

TRENDS IN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION:

A CASE STUDY OF UGANDA

CAROLINE NALWANGA MAGAMBO

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DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that this report is my own work and I have acknowledged any use of published or unpublished works of other people.

NAME: **CAROLINE NALWANGA MAGAMBO**

DATE: **27TH MARCH 2011**

KIGALI, RWANDA

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to examine the communication trends in diplomacy with a focus on Uganda. The central question examined the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in diplomacy and the extent to which States have adopted its use. In this Thesis the application of ICT in the conduct of Uganda's diplomacy is also compared to best practice in other countries.

The findings indicated that the Government of Uganda has put in place an ICT policy and created institutions to support the formation of E-government, even though full implementation is yet to materialize. Findings also show that Uganda's diplomatic service is cognizant of the importance of ICT in the conduct of diplomacy and has since 2004, formulated an ICT master plan, which is currently being implemented, despite the challenges faced.

The study concludes that the use of ICT as a channel of communication in diplomacy can only thrive based on the wider effort of successful implementation of E-governance in Uganda. Some recommendations are also made with regard to enhancement of Uganda's diplomatic communication.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AOL	America on Line
BC	Before Computers
CHOGM	Common Wealth Heads of Government Meeting
DFAIT	Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
E-10	Ten elected Members of the Security Council
FP	Foreign Policy
G-24	Intergovernmental Group of Twenty Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development
GoU	Government of Uganda
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	International Peace Academy
ICRC	International Committee for the Red Cross
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IGOs	International Governmental Organizations
MNCs	Multi-National Cooperation's
MFA	Ministries of Foreign Affairs
MTN	Mobile Telephone Network
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
NSAs	Non State Actors
PD	Public Diplomacy
P5	Five Permanent Members of the Security Council
PS	Permanent Secretary
PPP	Private Public Partnership

TM	Top Management
UNCST	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
UTL	Uganda Telecom Limited
VCDR	Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Communication is to diplomacy as blood is to the human body. Whenever communication ceases, the body of international politics, the process of diplomacy, is dead, and the result is violent conflict or atrophy (Tran, 1987, p. 8).

Indeed communication is the lifeline of diplomatic missions, which according to ART 3 of the 1961 VCDR (2005, p.3), serve the purpose of;

- a) Representing the sending State in the receiving State;
- b) Protecting in the receiving State the interests of the sending State and of its nationals, within the limits permitted by international law;
- c) Negotiating with the Government of the receiving State;
- d) Ascertaining by all lawful means conditions and developments in the receiving State and reporting thereon to the Government of the sending State;
- e) Promoting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations.

The Definition of diplomacy as “a tool of international relations which involves “...non-violent problem-solving through cross-cultural communication, negotiation, and compromise Copeland (2009, p.5) alludes to the importance of communication in diplomacy. The word “diplomacy” is also said to have been derived from the Greek verb *diploun*, “to double,” and

from the Greek noun diploma, which refers to an official document written on double leaves joined together and folded. Diploma has the double connotations of a secret message and an official paper conferring certain rights to the bearer (cited in Jönsson and Hall, 2005, P.67). This also emphasizes the centrality of communication in diplomacy.

Traditionally, communication only occurred amongst States; however, this has changed with the increasing involvement of Non State Actors (NSAs) who now play an increasingly important role in international relations. Brown and Miller classify Non-State Actors into two categories: International governmental organizations (IGOs) and transnational or international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (cited in Ataman, 2003). They argue that the first group consists of NSAs that are created by nation-states and that they are officially documented by government agencies while the second group of non-state international actors is not established by nation-states, but by certain group of individuals, businessmen and other societal forces and have no legal bonds with nation-states; therefore, they are truly transnational.

The National Intelligence council (2007) also defines Non State Actors as; “Non-sovereign entities that exercise significant economic, political, or social power and influence at a national and in some cases international, level”. This includes; trade unions, Multi-National Corporations (MNCs), terrorist groups, community organizations, religious institutions, ethnic groupings, celebrities, business entities, the media and universities, among other actors.

1.2 Non State Actors in Diplomatic Communication

The increasing participation of NSAs in diplomacy is arguably caused by several factors;

- a) Advances in Technology,
- b) Globalization fueled by free movement of capital across borders,

c) Broadening of the Development Agenda.

The National Intelligence Council (NIC) (2007) in its assessment of the Impact of NSAs on International relations and the implications for the United States notes that, globalization-fueled diffusion of finance and technology has enabled NSAs to encroach upon functions traditionally performed by nation-states, facilitating their evolution into forms unheard of even a few years ago. Irfan ul Haque (1999) in his paper prepared for the meeting of G-24 titled 'Non- State Actors (NSAs) and Global Governance', also argues that; "The rise of non-state actors in global governance was a product of the widening of the development agenda, on one hand, and the scaling down of government's role in economic activity, on the other. The process has been helped by the realization on the part of the IFIs (International Financial Institutions i.e. the World Bank, the IMF and regional Banks) that dealing with some of the non-state actors is politically convenient and enhances their credibility as far as their major shareholders are concerned".

Anne Peters et al (2009) supports the view points of both scholars, she notes that, "the context in which the proliferation of Non- state actors ...occurs is well known. Globalization, liberalization and privatization waves which swept the globe in the 1980s and 1990s have contributed to shifting the focus away from the State as the sole source of regulation..." she further argues that the integration of national economies into a world economy has diminished or at least modified the authority of the State.

The increased involvement of NSAs in matters formerly handled by states only has equally affected interstate relations and communication. The exchange of information or communication between diplomats and NSAs in the receiving state is termed as Public Diplomacy (PD). A form of diplomacy described by Copeland (2009 p.6) as one which, "...involves diplomats from the sending States using dialogue, image projection, reputation management, and the power of attraction to connect directly with foreign populations;

opinion leaders, NGO representatives, businesspeople, journalists, and others to advance the objectives of their Governments”. This widened scope of engagement has increased the communication requirements of the MFAs and led to a change in the methods of communication used in order to retain efficiency and as such, the traditional means of communication are edging out. In this study, the traditional means of communication are associated with inability to overcome barriers to distance and time while the modern communication systems are those advantaged by the advances in technology that have greatly curtailed these limitations.

1.3 Rationale for ICT use in Diplomacy

Today the importance of efficient communication cannot be overemphasized and “is most graphically demonstrated, paradoxically, when diplomatic relations are broken and the parties almost always look for, and find, other ways of communicating” (Jönsson and Hall, 2005, P. 68). In this thesis, it clearly emerges that several MFAs are increasingly using ICTs to enhance communication and several arguments favor use of ICTs as opposed to the traditional methods of diplomatic communication.

The global advances in technology have improved the efficiency of businesses and diplomacy is not an exception. The capacity of the internet to store and process data, has created a conducive environment for ICT use by society resulting in increased pressure on governments to improve their performance through the deployment of ICTs. The term “e-government”, has been used by the OECD, E-Government Project, to mean the use of ICT as a tool to achieve better Government. Therefore, e-government focuses “on using ICT to transform the structures, operations and, most importantly, the culture of Government” United Nations report (2003, Pg 5). Adoption of E-government is important because the world’s population is increasingly converging on the internet to meet its information and

communication needs. This trend of events was predicted by Barry Fulton (1998, p.8), Director of reinventing diplomacy in the information age project; “The Internet, with 100 million users today, will reach one billion people by 2005, and will be available to half the world’s population by 2010 and that, “the network will become the central nervous system of international relations”. Indeed this has been proved to be true as the UN Telecommunications agency (2010) report indicated that by the end the year, 71 per cent of the population in developed Countries will be online compared to 21 per cent in developing Countries”.

ICTs overcome the barriers to communication which include time and distance. Emails facilitate instantaneous forwarding of even the most bulky documents and moreover there is no waiting time period for one to receive the information. The Use of a cell phone also aids instant consultations when in need of support during negotiations. The wide scope of engagement in contemporary diplomacy and limited staff numbers therefore requires the utilization of technology to keep pace with the communication requirements. Copeland (2009, p.12) argues that ICTS produce efficiency in MFAs because of the ability: “to pool e-diplomatic resources, DFAIT can capture scale of economies and benefit from the move from bricks to clicks”.

ICTs facilitate networking and ease the function of information gathering. Diplomacy as a function of government that projects itself in the international environment has not been spared from the use of ICT to better serve the growing interests of society. Diplomats now use the internet for collecting information and disseminating it, negotiating, sending documents, to attend meetings, to engage the public, in the establishment of virtual Desks and embassies and even corridor diplomacy is increasingly done online.

ICTS though still costly, are more cost effective in the long run, when compared to other traditional means of communication such as air travel, fuel, snail mail and the logistical

requirements of organizing traditional meetings. The Tripartite Plus Joint Commission, a forum for conflict resolution among the Great lakes countries, (Uganda, Rwanda, DRC and Burundi), involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which was initially funded by the American government could not continue due to lack of finances to facilitate the delegations of some member states, among other reasons.

The communication facilities at the disposal of diplomats from developing countries is daunting; diplomats carry out tasks under extremely difficult conditions which include limited Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and support staff, dwindling budgets and use of rudimentary methods of communication like snail mail, couriers, and organization of meetings. This state of affairs has rendered the MFAs of developing countries incompetent, sluggish and more often caused lack of participation in meetings which require logistical arrangements in place. This means that key decisions that impact on the country's interests are delayed due to lack of quorum or passed in the absence of key negotiators, which is a potential source of conflict in the future or abates conflict resolution efforts. This is why MFAs even of developing countries like Uganda need to acquire modern ICT infrastructure to improve their communication strategies.

This debate about use of traditional versus modern forms of communication in diplomacy brings us to examine how the idea of diplomatic communication between States was conceived and there by designed. This is important because the communication used by MFAs is unique and rather unmatched to the strategies used by other government departments. Therefore in the section below I trace the evolution of diplomatic communication from the practice of the ancient monarchs to the present MFA system.

1.4 The Evolution of Diplomatic Communication

Diplomatic communication dates as far back as two millennia, as practiced by the ‘great Kings’ of the near East, who depended on messengers and merchant caravans to deliver messages: to solve territorial conflicts and existing hostilities, prevent occurrence of wars, and pursue friendly relations and to trade. Kautilya (1915, p.17), explains the duties assigned to such envoys sent to another territory, “the envoy shall make friendship with the enemy’s officers such as those in charge of wild tracts, of boundaries, of cities and of country parts. He shall also contrast the military stations, sinews of war and strongholds with those with those of his own master. He shall ascertain the size and area of forts and of state, as well as strongholds of precious things and assailable and unassailable points”. He adds that, “having obtained permission, he shall enter into the capital of the enemy and state the object of the mission as exactly as entrusted to him even at the cost of his own life”

Berridge (2002, p.2) describes diplomacy in this early period as ‘rudimentary’ partly “because it was not called on very often and because communications were slow, laborious, unpredictable and insecure.” He attributes the beginnings of modern diplomatic communication to the Greek city state system of the 4th and 5th centuries BC and the formation of consulates, “when diplomatic immunity...became a more entrenched norm and resident missions began to emerge, through employing a local citizen known as a proxenos”. Communication was further modified from the Italian city State system where it begun during the renaissance into the French diplomatic system with the introduction of a resident Embassy headed by a citizen of the sending State, (Lewis, 2008).

This French system of the 17th and 18th centuries are recognized as the first developed system of diplomacy and the basis of the bilateral communication network whose framework was used during the formation of permanent conferences i.e. the League of Nations, (Berridge 2002, p.2). Jönsson and Hall (2005 P.11), observe that the French system was, characterized

by elaborate secrecy in the gathering and protection of information as well as the conduct of negotiations. The occurrence of the First World War was blamed on this secretiveness of the “old” diplomacy and led to calls for putting into place open covenants, openly arrived at by President Woodrow Wilson.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was created three Centuries after the formation of the resident Diplomatic Missions. Prior to the 17th Century, responsibility of diplomacy in the States of Europe is said to have been routinely allocated between different Secretaries of State, who were also responsible for other domestic matters. The MFA was created in Paris by Cardinal Richelieu in 1626 who believed in the importance of resident Ambassadors in the capitals of European States and the need to have consistency in both the formulation and execution of foreign policy.

Berridge (2002, p.6) attributes the formation of the MFA to have been borne out of the need for missions to have organized communication and safety of information back home; “more diplomacy multiplied the possibilities of inconsistency in both the formulation and execution of foreign policy and as a result it demanded more unified direction and better preserved archives...as for the fact that diplomacy was increasingly conducted by representatives resident for long periods, this demanded at least some degree of organized communications with them, with the attendant needs of ciphering and deciphering instructions and dispatches”. The 18th Century marked the period of provision of advice on foreign policy and the administration of diplomacy by a single ministry headed by a Foreign Minister. “As absolute monarchs gave way to Constitutional Monarchies and Republics, embassies and legations became more institutionalized all over Europe; and by the end of the nineteenth Century, European-style diplomacy had been adopted throughout the world” (Roberts, 2006).

In April 1961, The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations was signed, and this forms the present day basis for an internationally agreed standard of interstate communication. The preparatory work for the Vienna Conference is said to have started at the request of Yugoslavia in 1952 and that it followed the standard United Nations procedure for the codification of international law applied in fields where there is already extensive State practice, precedent and doctrine. The success of the Conference and of the Convention is largely attributed to the fact that the central rules regulating diplomatic relations had been stable for over 200 years. Although the methods of setting up embassies and communicating with them had radically changed, their basic functions of representing the sending State and protecting its interests and those of its nationals, negotiation with the receiving State, observing and reporting on conditions and developments there remained and still remain unaltered (Denza, 2008).

1.5 An evaluation of contemporary Diplomatic Communication and the VCDR

Examination of the provisions of communication in the 1961 Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations (VCDR) , which marks 50 years in existence this year, indicates that most of them have been overtaken by events that could not have been predicted at the time it was signed.

Article 27 of the Convention States that; “The receiving State shall permit and protect free communication on the part of the mission for all official purposes. In communicating with the Government and the other Missions and consulates of the sending State, wherever situated, the Mission may employ all appropriate means, including diplomatic couriers and messages in code or cipher. However, the Mission may install and use a wireless Transmitter, only with the consent of the receiving State”, (2005, p. 8). When one examines Article 27 of the VCDR, there is a great departure from the means of communication used in contemporary diplomacy. Increasingly, communication is becoming wireless in a borderless virtual world

and use of couriers and telegrams is becoming obsolete. In addition to that, the wide spread application of wireless technology like the internet and mobile phones that circumvent the provisions of the VCDR at that time of coining the VCDR were unpredictable.

Article 41 of the VCDR states; “all official business with the receiving State entrusted to the mission by the sending State shall be conducted with or through the MFA of the receiving State or such other Ministry as may be agreed” (para2, 2005 p.13). In contemporary diplomatic practice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is no longer the principal contact point for diplomats. They now directly engage with the Civil Society, Government Departments, Think Tanks and the Media, Business associations among other actors.

Allan Gotlieb former Canadian Ambassador to the United States coined the term “the new rules of diplomacy”, which essentially means a number of activities which take one fairly close to understanding domestic affairs and the internal processes of Government. In an interview with Harry Kreisler and Thomas Barnes (1996, p.3), he explained why the MFA is no longer the principal contact point for an Ambassador; “Certainly, the State Department is the proper and appropriate channel, and if you want to deliver a diplomatic protest, you go to the State Department. If you want to propose any major undertaking in the foreign policy field, the proper channel is the State Department. But if you look at the substance of international relations, and if you try to quantify it, the vast number of issues which have become the substance of international relations are generated by forces which are represented by other departments of Government or by the legislative branch”.

Some scholars argue that this direct contact with other government departments and NSAs has weakened the role played by the MFA in international relations while others think it is useful to engage a Country at all levels in order to attract them to the interests of your Country a termed referred to as soft power by Joseph Nye and Public diplomacy by other scholars. This approach of diplomatic missions interacting with NSA however is closely

linked with Art 3 para e) of the VCDR which mentions one of the functions of the diplomatic mission as being the Promotion of friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations.

Having reviewed the evolution of diplomatic communication and evaluated the VCDR as a legal instrument regulating the conduct of diplomacy, I may conclude that it lacks provisions for the regulation of an increasingly ICT based society; this supports the view point of many scholars who are increasingly pushing for the amendment of this convention. However some scholars of international law still justify the application of this convention to contemporary diplomacy. Denza (2008) in her book “Diplomatic Law, commentary on the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations”, particularly points out the strength of the principle of reciprocity which is still applicable in modern diplomacy although this principle is not applicable to NSAs.

In Uganda diplomatic communication has been shaped by the global trends and just like her foreign policy based on the practice of the colonial administration. In the section below we examine the background to Uganda’s foreign policy relations which have shaped its communication.

1.6 The Background to Uganda’s Diplomatic Communication (1962- 2010)

Uganda’s foreign policy can be traced back to the peaceful co-existence of Kingdoms with well developed political institutions, which first encountered foreign contact when the Arabs moved from the Indian Ocean coast to landlocked Uganda in the 1830’s, followed by the British explorers and missionaries. Therefore contemporary diplomacy in Uganda has been shaped by the practice of its former colonial masters, Britain, which declared the country a protectorate of Great Britain in 1894 until 1962 when Uganda attained her independence. The conduct of foreign relations has been evolving and changing with the post colonial regimes

and on the regional and international front although foreign relations were unpredictable and often erratic.

President Obote and Amin had a mixed foreign policy, ranging from dealing with the Soviet Union (SU) in increasing military capability to being an accomplice in the Palestine hijack of Israeli nationals. When Amin was overthrown in 1979; Uganda went through a phase of turmoil and instability. Within two years there were four rulers. Professor YK Lule ruled for a record sixty eight days, backed by Tanzania, and was replaced by President Godfrey Binaisa who ruled for eleven months and was overthrown by the Army Commander, Oyite Ojok in May 1980. The military set up a Military Commission to rule Uganda as it prepared elections. The elections were held on multi-party basis and Milton Obote became President for the second time in December 1980.

When Obote came to power again, he avenged his ousting by hunting down Amin's clansmen and the southerners (particularly the Baganda) for having celebrated his downfall. These ethnic categories of the south (particularly the local leaders) were tortured and killed on grounds that they harboured anti-government forces. The ethnic groups in the south included the Banyankole, Batoro, Bakiga, Banyoro and Banyarwanda (Batutsi Refugees). Throughout Obote's second period of rule, Uganda was plunged in serious guerrilla warfare and eventually in 1985 the Army Commander then Tito Okello Lutwa overthrew President Obote, Makimu Mwagiru (1996, p.171-187). On assuming power, President Tito Okello tried to engage in dialogue and peace talks with the different rebel groups but was also overthrown by NRA on 26th January 1986.

During the period it was hard to speak of a functional Government. The civil service had broken down; all the Government Departments were run down and the countryside were characterized by insurgency in short Uganda was what had been termed a "failed state" Dorff (1999 p.63) and diplomatic communication was suspicious due to scattered allegiance both to

the sitting government and the rebel movement (NRM) headed by President Yoweri Museveni Kaguta which took over power in 1986 has ruled the Country to date and created a relatively peaceful environment that has allowed foreign policy to thrive.

Communication between the colonial masters in Britain and the Kingdom leaders in Uganda was through telegrams and exchange of Envoys who travelled by Ship or road. The use of technology telephones, fax and computers generally followed global trends with most technological benefits reaching developing countries like Uganda years after invention. Telephone use can be traced back to the 1970s in Uganda and internet use to the late 1990s.

1.7 Motivation of the Study

In many countries today, communication is aided by the advances in technology which have quickened communication and improved the efficiency of the MFAs. Despite this fact, MFAs of most developing countries are still using the traditional communication methods with limited and rather reluctant application of ICTS. This thesis therefore examined the communication trends in Uganda's diplomacy and sought to establish the extent to which developing countries like Uganda are applying ICTs in their communication strategy.

Uganda being a developing Country with competing demands for its financial and human resources, it was also important to examine the feasibility of using ICT in its foreign policy communication strategy.

1.8 Objectives of Study

This study sought to;

- a) Examines the communication strategies used by Ugandan diplomats.
- b) Examine the extent to which Uganda's MFA applied ICTS.

- c) Identify the gaps in use of ICT by the diplomats of developing Countries and how these can be bridged.

1.9 Research Questions

- a) What are the methods of communication used in Uganda's MFA?
- b) To what extent has Uganda incorporated ICTs use in its foreign policy?
- c) What challenges are faced by developing countries in the use of ICTs?

1.10 Hypothesis

It was and still remains my contention that if given due attention, new communication technology can improve the conduct of diplomacy and contribute to resolution of many conflict situations in the world.

1.11 Organization of the Dissertation

This report is divided into six chapters;

Chapter 1 provides background information about diplomatic communication and also highlights the major themes/objectives of this study.

Chapter 2 discusses the methodology used in this research.

Chapter 3 provides a perspective on the communication trends in diplomacy and also explains why these occur.

Chapter 4 gives a comparative analysis of the application of ICTs in Uganda's diplomacy.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions to this study and also makes recommendations to support appropriate use of ICT tools in the diplomatic communication of developing countries.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study was done using a Case Study Design within a qualitative framework. A case study is defined to be “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” Yin (1991.p.23).

Yin further argues, this method was chosen because it is valuable, has distinctive characteristics that include looking out for all the relevant evidence, looks at different interpretations of the situation, identifies the most significant aspects in the area under study and calls for the use of the researcher's prior expert knowledge to further the analysis. It can also be used in combination with other methods.

2.2 Sample Selection and Size

Purposive sampling was used in this study and respondents were interviewed. This allowed for inclusion of key informants of different categories, which in turn provided a favourable chance to compare the views of the informants. It also allowed optimum efficiency within guided constraints of available financial, logistical and human resources. From a sampling-unit selection point of view, the study captured views of State categories such as the Permanent Secretary, Directors, Head of Department, Desk Officers and IT resource persons.

2.3 Methods of Data Collection

During this study, two basic methods were used. These were Interviews and documentary evidence. Interviewing these informants was crucial if information had to be corroborated with the documentary sources. Secondly, they had an advantage of being involved in the day-to-day policy reviews and implementation.

2.4 Research Instruments

The researcher used an interview guide for interviews and a documentary checklist for identifying relevant documents. The instruments were meant to capture information relevant to the study.

2.5 Interviews

The interview method was selected because it allowed the respondents to express their mind, allowed the study of non-verbal communication and enabled the researcher to avoid alienation from the respondent. It was also found to be flexible, with high response rate, easy to administer and ability to probe and seek clarifications during the interview. The interview guide was used as a research instrument, and it was constructed in such a way that it allowed flexibility during the interviewing process.

The Interviews were conducted following a number of successive steps. Basically it involved selecting and approaching individuals, arranging time, date, duration and conditions of the interview. The respondents were selected basing on the criteria of knowledge about the subject in question. A total of 25 respondents were interviewed.

2.6 Documentary Evidence

In the study, documentary evidence was used and involved in identifying and interpreting information contained in the documents both secondary and primary regarding the use of ICT in diplomacy. The documents were gathered following a documentary checklist and the method was accomplished in a number of successive steps.

The first step was identification of relevant documents. Here, the choice depended on the availability, accessibility, relevance and the research objectives. However in some cases, a single source was chosen.

2.7 Data Analysis

During Data collection and analysis, information from documents and in-depth interviews was related to the assumptions made before, in the theoretical discourse as well as during the data collection. They were assessed with regard to the degree to which these assumptions are valid.

Interpretation of findings was done in the context of the research topic, nature and objectives of the study as well as the methodology employed. While in some cases inductive generalization has been made, in other cases analytical generalization has been used.

2.8 Encountered Constraints

The researcher was faced with a problem of insufficient time and some respondents could not be reached. This problem was resolved by obtaining vital information from reviewing documents.

2.9 Ethic Considerations

This Research commenced after obtaining clearance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorities. A letter authorizing the researcher was obtained to enable the researcher access the various research areas. Emphasis was made indicating that the study was for purely academic purposes.

Those informants or interviewees who preferred to be concealed were treated in strict confidence and efforts have been made to ensure that the thesis does not compromise their position. The study dealt with very salient matters and sometimes-documentary sources were restricted.

Even some informants viewed the research as evaluative of the work they are doing. It was an uphill task to convince respondents that the study was for purely academic purposes.

CHAPTER THREE

TRENDS IN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION

Communication is the essence of diplomacy. There has never been a good diplomat who was a bad communicator. Stearns, (cited in Jönsson and Hall, 2005 p. 67)

3.1 Language and communication

Language has always been an issue of prime importance in diplomacy. This is so because if the exchange of information is not communicated in a language understood by the parties involved then no communication has occurred at all.

Artaxerxes of Achaemenid Persia sent to Sparta a special messenger, named Artaphernes, with a complaint that he was unable to understand the many ambassadors who had been dispatched to his court, and urged the Spartans to choose someone who could speak plainly and be understood by him. Of interest, perhaps, is the highly complicated method involved in the transmittal of the above communication: it was prepared in Aramaic, written in Assyrian script, and in order to be acted upon by the Spartans required translation into Greek (cited in Jonson and Hall p. 69). This lack of a common language led to the evolution of the diplomatic language over the centuries to the recognition of six official languages by the United Nations namely Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. They are said to be the mother tongue or second language of 2.8 billion people, nearly half the world population, and are official languages in more than half the States in the world (United Nations, FAQs, 2011).

In this chapter we examine the forms of communication common to MFAs and review the changes from the traditional methods of communication to the modern forms of communication.

3.2 Communication Methods used in Diplomacy

Communication can be defined as an activity by which information is conveyed. It involves mutual exchange of messages by writing, speech and signals or behavior. Below we examine the application of written, verbal as well as non- verbal communication.

3.2.1 Written Communication

There are special names accorded to the different documents used in interstate communication and these have specific formats in which they should be written. These include; Treaties, Protocols, Memorandum of Understanding, Note Verbale, Aide Memoires, Joint communiqué, Press Communiqué and Resolutions among others. It is now also common practice for Envoys to use normal letters in communication with government departments and NSAs. Emails are also used for informal communication between government officials but mainly with NSAs. Interdepartmental communication documents include; Briefs, letters, Talking Points, Record of a Meeting; Cabinet Memos and Loose Minutes or Memos.

The processing and presentation of the above mentioned documents, involves communication and the methods used range from use of messengers, couriers, snail mail, fax, Emails, the web and meetings. Increasingly, the web is used as the preferred means of conveying written communication (official and informal) and this is so due to the convenience of ease of access to information, widespread distribution, instant delivery and storage.

Governments have had to follow suit in the use of the web, after the NSAs who are merited for efficiency due to this kind of communication. According to Paul James (2004), in the Late 1990s NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, IPA, Amnesty International and ICG, which had picked interest in Security Council work wrote policy papers, advocacy books and established websites which shaped the issues up for discussion at the Security Council. Towards the beginning of 2000 Security Council delegations also started using the web to research on Council issues and also established their own websites on which they posted, official speeches, policy papers, news conferences, and draft resolutions. The Security Council is said to have followed this trend and in 2001 set up a Presidency area on the UN website. This carried the work programme, wrap-ups and assessments, Presidential statements, resolutions and transcripts and streaming videos of Council meetings. The use of the website to convey written information has increasingly been adopted by Governments around the world, and most MFAs and diplomatic Missions now have websites to serve this purpose.

3.2.2 Verbal Communication

This form of communication usually compliments and enriches written communication, but is far more elaborate than written communication mainly because not everything that is spoken can be written. Rana (2009 pg. 1) notes that “the preferred channel of sending information is always one’s own Envoy. One reason is that he can be relied upon to convey the exact points and the nuances to the decision-makers on the other side”. Such a messenger should have tact as well as good negotiation skills, to ensure a positive outcome of his mission.

Apart from the usual envoys resident in the capital, states also send envoys in situations that are politically sensitive and which if not resolved, may lead to the severance of relations between the two States. An example of this was the exchange of Envoys between Uganda and Rwanda on several occasions to resolve the clashes by the Armies of the two Countries

operating in Kisangani in August 1999. These clashes came as a result of failure by the two Countries to agree on how to wage war against the negative forces operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This led to the exchange of several envoys mainly at the level of Foreign Ministers, Security ministers and Chiefs of Intelligence Services.

Verbal communication may also take the form of a group briefing. This is organized for foreign envoys based in a country's capital to explain policy actions, avoid distortion of information as well promote interstate relations. Such information may also be sent to one's envoys in the different capitals to ensure that the very same information is conveyed to the host governments. An example of this is the regular monthly briefings about the progress of operations of Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) in Northern Uganda against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). This war had produced international attention and outcry due to rape of women, regular abduction of villagers and school children and maiming of the people in the area by the LRA. The misconception about this war escalated when the 2011 Presidential candidate Olara Otunnu, then UN Under-Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (1997-2005); alleged that Government of Uganda (GoU) was committing atrocities against the people of Northern Uganda. This led to regular briefing organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed by the then Minister of Internal Affairs minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda and the Minister of State in charge of International Affairs, who were involved in the Juba peace talks with the rebels.

Another example of verbal communication is the trend adopted by NGOs in the process of creating dialogue with the Security Council. They held conferences and meetings on issues on the agenda of the Security, and also participated in task force and special consultation meetings. The ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) held regular meetings with Council Presidents since 1980's. According to Paul James, (2004) in 1990, the IPA

(International Peace Academy) started a series of roundtable meetings on various council issues and enlisted the participation of high ranking diplomats, executives and lawyers among others. In 1991, Amnesty presented a paper to the Council advocating for human rights monitors in Iraq and followed this petition with several written letters. In 1995, NGOs under the leadership of the Global Policy Forum, founded the NGO working group on the Security Council to pursue policy reforms. This group of NGOs made presentations to the Council under what was termed the “Arria formula Briefings”.

In addition to that, private meetings also took place between NGO representatives and single Missions. “In April 1994, delegations were shocked at P-5 secrecy (and Secretariat silence), as the genocide in Rwanda was unfolding. New Zealand Ambassador Colin Keating, President of the Council, invited MsF and the ICRC to brief him, while the Czech Ambassador invited an expert from Human Rights Watch to his residence to brief all E-10 members...” (Paul James, 2004).

Technology has eased verbal communication by aiding direct communication between principals in different locations reducing diplomatic red tape in crisis situation. It is now common practice for Presidents and Foreign Ministers to call up each other and consult on phone or by video conference on urgent matters that require immediate attention. Although this kind of contact is not encouraged due to the absence of an official record and the difficulty it presents for the MFA to make a follow up, it speeds decision making and eliminates the need to solely rely on written communication and envoys.

3.2.3 Signals

“Signaling is as essential to diplomacy as to a busy airport. One crucial difference is that there is much more scope for ambiguity in diplomatic signaling. Ambiguous signaling between pilots and traffic controllers may be a prelude to disaster, but in diplomatic

communication ambiguity is considered constructive and creative” (Jönsson and Hall, 2005, P. 76). Signals in diplomacy involve behavior conveyed with intention to another party. Signals are hardly understood if used alone and therefore are usually used to compliment written or verbal communication. Moreover the understanding of signals also requires that both the sender and the recipient have a common cultural understanding. Short of this, signals will lead to distortion of the intended message and ineffective communication.

An example of use of signals with ambiguity in diplomacy include; the uncompromising stand of the United States on the North Korea nuclear programme negotiations which were facilitated and hosted by China since 2003 and were interpreted by Chinese officials as a tactic to allow the Country to proceed. The U.S “ had rejected proposals for a temporary freeze, technical talks and any interim steps short of the unconditional and complete ending of the programme” (Lewis, 2004). China was worried that the U.S had intentions to tolerate the programme as long as the weapons were not transferred to terrorists. The Chinese regarded nuclear weapons at their Border not only a national security threat, but also suspected that this could eventually lead to acquisition of nuclear weapons by other Asian states like Taiwan there by undermining China’s strategic cooperation with the U.S.

Other forms of signals include the mannerism or reception of an Envoy by the host Country. A handshake, the venue of meetings, the level of representation and exchange of gifts are commonly used and understood in diplomacy. Courteous behavior portrays friendly relations while the opposite behavior is a display of displeasure. Kautilya (1915, p.17), explains how signals portray the good or bad relations between States; “Brightness in the tone, face, and eyes of the enemy; respectful reception of the mission; enquiry about the health of friends; taking part in the narration of virtues; giving a seat close to the throne; respectful treatment of the envoy; remembrance of friends; closing the mission with satisfaction;--all these shall be noted as indicating the good graces of the enemy and the reverse, his displeasure”.

Partly because diplomacy is an art and its practice requires extensive display of virtues which are dependent on the personal character, it's not easy to convince diplomats that technology offers the same benefits as personal contact. However Applications such as Skype and video conferencing seem to offer a comfortable choice of communication quite close to meeting in person.

3.3 Changes in Diplomatic Communication

Having discussed the various forms of communication in diplomacy, I wish to submit that they are all still relevant and in use today. However, three factors seem to have greatly influenced and caused a departure from the traditional means of communication. These are; the advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICTs), increased participation of NSAs in international relations, and the increased mandate of the MFA. Below we examine the impact of these three factors on diplomatic communication.

3.3.1 Impact of ICTs on Diplomatic Communication

By the 19th century the US president wrote a memorandum to his Secretary of State, lamenting the fact that the ambassador in Spain had not been heard from for two years. "If we do not hear from him this year," he added, "let us write him a letter (cited in Jönsson and Hall, 2005 p.91). As technology advances interstate communication has become faster. The use of the telegraph made it possible to send messages over vast distances in less time and another breakthrough occurred with the advent of the telephone in the 1870s by Alexander Graham Bell and also the emergence of radio technology which revolutionized communication.

Radio communication made it possible for States to engage not only their citizens on foreign policy issues but also the foreign public. In the same way the use of a fax increased the speed at which written information was dispatched. The use of telephones on the other hand

increased the indulgence of States in Summit diplomacy, where principals engage in direct discussions with their counterparts and reduced the need for sending envoys and as well as quickened communication by reducing diplomatic red tape. The invention of satellites eventually led to the use of the mobile phones on April 3, 1973 at the initiative of Motorola which enabled telephone calls to reach even the most remote areas on the planet. Mobile phone technology has since enabled remote support during negotiation processes and also supported bilateral relations since they are personal to holder. In the same way, the discovery and use of air transport promoted the speed at which envoys traveled to foreign lands but also increased Summit diplomacy

The efficiency of the above mentioned technological inventions were bypassed with the invention of the computer and Internet which have not only eased the means of interstate communication, but also improved the storage, processing and duplicity of information to several foreign policy actors thus reducing the laborious process of communication. Since its invention in the early 1990s, the Internet has progressively shifted from Web 1.0, which was only used to read and write information, to Web 2.0, which facilitates interaction and exchange of information such as blogs, twitter and face book and now to Web 3.0, which aids communication related to emotion, sensation and real life experience in the virtual world such as Skype.

An exponentially increasing number of the people now use the Web to gather information and communicate. It may be recalled that the internet expanded from 500 hosts in 1983 to an estimated 109.6 million hosts in 2001 in 214 countries. In October 2010, The UN Telecommunications Agency reported that “the number of Internet users worldwide has doubled in the past five years and will surpass the 2 billion mark in 2010, with the majority of the 226 million new users this year coming from developing Countries (UN News Agency 2010).The use of the Web ranges from e-mail, social networking, making telephone calls,

video conferencing, reading print media and listening to audio and visual media. It is therefore important that diplomacy adapts itself to the application of the web tools if it is to remain relevant in an increasingly borderless world whose citizens are increasingly converging on the web to meet their information and communication needs.

The justifications of the importance of the Web to diplomatic communication are numerous: It is a powerful tool in the mobilization of people; Campaigns on the Web were crucial to stopping the Multilateral Agreement on Investment in the late 1990s. It has also been used to mobilize the Egyptian people in the February 2011 demonstrations against the rule of President Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled Egypt for the last 30 years. In the same manner a free online mapping tool, the Ushahidi (meaning testimony), was used to compile information on where incidents of violence, riots and rapes were happening in Kenya, after disputing the outcomes of the 2007 Presidential elections; by use of the Web and SMS function of the Mobile Phone (Carter, 2010). This same tool has been used in Brazil and Venezuela to mobilize masses as well as to save lives in Haiti after the earthquake.

Blogs are effective tools in facilitating mutual exchange of information and promoting cross cultural communication. Saranga David (2009), Consul for Media and Public Affairs at the Consulate General of Israel in New York, in his blog, "the use of new Media in Public Diplomacy", explains the impact of social networks. "Social networks that have now penetrated large segments of our society have become tools that allow us to spread Israel's message directly--unmediated by the press. Furthermore, our messages can be spread not only by the Government of Israel but also by our supporters around the world..." He adds that "IsRealli.org was created with the purpose of showcasing Israel "beyond the headlines."

E-mail eliminates the communication difficulties between Embassies and Headquarters brought about by the different time zones. For example to communicate on phone with the Foreign Ministry in Kampala from our Mission in Washington, the Officer will have to wait

till 4am but with the email he sends information that is received instantly and acted upon. This in effect extends the communication hours between the Embassy and the Ministry to 24. The use of E-mails has replaced the traditional means of forwarding printed copies of information and made communication flatter than before, reducing the hierarchies which are associated with the Public Service while at the same time quickening the process of decision making within the MFA. Rana (2007, p.196)

Emails are increasingly replacing the traditional means of communication by use of fax or telegrams, when diplomats need to send written information. This is especially so because of the advantages of instant delivery, reduced need to print and forward even the most bulky documents and reduced reliance on support staff to communicate. This has eased the conduct of diplomacy especially when handling a crisis situation and reporting. Emails are commonly used by diplomats from both developed and developing countries. Diplomatic missions also submit information to their home countries through secured intranets.

Stefano Baldi (1998) in his presentation, “the Internet and Diplomats of the Twenty First Century”, compares the efficiency of the different methods of communication as shown in (table 1)

Table 1: Comparison on cost of messages

The estimated cost is referred to a text of one page (A4) composed of about 300 words sent from Switzerland to Italy. (in Swiss Francs)

Message type	Real transmission time of the message	Cost for 1 minute transmission (in SFR.)	Cost for sending the message	Time to deliver the message to the final user	Advantages	Drawbacks
	B	C	$D = B * C$	E	F	G
Telex	6 minutes	1 (+ 6 Frs. per call)	12.00	1 - 2 days	- Valid for all kinds of communications	- It is not possible to send documents originating from other sources - It is a text-only means
Message through X40 connection	1 minute	0.42	0.42	1 - 2 days	see telex	See telex
Fax	49 seconds	0.75	0.75	Between 1 minute and 1 day	- It is possible to send copies of documents originating from other sources	- Often a fax cover is needed - To send the same fax to the different destinations you have to repeat the procedure (unless it is a group registered in the machine)
Note by diplomatic pouch	1 day	n.a.	n.a.	4 - 6 days	- Valid for all kind of communications - It is possible to send copies of documents originated by other sources	- Slow delivery times
E-mail	20 seconds	0.16	0.16	1 - 30 minutes	- Message send directly to the final addressee without intermediaries - The same message can be sent simultaneously to different addresses.	- Limited use for official communications - the final addressee needs an e-mail address

For the sake of comparison, the time to read the text was calculated as 3 minutes. An International telephone call to Italy lasting the same time costs about 2.25 Frs. Note: Most of the times indicated refer to estimates based on experience.

These findings above justify the efficiency of emails since they are delivered instantly and eliminate the need to use intermediaries in the communication process. The increased number of actors in international relations has strained the financial and human resource capacity of the MFA which has required the adoption of a communication strategy that is both cost effective and less time consuming. With the use of email, it has become easy to send information to several stakeholders at the same time, which has reduced the need for the laborious and expensive exercise of sending couriers to the different recipients as well as the

printing expenses involved. Many MFAs are using Intranets as a communication mechanism as well as their Missions. This has facilitated the written communication between headquarters and the missions in a secured environment.

The use of ICT has generally improved service delivery of Missions which have limited Staff and high demands for provision of information to the public, as Jomo Makela, Press Counselor at the Embassy of Finland clearly explains, "Internet-based solutions" are now central to his job. "[With the Internet,] you have a reach that you could not dream of a couple years ago.... 15,000 visitors physically visit our embassy each year. On the Web, we have 25,000 visitors each month," (cited in Theros, 2001). Most Missions now have websites, which provide information on travel advice, visa application procedures and forms on the website.

The adaptation of ICT has increasingly become a critical tool in high-level diplomatic negotiations. This has reduced the need to travel for meetings especially where there is security and logistical concern. An example of this is the February 2000 meeting where President Clinton attended a regional Summit in Africa to resolve the crisis in Rwanda and Burundi with the aid of a Video Conference.

The Internet has however contributed to a dispersal of FP Authority away from States and toward sub national actors, such as corporations local and multinational, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), special interest groups, social movements and even private citizens groups that are often termed the Civil Society. Potter (2002, p.5) notes that, "As networking overtakes hierarchy and bureaucracy as the primary mode of organization and communication, it will become progressively more difficult for Governments to control, shape and influence the information and its distribution". However, Barry Fulton (2005, p.16), editor of the Virtual Diplomacy series is opposed to Potter's view. He merits ICTS for promoting information sharing between NSAs and governments. "In a networked

information environment, we can learn more by developing close and cooperative links with the thousands of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) ...than by relying on a small number of political and intelligence officers reporting from African Capitals”. He adds that “A nation’s ability to promote its values and policies and the relevance of its institutions, now rests on Government participation alongside such actors in a multidimensional global dialogue”.

The internet also poses some challenges and risks to classified and sensitive information that Internet access poses to government and computer systems. The increasing cases of hackers have made diplomats shy to send sensitive information via the internet irrespective of the security features that have been put in place. Wiki leaks (<http://213.251.145.96/>), is one such website that has popularized itself by tapping into diplomatic cables. It was launched in 2007 and relies on volunteers around the world to collect information. It publishes secrets of the US diplomatic cables and was founded by Julian Assange. These cables are internal communications that include secret information exchanged between US diplomatic outposts and State Department headquarters in Washington.

As reported in the Irish Times (2010), State Department’s spokesman Mr. Crowley said, “The release of confidential communications about foreign governments would probably erode trust in the US as a diplomatic partner and could cause embarrassment if the files should include derogatory or critical comments about friendly foreign leaders.” “When this confidence is betrayed and ends up on the front pages of newspapers or lead stories on television or radio, it has an impact”. It was further reported that, “The revelations they contain are likely to range from the mundane, in the case of routine reporting on meetings between US and foreign government officials, to the explosive, in the case of candid assessments of foreign officials or the exposure of pressure tactics used by US diplomats”. Such embarrassment has put to question the safety of diplomatic communication over the

web and caused panic to Obama administration as many Governments around the world read with fury the contents of US foreign policy that had not been revealed before.

Increasingly the manufacturers of computer software are putting in place confidence building measures to curb the conspiracies of hackers and there is constant production of newer versions of anti- spy and anti- virus software. This needs to be backed with international legislation governing the use of the internet and to make crimes committed in cyberspace punishable. Despite the positive attributes of ICT to diplomatic communication, its use has not yet been fully embraced by governments. This may be partly due to the high cost of ICTS, lack of appropriate skills and the relevance of its application in developing countries with low internet penetration.

3.3.2 The Impact of Non State Actors on Diplomatic Communication

Martin (2001, p.2) explains how the ICT revolution has challenged diplomatic communication by empowering the NSAs. “This shift in communication has perhaps been most pronounced in the field of diplomacy, a traditional prerogative of the state and symbolic of its claim to sovereignty. In the past, diplomatic agencies were not often subject to organizational rivalry. The diplomatic world is now beginning to feel the heat of competition, especially from more agile Non – State Actors empowered by the information revolution”.

NSAs are increasingly playing an active role in international relations. Sometimes they ally with governments and international bodies in support of some policies while at other times they strongly oppose government policies. This has shifted the attention of MFAs from concentrating on interstate communication to engagement of the NSAs as well. Jonathan Clarke, a former British Diplomat and President of the American Journalism Foundation, analyses this shift in diplomatic communication: “Today there is a proliferation of new actors. You used to have a nice, cozy relationship between States. Now you have more

figures on the stage. This adds to the pace and complexity of diplomacy” (cited in Theros 2001).

The importance of state communication with NSA is clearly demonstrated in the process of the 1997 Ottawa Landmines Treaty in which Canada utilized ICTs to successfully engage a large NGO network the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, to bring the Treaty to pass. One participant involved in the Ottawa process is reported to have suggested that, “...the treaty signaled a new kind of diplomacy ... a new texture in the international system where negotiating tables have new players and shapes, where linkages and networks transcend state limits...” (Cited in Wiseman 2004, p. 46) It is also demonstrated in the violent protests to the WTO negotiations, in the cities of Seattle and Montreal where small groups coordinated on the internet from across the United States, Canada and Europe brought the negotiations to a standstill. This strengthens the argument that foreign policy technocrats need to engage NSAs in policy matters and also to realign their communication strategies to those used by NSAs in order to keep them engaged.

The 24hr news media is increasingly a primary source of information about what is happening in different parts of the world, and is increasingly used as a source of information by diplomats. This sometimes presents a challenge to diplomats based at the Missions, because the media may report about an event happening in the receiving state before they are aware of it. The media may also be used as an information dissemination channel to both nationals and the international community. This may be in the form of a press release or coverage of a meeting. This has caused increased accreditation of media personnel amongst government delegations. The media has also consolidated itself as one of the Key players in communicating foreign policy issues to the nationals, bypassing the safeguards once put in place by governments to control the information that could be accessed by their citizens. An example of this is the access of information by the public in Arab countries. Though there is

still restricted access of information about the west, it now possible to access TV, Newspapers TV and radio Stations via the internet.

The downside to the media in diplomatic communication is that it sometimes jeopardizes the conduct of diplomacy under the guise of protecting the freedom of speech and may make it difficult for countries to secure their interests. A case in point is the whistle blower website Wiki leaks which publishes sensitive information about interstate relations but justifies its actions under the freedom of speech and holding the Government accountable. "The broader principles on which our work is based are the defense of freedom of speech and media publishing... We derive these principles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In particular, Article 19 inspires the work of our journalists and other volunteers. It states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (Wiki leaks website, 2010)

Francis Fukuyama at a Conference on Virtual Diplomacy at the United States Institute for Peace highlights the negative influence of NSAs on State communication. "...It is very possible that there may be too much civil society. In fact, a lot of the discussion about the dysfunction of American democracy has been related to the fact that there are too many interest groups ... able to respond at a moment's notice on a variety of issues." (Fukuyama, 1997). This realization has caused States to engage NSAs on FP issues. If brought on board, they are powerful channels in the promotion of a country's PD and increasingly it is common practice for country delegations to include NSA to keep them informed of developments in a country's foreign policy as well as to ensure that they support government policies. Diplomatic communication must therefore now take into account dialogue with regional and

international organizations, multinational corporations, advocacy networks, and influential individuals and this is best achieved with the application of ICTS.

3.3.3 Increased mandate of the MFA

In his article “Dealing with a changing world”, Mr. Rajiv Bhatia (2010), who has served as India’s Ambassador/High commissioner in several countries notes that; “In essence, diplomacy is still about communication and relations between Governments. Political diplomacy, therefore, retains its relevance and significance, except that its scope seems to have expanded considerably. Diplomats now have to deal with a wide range of matters like trade negotiations, international economy, climate change, nuclear proliferation, terrorism and regional and global integration”.

Bhatia gives an example of how this increased mandate of the MFA has changed the traditional communication channels of the MFA, “The previous generation of Indian Foreign Service officers, with a few exceptions, preferred to do traditional ‘political’ work, but progressively in recent years economic work involving multilateral and regional trade negotiations as well as bilateral trade, investment promotion, joint ventures and technology transfers has become the bread and butter of diplomacy. In my first two ambassadorships, I communicated more with the Ministry of External Affairs and a few economic Ministries, but in the last two stations as Ambassador/High Commissioner, I was more frequently in communication with India Inc than the Government of India”.

Rana (2007, p. 126), subscribes to the same argument and notes that the MFA “...must play ...the role of the coordinator of all external relationships, involved on all principal matters, without getting involved into the detailed management”. He also argues that the “MFA should reach out to the organization of ‘civil society’ that are engaged in external relationships”. This form of interaction has increased the scope of work of the MFA, reaching

out to the public of other countries and as well as their own Diaspora communities. This requires the adoption of modern communication technology to make Embassies and MFAs actors in real time to solve emerging issues in international relations.

3.3 Conclusion

It may be noted that the methods of communication by MFAs and Missions essentially remain the same except that the use of new Information and communication technology, participation of the NSAs and the increased mandate of the MFA have affected the medium used. This has essentially transformed communication from the traditional methods of communication to use of modern methods which are associated with instantaneous communication.

Much as MFAs are cognizant of the importance of ICTs in communication few have used them as channels of communication. This means that conflicts still persist in the world fueled by media reports and lack of cross culture communication as diplomats continue to sit in air conditioned rooms looking for solutions to seemingly complex issues. It is my strong conviction that tactical utilization of ICTS in diplomacy will contribute to promotion of cross cultural understanding and positive engagement of Non- State Actors. In chapter 4, I benchmark the use of ICTS in Uganda's diplomacy against best practice from other MFAs.

CHAPTER FOUR

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE APPLICATION OF ICTS IN UGANDA'S DIPLOMACY

The National Information and Communication Technology policy of Uganda reads,

“The Sustainability of both high economic growth and efficiency in operations of both the private and public institutions are dependent on the adoption and effective utilization of ICT. The government of Uganda has recognized the fundamental importance of ICT in any policy for development, and creating the conditions for the fullest participation by all sections of the population” (Ministry of Works Housing and Communication 2003, P.6).

In this chapter, I examine the environment shaping ICT use in Uganda's diplomacy and later examine the application of ICTs in Uganda's MFA while drawing conclusions based on best practice in other countries.

4.1 Background to ICT use in MFA

An attempt to analyze the application of ICTs in Uganda's diplomacy without consideration of the external environment would be a misnomer and lead to illogical conclusions. The background includes a review of Uganda's ICT environment, location of Uganda's Missions and the staffing of MFA.

4.1.1 Uganda's ICT Environment

The overall goal of the National Information and Communication Technology policy is to promote the development and effective utilization of ICT such that quantifiable impact is

achieved throughout the country within the next 10 years through: dedicated legislation; improved education; opportunities for citizens and institutions to gain access to and disseminate information; enhancing the country's economic, social and intellectual potential (IST Africa 2004, 2007). This policy was put in place in 2003 but it is important to recognize that it was preceded by other policy frameworks that have shaped the use of ICT infrastructure in Uganda. These include; The Press and Journalist Statute, 1995, regulating the media, the Electronic Media Statute, 1996 which controlled the licensing system, through the Broadcasting Council, for radio and television stations, cinemas, and videotape rental businesses plus the purchase, use, and sale of televisions at one time, the Uganda Communications Act, 1997, which led to the formation of Uganda Communications Commission as an independent regulator of the communication, the Rural Communications Development policy, 2001 to ensure the spread of ICTs to all Ugandans.

These policy frameworks have shaped the communication landscape in Uganda which has evolved from government monopolies to the entrance of private operators like, Celtel, the first telecommunication private company to provide mobile cellular service to Ugandans. This process has seen an increase in the number ICT service providers when one compares the statistics of 1996 with those of 2007; fixed telephone line subscribers from 45,145 to 137,916; Mobile cellular subscribers from 3000 to 3,015,493; Internet service providers from 2 to 17; private FM radios from 14 to 158; private TV stations from 2 to 25, Courier service providers from 2 to 25 and pay phones from 1, 258 to 16, 059.

(Uganda Communications Commission, 2010) For a detailed history about the development of ICTS in Uganda see Annex 4.

Though considerable progress has been made in the area of provision of ICT infrastructure, the majority of Ugandans still lack access to use of ICTs. It is estimated that the internet penetration in Uganda stood at 3.5 million users by the end of 2010 (Uganda

Communications Commission). This represents about 10% of the population which stands at 35 million. (Mwesigye 2003, p.87) attributes this challenge to Internet penetration in Uganda, as common to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, to low level of telecommunications infrastructure, the high cost of computers, limitations to power supply and the rampant power outages. In addition to that, though Uganda was one of the first countries in Africa to develop a policy on universal access to telecommunications, exceedingly high taxes of up to 30% on services in the mobile and fixed telephony sector were undermining the success of this initiative (APC news 2009). The government of Uganda has taken steps to encourage the growth of the ICT sector by removal of tariffs on computers since 2002; which has lowered their cost and increased accessibility.

The Rural Communication Development Fund was formed and has facilitated the installation of 76 internet access points across the country, reaching the majority of the population. It also put up 60 wireless communication masts, enabling telephone access to villages, thus uniting the country via cell phones (Bisiku, 2010). In 2006, Uganda created the Ministry of Information and Computer Technology to oversee the development of information technology, it has since overseen the installation of fiber optic cable and the National Data Transmission Backbone, to, among other things, interconnect the districts for information sharing and the problem of power outages is reducing with the construction of the Bujagali Hydroelectricity and possible use of methane gas from the oil production industry. The Rural Electrification Program also facilitates the extension of electricity to the rural areas.

Overall the availability of ICTs infrastructure is predictably improving and it is anticipated that more Ugandans who fall in the age bracket of 16- 30 years will increasingly embrace ICTs. This has been supported by the Ministry of ICT embarking on the distribution of computers in government supported learning institutions. This ICT environment has shaped the application of ICTs in Uganda's FP from the use of snail mail, fixed telephone lines and

faxes to the utilization of computers and the Internet. Below we examine ICT usage in MOFA – Uganda.

4.1.2 The Structure of Uganda’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry is composed of the Headquarters and 27 Missions in addition to three Consulates. At the political level, the Ministry is headed by a Minister assisted by two Ministers of State, responsible for International Affairs and Regional Cooperation.

The technical team on the other hand is led by a Permanent Secretary assisted by two Directors who supervise nine (09) Departments which include the African Union, Resource center, Americas, Asia, EAC (East African Community) and Ring States, Europe, NAMERA (North Africa, the Middle East and the Rest of Africa), Protocol and Consular services, Finance and Administration and soon, the creation of Diaspora Services Department which is at a level of a Desk.

Table 2: Location of Uganda’s Missions abroad

Africa	11	Abuja, Addis Ababa, Cairo, Dar es salaam, Kigali, Kinshasa, Khartoum, Nairobi, Pretoria, Tripoli and Juba- Consulate
Europe	8	Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Geneva, London, Moscow, Paris, Rome.
Americas & the Caribbean	3	New York, Washington, Ottawa
Middle East	3	Riyadh, Teheran and Dubai Consulate.
Africa & Pacific	5	New Delhi, Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, Canberra.

An assessment of the location of Uganda's missions abroad indicates a distribution in the various regions of the globe and clearly indicates the need for an efficient means of communication.

4.1.3 Staffing of Uganda's MFA

In total MFA currently employs 319 staff of which 203 are FSOs and 116 are support staff and administration. The total number of FSOs at missions is 124 while the number at Headquarters is 63 because 16 FSOs had obtained leave for various reasons. This means that the number of support staff employed at MFA headquarters were almost twice the number of FSOs. An examination of the Missions revealed a similar pattern. Take for example the Ugandan High Commission in Kigali; the FSOs are 3 while administration and support staff are 8.

An examination of the work of administration and support staff revolves around communication apart from a few involved in personnel matters and financial management. This work includes receiving visitors and documents and record management, document processing and filing while others work as office messengers, drivers, manning of photocopiers, faxing, and switch board activities. If efficient ICT based solutions are used then it is possible to reduce the role of support staff from communication activities to other matters of administration and to increase the number of FSOs who manage their own communication. A case in point could be the automated telephone answering service which would direct one to the proper extension of the required department as opposed to having a person carry out this task manually. In addition to that the secretary can handle administrative matters as opposed to typing letters, printing them, taking them for signature to the FSOs, dispatching them and filing flimsy copies.

The use of virtual communication is envisaged to eliminate this manual system of communication and to reduce the need for support staff as FSOs are able to process a

document, dispatch it and retain a record in the computerized filing system. This will also increase the security of information which many times is said to be leaked by local staff and reduce the costs associated with paper based communication such as printing and dispatching whether by fax or courier.

4.1.3 The ICT policy and Master plan 2004

Uganda's MFA, like that of many other developing countries, adopted the use of the internet as a medium of communication in the late 1990s but on an informal basis, as it was based on the initiative of staff in the absence of deliberate government policy. This was partly because the ministry lacked an ICT policy and Master plan until 2004 and also because few staff had acquired the necessary skills. In the preceding period, interdepartmental communication relied on printed documents typed using a type writer, while communication to missions abroad and other governments relied on couriers and faxing. This was not only a tedious exercise that required employment of a good number of support staff but it also relied on their presence. With the assistance of development partners and with the increased demand for improved service delivery in the public service, it was realized that to cope with the ever increasing communication demands, it was vital to adopt modern means of communication that were used by developed countries.

This trend of events led to the creation of the Resource Center department to spearhead the implementation of the ICT policy and Master plan drawn in 2004. This Master plan laid out an integrated and structural approach for the development, deployment and management of modern ICT services for the ministry. The main goal of this plan was to enable the ministry optimally utilize ICT in the realization of its mission and strategic objectives. When fully implemented, this project will provide end user skills training, Ministry wide data communication infrastructure, connectivity to Missions abroad, automation software and hardware, document management systems and Internet / Intranet facilities. Among the

priorities, the Master Plan will achieve is the attainment of a Local Area Network (LAN), Internet connectivity, Voice- Over- IP connectivity and elements of back-end automation. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Filmax International Inc. in 2007 to oversee the implementation of the Ministry's ICT policy master plan and to streamline the webpages of Uganda's Missions abroad as public information portals. Below, we examine the extent to which ICTs have been deployed to support the communication strategy of Uganda's FP.

4.2 Application of ICTs in Uganda's Foreign Policy

Article XXVIII of the Constitution of Uganda (1995, p. 17) is the basis of Uganda's foreign policy which is enshrined on the principles of-

- (a) Promotion of the national interest of Uganda;
- (b) Respect for international law and treaty obligations;
- (c) Peaceful co-existence and non-alignment;
- (d) Settlement of international disputes by peaceful means;
- (e) Opposition to all forms of domination, racism and other forms of oppression and exploitation.

It further states that; Uganda shall actively participate in international and regional organizations that stand for peace and for the well-being and progress of humanity and that The State shall promote regional and pan-African cultural, economic and political co-operation and integration. The objectives are achieved by; the promotion of trade, tourism and attraction of investors, collection of information and reporting , participating in meeting, carrying out negotiations , conducting State Protocol, offering consular services, protection of Uganda's interests and citizens abroad.

The coordination of these activities by MFA requires regular communication with the different stakeholders who include; government departments, diplomatic missions accredited to Uganda, Uganda's missions abroad, business associations, manufactures, NGOs, the

media, Development Partners and member states of regional and international organizations to which Uganda subscribes membership. Below we examine the application of ICTs in MOFA's FP and for the sake of presentation in this Thesis I will classify MOFAs functions as follows;

- a) Representation
- b) Promotion and protection of interests
- c) Information gathering and reporting
- d) Consular services
- e) Participation
- f) Negotiation
- g) Public Diplomacy

4.2.1 Representation

One of the functions of Diplomatic Missions is to represent the sending State, and in this regard Kurbalija and Baldi note; "If cyberspace is considered a separate entity and "space", then websites of diplomatic Services could be considered as a country's representation in that space" (cited in Olesya, 2006, p.20) The Internet has created room for diplomatic Missions to service the internet society using websites and virtual Embassies. Online content includes information and news about the home country, contacts for trade investment and tourism, consular information and services, travel advice and health information.

In Uganda MFA website was launched in 2005 and below we examine how the MFA is utilizing its presence in space in terms of provision of adequate information, organization and symbolic representation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a website and 12 out of thirty

Missions abroad, also have websites representing Uganda in the Virtual world. The table below shows their distribution by Region.

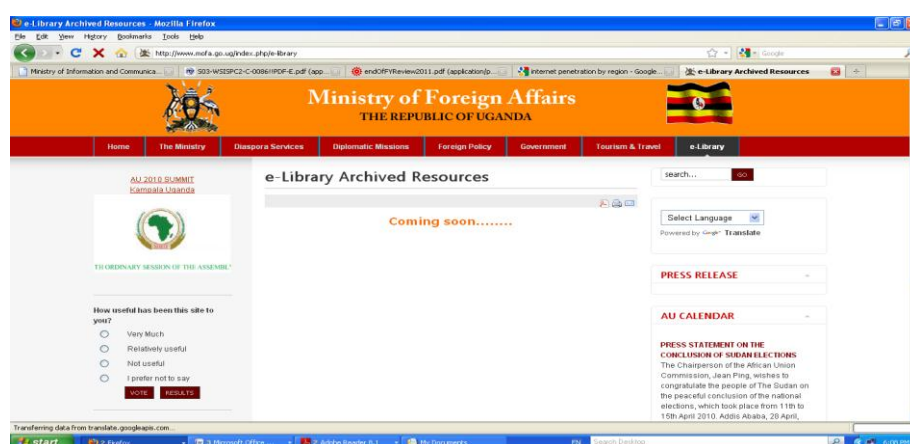
Table 3: List of Ugandan Missions with Websites

Region	No	Percentage	Missions
Africa	3	27%	Kigali, Nairobi, Pretoria
Europe	5	75%	Copenhagen, Geneva, London, Moscow, Paris
Americas & the Caribbean	3	100%	New York, Washington, Ottawa.
Middle East	0	0%	None
Pacific	1	20%	Beijing,

As shown in the table above, the Region in which Uganda is least represented in Virtual space is the Middle East, followed by the Pacific Region which may be partly due to restricted access of the internet in this area and thus limited internet penetration which is currently stands at 21.5%. The statistics in Africa are representative of the challenges of connectivity (with internet penetration currently at 10.9%) associated with limited and costly infrastructure, low literacy rates, and thereby low demand of services according to (Internet world Statistics,2010 see Annex 5).Not surprising, is the high representation of Uganda in the Virtual world in both the Americas and Europe. Internet penetration in North America stands at 77.4% while in Europe it is 58.4% this means that the cost of accessing Internet services is cheap and thus high demand for online services.

An examination of the website in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Uganda www.mofa.go.ug, and those of her Diplomatic Missions (see Annex III) shows the Ugandan flag and Courts of arm which Emblems are representative of Uganda and in addition to that, the websites seem to have all the key features of information required by the public. However as illustrated below, the biggest challenge lies in the fact that most of the sections on the website either don't have any information yet or indicate "coming soon", or the information is not up-to-date and therefore not useful to the public.

Figure: 1 Screen shot of the Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs



An interview with the ICT department indicated that most of this information was not updated because it had to be collected and posted by one IT personnel from all the other departments. The departments had on several occasions delayed to submit the required information despite several reminders from the IT personnel and further probing on this subject indicated that the departments viewed this as yet another task added to their already overloaded work schedule which partly explained why there was reluctance in submitting the information. This challenge was also highlighted in the findings of the MOFA ICT Audit report of Kanagwa et al (2011, p. 14), which indicated that; "There is lack of a decentralized approach to updating of the information. At the moment there is one staff, the Principal Website Administrator charged with updating of all information on the Ministry website".

Having an updated website is still an uphill task for Uganda's MFA, especially when the editorial team lacks dedicated Foreign Service officers to ensure suitability of content posted on the website. The importance of involving FSOs was highlighted by Kurbalija during a presentation on DiploWeb Methodology for diplomatic websites; "Information on a diplomatic website should be managed by a subject specialist: a diplomat. A diplomat has the best understanding of the nature of the information presented, the target audience and the context of information in relation to the government's policies and objectives. Moreover, diplomatic websites have legal and political importance, and are used for diplomatic signaling...All of these points make diplomatic websites too important to be left in hands of designers or technical specialists".

An example of a website which depicts good representation of its country is the embassy of the United States in Kampala <http://kampala.usembassy.gov/> shown in Fig.2.

Figure: 2 Screen shot of the Website of the American Embassy in Kampala



A review of this website showed updated information on; visas, citizen services, resources and policy news, reports and journals, links to websites of US organizations working in Uganda such as CDC, Peace Corps, and USAID.

The other aspects of representation by Virtual Departments, Desks and Virtual presence posts have not yet been conceived in Uganda and this may explain why in the opinion poll conducted about the usefulness of the website 83% indicated that they did not find the site useful, 4.8% relatively useful while 2.9% preferred not to say (MFA Uganda website, 2010)

Virtual presence posts (VPP) are defined by the U.S Department of State as, posts which, “Have no resident U.S. employees, either U.S. citizens or locally engaged. VPPs allow established Posts to provide a low but formal level of diplomatic engagement with important Cities or Regions. Generally, they utilize a three-pronged strategy of regular, targeted visits from Mission Personnel, ongoing public affairs activities, and “virtual” engagement by means of Web sites dedicated to the environs of the nominal “VPP” City or Region” (2010, p.2). Maldives was the first country to open a virtual embassy in the Second Life world to represent it in Belgium and at the European Union <http://www.maldivesmission.eu> followed by Sweden <http://www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Lifestyle/Reading/Second-Life/> and Malta and Djibouti were also planning to open similar embassies. These have a virtual entrances and virtual staff including Ambassadors in form of Avatars and imitate the experience one would have at a real Embassy.

The American embassy in Kampala also has a US Virtual Presence Post about Northern Uganda (the part of the country which has been affected by the war for over 20 years) which carries detailed information about the work of the US in the area, speeches and activities of the Embassy. The Idea of virtual representation would be one of the ways in which a developing country like Uganda may best utilize both its human and financial resources at it is easily operated at the Headquarters. Virtual representation can also be used in the organization of the departments of MFAs. Copeland (2009, p.12) gives an example of how virtual Desks can be organized according to a thematic or geographic association, which would use the new media to create networks of expertise extending far beyond the Foreign Ministry. “The Thai “Desk” at Headquarters, by way of example, in addition to the one

officer covering a number of Southeast Asian Countries, could include a shared site in cyberspace linked to professors, Non-Governmental Organization representatives, recently posted Staff, Business people, Canadians working in Thailand, and anyone with knowledge and expertise that they are prepared to contribute”.

Overall assessment of Uganda’s representation in the Virtual world stands at 40% and is still a work in progress. Though this is one of the key areas of focus of the ICT master plan, it has not been implemented to a large extent.

4.2.2 Promotion and Protection of Interests

Technology based communication has improved the MFA function of promotion and protection of a country’s interests, even though it is still important for diplomats to promote such relations through full time representation in the receiving State. I will take the promotion of interests to include activities which further the FP of other States and protection to mean the measures put in place to limit damage to a country’s FP.

The mobile phone is an important tool which supports the promotion and protection of interests through relationship development and is normally used for consultations and follow up. This is especially so because they are personal to holder and provide 24hr access to important contacts for diplomats. All Ugandan diplomats have mobile phones and even though they were purchased personally they are also used as official contacts. In an era when the mobile phone has provision for internet services the potential benefits to a diplomat are several; this enables diplomats who are regularly traveling, to catch up with breaking news and access their emails, forward draft resolutions that require consultation with the MFA, and upload and forward meeting outcomes. Practically a diplomat no longer needs to stay in office to carry out official duties. Findings indicate that less than 2% of FSOs at MFA – Uganda use the mobile phone to access internet services because of the costs involved with

the charges equivalent to a phone call charged at approximately 8 US dollars per hour. This cost may seem reasonable to FSOs from developed countries but is high for those from developing countries where more than 80% of the population depends on less than 1 dollar per day.

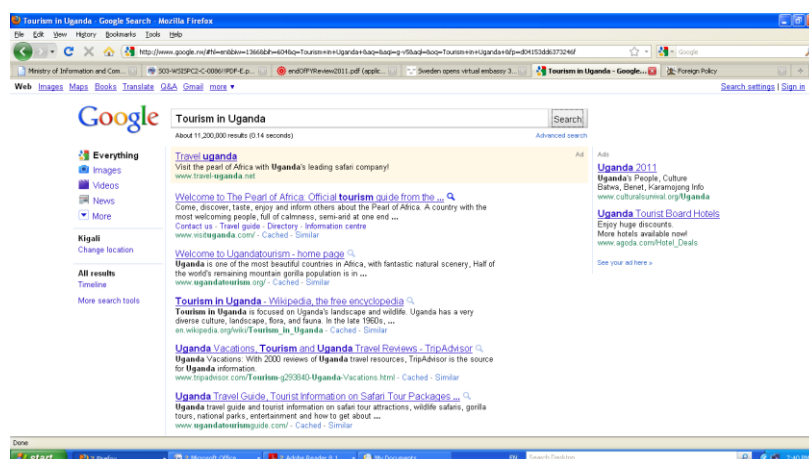
Many MFAs and missions provide online content relating to foreign policy, commerce and trade, tourism, academic opportunities and other information which support relations with other countries. As already illustrated in Uganda, 12 out of 30 Missions have websites providing information about Uganda and links to websites which focus on trade, investment, tourism and education. Since Uganda's MFA does not have an intranet that guarantees safety of information transmitted online, the diplomatic bag is still used as the means of sending sensitive information. This delays the process of decision making and averts timely action in addition to the difficulty of FSOs discussing factually about the developments in Uganda. This state of affairs validates the complaints raised during the Ambassadors annual retreat in December 2010 that Missions were not aware of the activities done by other Missions and departments. The realization of the importance of Virtual promotion of bilateral interests by the Top Management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is, expected to lead to the mainstreaming of this activity in Uganda's FP.

A Memorandum of understanding was signed in 2007 with Promote Uganda Limited in a public private partnership arrangement, to disseminate information about Trade, Investment and Tourism through Uganda's Mission abroad using the medium of Plasma TV Screens. However, to date this project has not yet been implemented and Missions still rely on distribution of brochures and booklets to promote Uganda's bilateral interests. Though this was a project with good intentions, the use of plasma screens may not be the most viable option for Uganda to disseminate information. First of all, this information would only be accessed by those visiting the missions and in addition to that the information provided would

be static and repetitive because plasma screens would require reprogramming whenever new information has to be uploaded.

Increasingly the ICT revolution in Uganda, just like elsewhere in the world, has strengthened people to people relations. Through the use of the internet people directly connect with those of similar interest. Many academic, business and cultural institutions now have websites promoting their activities and can be accessed by any one in any part of the world. A search for tourism activities in Uganda (Fig. 3) generates several websites which include Tour companies, hotels, car rentals, tourist attractions and news about tourism activities many of which are private agencies.

Figure: 3 Screen shot of a web search on Tourism in Uganda



Therefore promotion of interests is no longer solely the function of diplomats although Missions may initially organize promotional activities in the receiving State.

The internet has also been used to suppress actors in FP in the name of protecting the interests of people as Fulton (the editor of the Virtual Diplomacy series (Part III) notes that; "... Authoritarian regimes in China, Burma, and Saudi Arabia attempt, with diminishing success, to restrict access to Web pages". (2005). In 2009, Andrew Jacobs reported in the New York Times how Internet use was restricted in China and that the Government regularly blocked web sites and blog postings that it views as a threat to State security. There was also

a crackdown in the same year, on 91 Web sites that were said to feature lewd content and shut down of Bullog, a popular blog aggregator. This crackdown targeted Dissidents, Falungong adherents, Tibetan exiles, and Chinese University Students, who use e-mail, web-based petitions, and chat rooms to coordinate, organize, motivate, and transmit information were regarded by Beijing as politically sensitive or “subversive”.

Such repressive regimes limit the reach and thereby the effectiveness of the internet as a tool of promoting a country’s interests especially at a time when MFAs no longer the gatekeepers of information. In her address at the George Washington University, Hillary Clinton highlighted the countries that are curtailing the use of the internet; “In Burma, independent news sites have been taken down while Cuba, the government is trying to create a national intranet, while not allowing their citizens to access the global internet”. She also highlighted the limited freedom of speech in Vietnam, where bloggers who criticize the Government are arrested and abused and in Iran where authorities block Opposition and media websites, target social media, and steal identifying information about their own people in order to hunt them down” (U.S Department of State 2011) .

This state of affairs calls for coining of international regulation just like the VCDR to regulate the conduct of foreign policy and the involvement of NSAs in the E- governance (Corien, 2006 p.151). Despite these challenges the internet remains an effective channel for promoting a country’s interest when compared to the traditional methods.

4.2.3 Information Gathering and Reporting

The modulation of foreign policy requires the continuous, gathering and analysis of information about the policies of other states Vis-à-vis one’s own policies and as such, “the introduction of resident ambassadors... flowed from the growing need not only to send messages but to gather information about neighbors among vulnerable yet ambitious Italian

city-states “(cited in Jonson and Hall, 2005, p.73). This still remains one of the key tasks of diplomacy and to some extent has been integrated and merged with intelligence gathering or what is rather termed espionage. It is not uncommon for countries to send intelligence officers to other countries under the cover of diplomats and more so to protect them from prosecution as per the provisions of the VCDR, should they get caught in unlawful acts.

An increasing number of MFAs are publishing a number of resources such as official statements, papers, speeches, press releases, internal correspondence and other information on their websites. Some of this information may be accessed by the general public while some can only be accessed through a restricted area. Availability of such information has made it possible for diplomats to keep abreast of happenings in the home country and for those with diplomatic representation to collect information about the country. Even though this method of information collection is helpful, it cannot substitute the importance of resident diplomats who have to access unpublished information, as only they can gauge the mood of certain events and report factually to their Capitals.

A recent example of the internet as a source of information is the mass protests of 24th January 2011 in Egypt when people took to the Streets demanding for a change of Government. The developments of these protests were followed by millions around the world, mainly on the internet through blogs, streaming videos, telephone calls, and the media which also relied on eye witness reports when the government decided to cut off all communication like the internet and telephones.

In Uganda diplomats also rely on the web to gather information about other countries, however as already mentioned, the websites of the Ugandan missions at the moment are not adequate sources of information. This being true for many other countries, it may be concluded that ICT may facilitate information gathering and reporting but cannot substitute the functions of diplomatic mission. Ugandan diplomats use emails to send and receive

information but classified or sensitive information is still sent by diplomatic bags. This may be due to fears of unsecured communication over the net if one is using service providers such as yahoo mail, Gmail, AOL which are general service providers. An inquiry into the preference of unofficial email addresses over the official ones indicated that previously FSOs could not access their emails outside office and yet the bandwidth provided at the office could not enable them to send and download bulky attachments. The low bandwidth on the other hand was attributed to the cost of ICT services since these are paid for on a monthly basis to a private company UTL.

The media is another tool that plays a critical role in diplomacy and the way a government's policies are viewed by the public both at home and abroad. The media can be a critical ally to diplomats, in that it sometimes provides breaking news of an event and therefore is used as a primary source for collecting information and can also be used to provide information to the public about a new development, an outcome of the meeting and important events. It is said that during the New York newspaper strike the quality and quantity of diplomatic reporting around the world diminished perceptibly: without The New York Times to tell them what to say, the diplomats fell silent (Jonson and Hall 2005, P. 74)

In modern diplomacy, the media is highly involved in election monitoring and reporting, covering high level visits, publishing outcomes of negotiations and even creating pressure during negotiations by some parties. It is evident that in Uganda the media has influenced Uganda's foreign policy. I remember a time when the media highlighted allegations of Ugandan army occupying DRC illegally. These allegations though could not be verified, led to formal negotiations which allowed Uganda a limited time Frame to pursue the LRA in DRC. (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2006) At other times the media reportage on corruption scandals by government officials has led to drastic measures from the donor community through budgetary cuts and withdrawal of Aid. Therefore the

influence of the media on Uganda's foreign policy cannot be underestimated especially because it reaches a significant audience which involves the international community as seen in Mugerwa's article (AllAfrica.com, 2010).

4.2.4 Consular Services

The function of provision of consular services relates with the function of protecting Uganda's interests abroad. Consular services consist of; processing travel documents and the protection of the interests of nationals abroad. Increasingly, visa application and processing is done online, especially for countries which can afford the biometric technology to support authenticity of applicants such as fingerprints and biodata.

Most countries like Britain, United States and Canada and Rwanda carry out online visa application, although processing is still done after receipt of one's original documents and interviews. Other Countries like Kuwait, Cambodia, Singapore and Australia issue E-Visas which has not only eased the process of visa processing but increased visits to such Countries. In Sweden, Wilma, a web-based Information System links Migration Authorities involved in processing migration cases. It is used to process information concerning individuals, cases, documents and decisions. IT supports the entire information chain, from application for a visa or residence permit at the mission to a decision in case of any appeal. This, IT support is also used to monitor entries and exits out of the country.

Other consular services common on most Mission websites are, travel advisory services which usually include immunization information, common diseases, risky areas, contacts in case of medical emergency, lawyers and contacts of the diplomatic mission. However services like solving of marital and business conflicts and visitation of prisoners cannot be conducted over the web and therefore the involved parties are still required to visit the mission. Even if this is the case, the use of the web as a source for information exchange and

to support communication even for such cases is still crucial. The consular information available on most of the Ugandan Mission websites is in form of requirements to obtain a visa, travel documents and other documents processed by the embassy. Other consular functions that can be processed online like travel advisories, biometric authentication of visa applicants, online visa processing education and cultural services are absent from the website of Uganda's Missions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Therefore there is limited application of online consular services.

Ugandan Missions accredited to several countries like that of London also face major revenue loss in visa processing, because they meet the cost of posting back the applicants passports. Therefore, this online function still needs to be upgraded to match public interest, create efficiency and save public funds. Investment in technology that allows online visa processing though expensive in the short run will be of major benefit in the future especially because the world is becoming increasingly hi-tech and few people may be willing to go through the painstaking process of manual visa processing for tourism activities. The efficiency and convenience of ICTs may in fact be one of the simple ways in which the country can increase the number of tourists to Uganda.

4.2.5 Participation

Hillary Clinton, in her address at the George Washington University remarked that “the internet has become the public space of the 21st century – the world's town square, classroom, marketplace, coffeehouse, and nightclub. We all shape and are shaped by what happens there, all 2 billion of us and counting” (U.S Department of State, 2011). The fact that E-participation is shaping diplomacy just like the other fabrics of society, should be of extreme importance to the civil society and developing countries that may not be able to attend meetings for one reason or the other. The UN website <http://www.un.org/en/> is a good example of the promotion of E- participation in diplomacy.

It provides documents of outcomes of meetings and makes important announcements of upcoming events. Blogs, videoconferencing and Streaming videos posted on the website are used to increase the participation of the civil society both by the UN and governments around the world, especially when logistics do not allow for certain delegations to participate in meetings.

An examination of the implementation of E- participation by Uganda's MFA reveals that this online function has not been applied to a great extent. A review of the MFA website showed that a blog was present but not actively used by the public. The inactive use of the blog is mainly attributed to the inadequacy of the information provided on the website. As already discussed this information is not regularly updated to cater for provision of information on current issues affecting our foreign policy and as such does not stimulate public interest to participate and contribute to issues shaping Uganda's foreign policy. Examination of the websites of Uganda's Missions indicates that there is no provision for blogs. This may be attributed to lack of appreciation of blogs as tools for public engagement but also to the fact that the structuring of mission websites has been designed based on the traditional model of diplomacy which presumes that the embassy is the gate keeper of information which per say does not require the contribution of NSAs. This indicates the need to revise MFAs FP to keep in tandem with modern diplomatic practice.

Most mission websites were knowledgeable of the idea of streaming videos, the challenge lies in the fact that the videos posted on the websites were repetitive pictures of Uganda's wildlife and culture. To a first time visitor who wants to know about Uganda this information may be interesting but to a second time visitor may not have any new information to pick. This lack of updated information has limited the participation of NSAs in Uganda's diplomacy. By the time of writing this thesis, video conferencing had not been utilized, although an interview with the ICT department revealed that the equipment had been

procured but not utilized because the missions abroad did not have matching equipment to utilize this service for purposes of holding meetings between the Headquarters and Mission staff. Thus attendance of internal meetings and in house training still requires staff at the missions to fly to Uganda, and travel budgets still remain unaffected and increasingly high.

In the same way teleconferencing facilities, which had been provided as part of the E-government project to support free and unlimited interdepartmental communication among all government agencies, remained under utilized. The telephony handsets were provided to the senior managers of all government departments. This facility has remained underutilized partly due to the fact that missions and other junior officers in MOFA have not yet acquired teleconferencing equipment but also due to the reluctance of the government officials to apply new ICTs. The Permanent secretary MOFA illustrated this clearly in during an interview conducted in the writing of this report; “It’s only Samanya, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Information Technology who calls me using this IP telephony, even internally people are reluctant to use the facility and prefer to meet with me in person or use the intercom ”. This calls for measures to target the attitude of civil servants towards the use of ICT.

E- Participation is also beneficial to FSOs who may wish to pursue further education and training while at the same time continuing to work. This is important because the nature of service may place one in a country where they are unable to study due to language barriers or lack of appropriate training institutions. In MFA- Uganda, E- learning has so far been pursued by 4 FSOs at Diplo Foundation and though still inclined to suspicion is becoming increasingly acceptable as a formal qualification in Uganda’s Civil service. All the FSOs including myself who took up E- learning were on their Tour of Duty in countries where language was a barrier or lacked appropriate training institutions.

4.2.6 Negotiations

“Without common interest there is nothing to negotiate for, without conflict nothing to negotiate about.” It is often the task of diplomats to search for common interests in conflict situations, as pure conflict does not lend itself to productive negotiations” (Jönsson and Hall, 2005, P. 82). In modern times, mediating roles are assumed not only by diplomats and other representatives of governments, but also by representatives of intergovernmental and Non Governmental organizations as well as private individuals. This process just like all other functions of diplomacy requires communication which may be in the form of exchanging information on negotiation dates and venues, agreeing on a mediator and also the content of the agreed text of negotiations. ICTs are thought to facilitate the negotiation process, which tends to be a rather tedious task of multiple consultations both from ones delegation and those of the other parties involved, in several ways;

Some countries may not be able to attend negotiation events due to logistical or time constraints. In the internet era, it is now possible to have e-negotiations. This not only saves travel costs in the times of shrinking government budgets but also makes room for a diplomat to participate in multiple negotiations occurring simultaneously in different geographical locations. E-negotiations also support occurrence of negotiations in situations where meetings would have been opposed. The June 2001 World Bank meeting was held via the Internet through forums and videoconferencing because of anticipated protests in Barcelona (Bretton woods project.org, 2001).

Negotiation Software such as INSPIRE, have also been developed to support the negotiation process. However, this software has not been applied much to support the negotiation process by most countries. This may be due to the expenses involved in the purchase of the software and also due to lack of appropriate skills. Negotiation processes may also be supported by other ICT applications like the e-mail, instant messaging, chat sessions and whiteboards

before, during and after negotiations. These applications may not be used by many MFAs depending on their availability, the skills of the officers involved in the negotiation process and also the attitude towards IT as well as the ability to obtain a reciprocal response from the authorities being consulted.

The examination of the application of E- negotiation tools in Uganda indicates that the Ministry officials have never participated in E- negotiations of any kind, and are not trained in the application of negotiation software such as inspire which supports the negotiation processes. However, there is regular use of less sophisticated technology in support of negotiations processes especially in the period when Uganda was a member of the Security Council (2009-2010). Applications such as emails used on the black berry supported consultations between officers in New York and the Top Management on draft positions on several occasions. Black Berries phones were also used to support interdepartmental consultations amongst the ministers and the other senior officials during the preparations of the Common Wealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) held in Uganda in October 2007. Much as this effort needs to be applauded it was short lived because at the time of writing this thesis the 291 Black Berry phones were to be withdrawn due to queries by the Auditor General and the Public Accounts committee of parliament (The New Vision, 2010). In a way the basis of query seems to have been based on the purchase price rather than on the necessity of the phones. It may be concluded that it is important to continue cultivating the use of these simple ICT tools to support communication and ease consultations during negotiations.

4.2.7 Public Diplomacy

According to present-day advocates of public diplomacy, diplomats need to transform themselves “from being reporters and lobbyists on reactive issues to shapers of public debates around the world.” (Jönsson and Hall, 2005 P.90). Increased globalization and the

exponential use of ICTs in the late 1990 led to openness and coalition building rather than use of force by Governments in securing their interests. This led to the coining of the term “soft power” by Joseph Nye to describe the “ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion” (Bohorquez, 2005). This form of influence is not only concerned with public opinion about policy issues but also public engagement, consultation, and feedback and when conducted in another country; is what constitutes Public Diplomacy.

Jönsson and Hall categorize Public diplomacy into three dimensions. The first is communication on day-to-day issues and aligning diplomacy with the news cycle. The second dimension is strategic communication, managing overall perceptions of one's country. The third dimension is long-term development of lasting relationships with key individuals through scholarships, exchanges, seminars and the like. The increased use of ICTS such as telephones, radios, televisions and the internet have facilitated the projection of Public Diplomacy, bypassing the ineffective controls that may have been put in place by the governments of target countries. Social networking tools are increasingly used in Public Diplomacy to engage the public on foreign policy issues and also to provide information about foreign policy. Examples include the Hilary Clinton's blog, Obama Today, in addition to diplomatic Missions taking the public diplomacy battle to face book and You-Tube (American Embassy in Kampala). The UK is also now actively recruiting “digital diplomats” to engage the Virtual community and “the theme of diplomacy has even attracted the attention of on-line game players (Copeland 2009. pg 8)

In this regard, the MOFA- Uganda participated in the Brand Uganda/Gifted by Nature initiative which was developed under a Public Private Partnership (PPP), with the purpose of projecting a new national brand Identity and logo for Uganda. This involved a week documentary covered by CNN promoting Uganda as a tourist and investment destination. However this PD effort could not be sustained by government as it is said to have cost a

whopping three million USD and the efforts towards making this PD approach permanent have been owned by a privately owned company with little involvement of government as indicated by the Monitor News Paper (2006). This PD strategy has therefore had limited impact in achieving Uganda's strategic objectives and provides lessons for careful consideration of communication strategies that should be used by developing countries.

The use of blogs in engaging the public has not yet been utilized as explained earlier in this report and the Foreign Minister and Ministers of State lack a blog similar to that of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the idea of the Ministry recruiting digital diplomats has not yet been conceived. Also unlike the websites of US Embassies, none of the Mission websites of had any links to face book, twitter or U-Tube as an element of creating awareness of the activities of the Ministry and Uganda's Embassies. The Ministry has however engaged the public by conducting press conferences at Ministerial and official's level, issuing press statements to the media and liaising with Government Spokespersons and media facilities, to ensure a consistent projection of the national image. The Ministry also has a spokesperson appointed for the purpose of liaising with the media who is also the Head of Department of the Resource Center which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Information Centre Project. He has been active especially in engaging the media both in Uganda and at the international level. An example of this is the positive engagement of the media during the hosting of the AU Summit. Alshabab bombed two spots during the world cup on July 11, 2010 and this led to fears of hosting the AU Presidents in Uganda. According to the spokesperson, this led to a record turn up of the Presidents.

Uganda's efforts of implementing public diplomacy need to be boosted by using the most viable tool, the internet, this reaches a reaches a vast audience, is cost effective and also provides room for regular engagement and feedback.

4.3 Factors Hindering effective use of ICT in MOFA

We note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Uganda is cognizant of the importance of ICTs in Diplomacy and has taken steps to formulate an ICT Master plan in 2004. However, seven years after the formulation of this plan, its objectives have not yet been fully realized. Several factors have hampered the full implementation of this plan and these include, but are not limited to, the following internal and external factors.

a) Internal Factors

- I. The use of ICT has not been streamlined in the Ministry's objectives and therefore not been prioritized by the Senior Management;
- II. The ICT master plan was developed by ICT experts with little input from FSOs and as such, change of employment by these experts hampered the implementation of the master plan until the recruitment of a new IT expert in 2010;
- III. This also ties with lack of expertise among the Foreign Service Officers on many internet applications, and moreover the implementation of the master plan was not backed with training for the end- user Departments;
- IV. During an interview Management of the slow progress of ICT use was blamed on budgetary cuts.

However an examination of the general cost of communication include salaries of support staff involved in communication, the cost of fuel, landline telephones, paper, faxing, fuel, travel allowances, vehicle maintenance and cost of organizing meetings over a period of three financial years (2008- 2010) indicated that the full budget required to implement the master plan could be comfortably spread over three years in a phased approach. I therefore conclude that the major hindrance to use of ICTS is the attitude of the senior managers as confirmed

during an interview with Permanent Secretary MFA, he pointed out his strategy for improving use of ICTs, “One of the tasks am embarking on is use of the Balance Score Card system and training of the staff beginning from the top, because managers make the decisions”.

b) External Factors

- I. There are generally low levels of coordination and collaboration within Uganda’s Public Administration which would have been a precursor for the development and application of E- government services such as shared information of citizen bio data;
- II. There are low levels of Internet connectivity and computer penetration in Uganda with the services mainly prevalent in a few urban centers. This is due to the high costs of accessing ICT services provided by private companies and the result is low demand of E-government services of which diplomacy is only a part;
- III. There is no legal framework in Uganda at the moment formalizing the use of online communication, and therefore this is a barrier to effective use of online services both by Government and Private Sector;
- IV. There has also been little effort for the Government to network its services with the Private Sector providers who are leading in the implementation of online service provision such as banks and Insurance companies;
- V. The Government efforts to embark on the use of ICTs have not been backed by implementation of frameworks for monitoring and evaluation so as to ensure the adoption of appropriate online services for Ugandans.

These among other reasons explain largely why ICT has not been fully utilized in Uganda just like many developing countries and calls for urgent action by the Government to close these gaps if ICT is to benefit our society and become relevant to diplomacy.

4.4 Conclusion

Much as statistics have proven that an increasing number of people every year use ICT to meet their information and communication needs, the benefits of the use of ICT in the conduct of diplomacy have not yet been fully realized in Uganda. It is only fair to conclude that the 2004 Policy and Master plan adopted by MOFA has largely been unsuccessful seven years after its inception and none of the objectives of the master have been fully achieved. It is also hoped that young people in the MFA will play an increasingly important role in ICT usage in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since many are already ICT literate, more open to change and easily adapt to new processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

“As the lines between the real and the Virtual worlds become less distinct, the momentum already evident in various diplomatic cyber options is likely to accelerate, with a range of still unclear consequences” (Copeland, 2009, p.13). This statement is true when one examines the global statistics on the use of the internet which show that an increasingly large number of people are converging to the internet to meet their information and communication needs. This has sparked off in-house evaluations by many MFAs that have recognized the importance of serving the internet community. Though many countries have incorporated full use of the internet in their diplomacy, this is not yet the case for many developing countries like Uganda.

In this study, we have traced the origins of diplomatic communication from the use of merchant caravans to the formation of the embassies and later the evolution of the Foreign Ministry as an institution mandated under international law to supervise the management of international relations, and carry out diplomatic communication. A review of the trends in diplomatic communication indicated the increased use of ICT indulgence of NSAs and a departure from the prescribed norms of international law and the traditional methods of communication. This study notes the reinforcing factor in the “new trends” of diplomatic communication to be the use of ICT which has facilitated both the civil society access to information and participation in international relations as well as multiplied the reach of the media to the remotest parts of the globe.

Chapter 4 pays attention to the application of ICTs in developing countries and focused on Uganda's diplomatic communication. Findings indicated that the Government had put in place an ICT policy and created institutions to support E- government even though several challenges have hindered the implementation of this policy. There is limited application of ICTs in the implementation of Uganda's Foreign Policy and this has been attributed to external factors and internal factors to MFA. These include; Lack of appropriate skills by the FSOs, limited number of staff, poor attitude towards ICT use, high cost of ICT services and infrastructure, lack of appropriate legal frame work and generally the limited application of E- governance in Uganda.

5.2 Recommendations

I wish to make the following recommendations regarding Uganda's MFA communication strategy;

There is need for the MFA to align the use of ICT with the implementation of its core objectives. These will not only make the use of ICT acceptable in the Foreign Service, but it will make it the only way to do business as the ease of access to information and communication become a reality. This will also lead to change of attitude towards the use of ICT;

There is need for GoU to address the low levels of affordable connectivity and computer penetration among the Ugandan society, by investing in the provision of ICT infrastructure just like Roads and Electricity to propel the society towards ICT literacy which in the future will be the backbone to for all citizens' communication and information needs. This will lay a strong foundation for active utilization of ICT in Uganda's diplomacy. The Government could also partner with the Private Sector in this regard to provide the infrastructure and the computers and provide incentives such as tax holidays;

There is need for Government through the Ministry of ICT, to provide interdepartmental coordination and sharing of information such as shared information of citizen Bio data and statistics. This will increase the use of ICT by Civil Servants and create an environment suitable for use of ICT by Ugandans and other stakeholders. In the long run this will reduce paper based services, cutting costs, creating efficiency and reducing Government red-tape in communication and access to information;

It is important to put in place a legal framework formalizing the use of online communication and services to stimulate use by the Private Sector;

The Ministry should hire private consultants to initially support the implementation of the ICT plan but back it up with rigorous staff training for the end user department to ensure continuity of activities in the absence of ICT experts who can occasionally provide support;

There is need for MOFA to put in place a comprehensive framework to monitor and evaluate the use of ICT in the attainment of its objectives, to ensure the adoption of appropriate online services for Ugandans and the global community.

5.3 Conclusion

The Scope of this study was to examine the change of trends in diplomatic communication with a specific focus on Uganda. This particular study aimed at verifying the extent to which ICTS were utilized in the conduct of Uganda's diplomacy in comparison to the diplomatic Service of other countries which had acquired advanced online applications.

I therefore wish to conclude that though there is limited application of ICT in Uganda's diplomacy, the ICT Master plan put in place has the potential to improve the current state of affairs if fully implemented. This plan can only thrive in coordination with other Government departments which may be termed as E-government. Uganda's E- government should

incorporate those aspects of online services which are compatible with the current needs of society but also project into the future to prepare for upcoming generations which are increasingly ICT literate.

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ANNEX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Activities of the MFA

1. Which stakeholders do you work with in the execution of your work?
2. What activities do you engage in?
3. How the media is involved in the activities you coordinate?

Communication by the MFA

4. What methods of communication do you commonly use?
5. What challenges do you face in the use of the above communication?

Use of ICT

6. What ICT equipment do you use in your daily work?
7. How relevant is ICT in your work?
8. How often do you use ICT compared to the other methods of communication?
9. In your opinion, how has the use of ICT transformed communication within the MFA?

ANNEX II
LIST OF WEBSITES FOR UGANDAN FOREIGN MISSIONS

REGION	MISSION	WEBSITE
Africa	Kigali	www.ugandaembassy.rw
	Nairobi	www.ugandahighcommisionco.ke
	Pretoria	www.org.za
Europe	Copenhagen	www.ugandaembassy.dk
	Geneva	www.ugandmission.ch
	London	www.ugandahighcommision.co.uk
	Moscow	www.uganda.ru
	Paris	www.ugandaembassy.fr
Americas & the Caribbean	New York	www.ugandamissionunny.net
	Washington	www.ugandaembassy.com
	Ottawa	www.ugandahighcommision.com
Pacific	Beijing,	www.ugandaembassycn.org

ANNEX III

UGANDA'S COMMUNICATION HISTORY

Communications Sector Comparative Figures for the Period December 1996 to March 2007

	Fixed phone lines	mobile cellular subscribers	Internet service providers	private FM Radios	private television	courier service providers	pay Phones
Mar 2007	137,916	3,015,493	17	158	32	25	16,059
Dec 2006	129,863	2,697,616		153	31	25	12,889
Sep 2006	117,026	2,241,272	17	145	34	22	12,025
Jun 2006	108,140	2,008,818	17	145	34	22	11,082
Mar 2006	107,922	1,937,109	17	145	34	22	10,925
Dec 2005	100,777	1,525,125	17	145	34	22	10,263
Sept 2005	97,393	1,410,318	16	145	34	22	8,091
Jun 2005	87,513	1,315,300	19	145	34	22	6,914
Mar 2005	86,813	1,235,028	18	145	34	20	5,624
Dec 2004	82,495	1,165,035	18	148	31	19	4,634
Sept 2004	71,568	1,040,124	18	129	25	19	3,817
Jun 2004	71,272	987,456	18	126	23	19	3,661
Mar 2004	67,234	872,709	18	125	23	19	3,661
Dec 2003	65,793	777,563	18	122	22	17	3,456
Sept 2003	64,856	711,313	17	119	22	14	3,347
Jun 2003	60,995	621,082	17	117	22	12	3,036
Mar 2003	59,590	595,996	17	117	22	12	3,086
Dec 2002	59,472	505,627	17	117	22	11	3,200
Sept 2002	55,453	443,903	17	117	22	11	3,282
Jul 2002	54,976	393,310	17	115	22	11	3,278
Jul 2001	56,149	276,034	11	112	20	10	3,310
Feb 2001	61,462	188,658	11	100	19	10	3,075
Dec 1999	58,261	72,602	9	37	11	11	1,680
Oct 1998	56,196	12,000	7	28	8	7	1,433
Dec 1996	45,145	3,000	2	14	4	2	1,258

ANNEX: IV

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATS

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS						
World Regions	Population (2010 Est.)	Internet Users Dec. 31, 2000	Internet Users Latest Data	Penetration (% Population)	Growth 2000- 2010	Users % of Table
<u>Africa</u>	1,013,779,050	4,514,400	110,931,700	10.9 %	2,357.3 %	5.6 %
<u>Asia</u>	3,834,792,852	114,304,000	825,094,396	21.5 %	621.8 %	42.0 %
<u>Europe</u>	813,319,511	105,096,093	475,069,448	58.4 %	352.0 %	24.2 %
<u>Middle East</u>	212,336,924	3,284,800	63,240,946	29.8 %	1,825.3 %	3.2 %
<u>North America</u>	344,124,450	108,096,800	266,224,500	77.4 %	146.3 %	13.5 %
<u>Latin America/Caribbean</u>	592,556,972	18,068,919	204,689,836	34.5 %	1,032.8 %	10.4 %
<u>Oceania / Australia</u>	34,700,201	7,620,480	21,263,990	61.3 %	179.0 %	1.1 %
WORLD TOTAL	6,845,609,960	360,985,492	1,966,514,816	28.7 %	444.8 %	100.0 %

(Internet world statistics 2010, www.internetworldstats.com.)