



❖ **What kind of
diplomacy for the
3rd Millennium**

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“WHAT KIND OF DIPLOMACY FOR THE 3RD MILLENNIUM?

Role of media and public relations in contemporary diplomacy.

Paper for the 8th International Public Relations Research Symposium

Politics of Communication and Communication of Politics:

Cross-Cultural Theory Building in the Practice of Public Relations and Political Marketing

Bled, 5-8 July, 2001

Ljubljana, 31 July 2001

Introduction

"I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy. We had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul; a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country. And I appreciated so very much the frank dialogue.

There was no kind of diplomatic chit-chat, trying to throw each other off balance. There was a straightforward dialogue. And that's the beginning of a very constructive relationship. I wouldn't have invited him to my ranch if I didn't trust him."¹

The President of the United States George W. Bush Jr. shared this impression live with international press corps and millions of television viewers around the world after his first meeting with the President of Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, on 16 June 2001, in Slovenia. Is that what the highest meetings between two superpowers really are about - two men talking, getting familiar and building friendly ties? Or is it rather a simplified, popular presentation of the summit, nicely packed up in an infotainment event and played out for the TV cameras? Is it how foreign policy and diplomacy in the 3rd millennium actually work?

In today's world of a revolution in communications and information as well as of global interdependency, a medialised politics became a general reality. One can observe such a trend specifically in the field of international and foreign affairs where state and other actors use communication channels and public relations to a large extent to improve on the content and in particular, on the image of their policies. Here one can also argue that a major share of bilateral and multilateral relations among states is shaped by the international media, or vice versa, that all major "wars" are "fought" through the media.

Diplomacy is entrusted to manage relations between states and between states and other actors, by advising, shaping and implementing foreign policy, articulating, coordinating and securing particular and wider interests.² In the "media shaped" world it adopts new dimensions, being concerned with media and communication management, and as some argue,

¹ Transcript of the Press Conference by President Bush and Russian Federation President Putin, Brdo Castle, Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, 16 June, 2001, p. 5, White House, Office of the Press Secretary. At <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/06/>

² In Barston, 1988: 1. Thus, within its various definitions diplomacy can be understood as a formulation and implementation of a foreign policy; as a technique of a foreign policy; as international negotiations; and as an activity performed by diplomats. The common denominator of these definitions would be diplomacy defined as a primary method by means of which foreign policy is implemented and the usual means of communication in international affairs (Vukadinović, 1994: 107-109). "Policy is formulation and direction; diplomacy is communication and implementation. It is the lubricant of the foreign policy machinery." (Olson, 1991: 60)

developing to a genuine "communicative action".³ With the trends of the information society a modern diplomat takes on a specific role of a public relations officer, a manager and a coordinator.⁴ Further on, one predicts that the diplomacy of the future will be increasingly public, networked, technology-driven and electronic, and therefore, education and training programmes for professional diplomats will work even more in these directions, towards specialisation in communication knowledge and skills.⁵

Author intends to explore the increasing inter-relation between state foreign affairs and diplomacy on one side, and media and public relations, on the other, as they started off in distinctly separate spheres and with different logics, but they seem to converge more and more. One would also like to see how the profession of a diplomat develops under such circumstances, and how it takes on media and public relations assignments. The paper will start off with basic concepts of an open/democratic diplomacy and a public diplomacy, linking them with the emergence of international public relations. Further on, it will analyse the trends of media diplomacy, medialised foreign policy and media wars. It will introduce a discussion on modern European diplomacy and communication in the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In conclusion an attempt will be made to apply the general framework to Slovenia with its specifics of a small, new country.

³ Some authors use Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action to describe the process of so called *diplomatic communicative interaction* in which cooperation is conceptualised as a social relationship conducted inside a complex web of intersubjective social structures of principles, norms, and rules produced and reproduced in the communicative interaction between states (Lose, 2001: 180). Diplomatic interaction is characterised by behaviour oriented towards mutual understanding, where perceptions of reality, interests, preferences, and desirable behaviour are subjected to a collective process of interpretation guided by argumentative rationality and the claim of validity. Collective understanding is constructed through diplomatic communicative interaction, i.e. on the basis of discussion, information gathering, and the desire to coordinate behaviour in order to minimize interstate friction (Lose, 2001: 188-190).

⁴ On additional requirements for a modern diplomat, see Macomber, 1991.

⁵ Howard Cincotta, USIA's Information Bureau, in State Magazine, February 1999. At http://www.state.gov/www/publications.statemag/statemag_feb99

Open, democratic diplomacy

The shift from a traditional (secret) diplomacy to its new, open and democratic forms can be traced back to the end of the 1st World War. The conclusions of the Conference in Brest Litovsk after the October revolution in Russia (1917) and the declaration of President's Woodrow Wilson 14 points at the Paris Peace Conference (1918) were the breaking points in this respect. Taking distance from previous practices of secret agreements among monarchs and privileged elites, these introduced a concept of an *open diplomacy*. As summarised in the words of Wilson: "open covenants of peace openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind." (in Nicolson, 1988: 43). Here one argues that Wilsonian dictum was often misunderstood as it would be impossible and also unwise to conduct negotiations openly. Only the fact that the negotiations are taking place must, barring exceptional cases, be publicly known, and the results of the negotiations must also be publicly announced (Rangarajan, 1998: 21). At this point diplomacy ran into a contradiction which had to be solved in real life: as one became increasingly aware that public had to be involved somehow, diplomacy adapted to the new circumstances, thus, still it had to preserve a certain level of secrecy and closure to enable it to perform its professional function (Vukadinović, 1994: 39).

The overall transformation of the "nature and spirit" of the traditional diplomacy entailed the whole democratic trends of the 19th century. *A democratic diplomacy* functioned according to the basic logic of the democratic parliamentary system: diplomat as a civil servant is subject to the Foreign Minister, who as a member of the Parliament is subject to the majority in the Parliament, and Parliament as a representative Assembly is subject to the will of the sovereign people. All in all, at that historic point it was stated and accepted that statesmen in their foreign policy performance and diplomats in their activity were bound to a democratic control of the people and therefore, had to provide for a certain transparency and also flexibility of their action (Nicolson, 1988: 41-46).

Hence, it is stressed that the electoral process itself represents the institutionalisation of public opinion in international relations. As in democratic societies foreign policy makers and diplomats became more and more related to the electorates and respectively, sensitive to public attitudes, public opinion took on a special role and comprehension in the field of foreign affairs and diplomacy.⁶ It was

⁶ In fact, it is difficult to establish any direct relationships between public opinion, foreign policy and the conduct of diplomacy. Two contradictory lines of thought can be distinguished, the first arguing about the volatility and inadequacy of public opinion as a stable and effective foreign policy, whereas the second considers public attitudes quite stable and consistent over time and actually exercising a strong influence on foreign policy-making (Risse-Kappen, 1991). Some authors claim that within the context of open diplomacy the analysis of public opinion is usually one-sided, taking into account only the impact of something called "the populace" on the statesman, the diplomat or the military leader. "Public opinion, however, is not an autonomous force; it is frequently organised by voluntary organisations or a specific political group" (Sofer, 1991: 73). Therefore, one

recognised as an important power even earlier on, described by Metternich as "a malevolent meteor hurled by divine providence upon Europe" or by Canning as "a power more tremendous than was perhaps ever yet brought to action in the history of mankind". (in Nicolson, 1988: 37). However, one warned of particular difficulties with public opinion as related to the formulation and implementation of foreign policy: the sovereign people are not wholly aware of their responsibilities; they do not have sufficient knowledge about the state of foreign affairs and particular issues; and they are primarily interested in domestic matters. As to such a view, democratic diplomacy was facing dangers of being delayed in its execution and of being imprecise in its formulation, which both could be damaging its basic efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, with the acknowledgment of the role by the free press, democratic diplomacy attempted to balance between the demands for publicity and needs for discretion (Nicolson, 1988: 46-50).

The changes in the concept of diplomacy and its relation to the public altogether called for additional tasks of foreign service and diplomats. First and foremost, if the people were to exert democratic control over foreign policy, but not to obstruct its efficiency and effectiveness, one had to provide them with essential facts in digestible form. Here one stressed that work with the press was necessary, and abroad a new diplomatic post of a Press Attaché was conceived to carry out activities to this purpose: maintain contacts with the local media, important opinion leaders and correspondents from home country, secure that the views of one's country are made public and that they obtain adequate publicity (Nicolson, 1988: 91). Furthermore, one already pointed to the possibility that press could be used to one's advantage, as a tool of persuasion or even propaganda. Such efforts to manipulate media coverage of foreign actors, events and policy issues were even more likely to succeed as foreign affairs were generally unobtrusive, i.e. the public was unlikely to have any direct experience with them, and information gathering about such issues was difficult (Manheim&Albritton, 1984: 643).

should analyse public opinion and foreign policy, as well as diplomacy, as in the process of interaction, constructing each other through existent domestic coalitions and policy networks (Plavšak, 1996a).

Public diplomacy

Through further expansion of communication technology and broader public participation in the process of foreign affairs, diplomacy became more and more tied down to international media and public opinion. In its democratic, public role diplomacy broadened its scope of action to include diverse spheres of life, not merely "high politics", to involve, besides officials and professionals, also other relevant actors, and to open up to various foreign publics. It attempted to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of one's foreign policy by means of a systematic, multifold communication. It expanded its functions within the concept of *public diplomacy*, defined as "the way in which both government and private individuals and groups influence directly or indirectly those public attitudes and opinions which bear directly another government's foreign policy decision." (Signitzer and Coombs, 1992: 138).

Whereas traditional diplomacy was based on formal relations between governments or government-to-government communication, today governments speak and listen directly to the people also in other countries. In its efforts public diplomacy is designed to bypass the constraints of foreign governments and reach directly into the hearts and minds of foreign audiences. Public diplomacy activities include, for example, government video teleconferences for journalists, students and other interest groups, or student/cultural and international visitors exchanges (Alexandre, 1987: 30). Hereby, public diplomacy becomes an ever-widening arena that encompasses nongovernmental organisations, multinational corporations, regional and local governments, academic institutions, media and other important players. Therefore, also "the actors in public diplomacy can no longer be confined to the profession of diplomats but include various individuals, groups and institutions who engage in international and intercultural communication activities which do have a bearing on the political relationships between two countries." (Signitzer and Coombs, 1992: 139)

One can trace similarities with the public relations: pursuing common aims of influencing public opinion to advantages of one's organisation/government, targeting various groups in other countries, strategically planning for diplomatic (communication) activities etc. Public diplomacy strives for intensive exchange of information, neutralisation of clichés and prejudices about one's nation, popularisation of one's foreign policy and social system, strengthening of one's country positive image. As such, its efforts overlap with *the international public relations*, defined as "a planned and organized effort of a company, institution or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with publics of other nations" (Wilcox et al., 1992 in Grunig, 1993: 143) or "efforts to improve the image of one's country in foreign country (-ies) by distribution of interest motivating information" (Kunczik, 1993: 1). Both, public diplomacy and international public relations can work efficiently

together toward rationalisation and synergy in transmission of relevant information about one's state and foreign policy. Thereby, they can complement each other in state promotion activities, by using "soft" methods of media and public relations, on one side and on the other, also "hard" methods of persuasion and propaganda, more or less covered in subtle forms of cultural, education, promotion etc. programmes.

Nevertheless, public diplomacy is not merely a technique of state promotion, its basic content and quality is formulated and implemented foreign policy which cannot be merely compensated by means of public relations and advertising. The most important roles are played by credible and competent foreign affairs speakers who are involved with the policy decision making process. Efficient public diplomacy, responding in one voice, needs a strategic planning (recognition and solutions to open questions) and a systemic coordination of actors at the home Foreign Ministry, at embassies abroad and the other involved.⁷ Apart from official contacts with the host government, modern diplomats nurture relations with diverse opinion makers and multipliers, important and interesting people from all walks of life. They work more and more in cooperation with media, not against or in competition with them, and in addition, they take on the task of persistent convincing with relevant arguments, in public and in the media.⁸

⁷ From a videoconference with Barry Fulton, Associate Director of USIA, and Tom Genton, Foreign Service Institute, US Embassy, Ljubljana, May 2001.

⁸ "Oesterreichs Diplomaten im 21. Jahrhundert", Guest editorial by Ernst Sucharipa, Director of Diplomatic Academy in Vienna, Die Presse, 23 September 2000.

Media diplomacy

What is a modern diplomat's role in the times when "unmediated dialogue and information exchange between citizens from around the world occurs 24 hours a day" (Wriston, 1997 in Rothkopf, 1998: 328) and as "the media are increasingly a part of the process (if not the entire process) in the communication between governments and publics about international politics" (Karl, 1982: 144 in Kunczik, 1993: 169)? The intense dynamics of media coverage in the last decade can be barely followed by the capabilities of foreign affairs actors to gather information, make a proper decision and inform the public on time. The story of the former Director of Communication to the former President Clinton, George Stephanopoulos about how himself, the National Security advisor and the President got to know about anti-Yeltsin coup in Summer 1996 from the CNN first, is more than illustrative under the heading "once again CNN beat the CIA." (Stephanopoulos, 1999: 212) In a similar way, NATO's spokesman Jamie Shea explains: "The ability of the media to dramatise events and create a global audience for a conflict puts policy makers under pressure to take decisions faster and with less time for reflection than at any previous time in human history." (Shea, 1999: 5)

International television networks like CNN bring about "the constitution of a worldwide homogeneously time-zoned bios politikon, instantaneously affecting world wide political action or interaction via press conferences or public resolutions transmitted around the world" (Volkner, 1999: 3 in Thussu, 2000: 12). The world leaders and diplomats are aware that CNN became an independent force in international politics and an important opinion leader by itself and often acts, as formulated by previous UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in the seat of "the 16th member of the Security Council". Therefore, they strive to take on its advantages or the so-called "CNN effect", i.e. televise its foreign policy and sell it to the public (Thussu, 2000: 13). For example these attempts were made by US Presidents from the early 1970s on: Nixon carefully choreographed his visit to China for primetime viewing back home, Carter's administration engaged in "verbal ping-pong" with Tehran, sending messages back and forth via the TV channels, Reagan converted "photo ops" into a science in his foreign visits (Gergen, 1991: 47). Clinton mastered the medium, sending carefully staged TV pictures of foreign affairs events, like a historic shake hand between Palestinian leader Jaser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Barak on the White House lawn (in Stephanopoulos, 1999).

Even with extreme measures, use of force, and when leading a war, one is more or less involved with the media presentation and interpretation, and faces a particular phenomenon of *media wars*. In today's conflicts political leaders spend as much time explaining or justifying a conflict to their public opinion and to the media as they actually do running them. Thus, as stressed by communication lessons of the NATO intervention on FRY, one has to keep in control: "Leaders have to dominate the media and not

be dominated by it. Successful conflicts cannot be media driven. Winning the media campaign is just as important as winning the military campaign." (Shea, 1999: 8) Furthermore, one realises that "the realpolitik of the new era is cyberpolitik" in which the actors are no longer just states and raw power can be counted or fortified by information power. Internet technologies enable virtual communities to unite to counter government efforts, from use of violence to the closing off of existing media channels. These take their cases to the international court of public opinion, whose influence over states has grown as its means to reach an ever greater audience has multiplied. A worldwide network is the key feature of the environment in which diplomats and generals operate (Rothkopf, 1997: 325-330).

In this new democratic, media and communication driven environment, diplomacy not merely adapted to work with the media hand-in-hand, but also learnt how to manipulate the media, stepping toward a more active involvement and management of media and communication to one's country purposes and advantages guided by national interests. With the emergence of a so called *media diplomacy* and even *medialised foreign policy*, foreign policy decisions and diplomatic activity are more and more presented in news formats, also by pseudo events and personification (Kunczik, 1993: 169). Furthermore, "Western diplomacy has become sophisticated in packaging public information in a visually astute fashion and television networks, which often operate in a symbiotic relationship with authorities, tend to conform the geo-political agendas set by powerful governments" (Thussu, 2000: 5). To this point, during the Rambouillet talks between Serbian leaders and Kosovo Albanians in February 1999, it was indeed metaphoric to see the exhausted faces of James Rubin, Spokesman of the State Department, and Christiane Amanpour, Chief Correspondent at CNN, in their private lives the happily married "Hollywood" couple, but each doing one's job on the opposite sides of the fence.

Even government officials and PR experts are critical of themselves in this respect: "What too often counts is how well the policy will "play", how the pictures will look, whether the right signals are being sent, and whether the public will be impressed by the swiftness of the government's response - not whether the policy promotes America's long-term interests." (Gergen, 1991: 48-49) Some scholars argue that superficial daily news and media accounts cannot compensate for in-depth diplomatic reports, richer in information, sources, analysis and recommendations (Vukadinović, 1994: 248-249). Further more, others claim that the main functions of diplomacy have remained the same and that they represent one of the few stable foundations of international society. "It would not be surprising if this era was to be characterised not as the age of diplomacy's decline, but as the century of diplomacy." (Sofer, 1991: 78). Therefore, one calls also to the international public relations experts and practitioners, media consultants and spin-doctors working in the field of foreign policy alongside

politicians and professional diplomats, not to merely apply different sophisticated techniques, but rather strive to fill in "the ideological vacuum of the 3rd millennium".⁹

⁹ Interview with Paddy Ashdown, ex-leader of the British Liberals, Die Presse, 23 November 2000.

European modern diplomacy

Within the analysis of current trends in diplomatic practices and "the communication society", one should discuss also a particular phenomena of European modern diplomacy within a strengthened EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)¹⁰ as "the original European international society seems to have vanished, i.e. European inter-state relations have been transformed by means of intergovernmental integration" (Joergensen, 1999: 91). The basic dilemma in this context is how to modify the existent diplomatic and communication practices of Member States to comply with the agreed CFSP aims and framework. It seems that in the future perspective separate diplomacies within the EU will become dispensable in objective terms, but due to strong subjective perceptions that state's foreign and security is the core of nation's sovereignty, it will be very tough to provide for a merger as in form of a common European diplomacy and to persuasively communicate on that point.

However, diplomats of Member States have found certain ways in their every day professional work and communication of how to efficiently integrate both dimensions, the national and the European one. The analysis of European modern diplomacy in the context of communication is indeed a relevant one as a web of foreign ministries in which each is linked by means of a telex network is unprecedented in the history of diplomatic relations (Joergensen, 1999: 86). A study on concrete "emanations" of EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy within the UN (Plavšak, 1996b) showed that large credit for a successful policy implementation actually goes to every day communication, regular contacts, informal consultations, and coordination at lower levels and "in the field", among the diplomats of the EU Member States at the embassies abroad whereby diverse actors within the EU constantly interact, parallel to regular institutional channels. By these means Member States established a comprehensive coordination of policies and efficiently carry it out in a form and to the extent as allowed by sovereign states having common interests in some respects but differing national interests in others. Further on, within the regular process of policy coordination, the EU Presidency tries to attract the associated countries and also other countries belonging to the "European" region

¹⁰ Stated in Title V, Article J, of the Maastricht Treaty ('Treaty on European Union', signed 1992, into force November 1993). Hereby, the EU Member States, on the basis of previous practices of cooperation which from the early 1970s took place within an informal policy coordination framework, European Political Cooperation (EPC), agreed to pursue common objectives in this field "by establishing systematic cooperation... in the conduct of policy" and "by gradually implementing... joint action in the areas in which the Member States have important interests in common." As to such provisions, the Presidency (member country rotating every 6 months) carries a specific responsibility of representing the EU states and implementing the common measures, following the guidelines given by the European Council (heads of states) and complying with the decisions made by the Council (foreign ministers). Further on, EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy took the major qualitative step forward by the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty (signed in 1997; into force 1999), with more detailed provisions for the implementation of the CFSP, in particular to its defense dimension, and by the appointment of a High Representative for CFSP, at the same time Secretary General of the Council. More on the latest developments in Hannay, 2000; and Solana, 2000.

(like Norway and Monaco) whereby these countries ascribe to some of the EU's common positions and in general display a certain degree of a "policy mimicry", i.e. unilateral adjustment to EU policies also within the UN. As a large and well integrated voting bloc, EU often creates a "band-wagon" effect whereby individual states go along with the perceived "opinion" and "power" majority, and states strongly opposing the EU positions remain isolated.

In addition, in order to build on a common European diplomatic corps and spirit, several proposals were made for a College of Diplomacy of the European Union, a European Diplomatic Academy and a European Diplomatic Programme. These training and education programmes include aims to create personal networks among junior diplomats which can contribute to the creation of a European identity in foreign policy, the raising of national diplomatic consciousness with regard to the specifically European dimension of diplomatic practice of EU Member States and the raising of the level of preparation for European diplomatic tasks by the provision of a European teaching environment outside the strictly national setting. These should also become the centre piece of an emerging common EU "external service culture", which would facilitate the build-up of common diplomatic representations and add to the coherence of the EU's external representation and image, all together powerfully contributing to strengthening of the EU as an international actor (Molnar, 2000).

How do media and public relations involve in this process of European diplomacy and CFSP socialisation and popularisation? It is interesting to observe that the lower level communication and actual coordination among European diplomats mostly remains out of sight of the media and general public, whereas the summit meetings of Heads of States and Governments attract much of media attention and also public controversy. Here political leaders, also in their public and media appearances, always have to weigh sovereignty and national interests against the potential gains of the integration, "on the one hand national autonomy or *independence* of their job, i.e. absence of interference by supranational agents, and on the other hand *economic growth* which at relatively high levels assures them re-election." (Mattli, 1996: 27). On one side, through sophisticated interaction among European diplomats "...collective language is constructed - representing a collective understanding -and provides a bridge between the different agents so that the trust and understanding, as a precondition for cooperative behaviour, can be constructed" (Jonsson, 1993 in Lose, 2001: 191). Whereas on the other, one preserves a continuous public and media image of EU Member States exerting their sovereignty and national interests also in the field of foreign and international affairs.¹¹ The most important amalgam, as presented also in his personalised and televised form, remains the EU High Representative for the CFSP Javier Solana, as "the European Political Union can be identified

¹¹ Thus, a large majority of the European population continues to support a common foreign and a common security and defence policy, which can be explained in terms that Europeans are more conscious of common interests and even feel a degree of common identity (Palmer, 2000).

with a voice and face - "Mr. Europe" as some media have called Dr. Solana." (Heusgen, 2001). The messages which he continuously conveys and persistently stresses on his many journeys work to the same purpose: "we are essentially a values based society"¹²; "the right way for the European Union is the way of compassion and of engagement".¹³

Communication on the CFSP is further complicated as that mass media remain predominantly organised along the lines of the constituent states of the Union, rather than on any genuinely transnational basis, and that there is always a tension between discussion of issues as European issues and their discussion as issues of national interest within Europe (Kunelius & Sparks, 2001: 5).¹⁴ To put it into a broader perspective of debates on the construction of "a European public sphere" or rather on "Europeanisation of national public spheres", one speculates that this would need to involve the dissemination of a European news agenda; to become a significant part of the everyday news-consuming habits of European audiences; and to entail that those living within the EU have begun to think of their citizenship, in part at least, as transcending the level of the member nation-states (Schlesinger and Kevin, 2000: 228 in Kevin, 2001: 22). Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on questions like: "which issues and problems would be able to constitute the beginning of European publics?" rather than "which media is or would be able to construct a European public sphere?" (Kunelius & Sparks, 2001: 16). This means that also in the field of foreign affairs European politicians and diplomats address their publics with relevant European messages, but via country specific media and communication channels, as well as through national networks of opinion makers and public figures, while constructing a virtual community of the European Union.

¹² Speech "European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and its social basis", Berlin, 29 June 2001. At <http://ue.eu.int/solana/>

¹³ Speech "Europe: Security in the Twenty-First Century", Stockholm, 20 June 2001. At <http://ue.eu.int/solana/>

¹⁴ See also Plavšak, 1994.

Slovenia - potential of small diplomacies

Where does Slovenia stand in respect to the concepts and trends described in this paper? A small country, with limited resources and human capital, and with merely ten years of statehood, independent foreign policy and diplomatic experience, is probably not comparable to elaborated systems of (public) diplomacy in powerful Western countries like United States or Germany. Due to its size determinants, Slovenia's positioning in international affairs is specific, and also potential ways in which its foreign policy can be efficiently implemented and communicated differs from the others.

As at the start Slovenia was "a nation without an image and known identity" (Serajnik, 1998: 687), today it is widely recognised as a stable, prospective country in the Central Europe, proved to be able to take on a role of "an exporter of stability" to the region, a mediator and "an honest broker" in international community. The pictures and the words of the former US President Clinton during his visit to Slovenia on 21 June 1999 bear historic importance of communicating Slovenia's role in the world: "We must build a Europe with no frontline states - a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. And Slovenia can lead the way."¹⁵ One can claim that within the multilateral international organisations Slovene diplomacy made an excellent use of its smallness and unproblematic position and can profit even more within the EU integration processes (in Jazbec, 2001). The CFSP framework provides it, as an associated country, with an equal participation in the established coordination and communication practices which can contribute to rationalisations in the diplomatic apparatus. All in all, the very ability to communicate competently in the international affairs can importantly add up to the soft powers of Slovenia's cultural, civilisational and economic achievements, which exceed the physical power of the state.¹⁶

In order to compensate for its limited scope and power, Slovene diplomacy should work toward being more transparent, inclusive and communicative - it should build networks on all levels to include all relevant actors and provide for a synergy of diverse efforts in the field of public diplomacy and international public relations. Special attention should be devoted to media related work: work of Slovene diplomats to a great extent relies on international media reporting, and the international media in turn, can importantly strengthened Slovene foreign policy positions. Here one observes that Slovene foreign policy actors tend to often use the domestic media as a communication channel and also, a testing variable, while Slovene media seem to be increasingly interested to perform as official representatives (and defenders) of Slovene national interests. Further more, communication and

¹⁵ Remarks by President Clinton, Congress Square, Ljubljana, 21 June 1999. At http://clinton.hal.si/eng/clf01_3.html

¹⁶ Dimitrij Rupel, Foreign Minister of Republic of Slovenia, at a lecture "Unions and Disunions", Faculty of Social Sciences, Ljubljana, 17 January 2001. At <http://www.gov.si/mzz/eng/index.html>

messages by Slovene diplomats and foreign policy actors should be based on thorough analysis and well thought foreign policy formulations, on one side, and any foreign policy decision should take into account also public opinion and communication aspects. As there exists a stronger need for each and every single Slovene diplomat to integrate traditional diplomatic functions alongside the communication and media related functions, it is very important to educate future professionals not only in international relations and foreign affairs, but also train them in media and public relations.¹⁷ At the same time one should provide that media and public relations practitioners get actively involved in foreign affairs and diplomatic activities, also by rotating in their job positions at the Foreign Ministry and the Slovene embassies abroad.

¹⁷ A proposal by the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, to the Slovene Foreign Ministry includes a workshop “Public Diplomacy and International Communications”, to be on the curriculum of the Diplomatic Academy in the upcoming academic year.

Conclusion: Diplomacy for the 3rd millennium

"No matter how convincing your strategic rationale for a given policy may be, it must, above all, be understood by a broader public, or else it may not be politically sustainable."¹⁸

This paper looked into the genesis of diplomacy as a concept, shifting in its meaning and function toward final destinations of a medialised reality and a pure communicative action. It showed that diplomacy became more or less media formatted and instrumented by communication, however, its basic content remains foreign policy as a way of how national interests of a particular country are formulated, implemented and coordinated in relation to other countries. Modern diplomats are locked in a specific relation of inter-dependency where they rely on media transmitted information, on one side and on the other, use media as efficient communication means supplementing the classical diplomatic channels. Given such a situation, diplomatic profession nowadays resembles the profession of a public affairs practitioner, as it implements reasoning, tools and techniques of media and public relations. At this point it should be stressed again that in diplomacy, like in public relations, one should first and foremost be clear on what one wants to communicate, i.e. on the message, based on particular foreign affairs positions and shaped by public perceptions, at home and abroad.

To the contrast of the US "big power" and "Hollywood" like pictures and messages in international relations, we pointed to the sophisticated, considerate and low profile European way of diplomacy and communication which in our opinion, actually creates the fine texture of the EU's common foreign policy and further on, common (international) identity. While we attempted to position the Slovene diplomacy within the current trends of the international community and the communication society, we concluded that these can be only of an advantage to the diplomacy of a small, but perspective country - its shortcomings in physical powers can be even better compensated by soft powers of communication. A Slovene diplomat, connected to the world-wide-web, providing a stronger bridge with media and the public, and being overall synergic and integrative in his/her communication function, can be even more efficient and effective in making the Slovene foreign policy voice heard, recognised and followed around the world. .

¹⁸ NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson in a speech "Communicate", Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 23 April 2001.

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