The New Diplomacy: Evolution of a Revolution

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The continued rise of the non-state actor in twenty-first century international politics issues a potent challenge to state primacy in the area of diplomacy. Diplomacy's statist tradition, once the bedrock organising institution for pursuing international politics, is ceding influence to non-state actors—the "new" diplomats— who have displayed impressive skill at shaping policy through means that foreign ministries fail to grasp. To the chagrin of established scholars and practitioners, this paper claims that nothing has transpired to suggest the diplomatic profession is doing anything but pluralising. Furthermore, the process by which the foreign ministry opens itself to the public increasingly resides with the latter. Does this revolution mean the evolution of the "new diplomacy" has materialised? The contents in the following pages suggest so, and the main reason for this is built upon a radical view of agency: the age of diplomacy as an institution is giving way to an age of diplomacy as a behaviour. Yet despite who dominates in the art of influence, caveats remain and it appears likely that each side will need the other to achieve successful statecraft in the years to come.

Is diplomacy solely the domain of the state? Until recently—the last fifteen years—any answer but the affirmative proved a difficult proposition. For in the era of the nation-state, few institutions have remained so stable and enduring as the diplomatic. Though not itself an invention of the modern international system, it retains, however tenuous these days, a tradition fusing the Machiavellian urges of the state with the pragmatic rationalism borne of the Enlightenment. If states could be viewed as the hubs of political activity, diplomacy provided the spokes for one state's political interests to interface with those of another without resorting to military force. Adam Watson defined it as "a negotiation of political entities which acknowledge each other's independence," and by this accord participants partake in the most pluralistic organising institution in the international system.[1] One state could confidently enter into diplomatic relations with another under a

shared understanding of the rules of the game; with sovereignty mutually recognised, states could then use diplomacy as the means to achieving political ends.

However, from the 1990s onward some began to wonder if the state monopoly on diplomacy and, more precisely, diplomats faced inevitable decline. Several factors influenced this wave of declinism: the rethinking of foreign affairs institutions that took place after the Cold War, expanding perceptions of international agency to include firms, non-governmental organisations [NGOs] and other actors, the widespread adoption of information communication technologies such as the Internet—each served to reinforce claims of the looming disintegration of diplomacy as the world had known it, and much epistemological soul-searching ensued.[2] Without diplomats, as the venerable George Kennan pondered around this time, who would carry the profession forward?[3] What hope lay ahead for the orderly execution of international politics? Were diplomats still necessary? That the challenge to the traditional view incited this kind of existential despair underscored just how deep the institution of diplomacy had grown. States liked it this way and so did the diplomats. Codes of conduct enshrined in the Congress of Vienna of 1814–15, and later in the Vienna Conventions of 1961 and 1963, established norms of diplomatic protocols adopted by nations worldwide. The club-like atmosphere of the diplomatic realm, beyond promoting standards of official behavior and shared values, supported the common view of diplomacy as an exclusive and specialist pursuit. Mayer captured the mood of the early twentieth century foreign policy establishment in this way: "policy-making and negotiations in international politics, with a balance of power as the proximate objective, were [believed to be] so complex and unbending that they should be left to specialists and professional diplomats."[4] The flow of international affairs ran exclusively through the state and state-sanctioned representatives.

Why let go so easily? Juergen Kleiner has recently stated in these pages that this flow runs unabated; the institution, he says, has proved "remarkably resistant" to the fundamental changes that emerged in the 1990s.[5] This deduction rides on three assumptions that keep diplomacy firmly planted in the foreign ministry. First, conventional wisdom assumes that states retain exclusive control over the international agenda, dictating the priority of issue-areas and how to handle them. Second, the overriding condition for this form of management rests is inherently structural, that state initiative precedes all substantive international action. Third, as far as agency is concerned the order of diplomatic action remains unchanged, which is to say policy drives diplomatic action and not the other way around. To each of these dissenters have responded, firstly, that whilst states once reigned unchallenged in the management of international politics, as Langhorne has noted, also in these pages, the contemporary environment accommodates

"a wide range of human activities which owe little or nothing to geographical location, time of day and, most important of all, to government permission or regulation."[6] Secondly, with states' continued focus on traditional power metrics in military, economic, and geographic advantages, "information power" continues to undercut state primacy and confers unprecedented influence to a new generation of actors on the global stage.[7] These actors are noted for their ability to harness this power in such a way that enables them to operate largely unencumbered by sovereign controls. Thirdly, and central to this article's main argument, the beneficiaries of this new strain of power politics are non-state actors, who with great agility and efficiency are proving capable at bridging the multiplying information flows between the body politic and political action, even to the point of shaping policy in ways that today's diplomats cannot.

Indeed, what this suggests is that state control over diplomacy is eroding. Purists would like to believe that even in the most turbulent periods, the international system will not surrender this enduring practice to the clutches of postmodern thinking on the subject. But the continued rise of the non-state actor in twenty-first century international politics means challenges to state primacy in both agenda-setting and action remain present. And let us not overlook the nagging questions of representation: if government does not provide the necessary mandate for diplomatic action, then who does? Can the institution of diplomacy survive without state stewardship? And even if this fate comes to pass, could we even call such stateless statecraft diplomacy? In this paper, I submit answers to these questions built upon this radical view of agency, that the age of diplomacy as an *institution* is giving way to an age of diplomacy as a *behavior*. The signs identified in the 1990s presaged a convergence of forces reducing the power asymmetries between state and non-state actors and, together, these are challenging the very ontology upon which official diplomacy has stood for more than three centuries.[8]

In an attempt to prove this point, this article will first briefly survey the process through which official diplomacy has slowly opened its exclusive activities to the public domain. This gradual outreach to the public can be characterised as the evolution, and the long-anticipated arrival, of "newness." We shall see the prospect of newness finally realised by the ongoing liberalisation in the marketplace of ideas for governing international relations, a development that is one part technology due to the enabling power of information communication technologies (ICTs), and one part agency due to the unparalleled influence of non-state actors to usurp conventional diplomacy and expose its weaknesses. Diplomatic scholars and practitioners began highlighting this paradigm shift years ago, when it first became apparent that states needed to enlarge the tent of its liaisons to include firms, NGOs, and other "paradiplomatic" agents. Since then, nothing has transpired to suggest that the profession is doing anything

but pluralising. The argument to be made here is that diplomacy is now well beyond the point of opening itself to the public—it is becoming enmeshed within the public domain.

Second, I will briefly examine diplomacy as a non-state behaviour in relation to power. Information power gained through the mastery of ICTs has elevated the influence of the public domain to behave in ways that are not necessarily coterminous with the system of states.[9] There is one further distinction to be made between official diplomats and unofficial or non-state actors on the matter of authority. From where do they get it? Those who view the traditional system as eroding argue that members of the empowered global public are proving to be particularly adept at integrating political action networks and popular support at the supra-state level. When populations identify more with transnational concerns than those defined by the state, they "relocate" authority to a non-state entity or figure, which in turn enables the non-state actor to amass moral legitimacy and to influence the behaviour of states from outside.[10] These "new diplomats" simultaneously manoeuvre within the state system and command authority across it.

The essential question to emerge from this background is how diplomacy of the behavioural sort practiced by non-state actors or "new diplomats" will continue to eclipse institutional diplomacy practiced by official diplomats into the 21st century. The remainder of the paper, then, isolates five features already taking shape that shall permanently change the way diplomacy is practiced for the longer-term. It shall be argued that new diplomats display distinct advantages over more traditional counterparts in their connectivity to the public sphere. With great agility, they can marshal transnational networks into action and leverage legitimacy to transcend boundaries. On the other hand, new diplomats can exploit their mobility and decentralised organisational structure to elude accountability. Like an upstart company establishing its position in a niche market, new diplomats excel in areas where states are not optimised to act. Neither is perfectly positioned to pursue international action that is both innovative and responsible. To best serve the populations they claim to represent, old and new worlds of diplomacy should not arrange their practices along arbitrary institutional norms, but must instead focus on finding synergy amongst their respective behaviours.

Before launching into the core arguments, let us place the idea of "newness" into proper context. Up to this point, states have consistently managed to integrate "new" approaches into the classical diplomatic model without sacrificing the centrality of its own agents and institutions.[11] The longevity of code and rank as well as the ability of the state system to confine diplomatic dialogues to the foreign ministry attest to the perseverance of the status quo. Of course, the *corps diplomatiques* we associate with Metternich and Talleyrand may remain central to today's official communications—in

the representation of political, economic, and military interests abroad, as negotiators of agreements, and as liaisons and advisors to policymakers. However, they now share the stage with a new cadre of agents and institutions reflective of an international environment made distinct from the past by a number of factors. Among them, one may note that the expanded number of nation-states is relinquishing the amount of power they once held relative to non-state actors, even to the point where the latter are influencing the policy agenda and decisions of the former. State creation may still be desirable—for instance, Kosovo declared independence in February 2008—and yet an abundance of transnational issues and trends is eroding the significance once attached to borders and sovereignty. If one agrees with Nye that information is power, then the recent generations of ICTs have vastly empowered sub-state and supra-state actors so as to loosen the control governments once had on media and content. On matters as far-flung as climate change and international terrorism, we are constantly reminded what changes a well-organised, equipped, and capable group of individuals can bring to bear on an individual state or the state system as a whole.

Transitions are a fixture of modern diplomacy. To illustrate their frequency, one may note how throughout the post-Westphalian era the mantle of the "new" diplomacy is seized on several occasions. Without going into too much detail on each, there are two instances that stand apart: during the French Revolution and the immediate aftermath of the First World War extending into the inter-bellum. In the first, the French revolutionary regime spawned the notion of the *nouvelle diplomatie* in the same spirit that drove the desired break from the *ancien régime.* The installation of popular sovereignty supported a radically different approach to diplomacy from that of dynastic rule. Der Derian identifies the new, or "neo-diplomacy," emerging as a correction for social estrangement and alienation—monarchs had been too preoccupied with the European balance to deal with the concerns of the common man.[12] After initial success, the *nouvelle diplomatie* failed without the widely embraced internationalist ideals it needed to be sustained: "Before Napoleon was on horseback, neo-diplomacy was dead," wrote Der Derian.[13] A time of internationalism provides the backdrop for the second instance, when the establishment of a new order fuelled proclamations of another "new diplomacy" by diplomatic historians and practitioners alike. They attributed its arrival this time to the advancement of internationalist ideals such as transparency in government and open, multilateral cooperation.[14] Adam Watson viewed the League of Nations as symbolising a "major new development" in diplomacy as far as a permanent collective security architecture proved desirable, if not to be embodied by the League itself.[15] But this transition induced adaptational qualities in the "old diplomacy," which successfully transferred traditional practices into shiny new packages: "It is the outward appearance, or, if you like, the make-up of diplomacy

which is gradually changing," the influential French diplomat Jules Cambon revealed. "The substance will remain . . ."[16] Secrecy and exclusivity persisted. By the conclusion of E.H. Carr's twenty-year crisis, Harold Nicolson resigned himself to the conclusion that "so far from having died in 1918, the old diplomacy is to-day more dynamic and more assertive than the new."[17]

But the search for new frontiers in diplomacy did not cease there. From the 1960s onwards, the gradual yet noticeable diffusion of diplomatic powers extending beyond the official realm restored intrigue in the transformations in the international system, including those associated with diplomacy. James Rosenau is notable for having sensed the emerging supranational tendencies of political participation. "Politics everywhere, it would seem, are related to politics everywhere else," he wrote during that time.[18] In 1965, public diplomacy firmly entered the diplomatic vernacular buttressed by the idea that diplomatic dialogues should not only welcome public input, but also recognise the increasingly diverse and organised dimensions of the public domain.[19] In 1968, Arthur Hoffman assembled a group of journalists, anthropologists, psychologists and other social scientists to take another look at the "new diplomacy."[20] In this volume, several contributors wrote of the rapidly changing relationship between governments and foreign publics proposing, among other things, to factor foreign public opinion into the framing of foreign policies.[21] Global civil society surged throughout the 1970s and 1980s led by the rise of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the private sector and human rights-focused NGOs in the not-for-profit sector. As of 2005, the *Yearbook of International Organizations* counted over 77,000 TNCs, more than 10,000 single-country NGOs and 7,300 well-established international NGOs.[22] "Complex global interdependence" revived liberal internationalism for a new age, precipitating a more meteoric rise of non-state international actors than anyone could have foreseen.[23]

Meanwhile, the appearance and substance of international activity has and continues to transform in another significant way: communications. Earlier generations of diplomats faced revolutions in communications technologies with the introductions of the telegraph and telephone. In 1905, Cambon contended these new technologies to be part of a new school of diplomacy and incompatible with the freewheeling subterfuge of previous generations.[24] Nearly a century later, satellite and computer technologies along with other forms of media came to dominate the information sharing landscape. Discussions over the increasing sophistication of ICTs occupied the minds of high-ranking American officials in 1987, when then-Secretary of State George Shultz spoke of their centrality to the future success of public diplomacy: "The need for instantaneous, reliable communications links around the globe is perhaps the most obvious and immediate demand we must continue to meet."[25] What has evolved in the space of innovation between telegraphs and the Internet is the speed and the variety of the technologies themselves and the widening availability of these tools to the

global public. Where the breakthroughs occurred is in how such tools came to be used. Politics leverages communication in its capacity to influence the minds of constituents. As the growing selection of ICTs has become more widely distributed worldwide, networks of non-state political actors are displaying their own ability to influence, and in so doing are venturing into territory once reserved solely for diplomats. A 1998 Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS] report portrays a world rapidly advancing beyond the capacity of official diplomacy: "Openness is crowding out secrecy and exclusivity. The quill pen world in which modern diplomacy was born no longer exists. Ideas and capital move swiftly and unimpeded across a global network of governments, corporations, and NGOs."[26] Furthermore, Williams and Delli Carpini imagine the weakening role of the diplomat as the gatekeeper of influence as creating "new opportunities for citizens to challenge elite control of political issues."[27] Herein lies the unsolved riddle of how traditionally hierarchical official diplomatic organisations shall coexist with horizontal non-state networks in general and a new class of nonofficial diplomats in particular.

　　With the benefit of hindsight we can gauge the true impact of transitions and transformations as they pertain to official diplomacy. We discover that what is sometimes regarded as "new" is not necessarily revolutionary, and the "old" never truly fades into obscurity. Thus, for the sake of accuracy one may be better served to discern diplomacy's many "new" developments from the radical shift we are witnessing now. The latest wave provides the starkest evidence yet of separation from the institution, which began in the 1960s and accelerated through the 1990s up to the present. This movement should be distinguished from previous developments by the sheer magnitude of public's assumption of roles and involvement in the process. Unlike previous moments in the evolution of "newness," it is not only that the recent generation of ICTs is faster and more accessible than ever before, but also that its users are more proficient in maximising their services. Also noteworthy is the grander scale of non-state action compared to the past. Envoys of the state may remain vital to the pursuit of national interests, yet the new diplomat's mastery of ICTs draws attention to transnational issues like global warming and human rights. This is compelling as far as content management and technological innovation is concerned, since governments and their bureaucracies seem ill-equipped to compete with the myriad unofficial content providers in the vast marketplace of ideas.[28] After past attempts by states and intergovernmental bodies to make diplomacy more transparent, diplomacy is going public on its own accord.

　　As opposed to past attempts by the foreign ministry to pry itself open, the current shift reflects pressure from the bottom up rather than the top down. Take, for example, the resurgence of public diplomacy among scholars and practitioners of statecraft. The ascendancy of public diplomacy at this time, Christopher Hill argues, is caused in part by a "necessity for

governments to understand that people . . . must be drawn into the diplomatic process."[29] However, this may be according governments too much control over the process. It may also be true that governments are ceding control of diplomatic affairs to external forces. The fact that public diplomacy is on the ascendant in foreign ministries and diplomatic academies may be perceived as an attempt by the state to arrest the loss of legitimacy in its official envoys.[30] It took hundreds of years before statist objectors warmed to the idea that the attitudes and behaviours of the general public might be germane to accomplishing foreign policy goals. States of the twenty-first century fret haplessly over the enhancement of their national images and attempt to match the technological prowess of new media and horizontal—rather than hierarchical—networks. Indeed, it took the post-9/11 struggles of the United States to draw much-needed attention to the widespread neglect of public diplomacy by states. Yet when, in the late 1990s, Rosenau noted the post-war explosion of non-state actors on the international scene, he correctly presaged the "evolution of a multi-centric world" contributing to the "unmanageability of public affairs that has weakened states."[31] States and governments, he suggested, were suffering the consequences of blurred borders and decentralising dynamics in the form of a "relocation of authority": a crisis of state power that is shifting legitimacy to non-state actors.[32]

Although this trend appears to be reducing the power asymmetry between the two, the new diplomats are not and indeed cannot be facsimiles of their official counterparts since they hail from an unorthodox, random selection process that depends heavily on their networking capabilities. Their skills, areas of leverage, and sources of legitimacy are derived from different contexts. Both exhibit the same skills of persuasion: official diplomats are traditionally disposed to building coalitions of states, whilst new diplomats delve into transnational advocacy networks, using their "information and beliefs to motivate political action and to use leverage to gain the support of more powerful institutions."[33] Official diplomats rely on political legitimacy for reinforcement; in lieu of political representation new diplomats require moral legitimacy. The public domain, through vastly expanding modes of access to information and capabilities to communicate—and therefore organise into a network—grants this legitimacy based on what is widely desirable.

How much control do states have over the evolution of this revolution? Two reports released by American scholars in the late-1990s eloquently captured the changing landscape of international communication in pursuit of politics.[34] In admiration of the way the United States Department of Defense transformed its force structure to tackle contemporary military challenges, a process commonly known as the "revolution in military affairs," these authors called on the Department of State to initiate a "revolution in diplomatic affairs" [RDA] to stand any chance of success in a wired world. In 1998, David Abshire of CSIS endorsed a plan that called for no less than a

reinvention of America's diplomatic institutions, emphasising the adoption of a kind of "diplomacy that must become increasingly public to serve the national interest."[35] The following year, analysts David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla backed the findings of the CSIS plan with the warning that few diplomats had noticed, or even seemed to care about their disadvantaged position in the realm of high technology.[36] The decentralisation of control over information placed diplomats in a far weaker position than contemporaries of Cambons at the start of the twentieth century. This process, they argued, would draw officials into competition with non-state actors ranging from firms and NGOs to criminal and terrorist organisations. Few paid attention at the time, but more than a decade later it appears the twin forces of an empowered public domain and the proliferation of ICTs are yet more formidable. Since that time the essential question facing state-based diplomatic institutions has changed. Once possibly having the proactive capability to compete and cooperate with new diplomats today, the old guard has little choice but to prepare for the future.

As the state continues to cede more ground to the empowered non-state actor, five principal features of the future of diplomacy are unfolding. They are: (1) The current state of diplomatic institutions can be characterised as fragmenting, dividing its powers amongst a broad range of state and non-state actors and institutions. (2) At the same time, diplomacy is becoming more public: the "global public domain" is integrating social and technological networks to harness its developing diplomatic capabilities. (3) New diplomacy possesses an advantage in its agility, relies on grassroots mobilisation, and highlights the relevance of policy entrepreneurs. (4) Official diplomacy is and shall remain superior in areas of accountability and legitimacy, continuing to capitalise on its close proximity to policymakers. (5) New diplomats are competing with government action as well as compensating for government inaction.

These features may be best interpreted as two sets of related features— the first four—and an independent observation—the fifth. Inverse relationships between new and official diplomats form the core of this analysis, and I offer three brief points in support of this approach. First, despite a history of operating independently of one another, it is increasingly clear that with expansion of transnational issue-areas official and non-state actors share same spheres of activity. This is becoming more true of diplomacy as well, where states and civil society at times vie for command of policies, be it through agenda setting or negotiation with parties involved in social, security, or environmental affairs.[37] Mathews has noted that this may also lead to a redrawing of social lines as populations come to identify more with globalising issues than narrowly defined national interests.[38] Therefore, the second point to be made is that this competition over setting the international agenda undermines state primacy. The resulting relative decline of states in global governance places such non-state actors as new diplomats in an

opportunistic position, as relational power dynamics dictate. This assumes of course that there is a direct causal relationship between the fragmentation of diplomacy and integration in the public nonofficial realm and downplays other factors such as shifts in policymaking behaviour or transformational events such as the end of the Cold War—but it is more likely that states are too bureaucratic to adjust. Finally, the inverse power relationship between official diplomacy and the nonofficial public capitalises on the contrasting ways in which each has adjusted to the availability of information, expanding forms of media, and multiplying forms of policy entrepreneurship. Much in the same way that market forces thrive on deregulation, the liberalisation in the marketplace of ideas heavily favours new diplomats. Each of these factors applies pressure towards changes in the state-non-state power relationship, highlighting a new form of legitimacy and actuating Rosenau's relocation of authority.

Diplomatic institutions, in the official sense, are reflections of the state-based international system that created them. They base much of their organisational design, rules of conduct, and sense of mission on essential conditions of the international environment. Foremost among them Watson cites plurality: diplomacy is "recognition" by political leaders of the need to coexist with a number of other independent states in an interdependent world.[39] This presumes actions of consequence to ultimately rest with the state. Beneath this presumption also exists an important partitioning of affairs distinguishing those that are foreign from the ones dealing with domestic life. The traditional focus of the diplomat has been on the "outside world," where ministries of foreign affairs showcased a rigid hierarchy of officials who communicate directly with counterparts, analyze intelligence, and manage missions located in spaces external to the state. The problem facing official diplomacy is how to remain accurately reflective of and relevant to ongoing changes in the international system. Just as the business world has begun to dispense with the domestic-international duality, Rosenau argues, "so must the political world begin to think in terms of authority without territoriality."[40]

When Ronfeldt and Arquilla issued their RDA call, their argument suggested states retained the power to not only recognise but also initiate the process.[41] Of course states do reserve the power to actively transform their diplomatic institutions, evidenced, for example, by the American "transformational diplomacy" initiative launched in 2006. But states cannot control factors that are beyond their reach. One of the ways this is occurring is through the apparent fragmentation of official diplomacy to the point of surrendering its traditional authority and resources to actors beyond the jurisdiction of the foreign ministry. This decentralising dynamic, illustrated in Figure 1, means that diplomatic authority is being relocated to NGOs, public intellectuals, religious leaders, and other active subsets of the non-state sector.

Agenda-setting and negotiation provide two immediate examples of where fragmentation is happening. The emerging salience of transnational
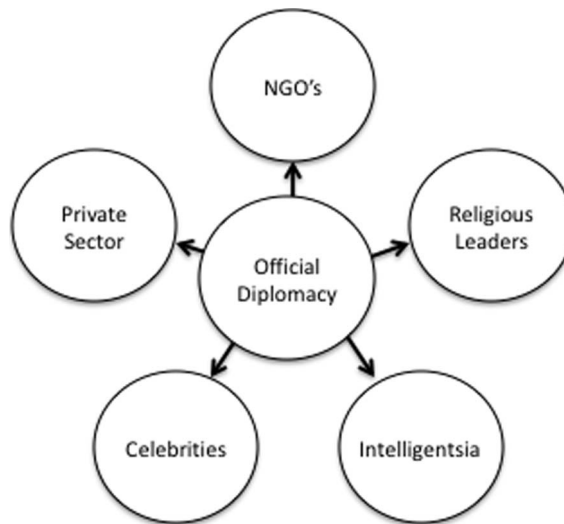
FIGURE 1 Decentralized diplomacy.

issues combined with the flexibility and reach of civil society individuals and groups have loosened the two fundamental responsibilities once restricted to diplomats. Some of these challengers hail from official backgrounds. After a long political career that included nearly eight years as Australia's foreign minister, Gareth Evans became president and chief executive International Crisis Group [ICG] in 2000. Under Evans' leadership, the ICG has grown into one of the world's foremost reporters and analysts of conflict occurring worldwide. Its sustained focus and ground presence on the African continent has proved vital to keeping crises in the Congo, Sudan, and Somalia in public circulation so as to maintain pressure on states to take action. Several former heads of state, such as Mikhail Gorbachev, Nelson Mandela, and Bill Clinton have taken active roles in bringing causes to public attention. In some cases, former heads of state assumed the role of negotiator, either at the request of states—such as Tony Blair in Israel–Palestine—or against state wishes—such as Jimmy Carter's negotiations with Hamas in early 2008.

Another area of fragmentation is in the control of information. During the Cold War years, the main challenges of persuading publics in closed societies amounted to perfecting the means to reach populations with limited information about the world within and beyond their borders, and, as a result, deprived to some degree of their political participation. The technology available to publics was not robust enough to bypass these barriers. But the proliferation of ICTs has made it far more difficult for governments to control information flows than was once possible. For example, whereas the Soviet Union could at one time filter information by jamming the shortwave radio signals of the BBC and Voice of America with some

success during the Cold War, it is increasingly difficult for governments today to block access with the same level of success. A recent OECD study reported Internet usage in Russia in 2006 to incorporate approximately 20 percent of the population.[42] And this number is rising steadily: between 2007 and 2008 Russia's Internet audience grew at an astounding 27 percent, far exceeding the growth rates of any of its European neighbours.[43] Not to be overlooked is the fact that government attempts to deprive its population of information is a double-edged sword. Especially in times of social upheaval, tech-savvy protestors all too often find a way around government controls, thereby defeating the purpose of the controls in the first place and exacting a political price for the regime in power to pay as well.

Recent research suggests that the influence of global civil society is on the rise.[44] One of the reasons for this is the demonstrated ability of civil society organisations (CSOs) to channel, through the effective use of ICTs, their power collectively to achieve common goals. Furthermore, CSOs of sufficient resources do this in such a way that concentrates the moral behavior of a transnational population into a means of global governance. The actions of global CSOs are mobilised collectively in a manner distinctly different from states. State bureaucracies operate hierarchically: policies are debated and decided at high levels in the chain of command, and it is only after a decision has been reached that representatives of the state are dispatched with explicit guidance to see that the policy is implemented. In this model, power is centralised and consolidated amongst a select few individuals who, based on intelligence, make informed judgments on issues salient to national interests. By contrast, the global public domain is becoming skilful in dealing with issues transnationally through horizontally structured networks. The impulse to act derives from constituents within the network. Unlike hierarchies, horizontal organisations eschew elite decision-making and advance agendas through consensus-building and grassroots advocacy. Ronfeldt and Arquilla have labelled these "sensory" organisations, which are described as "nodes in network apparatuses" self-motivated to draw attention to important issues beyond the narrow scope of national interests.[45]

Networks built from the global public domain are amassing diplomat-like powers despite the fact that actors within the networks are not traditionally viewed as diplomats. Examples appear in three different levels of social activity: systemic, organisational, and individual. At the systemic level global CSOs have historically taken the lead in advancing the human rights agenda, and in the 1970s started to effect notable changes in the behavior of states.[46] One might refer to the 1975 Helsinki Accords and the revival of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union. In the wake of the successful campaign to ban landmines in the late 1990s, global CSOs turned their attention to another issue seen to be lagging in the UN system: child soldiers. In June 1998, six influential NGOs banded together to form the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers with the goal of strengthening international legal

protections against the use of children in armed conflict. Through their combined efforts, the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict was implemented in 2002 as a safeguard against conscription of children under 18. In its most recent tally—2004—the group reports that the number of states that have ratified the Protocol is 117.[47]

Because CSOs are so numerous and operate beyond the purview of traditional statecraft, it is easy to overlook the contributions of singular group. On an organisational level, the Aga Khan Development Network mobilises a close-knit group of development agencies to address transnational issue-areas ranging from health and education to microfinance, rural development, and urban renewal. It happens to be one of the largest development agencies in the world, boasting an annual budget of $300 million for not-for-profit activities.[48] The driving force of this network is the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismaili sect of Islam and endowed with a considerable base of popularity and income-generation. The Aga Khan and representatives of his network often command meetings with high-level state officials and enlist their commitments to partnerships.[49]

At the individual level, consider the case of what one well-connected religious leader has accomplished. Bishop John Chane, head of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, DC, describes his engagement with religious and political figures overseas as a prolonged act of public diplomacy.[50] In 2005, Chane accepted an invitation to visit Iran from Mohammed Khatami, who had recently lost a close presidential election to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in August. The defeated Khatami redirected his energies toward the "Dialogue Among Civilizations" campaign he helped to launch in 2001 with the backing of the United Nations. In Chane, Khatami sought an American counterpart who would promote peaceful relations between the United States and Iran upon common theological principals. In turn, Chane took advantage of the access Khatami provided him to the inner circle of Iranian academic, political and religious leadership. He held private meetings with the head of the University of Tehran, with the current chairman of the Iranian parliament Ali Larijani, and with several senior clerics to discuss common virtues. His experiences in Iran spurred Chane to become involved in the Club de Madrid, a high-powered network of former heads of state, scholars, and policy experts. This has enabled him to participate in, among other activities, a 2007 Oslo conference on religious dialogue and tolerance and, in 2008, a conference on religion and modernity in Tehran.

The gradual wresting of diplomacy out of the firm grip of diplomats represents a postmodern turn for what passes as statecraft in contemporary international relations. Rhiannon Vickers, a British scholar, recently posited: the "proliferation of ways of thinking about diplomacy" has sharpened the view that it is "a set of skills and processes which can be learnt" rather than as belonging inherently to some traditional notion of a "diplomatic class."[51] In effect, the advent of new diplomats challenges us to think about new

notions of the diplomat and the role they play on the international stage. As global CSOs, well-placed policy entrepreneurs, celebrities, religious figure-heads, and other transnational actors wade into the once-exclusive territory of diplomats and adopt diplomatic behaviours, they are displaying a unique ability to link grassroots movements with tangible outcomes at the state level. In Andrew Cooper's estimation, such agility as to oscillate between these two political spheres sets this new class apart from conventional activism, advocacy, or philanthropy. Familiarity with the corridors of power and access to state officials are among the chief capabilities of the new diplomat, but a *cause célèbre* with global reach demonstrates how grassroots movements create the popular support to make these capabilities salient.[52]

To underscore this point, Cooper highlights the activities of policy entrepreneurs reflective of all these traits and aptly named "celebrity diplomats." Anointed members of this special cadre, which includes Irish musician Bono, actress Angelina Jolie, and Microsoft founder Bill Gates, have proven exceptionally skilful in alternating between the popular culture world in which they achieved stardom and the world of international politics. Even more remarkable is that they have managed thus far to do so without damaging their standings in either world. On the contrary, the double lives of these celebrity diplomats arguably have elevated their stature in both capacities, which may be attributed to the fact that their activities have become mutually reinforcing. For example, in advance of the 2005 Group of Eight—G—summit in Scotland, the London Live 8 concert, part of a broad strategy to inject public influence into the meeting, featured Bono and his band U2 as the opening act. It would reaffirm his iconic status as a musician-diplomat at an appropriate time: days later Bono would be socialising amongst leaders of the world's richest nations in search of alleviating poverty in Africa.[53]

The welcoming receptions many leaders have granted celebrity diplomats clearly testifies to their mastery of certain diplomatic skills, but it bears noting that their representation is another compelling, if not an enigmatic, factor in their success. The social movements that they represent are not necessarily state-based, but transnational. They normally champion single-issue causes which join otherwise disparate constituencies within civil society under one umbrella. How is it that non-state actors who happen to be independently famous obtain this representational power? The answer lies somewhere within the Hegelian division between moral and ethical foundations for political behaviour. Ethics are enshrined in the political community, a "shared way of life" with its own conceptions of "duties, virtues, and the good."[54] The archetypal political community, the state, is by Hegel's own writ "the actuality of the ethical Idea."[55] One's morality, on the other hand, is a code devised within the individual conscience, a belief system made manifest by will. As this suggests, it exists in a dimension separate from the state, as if to serve as an abstract precursor to a realised idea. For our purposes, New Diplomats are mobilised by moral legitimacy supplied by a collective, state-

less will to somehow reorient the ethical foundations of states, and to change state behaviour in a way that is desirable to the represented movement.

Whilst the speed and efficiency of NGOs offer tremendous advantages over government bureaucracy, drawbacks do exist in some critical areas. "Networks are not panaceas," Anne-Marie Slaughter correctly cautions, "they have big disadvantages as well as advantages."[56] One of the disadvantages lies in the matter of accountability. When non-state action goes wrong, who takes responsibility? A good example of this can be found in the story of mass protests that took place during the meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle in 1999. Originally billed as a peaceful expression of popular discontent, the protestors' loose organisation and divergent interests could not be contained by overwhelmed police forces. The scene escalated into violence with collateral damage sustained by law enforcement, protestors, and the city itself at an estimated cost of $20 million.[57] After the "Battle of Seattle," the impromptu social action network was ill-suited to account for disrupting the lives of uninvolved city inhabitants. Violations perpetrated by city's law enforcement, by contrast, could be prosecuted in the judicial system. The chain of command and clear delegation of responsibilities available in official bureaucracy make it far easier for affected constituencies to demand accountability. Where direct democracy enables polities to express their grievances domestically, official diplomats gather feedback from abroad to apprise the foreign ministry of opinion climates.

Government watchdogs strive to ensure that imperfections in official bureaucracy are fully disclosed to concerned publics; little such oversight exists in the non-state realm. Simmons bemoaned this fact in pointing out that "any group with a fax machine and a modem has the potential to distort public debate" at no risk to themselves.[58] A similar hazard confronts the second problem of legitimacy where nonofficial diplomats are concerned. Official diplomats derive their legitimacy from their affiliation via the rule of law; non-official diplomats, and more broadly NGOs, derive their legitimacy through the pursuit of social goals widely viewed as desirable.[59] Cooper lists a number of ways in which the new breed of celebrity diplomats can suffer a crisis of legitimacy. Celebrity diplomats can undermine their populist appeal by veering too closely to officialdom. Their star quality and personal activities become open to scrutiny, which may also weaken their cachet. It is telling that at September 2007 CBS/*New York Times* poll reported that forty-nine percent of Americans think celebrities should stay out of politics.[60] In some ways, non-state diplomacy invites an even more imperfect, highly volatile, and less forgiving strain of political participation from the global public domain. Official bureaucrats also maintain an edge in their access to policymakers, despite the fact that non-state actors are proving increasingly adept at navigating the corridors of power. To a large degree, international negotiations remain committed to exclusive official participants even to the point—as public diplomats know all too well—of shutting out some of their own. The revolution in

diplomatic affairs represents dramatic change in the liberalisation of diplomacy, but success in collaborating with official counterparts at the negotiating table still comes sporadically and often elusively.

Even in light of these developments there remain those who suggest, as many have in the past, that diplomacy be left to the specialists. It is true there are instances when novices wade far too deep into these murky waters and lack the capacity to build a network.[61] On the other hand, some are well-suited to the task. "Why should religious leaders be engaged in diplomacy?" asked Bishop Chane in response to the suggestion that statecraft should be left to the specialists. The answer: "Because our politicians have failed us, and who else but our leaders of faith to pick up the process?" As with economics, where for example the private sector seizes on a market failure induced by the limitations of government, civil society naturally assumes responsibility for political action when the politicians falter.

In presaging the RDA, Ronfeldt and Arquilla identify a crucial element deemed to be lacking in the evolution of diplomacy: competition. The thrust of their argument evoked a pattern of prior revolutions in business and military affairs, that they were aided by the presence of competing forces impelling both enterprises to innovate or else become antiquated and irrelevant.[62] The argument is a plausible one in that competition is now seen to be reducing the asymmetries between state and non-state power. However, the new diplomacy also fills a niche set apart from the actions, or some would say the inactions, of governments. For whilst the state-centric system is preoccupied with national interests, the new diplomats excel in the realm of global governance and pursue "genuine political activity on a global level apart from the system of states."[63] New diplomats have shown an ability to spur the advancement of global initiatives by leveraging the power of their networks, without which governments otherwise would have pleaded ignorance.

Instances where this has been the case cover a wide range of issue-areas. Mingst and Warkentin cite the example of the collapse of negotiations of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), a plan generated by the world's developed nations to further enhance liberal economic policies enshrined in the Bretton Woods institutions. A torrent of activity from civil society groups, including trade unions, development organisations, and human rights networks constituted a formidable campaign against its implementation.[64] In the private sector, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) an international association whose membership boasts thousands of companies of every size in over 130 countries worldwide, has demonstrated an ability to negotiate at a high level with intergovernmental organisations on global governance issues. It owns a large stake in the execution of the UN Global Compact as a mediator between business and government as they came to agreement on new norms of labour standards and environmental practices.[65]

The most celebrated achievement involving a diplomatic process beyond the state is recognised in the landmark international treaty to ban

landmines, informally known as the Ottawa Treaty, launched in December 1997. By the time of its signing conference, attended by representatives of 156 states and NGOs, the treaty would represent the culmination of a truly worldwide social action network, benefiting from timely publicity stirred by Princess Diana of Wales, and gaining much-needed political legitimacy through the support of Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy. But in the years leading up to this achievement momentum accumulated at a more deliberate pace under the direction of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). The ICBL meticulously built a network of over 1,000 NGOs from over 60 countries, which in turn created the necessary political pressure for many states to respond by acceding to the ban.[66] Given the virtual absence of this issue from the international agenda prior to the ICBL, one can conclude with a high degree of certainty that states would not have arrived at this action on their own accord. In their place, global civil society, and particularly New Diplomacy, negotiated the appropriate climate for states to join the campaign long after its establishment.

Non-state actors present a formidable challenge to state primacy in the diplomatic world and must be viewed as such. They both embody and mobilise the global public domain taking on issues "no longer coterminous" with national interests, but oriented towards over transnational issue areas instead. The new diplomats emerging now are best described as an epistemic and entrepreneurial aspect of civil society performing diplomatic deeds *de facto* by adopting its behaviours, as opposed to *de jure* sanctioned by the state. They are displaying uncanny abilities to shape and influence state behaviour by advancing agenda items and negotiating at high levels. This article makes the argument that a new breed of diplomat defined by a unique skill set rather than membership to an established class is expanding in number. Whether we can call their activities diplomacy is a complicated question. New Diplomats are nonofficial by nature but show themselves to be effective in navigating the narrow straits between official and nonofficial worlds. This is what separates them from strict advocacy or activism. They include celebrities, norm entrepreneurs, religious figureheads, former officials who have reinvented themselves so as to remain relevant in some aspect of world affairs. Above all, as Cooper explains, New Diplomats combine a moral basis of legitimacy with access to political change agents. They match their official counterparts in their familiarity with the corridors of power as well as their display of fundamental skills. They are beginning to exceed them in their ability to forge coalitions across borders. And finally, they act when government fails to do so.

Accepting the evidence presented here, the question that follows—and the course that forthcoming research on this topic should take—is determining the ways in which diplomats, traditional and new, will join their energies for the common good. The direction of the state-system is not yet clear, as Langhorne points out, since governments have not yet reconciled the

incompatibilities between the inter-state system of the past and the globalising, interconnected environment of the future.[67] Yet if the evolution of the revolution in diplomatic affairs stays the course, the states that stand the greatest chance of political success in an information-driven environment will recognise these growth areas beyond the ministry.

NOTES

1. Adam Watson, *Diplomacy* (London, 1991), p. 33.

2. For examples see Susan Strange, "States, Firms and Diplomacy," *International* Affairs, 68(1992), pp. 1–15; Richard Langhorne, "Current Development in Diplomacy: Who are the Diplomats Now?" *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 8(1997), pp. 1–15; Paul Sharp, "For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations," *International Studies Review*, 1(1999), pp. 33–57; Brian Hocking, "Catalytic Diplomacy: Between 'Newness' and 'Decline'," in Jan Melissen, ed., *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice* (New York, 1999).

3. George F. Kennan, "Diplomacy without Diplomats?," *Foreign Affairs*, 76(1997), pp. 198–212.

4. Arno J. Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917–1918* (New York, 1969), p. 14.

5. Juergen Kleiner, "The Inertia of Diplomacy," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 19(2008), pp. 329–41.

6. Richard Langhorne, "The Diplomacy of Non-State Actors," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 16(2005) p. 332.

7. Jospeh S. Nye, Jr. and William A. Owens, "America's Information Edge," *Foreign Affairs*, 75(1996), pp. 22–23.

8. David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla, "What if there is a Revolution in Diplomatic Affairs?," United States Institute of Peace Virtual Diplomacy website, 25 February 1999, http://www.usip.org/virtualdiplomacy/publications/reports/ronarqISA99.html (accessed on 6 December 2007).

9. Here I apply the definition of the public domain articulated in J. G. Ruggie, "Reconstituting the Global Public Domain-Issues, Actors, and Practices," *European Journal of International Relations*, 10 (2004), p. 519.

10. James N. Rosenau, *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier* (Cambridge, 1997).

11. Ronfeldt and Arquilla, "Revolution."

12. James Der Derian, *On Diplomacy: A Genealogy of Western Engagement* (Oxford, 1987), p. 173.

13. Ibid., p. 182.

14. Mayer, *New Diplomacy*, 36–58; K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp 136–182.

15. Watson, *Diplomacy*, p. 118.

16. Cambon, quoted in Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, Third Edition (New York, 1964), p. 29.

17. Ibid., p. 30.

18. James N. Rosenau, "Introduction: Political Science in a Shrinking World," in J.N. Rosenau, ed., *Linkage Politics*, (New York, 1969), p. 2.

19. According to the Fletcher definition, public diplomacy "deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications. . . . Central to public diplomacy is the transnational flow of information and ideas." Edward R Murrow Center for Public Diplomacy, brochure, http://fletcher.tufts.edu/murrow/public-diplomacy.html (accessed 20 February 2005).

20. Arthur S. Hoffman, ed., *International Communication and the New Diplomacy* (Bloomington, IN, 1968).

21. L.A. Free, "Public Opinion Research," in Hoffman, *International Communication*, p. 61.

22. Peter Willetts, "Transnational Actors in International Organizations in Global Politics," in John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens, eds., *The Globalization of World Politics*, Fourth Edition, (Oxford, 2008), p. 332.

23. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA, 1972).

24. Hamilton and Langhorne, *Diplomacy*, pp. 131–37.

25. George P. Shultz, "Public Diplomacy in the Information Age" (speech given before the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, Washington, DC, 15 September 1987).

26. CSIS Report, quoted in Steven Livingston, "The New Media and Transparency: What are the Consequences for Diplomacy?" in Evan Potter, ed., *Diplomacy: Managing Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century* (Montreal, 2002), p. 121.

27. Williams and Delli Carpini quoted in Manuel Castells, "Communication, Power, and Counter-power in the Network Society," *International Journal of Communication*, 1(2007), p. 257.

28. I attribute the best articulation of this argument to Livingston, "New Media."

29. Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 279.

30. Brian Hocking notes that public diplomacy is "increasingly defined as diplomacy by rather than of publics," in Brian Hocking, "Rethinking the 'New' Public Diplomacy," in Jan Melissen, ed., *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations* (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 32.

31. Rosenau, *Domestic-Foreign Frontier*, pp. 67–68.

32. Ibid, pp. 61–64.

33. Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Ithaca, NY, 1998), p. 30.

34. In addition to Arquilla and Ronfeldt, "Revolution," and CSIS Report, observe how the American "new diplomacy" dialogue has taken shape in United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, *The New Diplomacy: Utilizing Innovative Communication that Recognize Resource Constraints: Report of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy* (Washington, DC, July 2003); David Bollier, *The Rise of Netpolitik: How the Internet is Changing International Politics and Diplomacy: Report of the Eleventh Annual Aspen Institute Roundtable on Information Technology* (Aspen, CO, 2003).

35. CSIS Report, p. 3.

36. Ronfeldt and Arquilla, "Revolution."

37. P.J. Simmons, "Learning to Live with NGOs," *Foreign Policy,* 112(1998), pp. 82–96. It is important to view non-state diplomats not as a parallel exclusive institution to those dealing in official state-craft, but embedded in global civil society. Lipschutz defines global civil society as, "self-conscious constructions of networks of knowledge and action, by decentred local actors, that cross the reified boundaries of space as though they were not there."

38. J.T. Mathews, "Power Shift," *Foreign Affairs*, 76(1997), p. 52

39. Watson, *Diplomacy*, p. 15.

40. Rosenau, *Domestic-Foreign Frontier*, p. 28.

41. Ronfeldt and Arquilla, "Revolution"; John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Emergence of Noopolitik: Toward and American Information Strategy* (Santa Monica, CA, 1999). The 1998 CSIS report also portrays the RDA as a willful exercise of modernization, but it is my belief that states have less to say on the direction of this process than these reports imply. This may something to do with the policy-oriented format and the intended (American) audience.

42. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2007* (Paris, 2007), p. 123

43. According to comScore, "Russia Has Fastest Growing Internet Population in Europe," press release, August 27, 2008, http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2008/08/Russia_Internet_Growth (accessed 10 February 2009).

44. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists*; Mathews, "Power Shift"; Simmons, "NGOs."

45. Ronfeldt and Arquilla, "Revolution."

46. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists*, pp. 24 and 88–103.

47. UNHCR, *Status of Ratifications of the Principal Human Rights Treaties,* 9 June 2004.

48. According to the AKDN website.

49. In one instance, the Aga Khan met in October 2006 with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper to negotiate the establishment of the Global Center for Pluralism in Ottawa.

50. Author's interview of Bishop John Chane, Washington, DC, 14 April 2009.

51. Rhiannon Vickers, "The New Public Diplomacy: Britain and Canada Compared," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6(2004), p. 183.

52. Andrew F. Cooper, *Celebrity Diplomacy* (Boulder, CO, 2008), p. 7.

53. Cooper, *Celebrity Diplomacy*, pp. 42–48.

54. Robert Piercey, "Not Choosing Between Morality and Ethics," *Philosophical Forum* 32(Spring 2004), p. 54.

55. G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (Amhearst, NY, 1996).

56. Anne-Marie Slaughter, interview with Art Kleiner, *Strategy + Business* (Autumn 2007), http://www.strategy-business.com/press/article/07310?gko=5279d (accessed on February 21, 2008).

57. "WTO Protests Hit Seattle in the Pocketbook," *CBC News*, 6 January 2000.

58. Simmons, "NGOs," p. 90.

59. R. Barnett and M. Finnemore, "The Power of Liberal International Organizations," in M. Barnett and R. Duvall, eds., *Power in Global Governance* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 162.

60. Quoted from Daniel W. Drezner, "Foreign Policy Goes Glam," *National Interest Online*, November 1, 2007, http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=15932 (accessed January 31, 2008).

61. Many such cases depict celebrities cashing in on their fame to draw attention to a cause. During the George W. Bush presidency, actor Sean Penn traveled to Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba and used these trips as a platform to criticise United States foreign policy. Whilst many during this time might have agreed with him in principle, his methods did decidedly little to boost his moral legitimacy.

62. Ronfeldt and Arquilla, "Revolution."

63. Ruggie, "Public Domain," p. 502.

64. C. Mingst and K. Warkentin, "International Institutions, the State, and Global Civil Society in the Age of the World Wide Web," *Global* Governance, 6(2000), pp. 240–46. Simmons, "NGOs," p. 90 portrayed civil society interference in MAI discussions as a potential liability out of a sense that the core ideas of the accord did not get a fair hearing. A situation "where any group with a fax machine and a modem has the potential to distort public debate" may amount to a "rise of the global idiots."

65. Brian Hocking and Dominic Kelly, "Doing the Business? The International Chamber of Commerce, the United Nations, and the Global Compact," in Andrew F. Cooper, John English, and Ramesh Thakur, eds., *Enhancing Global Governance* (Tokyo, 2002), pp. 203–28.

66. Maxwell A. Cameron, "Global Civil Society and the Ottawa Process," in Ibid., pp. 75–77.

67. Langhorne, "Non-State Actors," p. 33.