



DiploCircle

MAGAZINE

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DIPLO



April 2020



Dear reader,

The year 2019 was particularly active for DiploFoundation faculty, alumni, and staff members. This newsletter lists their activities, including publications (academic papers, books, opinion pieces), presentations at conferences, international organisations, news channels, web debates and other events, as well as other activities relevant for those who work in, study, and think about diplomacy and international relations. Within these lists, we hope you will find something that sparks your interest and/or is related to your area of activity, and we warmly invite you to contact the authors if that is the case.

We also have an opinion piece by Prof. Jovan Kurbalija, Founding Director of DiploFoundation, discussing Diplo's latest project, *humAlnism*, and a reading recommendation by Prof. GR Berridge, Emeritus Professor of International Politics at the University of Leicester and Diplo Senior Fellow, reviewing Sir Brian Barder's book *Diplomatic Diary*. The newsletter finishes with an obituary of faculty member Amb. Paramjit S. Sahai who sadly departed earlier this year, written by Amb. Kishan Rana, Professor Emeritus at DiploFoundation.

If you want to learn more about DiploFoundation and its activities please check our website (<https://www.diplomacy.edu>) or contact andres@diplomacy.edu for any related queries.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter.



Opinion Piece: HumAIInism



Jovan Kurbalija

Prof. Jovan Kurbalija, Executive Director of DiploFoundation and Head of the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP)

In 2020, Diplo will enter a new phase: Diplo 5.0. We will follow our well-tested philosophy of **continuity** in our core mission of assisting countries, citizens, and companies to participate meaningfully in international relations; and **change** in the ways we work to accomplish our mission.

For example, the function and need for negotiations remains as it has been for centuries. But the way we negotiate is changing, with WhatsApp replacing corridor diplomacy, and the use of data and AI bringing new evidence in negotiating processes.

At Diplo, we have to revisit these fast-changing circumstances. Change is not always easy and simple. Change alters habits and routines, pushes us out of our human comfort zone, and puts us in new situations.


Thus, our first step is to ensure that our staff, lecturers, and wider community, including alumni, understand the changes ahead of us and become active and creative agents of change.

Change will be happening in three main directions:

First, in the training field, we will increasingly focus on skills for digitalisation of traditional diplomacy, a process which is happening fast. More and more digital tools are used in conducting diplomacy. More and more digital topics are raised on the diplomatic agenda. In our training, we will ensure that the core values, tested over centuries, remain relevant in the digital era. We will also widen our course catalogue to include just-in-time courses addressing the latest issues.

Second, Diplo's research and design activities will evolve from individuals writing articles or designing images towards creative exchanges with groups of researchers, artists, and philosophers. We hope that new and unexpected insights will emerge. By putting many smart people in cognitive proximity, we may be able to be as effective in connecting ideas and concepts and building knowledge as artificial intelligence (AI). New and creative insights will feed into our Digital Watch analysis and into our courses.





Third, a new AI platform, developed by Diplo's AI Lab, will make profound changes in our teaching, research, and communication. In our work with AI, we will learn how AI functions. It will help us to see how AI can be used for negotiation, policy analysis, and other diplomatic activities. AI will cut across our teaching, research, and communication activities.

The name we use to encompass these developments and more is *humAlnism*. HumAlnism will be the 'conveyor belt' for Diplo 5.0, encompassing a technical, philosophical, societal, and human rights approach. The high relevance of humAlnism for Diplo 5.0 makes it the central theme of this opinion piece.

The [humAlnism](#) project, which was formally presented at the 14th Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Berlin, is the result of a decades-long accumulation of experience, know-how, and understanding. It traces its origins back to 1999 when DiploFoundation organised the first conference on Knowledge and Diplomacy to explore the relationship between language and diplomacy and the use of hypertext in online learning, and more recently, the development of knowledge portals such as the Digital Watch Observatory.

A 'snippet' on humAlnism

Discussions on the regulation of AI are the hype of this decade. Various initiatives are surfacing, but ironically, one important element is always missing from the picture: AI itself.


This is where humAlnism comes in.

How, you may ask? By including AI in the conversation about what an AI-assisted future might look like.

The project has two tracks. The first track invites tech companies and research institutions to develop AI systems that will analyse the rich corpus of human knowledge based on fundamental lessons drawn from philosophy, ethics, and theology in order to draft a guide for the development of AI. The second track applies to direct development and application of existing AI solutions in the field of digital diplomacy, facilitated by Diplo's expertise.

Aside from starting a global interdisciplinary discussion on AI guidelines, humAlnism will also showcase AI tools that can assist in the conduct of multilateral negotiations, and in the drafting of reports and statements on a broad range of issues.





Today, Diplo has the maturity and wisdom to assemble the organisational, technical, and research building blocks needed for the creation of a data and AI-driven organisation.

So, what will be the practical elements of humAIism?

- Diplo's rich pool of gathered and owned data will be used to identify correlation and causation among different parameters, including, for instance, the rate of crime, rate of cybercrime, and investment in e-commerce in a given country. In addition, any comment or insight contributed to academic articles or blog posts will become an integral part of Diplo's corpus of knowledge which, in turn, will be at the disposal of learners, lecturers, and researchers.
- Instant AI analysis of articles, reports, and diplomatic documents.
- AI-driven reporting from conferences and events.

The most interesting aspect of humAIism is that it will 'walk the talk' and, as such, go beyond discussions on AI, ethics, and governance. HumAIism will reflect Diplo's dedication to capacity development, and therefore the project will widely share experiences on the practical use of AI in diplomacy and international relations.

That said, we are fully aware that as with all new technological tools, new challenges will emerge. While AI and data mining will provide more precise insights on contemporary international relations, they will also require researchers to develop new research methods.

Throughout all these activities, our objective is to anchor AI in the tradition of humanity. AI is here to stay, meaning that we have to accept and learn how to deal with AI. The current, simplified, dystopian/utopian framing of the impact of AI on society is not of great help. Instead, the complexity of AI's impact requires a much more sophisticated engagement. First, we need to understand better how AI functions. Once we understand this, we can consider AI's practical use in research, teaching, and diplomatic negotiations.

As we argued at the IGF, we think that giving AI a seat at the negotiating table can help us address the complexity of modern policy issues. How? The simple answer is: by providing more evidence and insights. HumAIism will invite tech companies and AI researchers to develop and employ AI to draft a social contract, in other words, a guide (on the basis of philosophical, literary, and theological sources, among others) for the AI era.

By analysing the corpus of human knowledge, from ancient texts to the latest blog posts, AI will provide us with reflections on how to deal with the core ethical, political, and legal issues posed by the fast development of AI. While the social contract will not be final and conclusive, we hope that it will provide food for thought. It should mark the beginning of a global debate on some of the core challenges faced on the eve of the AI era.

Diplo will make a contribution by harnessing its long tradition and expertise in addressing digital challenges in a comprehensive, informed, and creative way. On this important journey, the role of Diplo's lecturers and associates will be highly important and relevant.

Faculty list of activities



Kishan Rana

Professor Emeritus, former Indian Ambassador and Senior Fellow at DiploFoundation

• Publications/papers

- [Book chapter] [Xi Jinping's diplomatic strategy](#). In Mohanty M [ed.] (2019) *China at a Turning Point: Perspectives after the 19th Party Congress*. New Delhi: Institute of Chinese Studies.
- [Article] [Fixing India's strategic thinking vacuum](#). *The Wire*, 4 June 2019.
- [Article] [China's foreign ministry: Fit for purpose in the era of Xi Jinping, BRI and 'major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics'?](#) *China Report* 55(3), pp. 193–218.
- [Book review] Paul TV [ed.]: [The China-India Rivalry in the Globalization Era](#). *China Report*.
- [Book review] Sinha D: [The Legitimacy of Power: The Permanence of Five in the Security Council](#). *Business Standard*, 24 April 2019.
- [Book review] Singh ZD: [Power & Diplomacy: India's Foreign Policies during the Cold War](#). *Gateway House*, 18 April 2019.
- [Book review] Srinivasan K, Mayall J, Pulipaka S [eds.]: [Values in Foreign Policy: Investigating Ideals and Interests](#). *Business Standard*, 6 December 2019.

• Other activities

- [Panel discussion] Indian Council of World Affairs, conference marking the 50th anniversary of the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), 19 August 2019.
- [Session chair] Experience of the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) on its 50-year history and future relevance. 11th All-India Conference on Chinese Studies, Jindal University, Sonapat, 8 November 2019.
- [Session chair] 3rd 'India Forum on China @ Goa', titled 'The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRP', 6 December 2019.
- [Two lectures] Mauritius Foreign and Trade Ministry, 15–16 July 2019.
- [Lead speaker] Inauguration of the Madagascar Center for International and Strategic Research at Antananarivo, 18 July 2019.
- [Three lectures] Diplomatic Academy, Hanoi, 18 October 2019.

Stefano Baldi

Ambassador of Italy to Bulgaria and former Director of the Diplomatic Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy



• Publications/papers



- [Book] [Storia delle Relazioni Diplomatiche tra Italia e Bulgaria attraverso i documenti diplomatici italiani](#). Sofia: Paradigma.



- [Book] [Cultura in Residenza. L'esperienza dell'Ambasciata d'Italia a Sofia](#). Sofia: Ambasciata d'Italia di Sofia.

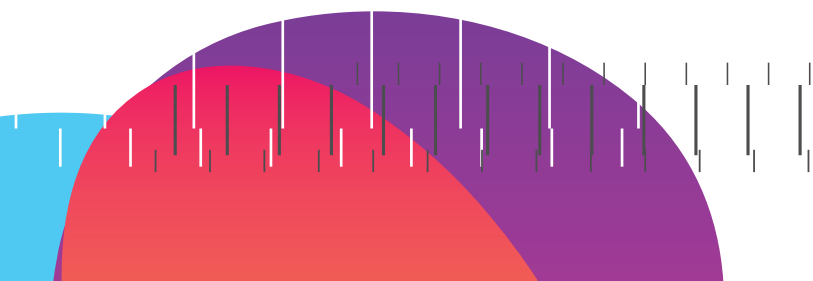
• Presentations

- 'The art of diplomacy or the diplomacy of art?' New Bulgarian University, Sofia, 16 January 2019.
- 'The diplomat of XXI century (diplomat 2.0)'. University of National and World Economy, Sofia, 12 March 2019.
- 'Diplomat 2.0. The diplomat at the age of Internet'. American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, 26 March 2019.
- 'The art of diplomacy or the diplomacy of art?' Università di Pavia, Pavia, 22 July 2019.
- 'Conference on 140 years of diplomatic relations between Italy and Bulgaria'. 29 September 2019.
- '[Visual digital diplomacy: Opportunities for diplomatic practice](#)'. DiploFoundation WebDebate, with Massimiliano Fusari, 1 October 2019.
- 'Soft power and diplomatic communication'. *Festival Diplomazia*, Rome, 23 October 2019.
- 'Diplomatic communication and social media'. New Bulgarian University, Sofia, 11 December 2019.
- '[La Settimana della Cucina Italiana nel Mondo ha rappresentato le nostre tradizioni culinarie](#)'. 8 November 2019.
- 'New face of diplomacy in a digital world. Ambassadors have a much higher exposure to the public than in the past'. 7 November 2019.
- [Interview] '[Intervista all'Ambasciatore Stefano Baldi](#)'. TV EUROPA, 12 October 2019.
- [Interview] '[Intervista di Georgi Mitov all'Ambasciatore Stefano Baldi sulla Conferenza dei 140 anni di relazioni diplomatiche fra Italia e Bulgaria](#)'. Classic FM, 19 September 2019.
- [Interview] '[Stefano Baldi: Italian ambassador on positive vibes and crossing roads in Bulgaria](#)'. VAGABOND.BG, 1 August 2019.
- [Interview] 'Euroreportage - Plovdiv, l'altra capitale europea della cultura'. RADIO24, 13 July 2019.

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- [Interview] 'L'Ambasciatore Stefano Baldi intervistato dall'Istituto Diplomatico di Bulgaria'. Istituto Diplomatico Bulgaro, 25 June 2019.
 - [Interview] '[Inviato Speciale – Intervista di Roberto Taglialegna all'Amb. Stefano Baldi su Matera e Plovdiv capitali europee della cultura](#)'. RadioRai 1, 27 April 2019.
 - [Interview] '[Intervista all'Ambasciatore Stefano Baldi, al pianista Lorenzo Turchis Floris e al tenore Carlos De Antonis](#)'. Radio Classic FM, 11 February 2019.
 - [Interview] '[Baldi - intervista su Matera](#)'. 21 January 2019.
 - [Interview] '[Intervista a Stefano Baldi \(1/2\) sui 140 anni di relazioni fra Italia-Bulgaria \(BNT\)](#)'. 20 January 2019.
 - [Interview] '[Intervista a Stefano Baldi \(2/2\) sui 140 anni di relazioni fra Italia-Bulgaria \(BNT\)](#)'. 13 January 2019.

- **Other activities**

- [Exhibition] '[Leonardo: The Gentle Genius](#)', exhibited in 29 cities in 23 countries, and translated into 13 languages.
- [Exhibition] '140 Years of Diplomatic Relations between Italy and Bulgaria'.
- [Documentary] '[Journey in Italy. Discovering the 20 Italian Regions through their Art, Food and Music](#)'.





Petru Dumitriu

Member of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system and former Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Office



• Publications/papers

- [Report] [Strengthening Policy Research Uptake in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU/REP/2018/7).
- [Report] [Managing Cloud Computing Services in the United Nations System](#). United Nations. Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU/REP/2019/5).

• Presentations

- [Panel member] 'Leveraging knowledge to advance the 2030 Agenda'. *From Science to Practice: Strengthening Research Uptake to Achieve the SDGs*, Geneva Science-Policy Interface and University of Geneva, 11 December 2019.
- [Panel member] 'Research collaboration and communication beyond the ivory tower'. *Multilateralism at Risk*, Swiss Network for International Studies and University of Bern, 26 October 2019.
- [Keynote speaker] 'Crosscutting roundtable on practitioner-research partnerships: What are challenges and best practices for making the SDGs real'. *Annual Meeting of Evidence and Governance in Politics*, 10 October 2019.
- [Panel member] 'Trends and practice of training for multilateral diplomacy: leadership, preparations for multilateral postings, maximizing the offer of diplomatic training by international organizations'. *46th Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and Institutes of International Relations*, 20 September 2019.

• Awards

- [Recipient] Sustainable Development Awards 2018

• Other activities

- [Co-organiser and chair] Round-table on e-learning platforms, as part of the Annual Conference of the World Association for Sustainable Development, hosted by the International Maritime Organization, London, 17 June 2019.
- [Co-organiser and chair] High-level conference on the impact of blockchain on sustainable development, co-organised by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System and Geneva Macro Labs, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 26–27 September 2019.
- [Co-organiser and chair] Roundtable on current practices and trends in the use of e-learning platforms, in partnership with the Geneva Learning Network, Geneva, Palais des Nations, 2 December 2019.

Alumni list of activities



Candice Tran Dai

Vice-president & Head of the Cyberspace Program at Asia Center, a Paris-based think tank, and Non-Resident Senior Policy Analyst & Chair of the Special Interest Group CyCORP at the Global Foundation for Cyber Studies and Research, a Washington D.C.-based think tank

• Publications/papers

- [Book chapter] [Trends and tendencies, principles and norms in cyber security](#). In Fitriani CP and Arifin NA [eds.] (2019) *Towards a Resilient Regional Cyber Security: Perspectives and Challenges in Southeast Asia*. Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), pp. 68–73.

• Presentations

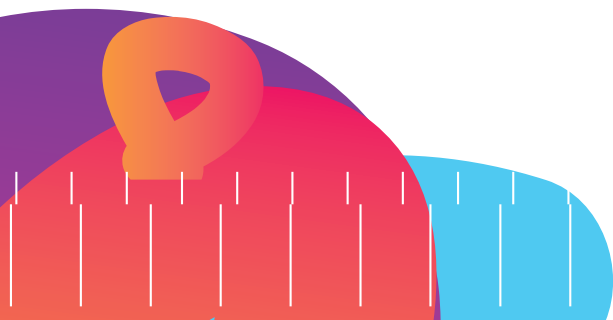
- 'China cyber strategy'. Institute of Higher National Defence Studies (IHEDN), Paris, 18 October 2019.
- 'The role of corporations in cyber conflicts'. *Web Wars: Getting Ready for the Next Cyber Crisis*, Foundation for Strategic Research (FRS) & Institut Geode, Paris, 16 September 2019.

Oleksandr Tsaruk

Graduate Research Assistant of Department of Management at John Chambers College of Business and Economics, West Virginia University

• Publications/papers

- [Paper] with Maria Korniiets, [Hybrid nature of modern threats for cybersecurity and information security](#), Smart Cities and Regional Development (SCRD) Journal.





Manyi Orok-Tambe

Foreign Affairs Officer of the Ministry of External Relations of
the Republic of Cameroon

• Publications/papers

- [Transcription of communication] [Africa's digital transformation at the heart of FIFAFRICA19](#). 6th Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAFRICA19), Addis Ababa, 23–26 September 2019.

• Presentations

- 'ICT adoption and implementation for Africa sustainable development'. *Third International Conference on ICT for African Development (ICT4AD)*, Yaounde, 26–27 November 2019.





Bamituni Etomi

Academic researcher doing a PhD in
Economics and Finance

• Publications

- [Article] [Introducing investment promotion: A marketing approach to attracting foreign direct investment](#). *International Journal of Marketing Studies* 11(4), pp. 91–98.

Marko Krstić

Senior Cybersecurity Advisor at [Serbian National CERT](#)
([Computer Emergency Response Team](#))

• Publications/Papers

- [Article] [Machine learning applications in computer emergency response team operations](#). *27th Telecommunication Forum TELFOR*, Belgrade, 2019, pp. 691–694.

• Presentations

- 'Fake videos: Forensic challenges and opportunities'. *Digital Forensics Evidence Analysis via Intelligent Systems and Practices*, WG1 Meeting, Zagreb, 11–12 September 2019.
- 'Children agents for secure and privacy enhanced reaction'. *Digital Forensics Evidence Analysis via Intelligent Systems and Practices*, 3rd Working Groups Meeting, Valletta, 23–24 October 2019.
- 'Improving digital forensic model explainability through model-agnostic methods'. *Digital Forensics Evidence Analysis via Intelligent Systems and Practices*, 3rd Working Groups Meeting, Valletta, 23–24 October 2019.





Joelson M Aneré

First Vice Chairman at Anere Institute of International Studies (AiIS)

• Presentations

- 'Male advocate roles and male advocate responsibilities in a changing world', *PNG Update Conference Paper*, Port Moresby, 8–9 August 2019.
- 'What is the impact of Papua New Guinea's leadership on the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), Melanesian SpearHead Group (MSG), and Donor Partners if "Take Back PNG and Work The Blue Pacific" was adopted as a Foreign Policy?' *PNG Impact Conference Paper*, Port Boreasby, 8–9 August 2019.
- 'Causal failures or intentional failures: Who do we blame for the lack of gender equality programming in the humanitarian crisis before, during, and after the Bougainville Crisis?', *Asia Pacific Humanitarian Leadership Conference*, Melbourne, 22–24 May 2019.
- 'People-powered and non-violent social movements containing political factors that usurp government authority', *Pacific Island Political Studies Association Conference*, Nouméa, 25–27 June 2019.



Staff list of activities

Marilia Maciel

Digital Policy Senior Researcher at DiploFoundation

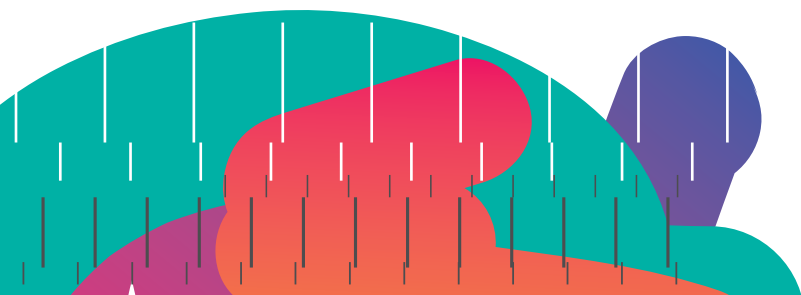


• Presentations

- 'From lagging behind to leapfrogging: Ensuring inclusive tech in developing world'. [WTO Global Trade and Blockchain Forum](#), Geneva, 3 December 2019.
- 'Quantifying peace and conflict in Cyberspace'. Session organised by the Institute for Economics and Peace at the *14th Internet Governance Forum (IGF)*, Berlin, 27 November 2019.
- 'Public diplomacy v. disinformation: Are there red lines?' Session jointly organised by Stiftung Neue Verantwortung and Microsoft at the *14th Internet Governance Forum (IGF)*, Berlin, 27 November 2019.
- 'As a stakeholder in the digital transformation, can civil society make its voice heard?' Session organised by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community at the *14th Internet Governance Forum (IGF)*, Berlin, 25 November 2019.
- 'Trade norms on access to the source code: What is the impact on trade in services and development?' Session organised by DiploFoundation and ITC at the *WTO Public Forum*, Geneva, 10 October 2019.
- "Data localization: Impact on small businesses?' *ITC Staff Talks*, Geneva, 24 May 2019.

• Training

- With Vladimir Radunović: 'Towards the national cybersecurity framework in Uzbekistan: Building a multistakeholder platform.' Capacity building provided in partnership with the OSCE, Uzbekistan, 4–7 November 2019.





André Saramago

Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Coimbra and Online Learning and Research Associate with DiploFoundation

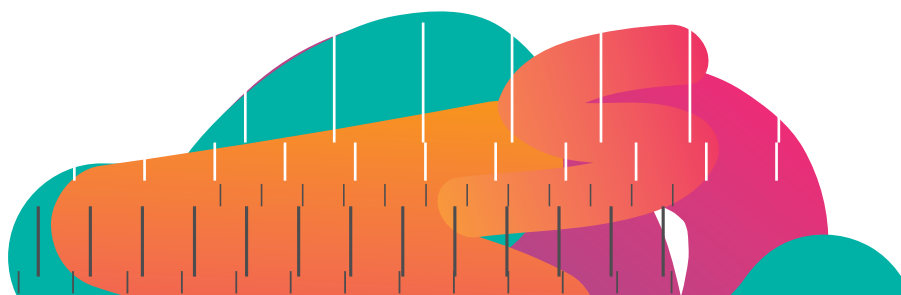


• Publications/papers

- [Article] [Reality-congruence, emancipatory politics and situated knowledge in International Relations: A process sociological perspective](#). *International Relations*.
- [Article] [Jürgen Habermas and the democratization of world politics](#). *JANUS.NET, E-journal of International Relations*, 10(1), pp. 14–28.

• Presentations

- 'Critical international theory'. *5th Conference on Contemporary Terrorism: Terrorism and Democracy in a Globalized World*, University of Lisbon, ISCSIP, 17 October 2019.
- 'Critical international theory: A post-philosophical-utopian perspective'. *Aberystwyth Academic Centenary Conference*, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, 17–19 June 2019.
- 'Marxist ideology in China's ecological civilization'. *44th BISA Annual Conference*, Royal Society, Carleton House, London, 12–14 June 2019.
- ['China and the Arctic: beyond geopolitics'](#). *DiploFoundation WebDebate: Arctic Diplomacy: Approaches and Lessons*, 5 February 2019.
- "China and the Arctic: beyond geopolitics", *DiploFoundation WebDebate: Arctic diplomacy: approaches and lessons*, 5 February.





Katharina Höne

Senior Lecturer, Researcher, and Project Manager
at DiploFoundation

• Publications/papers

- [Report] [Mapping the challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence for the conduct of diplomacy](#). Diplo AI Lab.
- [Report] [Mediation and artificial intelligence: Notes on the future of international conflict resolution](#). Diplo AI Lab.

• Presentations

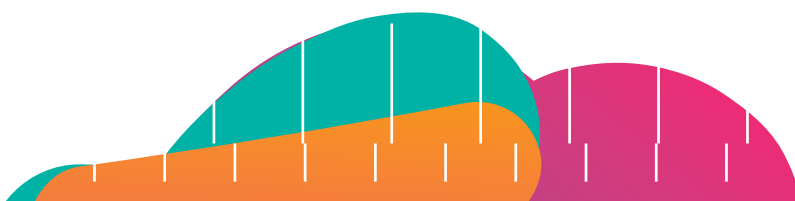
- 'Global Internet governance: The new diplomatic frontier?' *International Studies Association Annual Conference*, Toronto, 27–30 March 2019.
- 'Re-appraising moral agency and the problem of harm in the era of artificial intelligence'. *Aberystwyth Academic Centenary Conference*, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, 17–19 June 2019.

• Selected workshops and training sessions

- 'Expanding the limits of our knowledge through sci-fi' and 'Creative writing tools for policy makers', [Science Fiction Meets Policy | Policy Meets Science Fiction](#), Geneva, 15 January 2019.
- 'National AI strategies and sustainable development. Taking the next steps towards AI for Good', *AI for Good Global Summit*, Geneva, 28–31 March 2019.
- 'AI in and for diplomacy and global governance', *Science Diplomacy Summer School*, SciTech DiploHub, Barcelona, 1–5 July 2019.

• Other

- Awarded Certificate of Higher Education in Computing and IT, Open University, UK, November 2019.



Darija Medić

Web and Software Programmer and Digital Art Project
Coordinator at DiploFoundation

Darija's most meaningful experiences in 2019 gather various angles through which policy shares its space with other forms of interacting with technology. Starting the year with insights into how we can develop a sensibility for the impact of policy on issues of human rights, she developed an overview of Afrofuturism through examples from film scenes of Afrofuturist films, reading particular policy scenarios through the format of a card game.

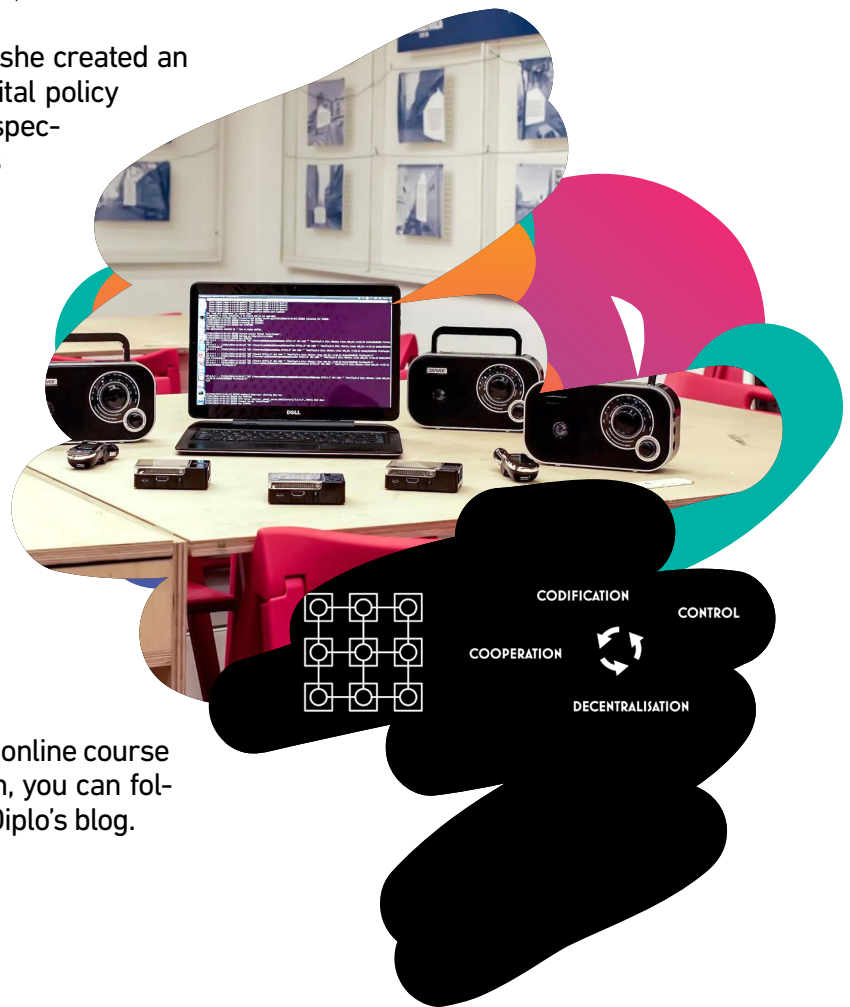
She was invited to take part in producing and designing a show – 'Signals – Algorithms of Disobedience' – in collaboration with kuda.org. Adapting (or in the language of open source, forking) the project of Berliner Gazette, she created a conceptual framework for how to think about the significance of the Snowden files in a post-Cambridge Analytica era.

Her interactive participatory art piece 'Transmitting is a Two Way channel' (first two image attachments) showed at several locations in 2019. The piece is an installation and performance transforming browsers into FM transmission stations, questioning the democratic potential of participatory technologies, anonymity, and data obfuscation. The archive of user participation in both audio and textual content grows over time and becomes a growing radio show as well as literary content.

Further in the landscape of demystification, her lecture *The promise of blockchain, ideal mediation or illusive transactions?* explored the conceptual grounds of facilitating blockchain for collaborative creative processes at the Creative Backslash conference, Fabrika, Belgrade, Serbia.

During a study visit and residency in New York, she created an enabling environment for a conversation on digital policy in everyday usage of technology from the perspective of the regular user. Among these inputs was the discussion on Art as Disruptive Knowledge in the Times of Emerging Technologies at Residency Unlimited, as well as the guest lecture Default Settings: Gender Norms of Everyday Scrolling, at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Continuing on those grounds, at the Creative Time Summit, she ran a workshop on creating a radio drama out of terms of service from various smartphone apps.

On her 2020 list is a fascinating Research Creation Fellowship from Chronus Art Center Shanghai/Duke University Kunshan for the research: Gatekeepers of Network Poetics - where she will investigate memes as contemporary tragic heroes of digital narratives. With these bridges to art practices, which she is actively including in online course materials and other activities at DiploFoundation, you can follow Darija's research on her website as well as Diplo's blog.



Reading recommendation

Brian Barder's Diplomatic Diary



Prof. G. R. Berridge

Emeritus Professor of International Politics at the University of Leicester and Senior Diplo Fellow

Brian Barder's Diplomatic Diary. Brian Barder [aut.] and Louise Barder [ed.]. Donelson Press, 2019, 308 pages.

Sir Brian Barder, the senior British diplomat and author of the always sage and sometimes gripping blog 'What Diplomats Do', died in 2017 but, courtesy of the professional editorial hand of his daughter Louise, has left us another treat. This is what he called a diary and which for the most part has the form of a diary (dated daily entries), although originally it was a series of letters sent to friends from foreign parts. Compared to diplomatic memoirs, diplomatic diaries are a rarity. And since this one is the product of an acute observer who loved the English language and used it in a vigorous and creative style, the appearance of this volume is doubly welcome.

The diary does not cover Barder's early career, which started in the Colonial Office in 1957, but begins when he arrived in Moscow in February 1971. In that important embassy he was first secretary political, number two to the head of chancery and also press attaché; in September, when his immediate boss went on leave, he became acting head of chancery and right-hand man of the ambassador just as the crisis began in Anglo-Soviet relations provoked by the expulsion of 105 Soviet intelligence officers from London (at almost 100 pages, the Moscow diary is the longest in the book). The next chapters deal with Australia in the mid-1970s, where he was counsellor head of chancery and a little over two years after his arrival faced the political crisis prompted by the sudden sacking of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam by the governor-general, who looked 'as always like Mr. Micawber, portly in morning coat and top hat, his thick snowy hair flowing out of it and setting off his florid petulant baby face, plum-coloured with tan or anger or both.' There follow chapters covering an eleven-month sabbatical in 1977-8 with the Canadian National Defence College while awaiting the outcome of a radical report on the Diplomatic Service; and finally, all of his head of mission appointments bar the last one. These were in Ethiopia, where in the mid-1980s Barder substantially overlapped with an appalling famine that attracted world-wide attention; Poland, in the last years of its Communist regime; and Nigeria, stagnating under yet another military junta at the end of the 1980s. Were it not for the relative stability prevailing at the last two postings, Barder might have been thought of as a diplomatic storm crow...

Full review can be found at [DiploFoundation](#).



Ambassador PS (Pummy Sahai): A tribute



Pummy Sahai passed away on 12 January 2020 at his hometown Chandigarh, after a sudden illness. He was much admired in the Indian Foreign Service and in academia, and was on the Diplo faculty for some years.

He served in the Indian Foreign Service from 1963 to 2000, and was Ambassador/High Commissioner to Malawi, Lesotho, Yemen Democratic Republic, Sweden, and Malaysia. He specialised in cultural, consular, and diaspora affairs, edited two books, and authored *Indian Cultural Diplomacy: Celebrating Pluralism in a Globalised World* (2019).

Pummy was admired for his cheerfulness, soft-spoken manner, and friendliness towards all. In his teaching, he infected his class with a spirit of inquiry and an egalitarian touch, showing that he was a learner like them, embarking together on a voyage of expanded understanding and learning new things.

Behind this was his resolve and dedication to study and writing. At Chandigarh he was the moving spirit at an academic institute. Pummy and I jointly developed a course for DiploFoundation on consular diplomacy, which was later expanded to cover diaspora diplomacy. He had plans to write a book on this theme, and was engaged in another collaborative book compilation with several other scholars. His was an exemplary life of engagement, scholarship, and humane service. He will be deeply missed.



D*i*PLO