

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON DIPLOMATIC TRAINING

27th Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and Institutes of International Relations

Diplomatische Akademie, Wien, 20-24 September 1999

Monday 20 September

Ambassador Dr Paul Leifer, in his capacity as outgoing director of the Diplomatic Academy, welcomed delegates to the 27th Meeting and introduced his successor, Ambassador Dr Ernst Sucharipa.

On behalf of all Members of the Forum Ambassador Sucharipa warmly thanked Ambassador Leifer for his remarkable contribution to the development of the Forum during his term of office, and especially for all his efforts in organising and preparing the 27th Meeting. Ambassador Leifer was made an Honorary Member of the Forum by acclamation.

Tuesday 21 September

Keynote Address:

Dr Erhard BUSEK, Co-ordinator of the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative, Chairman of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, former Deputy Prime Minister of Austria

Dr Busek reflected on developments in the Southeast European region since 1989, a period of readjustment and turmoil in which all states including Austria had confronted dilemmas of identity and orientation.

Political development in the region was hampered by the legacy of the past. Apart from the tragedies of recurring wars many of the decisions affecting the peoples of Southeast Europe had been taken by outside Powers imposing settlements and boundaries according to Western European priorities. Even the terminology used to describe the region reflected inaccurate perceptions and old prejudices.

The Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI) represented a fresh opportunity to incorporate the region into the mainstream of European integration. Until recently the approach of the EU had been essentially bilateral; now it was important to approach the process of integration multilaterally, as the core economic, political and ethnic challenges to be resolved were cross-boundary problems. SECI was concentrating on cross-boundary facilitation in trade, transport, energy, environmental conservation and the fight against organised crime.

The Stability Pact was a positive development though not without problems of scope and co-ordination. Though the circumstances were not those of 1945, there were useful elements reminiscent of a Marshall Plan such as the prospect of building up revolving 'counterpart funds'. Soft loans would be more useful than outright gifts in promoting a sense of responsibility for regional recovery.

Prospects for positive political development in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) were not yet very optimistic; the opposition remained too fragmented. But the Federal Republic remained the vital nodal point for the region, and the consequences of its continuing instability made Southeast Europe the main European issue for all European states.

Comprehensive co-operation therefore was vital. EU enlargement had to be accelerated, and the distinction between first and second wave applicants dropped. Practical steps such as joint history projects would help to overcome national myth and inherited hostilities by acknowledging the shared agonies of the past. And the religions of the region had a role to play in fostering ecumenical co-operation rather than division.

In response to questions Dr Busek stressed the positive impact of the tragedy of Kosovo in bringing Southeastern Europe into the mainstream of European political and economic development. Disintegration was perhaps a necessary precondition of reintegration within a new framework; nationalities had to decide for themselves to join a new union. The co-ordinating institutions emerging amongst Southeast European states helped to build confidence that integration did not imply Anschluss. Business was taking the lead in getting down to the practicalities. And with economic growth transitional problems such as illegal immigration, official corruption, the drain of the talented young abroad, and the marginalisation of the old and the unemployed would recede. But real progress in the region could be made only in partnership.

In concluding the session Dr Busek stressed the importance of common values and a shared sense of human dignity at the heart of European society. The states of Southeast Europe, in co-operation with their European neighbours, now had the opportunity and the responsibility to build a better future for the peoples of the region based on mutual cultural understanding.

2. Activities and Co-operation of Diplomatic Training Institutions:

2a. Introduction of New Participating Institutions:

Five institutions participating for the first time were introduced to the meeting:

Diplomatic Academy of the Czech Republic, Prague

represented by its Director, Milan Jacobec;

Diplomatic Academy of Kazakhstan, Almati

represented by its Rector, Myrzatay Zholdasbekov;

Diplomatic Academy of Romania, Bucharest

represented by its Acting Director, Marius Dragolea, Head of the Policy Planning Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

represented by Dr Peter Slinn, current rotating Chairman representing the eight member institutions of the UK Forum on Diplomatic Training;

University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Tashkent

represented by its Deputy Rector, Ambassador Dr Shavkat Alimov.

Dr Sucharipa also welcomed personally the twenty-two individuals attending the Forum for the first time as representatives of their institutions.

2b. Reports on Regional Developments in Diplomatic Training and International Co-operation:

2b.1 Latin America Group:

Ambassador Dr Eduardo Ortiz, Director of the Academia Diplomática ‘Andrés Bello’, reported continuing co-operation amongst the diplomatic academies of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela all represented at the Forum.

Co-operation on diplomatic training was developing also within the framework of Mercosur between the diplomatic academies of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Meetings had been held so far in Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. A new Andean Group was being created, expected to commence co-operative activities in January, 2000.

Regional courses for diplomats from Central and South America and the Caribbean were being offered by a number of diplomatic academies in the Group including Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica and Mexico.

The Latin American Group would meet next in Mexico on 14 December 1999, to mark the anniversary of the Instituto ‘Matias Romero’.

2b.2 Asia-Pacific Group:

Professor Khereid Bayasakh, Director of the School of Foreign Service at the National University of Mongolia, reported that thirty-two institutions were members of the Asia-Pacific Group, but that few had been able to be represented at the meeting.

Universities offering degree courses in international relations and diplomacy were co-operating in curriculum development. A number of diplomatic academies were offering regional courses of diplomatic training including India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan, with the notable assistance of the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security and the government of South Korea.

2b.3 United States / Canada:

Ambassador Ruth Davis, Director of the National Foreign Service Training Center, reported close co-operative relations between the Foreign Service Institutes of the United States and Canada.

2b.4 Africa Group:

Stephen Gawe, Director of the South African Foreign Service Institute, noted with regret that co-operation between the diplomatic academies of the African region was not yet as active as might be wished. There were hopes, though, that new initiatives would be developed in the coming year.

2c/d/e. Updates of Surveys of Diplomatic Training and Education open to Diplomats from other Countries:

Lucile Dromer-North, Deputy Director of the Institut International d'Administration Publique, and Dr John Hemery, Director of the Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies, presented updated findings of the surveys carried out amongst Forum members on programmes of training and education open to diplomats from other countries.

The surveys show that there is a rich variety of long and short courses being offered by a diverse and growing group of institutions, some governmental, some independent. However, both Mme Dromer-North and Dr Hemery reported relatively low response rates to the survey forms that had been distributed to all member institutions of the Forum. In addition, much innovative work was being carried out at institutions that were not yet members of the Forum, and so were not included in the surveys. The data and the analyses presented consequently were incomplete.

In the ensuing discussion general agreement emerged that such survey data could be gathered and made available most readily and accurately through a Website. Institutions then would have the responsibility of ensuring that the data on their own programmes were complete and up to date, whether through hyperlinks to their Websites or through email updates to a nominated survey centre.

Jovan Kurbalija, Director of the DiploEdu Project at the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies, observed that in response to the request of the 26th Meeting of the Forum at Seoul in 1998, a Forum Website had been created (www.diploedu/forum). At present it consisted principally of the addresses of Forum members, but there was no technical impediment to the presentation of the surveys on the Website.

Proposals for additional materials to be offered on the Website included course syllabi, exercise outlines, reading lists, lecture notes and articles. Some concerns were expressed about intellectual property rights, and about the loss of comparative advantage in a

competitive field. Dr Raymond Saner, academic and independent management consultant, observed that in the business community there had been a decisive move towards greater transparency; substantive materials were published, accessed freely and updated continually. Competitive edge lay not in what but in how materials were used.

Sir John Johnson, Associate Director for Diplomatic Training at Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education, observed that the process of sharing information begun in 1995 had proved beneficial not only in putting institutions in closer touch with one another, but also in encouraging capacity-building within emerging institutions of diplomatic training.

It was thought consequently that there would be value in continuing exchange of information and in periodic analyses of survey data, thereby providing an international digest of diplomatic training and education that could be accessed by any Ministry of Foreign Affairs seeking particular programmes of training and development for their officers. It was suggested that Forum members might pay a nominal subscription to cover the cost of maintaining a central database.

In summarising the discussion Professor Casimir Yost, Director of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at the Edmund Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, noted that great opportunities were offered through a Website but that there were problems to be addressed as well. Simple linkage of Forum Websites would offer perhaps too much information, possibly not the right information, difficult in any event to access rapidly. A coherent plan of action therefore was needed to establish the form and content of materials that would be useful.

In response to a proposal by Ambassador Davis an informal working group of interested institutions met briefly to consider the way forward. It was agreed that a concept paper would be prepared jointly by the Mediterranean Academy and the Diplomatische Akademie and circulated to the Forum in advance of the 28th meeting at Washington outlining a number of options for further development of the Forum Website. In the meantime the Diplomatische Akademie Vienna will list the addresses (with hyperlinks) of all members of the Forum on its own website (on the basis of the Forum website created by Mr Kurbalija).

2f. Possibilities of using DiploEdu:

Jovan Kurbalija gave a computer-based presentation of the DiploEdu project developed by a team of five at the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies. The Website (www.diploedu/course) comprises six modules:

DiploEdu: a nine-month postgraduate diploma course of distance-learning modules commencing with an initial conference/workshop at the Mediterranean Academy in Malta;

DiploWizard: a database offering e-mail linkage with experts on practical problems of diplomacy;

DiploAnalytica: a collection of textual analyses of diplomatic documents;

DiploWeb: an analysis of Web management strategy;

DiploPublishing: a bibliography of materials on diplomacy and diplomatic practice;

DiploKnowledge: an integrated programme offering active linkage of teaching, training and practice.

Mr Kurbalija stressed that information technology was not a substitute for traditional forms of training and education in diplomacy; it was simply an additional tool providing new opportunities and capabilities, but requiring increased time and commitment from instructors.

In discussion of computer-based learning some concerns were expressed about the capacity of so impersonal a medium to reflect adequately the realities of a profession so essentially personal as diplomacy, and about the unfriendliness of interacting with a VDU.

Adriaan deHoog, Dean of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute, observed that in the experience of their Virtual Campus, a programme of twenty courses open to members of the Canadian diplomatic service, the average dropout rate had been fairly high. Completion rates had improved, however, in direct proportion to the amount of personal contact by e-mail between participants and instructors. Participant satisfaction improved still further as instructors were given material incentives based on completion rates. There was significant and rising demand for home-based study via ExtraNet, not least from spouses wishing to gain qualifications that would facilitate job-twinning overseas.

It was recognised that as the volume of computer-based communication rose so the problem of information management increased. There were less disciplined procedures than with paper files; much vital information remained lodged in individual c: drives. Institutions needed to address this fragmentation of knowledge and collective memory as they developed their information technology systems.

Wednesday 22 September

3. Training Diplomats in Management and Leadership:

Papers were circulated and presented by Dr Raymond Saner, Sir Robin Fearn, Ambassador Ruth Davis and Sir John Johnson.

A number of key points arose in the course of the presentations and subsequent discussion:

- Despite there being a mountain of management literature relatively little has been done in developing 'management for diplomacy', focusing on the work of public servants operating across cultures.

- Diplomacy as a profession presents particular management challenges including organisational complexity, cultural dislocation, cognitive dissonance, and rapid turnover of personnel. Programmes of training consequently need to be designed to meet specific professional needs rather than general business management goals.
- Diplomatic services themselves have been slow to embrace administration as being of comparable importance to policy management. Now, however, managing human resources is recognised as a necessary skill for promotion.
- Essential principles of good management include:
 1. having clear and focused objectives: an overall strategy with priorities agreed in formal and informal dialogue between the Ministry, missions and other Ministries, reviewed and updated regularly;
 2. staff management flowing from the leader down within an established and transparent framework of performance evaluation and two-way consultation; much is achieved by example, on the job training being enhanced by informal 'open door' leadership;
 3. co-ordination within a larger team, with an effective flow of information and maximum transparency possible. In contemporary diplomacy all have a public role to play, and well-understood core messages and positions are essential.
- Management and leadership training need to be matched to the Ministry's precepts, based on building key competences progressively. Having identified the required qualities and skills it is necessary to start from the bottom up to develop each officer's capabilities cumulatively over time. Often new entrants and senior management are well provided; mid-career training in particular needs to be strengthened.
- Training needs to be an integral part of a human resources development strategy. Individuals need to know at each stage where they are in the system, and what they need to do to move up.
- Gender issues need to be taken better into account. Leaders need to encourage both women and men to overcome positively the established networks and mentalities that inhibit their advancement.
- Systems and ethos vary between cultures, states and institutions. Management models consequently are of little use in organisations wherein authority is not rationally distributed, or in multicultural institutions such as the European Commission. No one approach is likely to be completely applicable to all, though the personal qualities of a good manager and a good leader are virtually universal.
- In traditional state institutions where there is little scope for creativity, initiative and individual performance management, the role of the leader as mentor is crucial, offering guidance and encouragement in a relationship of creative interaction with those learning from his or her example.
- Some are born leaders; others will never have the necessary qualities. But while character and personality are vital factors, leadership, interpersonal skills and efficient management procedures can be taught, and individual potential drawn out in training.

- The development of self-awareness is especially important in enabling a leader to recognise his or her own strengths and to overcome weaknesses.
- An experiential approach with practice and feedback helps to focus training on essential skills.
- The essential role of diplomacy is communication. Communication skills thus are central to training, not least in training leaders to be clear in letting staff know exactly what is wanted. Clever people often leave too much as being simply understood.
- Flexibility is a key quality in rapidly changing circumstances, with increasing diffusion of policy from the center. Diplomats need to be taught to expect surprises and to learn how to deal with them;
- Staff might be offered guidelines with which to measure continually their own performance: initiative, preparedness, accuracy and follow-up.
- Staff, especially senior managers, need to be encouraged to understand that training is a required career-long investment, not an optional extra. Practical incentives include linking training with credits towards academic degrees or with promotion.
- Secondments to business and the professions help to promote cross-fertilisation of ideas and awareness of best practice.
- Efficiency does not always produce effectiveness. Senior managers and finance commissions need to be conscious of the limits to budget cuts and productivity gains in a profession grounded in personal commitment and motivation, often in difficult conditions.

4. Teaching the Implications of Globalisation:

Presentations were given by Dr Peter Slinn, Dr Paul Meerts, Jovan Kurbalija, and by Ambassador Bernard Dorin whose contribution was enhanced by a series of remarkable hand-drawn maps.

Globalisation was recognised as being an all-embracing but ill-defined and inadequately understood process affecting the profession of diplomacy in a number of ways:

- The role of the state is changing. While still in many respects the essential unit of the international system, the state is no longer wholly sovereign, not always the key actor in conflicts, and increasingly is subsumed in larger structures for purposes of trade, interest aggregation and dispute resolution.
- Without the suppressive matrix of Cold War relationships, enduring ethno-linguistic identities have re-emerged, giving rise to both sub-national and supra-national allegiances.
- Both separatism and regionalism, which might be accommodated relatively readily by older states, present problems for newer states in which recent revolutions, liberation and state-building are at the core of political discourse.

- Trends in commerce, communications and information technology all enhance the importance of multilateral relations.
- Developments in information technology are beginning to change the ways in which states and people interact, with growing participation in networks and partnering relationships, in an emerging 'community of creativity' (Drucker).
- Increasingly the pressing issues for international resolution are cross-boundary problems: human rights, environment, natural resources, terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking, money laundering.
- The concept of the national interest needs broadening to encompass common values and goals. The collective interest in many ways *is* now the national interest.
- States, hence diplomatic services, need to take positions and engage in negotiation on issues that may not have concerned them before. The role and potential influence of small states in multilateral fora consequently are progressively enhanced.
- Diplomatic academies have a role to play in helping to prepare not only diplomats but those from other Ministries and from business needing training in international negotiation and the professional skills of diplomacy.
- Multilateral courses help to foster regional and global thinking by bringing together participants from different cultures and traditions to confront common problems.
- As regional organisations develop, providing more effective leverage in global fora, regional diplomatic services are emerging with collective approaches and solutions. They consequently require collective rather than national training.
- Negotiations and working practices within regional organisations have specific characteristics requiring specific training.
- Training courses need increasingly to be interdisciplinary, helping to prepare diplomats capable of seeing the whole picture, drawing on specialist knowledge from line Ministries.
- Governments have structural obligations to pursue diplomacy in different matrices: government to government, international organisation to international organisation, government to non-government organization. Diplomacy thus increasingly is a function of fluid coalition-building and re-building. Greater importance accrues to public diplomacy, advocacy, marshalling arguments and raising awareness.
- Training needs to be orientated towards problem-solving, integrating skills training with substantive learning.
- As mediation and negotiation gradually replace war as the primary means of conflict resolution, and as the international community becomes more prepared to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign entities, training in conflict management, psychology and cross-cultural awareness grow in importance.
- Global interaction makes the study of history and political and human geography essential tools of analysis and understanding.

5. Topical Matters, Agenda of next meeting:

Ambassador Sucharipa observed that Forum discussions should try to focus on the impact of issues and developments in the international system on teaching and training programmes.

Topics of interest for future meetings included:

- development co-operation, including the diplomacy of the World Bank, IMF, UN Agencies and other donor agencies
- inter-cultural studies; dialogues of religions, of civilisations, of civil societies
- cultural diplomacy beyond science and education
- crisis management
- public diplomacy
- differing styles and contents of diplomatic training
- preparing the diplomat of the future: what to expect; how to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required
- training to develop the personality of the diplomat; developing attitudes of service-mindedness and cultural sensitivity
- management and leadership; preparatory training for ambassadors
- recruitment and career development
- gender issues: selection, retention, equal opportunity
- training of locally engaged staff
- further developments in information and communications technology
- a comparative analysis of the role of diplomats in 1900 and in 2000, as one of the constituting orders of the international system, embodying in a sense the 'international interest' of the time

There was decisive support for scheduling workshops on specific topics, perhaps in the afternoons, making possible discussions in smaller groups with particular interests.

It was hoped that at future meetings there could be further scope for contributions from the representatives of Asian, African and Latin American academies reflecting the interests of the diplomatic community beyond the member states of the EU and NAFTA.

Professor Yost invited members of the Forum to submit written proposals for the 28th meeting to him at Georgetown. He and Ambassador Sucharipa would confer with Ambassador Robert Galucci and Ambassador Ruth Davis to determine the dates and agenda of the Millennium meeting at Washington.

The meeting took note with gratitude of the formal invitation received from the Budapest Institute of Graduate International Studies to incorporate a visit to Budapest in the programme of the 29th meeting at Vienna in 2001, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Institute.

Dr Kamel Abu-Jaber, President of the Institute of Diplomacy in Amman, kindly proposed that the 30th meeting of the Forum be held in Jordan in 2002. Rome was also mentioned as a possible host of the Forum in the near future.

The special place of the Diplomatische Akademie as the *alma mater* of the Forum was acknowledged. In order to ensure coherence it was proposed that the practice of the meetings returning to Vienna every second year be continued.

6. Official Visits:

Members of the Forum attending the 27th meeting were fortunate to be welcomed at a number of institutions offering generous hospitality and programmes of special interest:

Town Hall of Vienna

hosted on behalf of the Mayor, Dr Michael Häupl, by the President of the Legislature of Vienna, Ms Maria Hampl-Fuchs

Economic Chamber of Austria

hosted by the Vice-President Ms Elisabeth Gürtler-Mauthner, with briefings by Dr Peter Schnitt and Ms Elisabeth Czachay

Austrian National Parliament

hosted on behalf of the President of the Austrian Parliament, Dr Heinz Fischer, by Mr Wilhelm Brauneder, Third President of the Austrian National Council, and Ms Alice Alsch-Harant, Chief of Protocol

On 24 September participants of the meeting enjoyed a one day excursion to Bratislava at the invitation of the Slovakian authorities. The visit was arranged by the Austrian Ambassador to the Slovak Republic, Dr. Gabriele Matzner, former Deputy Director of the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna.

Comenius University, Bratislava

hosted by the Rector Magnificus, Professor Ferdinand Devínsky, the Vice-Rector for Science, Professor Dušan Blinarcik, and further representatives of the University

The Government of the Slovak Republic

with a briefing by the Deputy Prime Minister for Integration, Mr Pavol Hamzik

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

with a briefing by the State Secretary, Mr Jaroslav Chlebo

The Primacial Palace, Bratislava

hosted by the Mayor of Bratislava, Mr Jozef Moravčík

In addition to the programme of official visits the Diplomatische Akademie kindly provided an informal 'Heurigen' hosted by Ambassador Sucharipa, with traditional music and dancing, as well as a comprehensive programme for accompanying partners including visits to the Historical Museum of the City of Vienna, the Johann Strauss exhibition, the Vienna State Opera, Schönbrunn Palace and Belvedere Castle.

In closing the meeting Professor Yost offered warmest thanks to the Director and staff of the Diplomatische Akademie, and to the people of Vienna. Together they had set an intimidating precedent for the team preparing the 28th meeting.

Ambassador Sucharipa said that he had been pleased to be able to follow the example set by Paul Leifer, and he looked forward to the Millenium meeting at Washington.

Dr John Hemery
Rapporteur

Attachments:

Agenda
Programme
List of participants
List of websites provided by participants