

and cut the use of coal-fired power to almost nothing by 2050 to avoid catastrophic damage from climate change, according to scientists convened by the United Nations. That, of course, includes elimination of oil and gas from our Primary Energy Mix (PEM) as well as total eradication of the ICE-powered cars (both diesel and petrol). All that is required within the following decade.

Which kind of existential stress this new "Cambrian explosion" will cause on adaptive and non-adaptive inorganic clusters and systems of our biota, and its group dynamics? What impact will it have on the traditionally automotive-industry leaning regions, and what in aviation industry – which, at least when comes to continental Europe, could have been grounded decades ago – since even at our current technological level, railroad transportation would be cheaper, faster, and safer than using planes? What implication does it bring to the extremely crude-export dependent Middle East, which is situated in the centre of our planet but at the periphery of human progress?

Finally, who will invest to such a change? The insurance and RE (reinsurance) industries are on a brink of 'impossibility

to perform' clauses – as the severity and frequency of (the so-called) 'natural occurrences' (such as floodings, hurricanes, wet monsoons, conveyor belt currents and temperature shifts, glacier retreat, etc) makes the insured case incalculable and unpredictable. The link between Climate Change and global financial crisis triggered by the insolvency of major investors is thereby established. This is to name but a few numerous implications and unanswered dilemmas yet even unasked question<sup>1</sup>.

No doubt, our crisis is real, but neither sudden nor recent. Our environmental, financial and politico-economic policies and practices have created the global stress for us and all life forms of this planet. Simply, our much-celebrated globalisation deprived from environmental and social concerns, as well as from a mutual and fair cooperation (instead of induced confrontation and perpetuated exclusion) caged us into the ecological *globalistan* and *political terroristan*. (Acidifying of oceans and brutalization of our human interactions are just two sides of a same coin. What is the social sphere for society that is the biosphere for the very life on earth, since what we euphemistically call anthropogenic Climate Change is actually a brutal war against nature.)

The world based on agreed principles that – besides businesses and governments – involves all other societal stakeholders, re-captured global cohesion and commonly willing actions is not a better place. It is the only way for the human race to survive.

Deep and structural, this must be a crisis of our cognitivity. Thus, the latest Climate Change Report is only seemingly on Climate. It is actually a behaviouristic study on (the developmental dead end of) our other 'CC' – competition and confrontation, instead of cooperation and (all-included) consensus.

Simply, it is the report on our continued global *Jihad* against the cognitive mind.

#### Endnote

<sup>1</sup>Still today, sustainability is lacking an operational definition: There is a controversy whether to consider a human-made capital combined with a natural capital (weak sustainability) or separately (strong sustainability). Central to this question is to which extent a human capital or rather technology can substitute the loss of natural resources.

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## Diplomatic Training: Recent Developments

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For foreign ministries optimizing career-long training for its only real resource – i.e. the personnel in its diplomatic service – is a major challenge, now sharper than ever before. Recent trends in international affairs have multiplied the demands on foreign ministry personnel. These can be briefly summarised as: a much widened range of needed work skillsets; heightened public expectations; a need to engage with new subjects and new actors; expand-

ed multitasking requirements; and as a final blow, shrinking financial resources. Each of these can be expanded into an article. One example is the impact of information and communications (ICT) technology that expands the work domains and immediacy of diplomatic work.

This article focuses mainly on entry-level and early career training, with some references to other related challenges.

By way of background one should also note the expansion in diplomatic academies and virtual training entities across the world. Rare is the foreign ministry that does not now have its own infrastructure, or a nucleus establishment, to manage and deliver training, including participation in training courses offered by other countries, which is vital for small states, which organise their own training programmes infrequently, only on an ad hoc basis.

## Two training models

The two principal training models for new entrants are: 'pure training', with intense full-time training for a year or more, as practised in most of Latin America, China, India, Japan, Germany, and elsewhere (recently India has curtailed the duration of its entry-level training). The second method, 'work-and-train', involves initial briefing of new recruits, followed by apprenticeship and fulltime work in the foreign ministry, practised by Australia, Canada, the UK and the US, among others. Further, new entrants are pulled out for short courses as needed. Malaysia practises a variation of this, in that immediately prior to their first posting abroad, officials undergo a six-month intensive course, which caps their first two or three years of foreign ministry work.

Which of these two models, initial intensive training or on-job learning, is superior? **I opt for the second variant, supplemented with the Malaysian method of an intensive 'pre-posting' course that contextualizes and grounds all that young officials have learnt on the job.** It is interesting that the UK, which managed for very long without a formal training mechanism, has now broadly adopted this model of pre-posting training. Consider the following reasons. First, new entrants are keen to come to grips with their work. If they have joined the diplomatic service directly after academic studies, they are jaded and thus unreceptive to more book learning. That is also probably true of others with work experience, who too are anxious to start their new tasks. Second, it is impossible to grasp the non-theoretical, practical dimensions of training, without direct work experience that gives context. For example, the right way to prepare a record of discussion, one of the staples of the profession, and the needed listening skill, can only be grappled if one has observed diplomatic discussions, and then tried to reproduce its content. That also applies to the preparation of subject briefs,

speaking points, aide memoires, and many of the other kinds of diplomatic documents. Third, those that have not studied international relations can enlist in distance education courses, especially of the e-learning kind, to make up for this. But at the core, diplomacy is a practical art that consists of skillsets that are not amenable to classroom learning. This is where UK's experience with its Diplomatic Academy, which partly operates through e-learning, is very relevant.

## The UK Diplomatic Academy

The UK Diplomatic Academy, established in 2015, offers training at three levels; foundation, practitioner and expert. It has astutely utilised its late-comer's advantage by looking around and borrowing from the best examples available. Its two strong points are career-long training and full exploitation of digital distance methods.

The 'foundation' courses are mainly offered through eight digital modules made available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) intranet, which can be completed from anywhere, by all categories of staff. They are intended to teach the basics to all personnel, including new entrants, also to staff from other departments that deal with external issues. The second 'practitioner' level is aimed at FCO staff, typically at desk-officer levels, and is built around the Academy's 11 faculties. It includes some digital material and some involving classroom work, including seminars and guest speakers. Language training is part of the offering, though many have noted that in the past 15 years or so, the FCO has weakened its language and area expertise, and needs to make up for this major deficiency. Some of these masterclasses are held at embassies. Some of the learning involves teamwork, again facilitated by its intranet. Completing such courses will become a requirement for promotion into the FCO's 'Senior Management Structure'. The third 'ex-

pert' level is tailored to individual needs and involves joining institutions for advanced study, or secondments outside of Government. The Academy also offers 'Leadership Training' through a mix of different kinds of courses and secondments. This includes 'Leading under Pressure' and 'Engagement and Communication for Leadership', aimed at newly-appointed heads and deputy heads of mission and other senior appointments.

## A Variation

There exists an interesting variation on diplomatic training that has emerged in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has not attracted much notice. The UAE, which opened its Emirates Diplomatic Academy in 2016, has taken a new path. Each year it takes about 50 graduates for a one-year diploma course; the best among them are appointed to the foreign ministry. This is astute; it gives ample opportunity to identify the best among the course cohort. The remainder go on jobs in the corporate world, having gained exposure to international affairs and diplomatic practices, which is surely an asset in our globalising world. Foreign Ministry officials in Abu Dhabi and others can also enroll at this Academy for a one-year MA course, conducted outside office hours. It broadens their horizon and makes good use of the Academy's training resources, also adding to the country's range of education options.

Armenia is another country that uses a similar model, providing about eight months of training to 25 selected graduate candidates, of whom around half are appointed to the foreign ministry. In essence, this method both selects and trains new entrants; the two processes are telescoped.

A question comes up: should diplomatic training be entrusted to universities? Would that not combine academic and practical training? In the 1990s, Switzerland, through its international coop-

eration programme, helped to set up training facilities in Kenya, Malta and West Africa; in each instance, after a decade or so these diplomatic institutes implanted in universities became increasingly academia-oriented, and the concerned foreign ministry lost interest. In Nairobi, around 2007 the Foreign Ministry went to the extent of setting up its own Foreign Service Institute, directly under the Ministry. In 2014 several Caribbean foreign ministries joined hands to create the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean, at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. That experiment will be watched with interest, not the least because it is a joint effort, and therefore likely to be costly for neighbouring countries that have to bring in their trainees to this location.

### Digital Distance Learning

Canada, Mexico, the UK and the US are among the countries that use advanced information and communications technology (ICT) for diplomatic training. This method overcomes a major barrier that all foreign ministries face, in that at any point of time half or more of their personnel are stationed abroad, and it is expensive to bring them home for classroom training. Distance learning relies on ICT tools such as 'hypertext' (which enables a group or class to work jointly on a lecture text, making comments and counter-comments, visible to all, for what becomes a class conversation). Other methods include 'webinars' and video conferencing.

Developing one's own distance learning modules is expensive, but by its nature, some course materials developed in another country are not directly usable by other foreign ministries. That applies to materials such as case studies, though simulation exercises and lecture notes

are much easier to share among different countries, with some adaptation.

### DiploFoundation

DiploFoundation, with offices in Malta, Geneva, and Belgrade, annually offers more than 20 ten-week post-graduate level certificate online learning courses that draw several hundred participants, from foreign ministries, international organisations, companies, NGOs, faculties of international affairs, and others. A particular strength is the compendium of four courses that cover ICT and internet issues, which can be combined to obtain an advanced diploma in internet governance. The remaining courses cover a wide range of diplomacy issues, essentially from a practical practitioner perspective. Most of DiploFoundation's courses are accredited by the University of Malta, and on the basis of fulfilling the University requirements, they can be sequenced to gain a post-graduate diploma or a Master's degree in contemporary diplomacy (with the option of 'internet governance' specialisation). In addition, DiploFoundation also runs on-site training courses, and also distance courses, for different foreign ministries, as per their requirements.

DiploFoundation's courses have evolved over the past 20 years, and each draws around 15 to 25 participants, guided by either a single lecturer, or by teams of two or three. Because the participants belong to different nationalities and foreign ministries, a special strength is that a great deal of mutual learning occurs among classmates. That is a distinct advantage in comparison with training programmes run for a single country. The foreign ministries of Argentina, Mexico, Serbia and the UAE, as well as some Caribbean countries sponsor their diplomats to join Diplo's courses.

For instance, the Mexican foreign ministry annually assigns about 70 diplomats to different courses. Incidentally, most of this lecture material is placed under 'Global Commons' copyright, and is widely used by other training entities, adapted to their own needs.

### Conclusion

The palette of diplomatic training options is now more varied and richer than ever before. Three broad trends are visible. First, a majority of foreign ministries have their fulltime or virtual diplomatic training institutions, more than before. Second, a shift is visible from intensive entry-level training to on-job learning, blended with selective training, though countries that practise intensive entry training remain convinced of the strength of their methods. Third, distance learning through the internet is increasingly used as an option.

The best foreign ministries treat training as a core function and devote top management attention to it, examining their options, the best practices of other countries, and ideas from the corporate world. Mid-career and senior level training, not addressed in this article are at least as important as the programmes for new recruits and junior officials. Yet, some foreign ministries still view training as a routine task that needs only to follow a set pattern: 'That is how we were trained in the past, and that's worked well'. Failing to recognise its cardinal role in shaping its human assets handicaps diplomatic service, limiting foreign ministry's capacity to deliver on national objectives.

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