Part I

BASICS OF MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIPLOMACY

MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIPLOMACY: FORMS, FUNCTIONS, AND FRUSTRATIONS.

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It has become apparent to observers of diplomacy that its forms and functions are increasingly complex. At one level, for example, traditional distinctions between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy have become less clear and, arguably, of diminishing significance. At another level, it is evident that the array of actors engaged in the diplomatic arena is far more diverse and that, in this sense, we may be witnessing the return to pre-modern forms of diplomacy. This diversity of actors has attracted varying terminologies, of which *multistakeholder diplomacy (MSD)* is one. However, the ideas in which these various forms of diplomacy are rooted are similar. Actors, including states – commonly identified as the generators of diplomacy – are no longer able to achieve their objectives in isolation from one another. Diplomacy is becoming an activity concerned with the creation of networks, embracing a range of state and non-state actors focusing on the management of issues that demand resources over which no single participant possesses a monopoly.

However, in what sense can MSD be described as diplomacy? Simply pointing out that more actors are involved in international policy says little about the nature of contemporary diplomacy, either in terms of process or in terms of structure. After all, non-governmental actors have been participants in diplomatic processes in earlier eras and the inclusion of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in multilateral agencies can be traced back at least to the International Labour Organisation. Nevertheless, it is apparent that, as in the past, the character of the diplomatic environment is adapting to changing circumstances. We are living in an era in which the state and the apparatuses through which it conducts its business are responding to a plethora of internal and external challenges, leading to questions regarding the relevance of diplomacy within contemporary world politics. In this context, is MSD a new model of diplomacy and, if so, how does it relate to conventional models rooted in state-focused intergovernmental processes?

MSD and "Two Cultures" of Diplomacy

John Ruggie (2005) helps to set the scene for our discussion in drawing attention to the challenges confronting the UN as it responds to criticisms of its humanitarian operations. On the one hand, he argues, a traditionalist diplomatic culture lies in the UN, reflected in the administration of the Iraq oil-for-food programme. This sees UN multilateral diplomacy as beginning and ending with responsibility to member states and represented in institutions such as the Security Council (characterised by secrecy and a lack of accountability). By contrast, one can also find in UN processes a "modernist culture" rooted in transparency and engagement with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. The traditionalists, he argues, regard opaqueness and exclusiveness as a strategic asset, whereas "for modernists transparency is the key to institutional success." While presented in obviously stark terms, this clash of cultures is symptomatic of an international system undergoing profound change, reflected in the character of diplomacy. As Mattingly (1973) notes, diplomacy is a functional representation of the political system in which it operates. Yet, however the contemporary context of diplomacy is characterised, Ruggie's two cultures are constrained to coexist. The older, state-based form of diplomacy exists alongside emergent forms, one label for which might be multistakeholder diplomacy. What kind of a diplomatic system does this represent and how does it work? In part, answering this question requires us to go back to first principles and to consider what it is that we are examining.

Identifying Diplomacy

Understanding variants on a states-system-based model of diplomacy requires us to take a broader perspective on its development. However, as a number of analysts have noted, the study of diplomacy has either been ignored by those preoccupied with the phenomena of globalisation and global governance or has been constrained by analytical frameworks rooted in statehood and sovereignty. Consequently, discussion of Ruggie's traditionalist culture has dominated the analysis of diplomacy as well as its practice. That is, much of modern "diplomatic studies" restricts itself to the association of diplomacy with a system of sovereign states, rather than seeking out its essential characteristics.

In seeking to dissociate diplomacy from preoccupations with its role within the states system, Sharp (1999) has suggested that we recall the fun-

damental qualities of diplomacy. He argues that these reside in the intersection of two conditions: separateness and the need to communicate. With a similar purpose, Der Derian (1987) notes that the continual shaping and reshaping of diplomacy sits uncomfortably with the assumption that it has attained its ultimate expression, "that we have reached – or even that we are approaching – after a long odyssey the best, final form of diplomacy" (p. 3). Likewise, Jönsson and Hall (2003) have argued for resisting the association of diplomacy with a state centric perspective, adopting in their analysis of diplomatic communication a definition of diplomacy as "an institution structuring relations among polities, that is, political authorities of various kinds with distinct identities" (p. 196). Equally, Lee and Hudson (2004) have pointed to the distortions that the assumption that diplomacy is essentially a dialogue between states poses to a broader understanding of its character and evolution. In sum, each of these arguments, in differing ways, makes the case for identifying both the essential character of diplomacy and the need to recognise that the form manifested in the classical state system is but one variant. These arguments suggest that MSD is not some transient mutation from a well-established norm, but may be an interesting development indicative of continuing adaptation.

Such considerations pose questions as to where MSD fits into the continually evolving patterns of diplomacy. If one argues that the principal discourse of diplomacy from, say, the 16th to the 20th century, has focused on the emergence and development of "national diplomatic systems," whose essence is rooted in the system of sovereign states, how does the concept of MSD relate to this? Does MSD represent a fundamental shift in the character of diplomacy such as that which accompanied the transition from the medieval to the Renaissance era – or is it simply a minor modification of well-established patterns of communication that have dominated international politics for several centuries? These questions invite us to extend the analysis that students of diplomacy such as Raymond Cohen (1999) have applied when considering the broader issues of the impact of globalisation on diplomacy. Arguing that a dispassionate analysis of diplomacy in a turbulent environment demands a conscious attempt to distinguish the "permanent from the transitory," Cohen (1999) invites us to identify the core characteristics of differing diplomatic systems. Pursuing the same theme, Jönsson and Hall (2003) argue for the importance of analysing change and continuity in evolving patterns of diplomacy divorced from culture-bound assumptions regarding its origins and fundamental characteristics.

One of the difficulties here (as Winham [1993] points out in reflecting on Mattingly's (1973) analysis of the evolution from medieval to Renaissance diplomacy) is that of perspective. What is clear with the benefit of hindsight would not have been apparent in, say, the 14th century. The same point applies now. If we are moving through a phase of significant change in international politics, the precise contours of the resultant landscape are uncertain. However, it seems reasonable to propose, and it appears to accord with the contemporary diplomatic environment, that we are witnessing the intersection, following Ruggie (2005), of a traditionalist and a modernist diplomatic culture. Assuming that we can denote MSD as one dimension of the latter, how can we describe its parameters and how do they relate to earlier phases in the long evolution of diplomatic practice?

What we are concerned with here is the adaptation of diplomatic systems to internal cultural challenges as older and newer forms of diplomatic environment and practice intersect. In *Table 1,* I sketch how a traditionalist, state-based diplomatic environment contrasts with the environment of the MSD image. The purpose here is not to argue that a form of new diplomacy is replacing an older, state based form or, indeed that they are discrete diplomatic systems. Rather, they exist alongside and intersect with each other, reflecting the pressures of adaptation in contemporary world politics. In other words, we can understand the character of significant areas of contemporary diplomacy only in terms of the interaction of practices and expectations generated by the interrelationship of the two images.

Context

The chief distinguishing feature of the setting or context in which diplomacy functions lies in the significance of the sovereign state as the "terminal authority" within the international system. While MSD does not deny the continuing significance of the state, Cohen (1999) notes that "one of the by-products of globalisation is an erosion of the exclusive functions and prerogatives of the state and the professions that served it" (pp. 1-2). Using Rosenau's (2000) terminology, we now live in an era marked by multiple "spheres of authority" whose agents are not constrained by domestic arenas. Instead, state agents pursue their interests in whatever policy arenas are appropriate to the attainment of their objectives. In terms of the evolution of diplomacy, this represents a return to pre-modern forms where non-

sovereign actors exercised the right to engage in diplomatic processes that would later come to be regarded as the prerogative of the representatives of the state.

One of the characteristic qualities of state-based diplomacy has been its exclusivity. Diplomats are defined in terms of their role as representatives of national governments; at the international level, their presence and activities reflect practices that emphasise a sense of community enshrined in codes of behaviour and protected through conventions of diplomatic immunity. In short, they can be regarded as a *guild,* sharing responsibilities deriving from the twin roles of diplomacy as statecraft and as an institution of the international system (Henrikson, 1997). Integral to this image is the proposition that diplomacy is distinct from other spheres of activity, a separation expressed in the concept of the diplomat as *gatekeeper,* or mediator between domestic and international environments. Diplomacy is also traditionally differentiated from policy making and from politics, points stressed by Nicolson (1939) in his writings.

MSD, by definition, possesses very different characteristics as reflected in the growing literature on multistakeholder processes from which it has emerged. A fundamental premise of multistakeholder processes is inclusiveness and partnership in policy processes, rather than exclusiveness. Such processes "aim to bring together all major stakeholders in a new form of common decision finding (and possibly decision-making) on a particular issue" (Hemmati, 2000, p. 19). Furthermore, in multistakeholder processes, "influence and the right to be heard should be based on the value of each stakeholders' unique perspective and expertise" (Hemmati, 2000, p. 7). As is often pointed out, this modifies the dominant democratic paradigm. At the same time, it also modifies the dominant diplomatic paradigm in significant ways. Not only does it challenge the rationale of the guild-like characteristics of traditional diplomacy; it offers a very different picture of who is involved in diplomacy. In particular, within MSD, private actors – such as firms and, of course, NGOs – can and should play a significant role.

This is not to say that non-state actors are unknown in the state-centred model. However, their role is that of *consumers* of diplomacy, whereas the MSD model provides for a far more proactive role in which the private sector can become *producers* of diplomatic outcomes. However, these roles are likely to depend on the dynamics underpinning the trisectoral interactions between governments, NGOs, and business. Doh and Teegen (2003) have suggested that the patterns of relationships between business and NGOs exist

on a spectrum lying between "stakegiver" roles, in which positive outcomes are produced, to "staketaker" roles in which NGOs become opponents of the interests of other parties.

Table 1. State-centred and Multistakeholder Diplomacy

	State-centred model	Multistakeholder model
Context	State as unchallenged terminal authority.	Multiple spheres of authority.
Forms	Government-led using bilateral and multilateral channels.	Diffuse: may be led by governments or other stakeholder. Developing and fluid forms.
Participants	Professional diplomatic guild. Diplomats whose credentials are based on principles of sovereignty. Non-state actors as consumers of diplomacy.	Multiple participation based on varying models. Frequently based on trisectoral model incorporating governments, NGOs, and business. "Stakeholders" whose credentials are based on interests and expertise. Non-state actors as producers of diplomacy.
Roles	Diplomat as gatekeeper.	Diplomat as boundary-spanner: facilitator and entrepreneur. Stakeholders performing multiple roles: stakegivers vs. staketakers.
Communication patterns	Government focused. Relations with stakeholders defined as "outreach." Hierarchical information flows focused on governments. Exclusive but with recognition of need for outreach.	Networks. Open and inclusive. Can be fluid and unstable. Multidirectional flows of information.

Functions	Managing relations between sovereign entities. Defining and promoting national interests.	Compensate for deficiencies in diplomatic processes by exchanging resources through policy networks. Information exchange. Monitoring processes. Defining and promoting global interests.
Location	Outside domestic arenas. Diplomatic sites: intergovernmental.	Crosses domestic-international arenas. Multiple diplomatic sites.
Representation patterns	State-focused. Mixed bilateral and multilateral with growing emphasis on mission diplomacy.	Multilateral and mission oriented. Variable permanent representation.
Rules	Clear normative expectations of behaviour. Derived form sovereignty-related rules. Centrality of protocol. Immunity of diplomatic agents. Confidentiality.	Underdeveloped rules. Clash of sovereignty and non-sovereignty based rules. Openness, accountability and transparency. Institutional tensions. Clash of expectations between stakeholders.

Nonetheless, the MSD model does not necessarily imply a diminished role for the professional diplomat. Indeed, that role might gain in importance, but, at the same time, become redefined. Rather than that of gatekeeper, the diplomat becomes what might be termed a boundary-spanner, recognising that boundaries between organisations, far from being irrelevant, are fluid and continually reconstitute themselves, thereby becoming sites of intense activity (Ansel and Weber, 1999). In such an environment, diplomats assume the role of mediators or brokers, facilitators and entrepreneurs (Rana, 2004). Indeed, Rosenau (2000) sees a crucial role for diplomats in assisting the creation and legitimisation of new patterns of social contract between individuals and a plethora of spheres of authority.

Communication Patterns

In contrast to the traditional, hierarchical model of diplomacy that stresses the centrality of intergovernmental relations, MSD is a reflection of a much more diffuse, network model. Underpinning the various definitions of networks lies the proposition that they have become indispensable in managing increasingly complex policy environments through the promotion of communication and trust. A policy network can be defined as

> a set of relatively stable relationships which are of a non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests, acknowledging that co-operation is the best way to achieve common goals. (Stone, 1997)

This definition underpins Reinecke's (2000) concept of global public policy networks. Starting from the premise that globalisation has highlighted the deficiencies of governments in terms of the scope of their activities, speed of response to global issues, and range of contacts, he identifies the significance of networks incorporating both public and private sector actors. Multigovernmental institutions are not irrelevant to the management of global issues, he suggests, but the more diverse membership and non-hierarchical qualities of public policy networks promote collaboration and learning and speeds up the acquisition and processing of knowledge. Furthermore, as an Aspen Institute (Bollier, 2003) report argues, centralised decision making processes are at a disadvantage when confronted by decentralised networks; the latter face fewer transactional barriers and are able to direct relevant information speedily to where it will have greatest effect.

Functions

In contrast to the premise that the agents of government exercise predominance in the shaping of international policy, the logic of MSD is rooted in the constraints confronting all actors – both state and non-state – in achieving their policy objectives. Challenged by ever more complex and multifaceted agendas, MSD establishes relationships of varying scope and composition, which, for example, bring together governmental actors, and business. Quite

clearly, the motivations for developing relationships will vary. Business has come to recognise that NGOs are now a critical element of the environment in which it has to operate. Indeed, taxonomies drawn from various stakeholder theories developed in the corporate political strategy literature have been used to analyse the motivations of business in engaging with NGOs and the variety of relationships that such engagement produces (Doh and Teegen, 2003). In general, such relationships seek to compensate for three forms of deficit that actors confront in achieving their diplomatic objectives: legitimacy, knowledge, and access. These deficits underpin the goal of resource exchange identified by Reinicke (2000) as a feature of global policy networks demonstrated in the trade policy arena where the pattern of a closed, club-like diplomatic environment has transformed into multistakeholder processes (Hocking, 2004).

The first deficit, legitimacy, reflects a decreased level of trust in the institutions of government. As Ostry (2002) has noted, accompanying the changes in the trade agenda lies a more general decline in public confidence in the institutions of representative democracy. Haynal (2002) sees this development as having a particular significance in the realm of diplomacy, which represents a mediating institution between people and policy arenas. What he terms the growth of "disintermediation," a rejection of such institutions, poses particular challenges to those charged with the conduct of international policy. The involvement of a broader cross-section of societal interests, as represented in civil society organisations, particularly the NGOs, is thus a logical strategy for dealing with this alienation.

Not surprisingly, in the wake of the experiences of the abortive Multilateral Agreement on Investment negotiations in 1998 and the Seattle World Trade Organization ministerial in 1999, policy makers have emphasised the need to consult domestic constituencies if support for trade liberalisation is to be sustained and anti-globalisation forces resisted. Thus, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) – now renamed Foreign Affairs Canada – is clear in its objectives regarding consultative procedures:

> By mobilising popular opinion and keeping people fully informed of the issues and the direction of trade negotiations, transparency and engagement combine to establish the legitimacy, consistency, and the durability of policy decisions and outcomes. (DFAIT, 2003)

Similar sentiments have been voiced in the USA and the European Union (EU). In evaluating the US system of trade consultation, Huenemann (2001) suggests that its biggest weakness is its failure to engage the public in a discussion on the aims of trade policy. The Seattle experience led Commissioner Pascal Lamy to introduce a DG Trade Civil Society Dialogue designed to "develop a confident working relationship among all stakeholders interested in trade policy, to ensure that all contributions to EU trade policy can be heard" (DG Trade Civil Society Dialogue, 2003). The underlying goal is, as Ostry (2002) suggests, for government to engage in capacity building within civil society if the anti-globalisation backlash is to be contained.

The second deficit that underpins the growing interest in developing MSP relates to knowledge. In the trade sphere, negotiators have long recognised that advice from the business community is an essential component in the framing of trade policy. Hence, for example, the advisory structures put in place by Cordell Hull following the enactment of the US Trade Reciprocity Act of 1934 (Aaronson, 2001). However, in the face of growing resource constraints, the knowledge capacity of government has, in general terms, diminished just as the demands imposed on it have grown. NGOs have a window of opportunity to fill this gap by capitalising on their own expertise. As Curtis (2001) puts it, NGOs

> possess . . . a reservoir of knowledge, skills and perspective that could be deployed to great advantage for policy development. This includes information that bears on the gamut of trade policy issues, from negotiations to administration of the multilateral system to the effective disposition of trade disputes. (p. 305)

In this context, Aaronson (2001) has suggested that one of the essential functions of consultative processes in trade policy is to establish a common language regarding the nature and objectives of trade agreements.

From the CSO perspective, another resource deficit – *access* – is apparent. One often hears that although the growing role of NGOs in world politics is underpinned by the diminishing obstacles to non-state actors, and that advantages inhere in the non-sovereign qualities of such actors, governments and the sovereignty-related rules governing the international system still control access to key diplomatic networks. Despite some movement at the World Trade Organization toward greater NGO access, its intergovernmental qualities still place a premium on opportunities provided by consultation at the national

level. To summarise, many areas of contemporary diplomacy, including those relating to international trade policy, involve the trading of resources between different actors, each possessing resources that the others need (Cooper and Hocking, 2000). Consequently, diplomacy is becoming more of a networking activity and thus demands the establishment of coalitions of diverse actors to manage complex policy agendas (Curtis, 2001).

We could point out numerous examples of these processes (I have described them elsewhere as "catalytic" diplomacy [Hocking, 1999]). The example of the Ottawa Process relating to landmines is an oft-cited example. More recently, the establishment of the Kimberley Process dealing with the sale of illicit "conflict" or "blood" diamonds is a good example; an NGO, Global Witness, acted as a catalyst to a process in which British and American diplomats, the EU Commission, together with journalists and the global diamond firm De Beers, contributed to the establishment of a diamond regime.

Location

Location refers to the primary sites within which diplomatic activity occurs. As noted earlier, Nicolson (1939) stressed two aspects of diplomacy that he deemed significant to its successful operation: the separation of policy from its execution and the separation of foreign from domestic policy. It is arguable whether the "old" diplomacy maintained these separations, but, clearly, they are no longer features of the diplomatic environment. The underlying rationale of MSD implies a democratisation of diplomacy that renders both assumptions redundant. Moreover, the character of the stakeholders – particularly NGOs operating in domestic and international environments simultaneously – means that the precise location of diplomacy becomes harder to determine. The linkage between domestic and international negotiating arenas is a well-established feature of contemporary negotiation and demands continual and simultaneous evaluation of developments in both arenas if successful outcomes are to be secured (Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam, 1993). The effect of MSD is to enhance the linkage and to project the domestic environment more definitely into the international environment. Quite clearly, the MSD model is likely to embrace a more diverse range of diplomatic sites, reflecting a varying degree of governmental involvement. Thus, Coleman and Perl (1999) have suggested a typology of four sites ranging from intergovernmental through multilevel governance and private

regimes to “loose couplings” where interactions between governmental and transnational actors are sparse and unstructured. The nature of the site will determine the objectives of MSD and the precise form that it assumes.

Patterns of representation

Diplomatic systems are marked by two basic modes of representation: diplomacy by mission and diplomacy by permanent representation. Nicolson (1939) regarded the latter as the essence of effective diplomacy. The recent history of state-centred diplomacy has emphasised the importance of mission over permanent bilateral diplomacy. “Diplomacy when and where you need it,” instead of “diplomacy whether you need it or not” (Winham, 1993, p. 33) reflects the growing complexity and the technical nature of negotiations. Here, we find a direct linkage to MSD since one of the central impulses underlying it is to bring expertise outside government into areas of complex negotiations. As we have seen, however, the world of state-centred diplomacy has had to adjust to changes whose roots lie in the political and economic configuration of the international order, as well as within its social underpinnings. National diplomatic systems around the world confront similar problems: how to bear the burden of greater demands with fewer resources while responding to the claims of domestic sectoral departments to act as their own representatives in international environments. These dilemmas have produced, for example, various models of alternative representation such as hub-and-spoke systems and co-location of missions. The more complex the environment – as in the case of the proposed reforms in EU external policy contained in the 2004 constitution – the greater the challenge to national diplomatic systems and the greater the opportunity for creative responses to these challenges.

The concept of MSD adds another layer to the problems of representation. Alongside statecraft comes what Cooper (2004) terms “society-craft” or the weaving together of the diplomatic resources of the state with those of non-state entities, particularly the NGO community. Society-craft poses challenges both to governments and to multilateral organisations in deciding with whom to engage and on what terms. Of course, engagement with stakeholders is not a new idea; the International Labour Organization is commonly regarded as one of the earliest instances, establishing in 1919 trisectoral representation from governments, unions, and employers. Since the creation of the UN, the trend has grown apace, with many of the concepts

relating to stakeholder activity deriving from the Rio Earth Summit of 1992. As Dodds (2000) notes, a significant aspect of the subsequent Agenda 21 was its status as "the first UN document to recognise the roles and responsibilities of nine stakeholder groups" (pp. 28-29). Since then, the creation of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development has seen a gradual expansion of stakeholder engagement.

Nevertheless, the intersection of the two diplomatic cultures creates tensions. This takes us back to a point made earlier, namely, the significant degree of control that state-based diplomacy exercises over access to the diplomatic environment. This is evident in comparing the development of stakeholder engagement in the UN system with that of the World Trade Organization where the dominance of sovereignty-related rules provides a less congenial environment for the development of MSD (Marceau and Pedersen, 1999; Esty, 1998).

Rules

The transformation of multilateral diplomacy and the challenges that it poses emphasise the tensions that underlie the operation of contemporary diplomacy and generate the frustrations that stakeholders frequently express with multistakeholder processes. If we are witnessing the emergence of a new phase in the evolution of diplomacy, an important aspect is the development of rules through which the new processes can function. As Jönsson and Hall (2003) note, ritual and protocol in diplomacy reduce transaction costs and are critical to its operation. From an NGO perspective, Dodds (2000) suggests the need for the development of agreed norms and standards by which multistakeholder processes can operate. "This will require a clearer definition of the role and responsibility of governments, as well as of stakeholders, and an agreement on the modes of interaction" (p. 37). However, two sets of rules are frequently in tension with one another. The clear, normative expectations of behaviour derived from sovereignty-related rules do not parallel those in the MSD environment wherein patterns of behaviour by some stakeholders clearly reflect different, non-sovereignty related norms. To take one example, the sovereignty environment and the MSD environment take differing approaches to confidentiality in negotiations.

The character of these problems depends on the nature of the political environment. In general, they can be identified in terms of the institutional

tension created by attempts to graft newer onto older modes of diplomacy. The result is a "crisis of expectations," a mismatch of goals and ambitions of the participants in the various processes, and a more general legitimacy debate nested within the broader debate about the nature of democratic processes in the face of globalisation. Such institutional tensions can be seen in the trade policy sphere where conflicts produced by the definition of new rules at the national and multilateral levels are evident. Within national processes of trade consultation, the shift from a relatively closed "club" to a more open multistakeholder model has generated tensions between business and NGOs, with the former sometimes resenting what it regards as the incursion of the latter (Hocking, 2004).

Much of this disquiet is related to the second factor, a crisis of expectations concerning the objectives of consultation, the means through which it is achieved, and the likely outcomes. This phenomenon is part of the stress more generally manifest in the conduct of international policy making and diplomacy as NGOs, the business community, and officials from government find themselves rubbing shoulders with increasing frequency. It is hardly surprising that in the case of trade policy, differing operational styles, organisational characteristics and, simply, a lack of familiarity between differing participants condition the workings of consultative processes. This has been the case with the EU DG Trade Civil Society Dialogue in which, as one commentator has noted, such factors "make it difficult for the creation of consultation spaces where the actors feel comfortable and, sometimes, frustrations and misunderstandings arise" (Muguruza, 2002, p. 13).

Conclusion

The above discussion is not intended as an argument in favour of yet another mode of "new" diplomacy replacing older forms, nor is it a re-statement of the "decline of diplomacy" mantra. Certainly, it is the case that state-based diplomacy is confronting challenges as it adapts to fundamental changes in world politics. This is a perfectly familiar process in the long history of diplomacy. Nor has it been my purpose to suggest that the professional diplomat is an endangered species. On the contrary, the logic of MSD as I have sought to define it here suggests that diplomats have significant roles that relate to their historic functions – rather than to current preoccupations with, for example, commercial diplomacy.

What I have suggested is, first, that one must see diplomacy in a context broader than that of the state system with which it is often associated. I have also suggested that identifying evolving patterns of diplomacy presents us with problems of interpretation and understanding that is as applicable to MSD as it is to that of other models. Third, I have suggested that it is possible to recognise the intersection of two diplomatic cultures overlaying and informing one another. Not surprisingly, their coexistence generates, simultaneously, creative and negative tensions.

Such tensions frequently reflect a clash of expectations from all parties involved as to the purposes of multistakeholder processes. In particular, civil society organisations may well entertain unrealistic assumptions as to what might be achieved through essentially bureaucratic processes, especially where they are seeking to redefine the political agenda in a way to which bureaucratic interlocutors are unable to respond. Diplomats, for their part, may fail to appreciate the legitimate goals of non-state actors with whom they become involved in negotiating arenas. What appears to be happening is that "rules of engagement" between the essential sets of actors, government, business, and NGOs, are gradually being shaped. Not surprisingly, these rules are tenuous and fuzzy. Yet, the success of much contemporary diplomacy, not only in the trade arena, requires that they be developed.

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