



Wilton Park
Harnessing the power of dialogue

Programme

The art of the possible: conflict diplomacy in an era of new global challenges

Friday 11 – Sunday 13 February 2011 | WP1090

Synopsis

Despite rapid globalisation and the emergence of new actors engaged in new modes of conflict, the work of diplomacy remains fundamental to the promotion of global stability. But as the world is changing so are the challenges facing the institutions and individuals entrusted with mediating or negotiating peaceful settlements to conflicts of unprecedented complexity and dynamism. “Traditional” bilateral conflicts have not been relegated to history, but most contemporary conflicts are multi-issue, multi-stakeholder affairs, today fought not only on the battlefield but also in multilateral forums and the media. This conference will tackle the challenges of diplomacy and conflict resolution in the twenty-first century by leveraging the collective knowledge of leading practitioners from across the world who have honed their skills in the service of governments, IGOs, and NGOs. The conference will assess what the new diplomat needs to have in terms of skills, knowledge, and support, as well as the role that the international community can play in resolving conflict through diplomacy.

In partnership with the United States Institute of Peace

(Speakers invited and themes proposed * denotes unconfirmed)

Friday 11 February

1300

Participants arrive

1430-1600

Welcome to the conference and introduction to Wilton Park

Richard Burge

Chief Executive, Wilton Park, Steyning

Opening remarks

Richard Solomon

President, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC

1600-1645

1. New conflicts and new actors

What kinds of conflicts are diplomats going to be asked to handle in the near and mid-term future? Will these conflicts mirror those of the past or will they be driven by new issues? For example, will the activities of transnational criminal organisations increasingly shape conflict environments? What regions will be most susceptible to conflicts? What is the role and nature of the diplomat in the new world? What new actors will the new diplomat face across the negotiating table or otherwise have to deal with in future conflict environments?

Chair: Julian Lindley-French

Eisenhower Professor of Defence Strategy, Netherlands Defence Academy, Alphen

Michael Lund

Senior Specialist, Conflict and Peacebuilding, Management Systems International, Washington DC

Francesc Vendrell

Senior Adviser, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva: Former UN and EU Special Representative to Afghanistan

1645-1730

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1730-1900

New conflicts and new actors continued

1900

Drinks followed by dinner

Saturday 12 February

0900-1030

2. New goals and practices

How will the same conflicts be handled in different negotiating forums and institutions at many levels? What issues does having multiple negotiating forums raise, and how can they be dealt with? How will these new conflicts, actors, and forums combine to impact the goals and types of negotiation practices? Will mediation become more important and negotiation less? Will the world look to an adversarial or a cooperative model of negotiation? Will short-term or long-term objectives take precedence? Will conflict resolution supersede conflict management? Will there be increased international focus on conflict prevention, resulting in new demands for diplomats to engage in mediation of political grievances that could erupt in conflict, but have not yet done so? Does unilateralism have a future?

Chair: Chan Heng Chee

Ambassador of Singapore to the United States of America, Washington DC

Richard Wright

Director, Conflict Prevention and Security Policy, European External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels

Antje Herrberg

Director of MediatEUr and Senior Advisor for Mediation, Crisis Management Initiative, Brussels

1030-1100

Tea/coffee

1100-1230

New goals and practices continued

1230-1430

Lunch

1430-1600

3. Creating the new diplomat

How do institutional and national cultures enhance or impede negotiating effectiveness? Are some cultures more suited to some diplomatic tasks and some conflicts than others? How might we arrange the best division of labour? Or are we just looking at an increasingly homogenized, globalised tribe of professional diplomats/negotiators who think and behave much like one another? Are there different skills that different kinds of diplomats working for different kinds of institutions need in order to prevent, manage or resolve conflict effectively? What impact do differing institutional and national cultures have on a diplomats work? What importance should be given to each of linguistic, technological and political skills? How do they or should they acquire and refine skills? Should the role and career path of a diplomat be redefined to make it more suited to contemporary challenges?

Chair: Daniel Korski

Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), London

Kishan Rana

Senior Fellow, DiploFoundation, Malta and Geneva; Former Indian Ambassador; New Delhi

Robert Beecroft

Supervisory Senior Inspector, U.S. Department of State, Washington DC

1600-1630

Tea/coffee

1630-1800

Creating the new diplomat continued

1900

Dinner with after dinner speaker

Lakhdar Brahimi

Member of The Elders; former UN Special Envoy and Advisor; and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria (1991-93)

Sunday 13 February

0730-0830

Breakfast

0830-1030

4. Implementing the new conflict diplomacy

What are new realities that diplomats face in negotiation and mediation? How will funding restrictions and funding flexibility effect conflict diplomacy? Will political leaders devote adequate resources to conflict prevention or only rhetorically acknowledge its critical importance? What tools and resources are available to diplomats? What will be the division of labour across regions, sub-regions, and countries in terms of preventing, managing, and resolving conflict? How will we protect and support diplomats in increasingly hostile environments—and how can we insulate them from domestic political attacks? How will we balance risk and opportunity? How will a large and diverse cast of actors engage in an increasingly globalised world? How will non-state actors impact traditional roles?

Chair: Lord David Hannay

Member, House of Lords, London

Søren Jessen-Petersen

Advisor, Independent Diplomat; Adjunct professor, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University; and School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC

Tamrat Samuel

Director, Asia-Pacific Division, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations, New York

1030-1100

Tea/coffee

1100-1200

Implementing the new conflict diplomacy continued

1200-1300

5. Conference conclusions

Chair: Pamela Aall

Provost, Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC

Winrich Kühne

Steven Muller Professor, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Bologna Centre

Deborah Goodwin

Senior Lecturer, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Camberley

1300-1415

Lunch

1415

Participants depart

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