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# MIDDLE POWERS. WHO THEY ARE. WHAT THEY WANT.

How Countries  
Navigate  
the Middle



Nation  
Branding:  
Propaganda  
or  
Statecraft?



Case Study:  
Sweden,  
Finland,  
South Korea



Australia,  
Chile, South  
Africa &  
More

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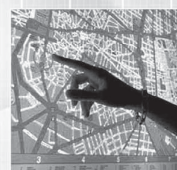
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## FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the second issue of *PD*. As many of you know, we launched the inaugural issue earlier this year. Since then the excitement around the creation of a new, vital publication in the field has continued. We've hosted events in Los Angeles and in Washington D.C. that were attended by members of the diplomatic, governmental, cultural and non-profit communities who welcomed these opportunities to meet each other, talk about public diplomacy, and forge relationships that promise future collaboration. The energy which surrounded the events, and the support we have received have exceeded our greatest hopes, reiterating how important it is to have a publication that chronicles the growth of public diplomacy as a field of study, practice and research.

Moreover, the fact that *PD* is available both in print and online has garnered a truly global audience who have requested copies, posted comments online, and emailed us about their diverse public diplomacy endeavors around the world.

The response has had two tangible outcomes. It has inspired us to launch a new section called "Forum," a space where professionals write specifically about the innovative PD initiatives of their governments, organizations, or institutions. In this issue, Senator Richard Lugar and the State Department's Jeremy Curtin wrote to us in response to our first issue, which asked what President Obama could do to help guide a new public diplomacy strategy for the United States. Their "Forum" pieces detail legislation and web 2.0 strategies aimed at increasing America's engagement with global publics. The second outcome has been our renewed commitment to having the content of the magazine reflect the diverse views and public diplomacy goals that exist among our global readership. This issue, which is themed "**Middle Powers: Who They Are; What They Want**" concerns the unique public diplomacy challenges and opportunities of the so-called middle power countries.

Some of the countries profiled in this issue are already frequently referred to as middle powers. Others will be surprising, and will challenge the traditional notions of what a middle power should be. The intent is not to provide a definitive list of the world's middle powers. (You might disagree with our choices. For example, we have not singled out the oft-scrutinized BRIC countries for further examination in this issue.) Instead, we explore the way public diplomacy is practiced by middle powers due to their size and/or their unique position in the world. Our choices also give exposure to countries that are sometimes hard to find in public diplomacy case studies, even though their approaches are worthy of examination.

From our lead section, Navigating the Middle, through our "Perspectives" and "PD in Practice" features, the behaviors and characteristics of middle power nations expose recurring themes that affect their public diplomacy, including the challenge of acquiring positive international attention, managing scarce resources, and the imperative of being streamlined and strategic in their messaging. For example, the South Africa and Australia contributions both illustrate the importance of international sporting events in bringing the spotlight to their respective corners of the world. In our "Case Study" section we look at a trio of countries whose national brands must coexist with their very strong corporate brands.

This issue marks our last endeavor as students in the Master of Public Diplomacy program at USC. As we graduate and enter the field as practitioners, we leave the publication in the capable hands of the class of 2010. We greatly appreciate the support of the MPD program, the Dean's office at the Annenberg School for Communication, USC College's School of International Relations, our advisory boards and our contributors. Particular thanks to the USC Center on Public Diplomacy staff for their continued encouragement and assistance.

It has been our privilege to work on the inaugural issues of *PD* magazine and engage in dialogue with our contributors and readers. Please keep the correspondence and suggestions coming at [dialogue@publicdiplomacymagazine.org](mailto:dialogue@publicdiplomacymagazine.org).

Finally, thank you for your support. It has truly been an exciting year!

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AFP Photo/Franck Fife

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## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY – THE NEXT 100 DAYS

BY RICHARD G. LUGAR, RANKING MEMBER, U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

As it does in many other areas, the Obama administration faces daunting challenges in the field of public diplomacy. Even with the election of a new president, much of the world remains skeptical of our actions and mistrustful of our motives. The dizzying proliferation of global media, such as satellite TV, the Internet, YouTube and Facebook, means many foreign publics now have access to vast new sources of information—and of disinformation. To cope with these realities of the 21st century, our public diplomacy response must also be rapid, nimble and adaptable.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is doing its part to support the administration's public diplomacy effort. I introduced S. 838 calling on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to create a corps of Science Envoys who would serve as goodwill ambassadors and collaborate with fellow researchers and students overseas. While various NGOs have been providing excellent opportunities for making these connections, a formal government program will help showcase the emphasis that we as a society place upon scientific achievement and higher education, an endeavor for which we are admired and respected around the world. This bill was passed unanimously by the Foreign Relations Committee and awaits action on the Senate floor.

Additionally, I introduced S. Res. 49, which was unanimously passed in the Senate and calls upon the Secretary of State to review the

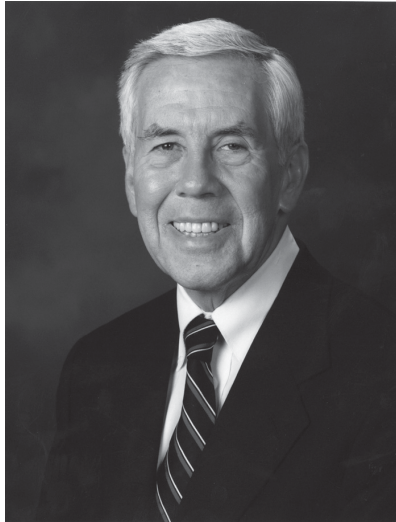
location of our public diplomacy facilities. Currently almost half of these facilities are open only by appointment—or closed entirely to the public. Within the limits of safety, the resolution seeks to re-establish the publicly-accessible American Centers, which were dismantled after the Cold War, and to allow greater flexibility in their location.

However, our larger public diplomacy efforts will not reach their potential unless the Obama administration recognizes the important role they play in our overall diplomatic program and ensures their innovative management and continuity. Especially critical is the need for consistent leadership in the post of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy.

Since that position was first filled in 1999, it has been vacant more than 35 percent of the time. Of those who have served since then, one was in the job for only six months. The average tenure has been a little over a year. Moreover, each of the last three under secretaries has brought a different philosophy and strategy to the task. This continual turnover in leadership has made it exceedingly difficult to implement effective programs.

President Obama has chosen an experienced communications executive, Judith McHale, to be the new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy. I hope that she will change this trend.

Similarly, the chairmanship of the Broadcasting Board of Governors has been





unfilled since June of last year. Three other positions on the board are also vacant, and the remaining four board members are serving well past the expiration dates of their terms. With responsibility for the radio, television and Internet operations of the Voice of America, and the various region-specific broadcasts to the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Cuba, the BBG is America's official mass communicator to the world. The lack of direction as a result of these vacancies has real implications: a survey by the government's Office of Personnel Management ranked the organization last among 36 federal agencies in terms of employee job satisfaction and leadership ability for the last three years. I urge the administration and my colleagues in the Senate to find a way to assure that the board is quickly and fully staffed, or look at another mechanism for providing consistent leadership.

Finally, the administration will be better able to meet the challenges if it integrates the roles of the different agencies that participate in public diplomacy. The Pentagon, for instance, according to an *Associated Press* investigation, spends hundreds of millions of dollars a year seeking to influence foreign audiences. Our overall effort would be more effective if this type of activity could be coordinated with the actions by State and other agencies.

Ultimately, success in improving America's image abroad will rest on the recognition that public diplomacy is not the same as public relations. As the great CBS broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, who became director of the old United States Information Agency, put it more than 45 years ago: "Truth is the best propaganda...To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful."

## U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY 2.0

BY JEREMY CURTIN, COORDINATOR, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS,  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Over the past couple of years, the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs has moved aggressively to apply new technologies to our public diplomacy mission of engaging the world on issues of U.S. policy, society and values. In January, 2007, we created *t*, a dynamic, multilayered website that serves as the home platform for an evolving array of webchats, webcasts, blogs, policy articles, and video portraying the diversity, energy and resilience of America to foreign publics around the world. Whether employing Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Second Life or simple webchats, our goal is to use the most relevant technology to compete in today's increasingly crowded global information environment.

One of our newest new media ventures is our Co.Nx web conferencing program, which links multiple international audiences with U.S. experts in all fields, from inside and outside the U.S. government. When Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hosted a town hall meeting in Brussels recently, we linked the event for two-way conversations via Co.Nx to gatherings in 40 U.S. embassies and other missions throughout Europe and beyond.

Since Co.Nx requires only Internet access to reach people in their homes or offices, even people in low-bandwidth countries can participate fruitfully in the webchats. We use Facebook, Twitter and other Web 2.0 resources to alert specific audiences to programs, and to interact with participants from countries

as diverse as Egypt, Indonesia, France, Kenya, Nigeria, Morocco, Maldives, Pakistan, Tunisia and Greece, and elsewhere.

While we use Co.Nx to interact directly with foreign audiences from Washington as a primary program vehicle, we also developed it as a new communication tool for our overseas embassies. It provides them with an easy and effective way to increase their direct interaction and engagement with key local audiences. An increasing number of U.S. missions, including Kabul, Mexico City, New Delhi, Abidjan, and Jerusalem, conduct Co.Nx web programs directly without Washington support.

It is safe to say that many of our colleagues in U.S. embassies and consulates overseas are embracing the host of new communication technologies—Facebook, SMS messaging, podcasts, video conferencing, and blogging—to carry out their public diplomacy efforts as enthusiastically as we are or even more so. The proliferation of new media, even in less developed regions where mobile technology is revolutionizing communication at a very basic level, creates tremendous opportunities and also challenges for communicators, perhaps especially for a government entity like ours. Unlike private individuals, we must blog and

tweet as representatives of the State Department and the U.S. Government. We follow rules and what we say, in many cases at least, reflects considered U.S. policy positions.

The demands of such a “regulated environment” might seem anathema to the core nature of new media, which is free, unstructured and democratic to an extreme. In fact, we recognize the power of new media, and, therefore, we are committed to finding ways to take advantage of the new global media rather than finding ways to fit our use of new media into the confines of existing regulations. This is not an easy task because we must meet the requirements of privacy and security. But we believe that we are meeting both goals by drawing on the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of our talented staff while working with a context of rules. Call it disciplined chaos.

Having watched the Bureau of International Information Programs embrace new media, I believe our success to this point has been because PD professionals have been quick to understand the great power and potential of new media, and to explore how to develop and learn from private-public partnerships with non-governmental entities, including the public diplomacy students and scholars at USC.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

### New Technology and New Public Diplomacy

Twitter's rise among popular social networking services has dominated headlines over the last several months. Whether as a result of the massive media coverage or its various celebrity endorsements, the microblogging site began experiencing exponential growth in its user base in late 2008. According to Nielsen Online, "unique visitors to Twitter increased 1,382 percent year-over-year, from 475,000 unique visitors in February 2008 to 7 million in February 2009."<sup>1</sup> Since that time, individuals have found a wealth of different uses for Twitter. The site gives users a 140-character limit to explain what they are doing, providing real-time status updates to anyone following them. These updates, or "tweets" as they are called, are used in a variety of ways. In public diplomacy, Twitter has been used as a tool to manage misinformation, mobilize individuals, launch messaging campaigns, engage directly with the public, and provide real-time information updates on government officials. While many government dignitaries use it to inform the public of what they are working on, advocacy groups have been known to use it to coordinate meet-ups and even protests.

During the G20 Summit in London in April 2009, Twitter proved to be a powerful tool in mobilizing people around specific events. As one *Telegraph* article explained, "The Internet has long been used by protest groups to organize and mobilize supporters and publicize campaigns. But now mobile technology, allied with social media, is providing a new platform for protest."<sup>2</sup> Like many other social media tools, Twitter can be accessed through cell phones. Even users without internet on their

mobile device can choose to receive tweets via SMS-text messages sent directly to their mobile phone. With the ability to send and receive Twitter updates via mobile phones, G20 protest groups like G20 Meltdown used Twitter to keep fellow protesters informed; with a single-click, protest organizers were able to send instructions and meet-up points to thousands of followers on Twitter. As a result, an estimated 5,000 individuals crowded the streets of London to participate in the two days of protests,<sup>3</sup> all the while using Twitter to document the event for those unable to attend. This real-time documentation also included visuals of the event. To accompany the 140-character tweets, users were able to instantly upload photos directly to Twitter using camera phones and TwitPic, a program built into most Twitter mobile phone applications.

Just days after the G20 Summit, using Twitter and Facebook to mobilize individuals, 10,000 young Moldovans came together to protest against Moldova's Communist leadership. The government attempted to intervene by shutting down the internet. According to the *New York Times*, "After hundreds of firsthand accounts flooded onto the internet via Twitter, internet service in Chisinau, the capital, was abruptly cut off."<sup>4</sup>

In contrast with the Moldovan Government, many other government dignitaries are choosing to embrace Twitter and its ability to increase transparency and continually notify the public of their current activities with every tweet. Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan joined Twitter in early May of 2009 in order to engage directly with the public. Known on Twitter as "@QueenRania," Her Majesty has conducted interviews on the microblogging site, responding to questions

and concerns directed to her on Twitter. While Queen Rania is fairly new to Twitter, she is one of the few prominent individuals on the site who personally manages their own Twitter account.<sup>5</sup>

Many foreign diplomats also use Twitter, such as British, Dutch, French, Portuguese, and U.S. officials abroad.<sup>6</sup> The site proved successful for U.S. diplomats who, according to *The Washington Post*, “‘tweeted’ down false rumors they feared might lead to a siege on the American Embassy in Madagascar”<sup>7</sup> when rumors began to circulate that the country’s newly ousted president, Marc Ravalomanana, was seeking refuge at the U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo. U.S. diplomats used Twitter to distribute the following two-part response, “We are aware of media reports that President Ravalomanana of Madagascar is seeking sanctuary at the U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo.” They then tweeted, “President Ravalomanana has made no such request and is not in the U.S. Embassy.” According to officials, the State Department has used Twitter since last year, but this was their first time using Twitter to manage misinformation and counter a potential crisis.<sup>8</sup>

It is difficult to predict how much longer Twitter will make the headlines. According to a Nielsen study, “about 60 percent of people on Twitter end up abandoning the service after a month.”<sup>9</sup> Regardless, there is no doubt that Twitter serves as a valuable social media tool to instantly disseminate pertinent information to masses of people.

When it comes to using new technology in public diplomacy, it seems government officials and other public diplomats are more aware than ever of the need to engage directly with the public. In another effort to keep the public informed, President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have both started conducting digital town hall meetings and uploading video recording of them addressing the public on

various relevant issues. Both President Obama and Secretary Clinton have worked to make the videos as interactive as possible. As part of President Obama’s continued effort to engage with the public and provide Americans with a direct line to the administration, the White House launched “Open For Questions,” allowing individuals to submit questions to the President, which he would then later answer during the digital town hall.<sup>10</sup>

All in all, these current trends of using technology for public diplomacy revolve primarily around disseminating information and messaging campaigns. While disseminating information and shaping messages are certainly important parts of public diplomacy, so too is cultural exchange. Therefore, it is important to remember that the internet not only facilitates information sharing, but it also connects individuals around the globe; it is this latter point that deserves more attention. The U.S. State Department seems to understand this void and plans to spend the next year creating a program that could truly capitalize on the internet’s potential to foster cultural exchange. During her speech at New York University’s 2009 commencement exercises, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced a new initiative called the “Virtual Student Foreign Service.” Secretary Clinton explained that, “American students will partner with our embassies abroad to conduct digital diplomacy that reflects the realities of the networked world.”<sup>11</sup> While there is little information available about this new program, it will hopefully be the beginning of a larger effort to foster cultural exchange online.

Part of online cultural exchange requires the preservation of cultural heritage. The digitization of such heritage ensures that it can be easily shared on the internet. Recently, the United Nations launched the World Digital Library, an online, digital library seeking to



display and explain the wealth of all human cultures in seven languages for students around the world.<sup>12</sup> According to the library's website, two of its principle objectives are to promote international and intercultural understanding, and expand the volume and variety of cultural content on the internet.<sup>13</sup>

A recent report from U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, titled "Time to Get Back in the Game," called for the revitalization of American cultural centers around the world. However, the various security concerns associated with making these centers more accessible to the public — usually by moving them outside of embassy grounds — raise a major barrier to reviving the cultural hubs.<sup>14</sup> With these difficulties, an online interactive cultural center, similar to the World Digital Library, could be a valuable asset.

When it comes to public diplomacy, simply spreading information is not enough. The burgeoning uses of social media technology for fostering cultural exchanges online are encouraging, and they will surely become more widespread as these innovations grow in popularity around the globe.

BY ANNA BERTHOLD

### International Broadcasting

International broadcasters are today facing some of the most difficult and exciting challenges with which they have ever dealt. With the rise of new media technologies and new networks of information, international broadcasters are struggling to transform their organizations in order to reach out to and connect with audiences that are increasingly distracted with alternative forms and sources of information. On top of this, broadcasters continue to face a traditional challenge that has been an impediment to effective international

broadcasting since its birth: foreign government hostility and censorship. While all broadcasters have been working with these two issues, some of the most interesting developments have occurred within the Middle East.

In January of 2009, the BBC World Service launched BBC Persian TV, a daily eight-hour service targeting audiences in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. According to Richard Sambrook, the BBC's director of Global News, "the backbone of the schedule will be news, together with a rich mix of current affairs, features and documentaries, culture, science, business and arts programs—all broadcast in Persian from a new newsroom in central London."<sup>15</sup> While the BBC has operated a Persian radio service in the region for 69 years, its foray into broadcast television attracted the ire of Iranian authorities, who argued that it was "an illegal channel," refused BBC's journalists permission to work within Iran, and stated that anyone found working for it would be arrested.

Indeed, the Iranian government is hostile to not only the BBC but to most foreign journalists. In April, Iran's Revolutionary Court sentenced Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi — who had reported from Iran for NPR, the BBC, ABC, and FOX — to eight years in prison for espionage, before reducing her sentence and releasing her in May. Yet, despite the government's hostility towards foreign broadcasters and their journalists, international broadcasting remains an essential source of news for most Iranians. A survey conducted at the end of 2007 by the Association des Chercheurs Iraniens found that Iranians between the ages of 20 and 29 considered international broadcasters to be far and away the most credible sources of news available within Iran.<sup>16</sup> Among those surveyed, Voice of America, both radio and TV, ranked as the most trusted source of news, followed by BBC Persian (radio) and Radio Farda. Perhaps a sign



of changes to come, Iran's Institute for Political Studies in Iran's Parliament Research Center released a report in April arguing, "preventing the establishment of satellite channels is not an effective method to break the Iranian audience's connection with such media."<sup>17</sup> The report concluded by suggesting that the Iranian Republic become less hostile toward foreign media and instead step up its own internal broadcasting credentials and capabilities.

Moving across the Persian Gulf to Doha, the Al Jazeera Network made waves with its coverage of the recent conflict in Gaza in January. Al Jazeera had the most extensive footage of the conflict. Additionally, having stationed two of its English language journalists there earlier in 2008, Al Jazeera English (AJE) was the only English-language news organization able to broadcast from within Gaza after Israel sealed the borders to journalists in late December of 2008. As a result, AJE's online viewership — via the application Livestation — skyrocketed by over 600 percent.<sup>18</sup> Not only did AJE's coverage of the recent conflict in Gaza draw global audiences, but it also coincided with several innovative and promising *Al Jazeera Labs*<sup>19</sup> initiatives. In November 2008, AJE launched its citizen-journalism upload portal, a website devoted to "seeking eyewitness news reports from its vast international audience."<sup>20</sup>

During the conflict on Gaza, the *Your Media*<sup>21</sup> Web page was flooded with photos and video from Palestinians in Gaza, much of which made its way into Al Jazeera's website and some of which was rebroadcast on the network's programming. In addition, the *Mapping the War in Gaza*<sup>22</sup> feature was a big hit. Using software developed by Kenyan-based *Ushahidi*<sup>23</sup> and based on Microsoft's Virtual Earth program,<sup>24</sup> Al Jazeera created a virtual map that integrated information submitted from its citizen journalists into a map of Gaza

and the surrounding territories. Each bit of submitted information from citizen journalists — be it a tweet, a video or a cell phone picture — was turned into a dot, categorized via color in order to differentiate the different events (dark blue dots noted a death of some sort, while yellow dots were references to news about international aid), and placed on the map. Citizen reports were vetted to ensure that they were indeed factual, and then integrated into reports from the mainstream media to ensure that the map was providing a comprehensive look at the events taking place.

Perhaps most interesting is Al Jazeera's decision to release all of its footage from Gaza during the conflict under the Creative Commons 3.0 attribution license, the least restrictive license available, functionally making the footage available for all commercial and non-commercial use, free-of-charge.<sup>25</sup> This means that news outlets, filmmakers and bloggers will be able to easily share, remix, subtitle, or reuse the footage in any way they see fit, as long as they credit the Al Jazeera Network. By giving up the rights to control and profit from the footage — footage that was not easy to come by during the conflict since journalists were not allowed to enter into Gaza — the broadcaster made a bold move, symbolically saying that news and journalism should not be dictated by market forces and that political efforts to suppress AJE's broadcasts in the West and elsewhere would not stop the images from Gaza from getting out of the region.

By SHAWN POWERS

### Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy

The course of U.S. public diplomacy under President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton may not be clear just yet, but it is known who will be at the helm. Judith

A. McHale, the former president and CEO of Discovery Communications, is the new Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

The daughter of a foreign service officer, McHale grew up in Britain and apartheid-era South Africa. In a press release announcing her nomination, the White House emphasized McHale's "commitment to global outreach efforts." In the 1990s, she launched the non-profit Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership, which supplies free educational video programming to students across Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. More recently, she worked with the Global Environment Fund to launch the GEF/Africa Growth Fund, an investment vehicle intended to supply expansion capital to small- and medium-sized businesses in emerging African markets.

Some observers of U.S. public diplomacy quickly expressed concern when President Obama nominated McHale in April, surmising that it may have had less to do with her public diplomacy acumen and more with her long friendship with Secretary Clinton and financial support for Democratic campaigns. Noting the unimpressive record of Karen Hughes, President Bush's media-savvy political advisor, as Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy from 2005 to 2007, former U.S. diplomat John Brown wrote in *The Guardian* that "McHale will have to convince skeptics the world over that she is not a Democratic clone of Hurricane Karen."<sup>26</sup> *Foreign Policy* blogger Marc Lynch likened McHale's resume to that of Charlotte Beers, the former J. Walter Thompson advertising agency chairwoman who was President Bush's first Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, and whose tenure, according to Lynch, "is generally considered to be an utter failure."<sup>27</sup> Once the nomination was announced, however, Lynch emphasized that "I have nothing against Judith

McHale!" adding that "I want her to prove me wrong and emerge as an effective advocate for public diplomacy and serious global engagement."<sup>28</sup>

According to former Under Secretary James Glassman, "Her career shows that Judith McHale certainly has the drive and talent to do the job. The bigger issue is what she thinks the job is. We will soon find out."<sup>29</sup> And Kenneth Wollack, the president of the National Democratic Institute (on whose board Ms. McHale serves) views her experience at the Discovery Channel as a plus: "Under her two decades of leadership, Discovery's reach expanded to 1.4 billion subscribers in 170 countries, with translations into more than 30 languages. Its emphasis is on both locally focused as well as globally unifying communications, which is the same strategy that should underpin U.S. public diplomacy efforts."<sup>30</sup>

The Senate confirmed Judith McHale as Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs on May 22. She was sworn into the position and began work on May 26.

### Obama Reaches out to Muslim Audiences

After promising Muslims around the world a "new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect" in his inaugural address, U.S. President Barack Obama reached out to Muslim audiences in several examples of the new approach during the first 100 days of his administration.

Beginning less than a week after the inauguration, President Obama embarked on what some are calling a Middle East "charm offensive," as he granted an interview to the Saudi-funded, Dubai-based television station Al Arabiya. That Obama granted his first television interview as president to an Arab-language station was cause for headlines in itself; just as noteworthy, in the eyes of many,

was his choice of Al Arabiya, rather than the arguably more popular Al Jazeera, or the U.S.-funded Alhurra.

During the ten minute interview, Obama told viewers that “I have Muslim members of my family. I have lived in Muslim countries... I’m not going to agree with everything that some Muslim leader may say, or what’s on a television station in the Arab world — but I think that what you’ll see is somebody who is listening, who is respectful, and who is trying to promote the interests not just of the United States, but also ordinary people who right now are suffering from poverty and a lack of opportunity.”

Next on the new president’s public diplomacy agenda for the Muslim world was a March 20 video message for Iran. Obama chose the occasion of *Nowruz*, the Iranian new year, to speak directly to the Iranian people, offering them a “new beginning.” “For nearly three decades relations between our nations have been strained,” Obama told his viewers, “but at this holiday we are reminded of the common humanity that binds us together.”

Making good on a campaign promise to speak in a Muslim capital within his first 100 days as president, Obama addressed the Turkish parliament on April 6, and followed up with a roundtable discussion with Turkish students the next day. In his speech to the parliament, Obama stressed that: “The United States is not at war with Islam. In fact, our partnership with the Muslim world is critical in rolling back a fringe ideology that people of all faiths reject. But I also want to be clear that America’s relationship with the Muslim world cannot and will not be based on opposition to al-Qaeda. Far from it.”

The President also made a much-touted keynote speech on U.S.-Muslim relations at Cairo University in Egypt on June 4. The speech was the centerpiece of a trip to the Middle East and

Europe, during which the President also visited Saudi Arabia and traveled to the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany. In the speech, which was aimed at Muslim audiences, the President said, “I know there has been a lot of publicity about this speech, but no single speech can eradicate years of mistrust, nor can I answer in the time that I have all the complex questions that brought us to this point. But I am convinced that in order to move forward we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts, and that too often are said only behind closed doors.”

Obama’s early engagement with Muslim audiences, and the marked shift in tone from that of his predecessor, were widely and, for the most part, favorably noted in the region. Reaction from al-Qaeda, not surprisingly, was hostile. In a video statement released April 19, Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda’s deputy leader, claimed: “President Obama did not change anything of the image of America towards Muslims and the oppressed... America came to us with a new face, attempting to fool us with it; a face that calls for change, but to change us, so that we give up our faith and our rights, not to change their crimes, aggressions, thefts, and their scandals.”<sup>31</sup> How Obama’s new approach will affect U.S. policy in the Middle East is not yet clear. In the short term, though, he hopes his efforts at outreach will begin to reduce the high levels of mistrust toward the U.S. in the region. As he told the Turkish students, “simple exchanges can help break down walls.”

### **South Korea’s Presidential Council on Nation Branding**

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak’s proposal for a Presidential Council on Nation Branding became a reality on January 22, when the council was officially launched by its



chairman, former Korea University president Euh Yoon-dae, together with the South Korean Minister of Culture and the president of the Seoul Tourism Association.

After taking office last February, President Lee promised to establish a presidential committee for the promotion of “Brand Korea,” saying he would upgrade the national reputation so as to strengthen its competitiveness.

The 47-member council includes eight ministers and several PR experts from the country’s leading enterprises. It will take the lead in creating an image of Korea commensurate with the country’s status as the world’s 13th largest economy. Council Chairman Euh said that South Korea would create a pool of nearly \$75 billion to build a brand for the country as a “respected and beloved” member of the international community.

“South Korea has become a wealthy country, but it is still regarded as a poor country in some parts of the world, partly because it failed to provide sufficient contribution to the international community and has not been active in helping poor countries,” Euh told *The Korea Times*. “In a sense, the country’s leading conglomerates like Samsung, LG and Hyundai have a higher degree of global reputation than their country. In terms of branding on the global stage, Korea lags far behind the companies.”<sup>32</sup> [For more, see **Beyond the Brand** on page 57.]

### **NATO’S 60TH Anniversary Summit**

Ten years ago, NATO’s 50th anniversary summit in Washington DC unfolded in the midst of the alliance’s air campaign in Kosovo, its second major combat operation in history. The goal then, for traditional diplomacy as well as public diplomacy, was to display alliance unity and keep simmering tensions over the Kosovo campaign from boiling over in public.

No such discord was expected to mar this year’s 60th anniversary summit, held April 3 and 4 in Baden-Baden and Kehl, Germany, and Strasbourg, France, even though NATO is currently engaged in another difficult operation, this time in Afghanistan. Yet this summit nearly ended in a public fiasco for the French and German hosts, provoked by the usually routine selection of a new NATO secretary-general.

Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen had emerged as front-runner to replace current Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who steps down at the end of July. But a secretary-general must be elected unanimously by the NATO member states, and Turkey was opposed to Rasmussen’s candidacy because of his handling of the 2006 dispute over cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad that offended Muslims and his tolerance of the Kurdish broadcaster Roj TV’s presence in Denmark. For some time it looked as if Turkey could not be persuaded; the summit was forced to go into overtime before an agreement was reached. Secretary-General Scheffer did not appear at his closing press conference until two and a half hours after the scheduled starting time.

Turkey put aside its concerns only after U.S. President Barack Obama intervened personally with Turkish President Abdullah Gül at the summit, and then phoned Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The German weekly *Der Spiegel* commented that by doing so, “Obama saved Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy from deep embarrassment... Merkel and Sarkozy owe him one.”<sup>33</sup>

### **Fifth Summit of the Americas**

The agenda for the fifth Summit of the Americas, held April 17-19 in Trinidad and Tobago, may have focused on “Securing Our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human



Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability,” but public attention was captivated by a handshake between the leaders of two countries that were present and the specter of a country that wasn’t.

The heads of state in attendance, representing the 34 democratic countries in the Organization of American States, signed a Declaration of Commitment at the conclusion of the summit outlining key areas of the agenda in which their countries will work toward common goals.

But headlines and photographs from the summit began emerging even before the opening ceremony, when U.S. President Barack Obama walked across the room where the heads of state were gathered and shook the hand of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

A handshake, normally just a formality, in this case signaled much more. Relations between George W. Bush’s administration and Venezuela under Chavez were chilly at best. At the last Summit of the Americas, in Argentina in 2005, Chavez railed for two hours against a hemisphere-wide free-trade agreement advocated by the Bush administration. But Chavez greeted Obama with the gift of a book — Eduardo Galeano’s “The Open Veins of Latin America,” the bible of the Latin American Left — and described the new U.S. president as an “intelligent man.”

Media coverage of the summit also focused on the debate over Cuba, which was excluded from the summit because its government is not democratic. On the eve of the summit, Obama eased some of the existing sanctions on the island, and he used his speech at the opening ceremony to announce that “the United States seeks a new beginning with Cuba.”

Expressing the views of a number of her fellow leaders in the hemisphere, President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner of Argentina

in her remarks urged Obama to “abandon the blockade of our sister republic of Cuba.”

BY MARK SMITH

### Cultural Diplomacy

Over the past six months, ongoing efforts in cultural diplomacy have led to an increase in, and strengthening of, bilateral exchanges aimed at building partnerships and promoting trust.

- The government of **Vietnam** has been one of the most visible and vocal advocates of cultural relations, initiating a series of partnerships in the region and even announcing 2009 as the “Year of Cultural Diplomacy.”<sup>34</sup> Vietnam opened its first cultural center in South Korea (South Korea established its own cultural center in Hanoi in 2006) and sent exhibition of ancient Vietnamese earthenware to the National Museum of Korea. “We hope that Vietnam’s intensification of cultural activities in the Republic of Korea will trigger a ‘Vietnamese Wave,’ similar to the ‘Korean Wave’ in Vietnam,” said Nguyen Tan Dung, Vietnam’s prime minister—referring to the popularity of Korean pop culture across the region.<sup>35</sup>
- **Thailand** sent a troupe of khon performers to **France** during the international Ramayana Festival in January to “help promote cultural diplomacy and to help improve Thailand’s image and restore confidence in the government and the economy.”<sup>36</sup> The khon dance uses physical postures, facial expressions and music to tell its story.

- In March, the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Havana, **Cuba** showed pieces from 28 New York galleries as part of the 10th Havana Biennial. That the U.S. Interests Section office in Havana gave the green light for the event is symbolic of the Obama administration's philosophy towards Cuba.<sup>37</sup>
  - The Embassy of the **People's Republic of China** in Washington D.C., the Meridian International Center, and the National Art Museum of China opened an art exhibition called *Metropolis Now!*, commemorating 30 years of formal diplomatic ties between the U.S. and China. The paintings, sculptures, mixed media, and video installations address the changes taking place in China's largest cities.<sup>38</sup>
  - The U.S. State Department and Brooklyn Academy of Music launched DanceMotion USA, a program where dancers will perform abroad and engage with local artists through workshops, particularly in countries where public opinion towards the U.S. is low, such as Venezuela, Nigeria and Brazil.<sup>39</sup>
  - **Germany** is reaching out to academics by building a series of missions to highlight German scientific and engineering achievements, and to connect local academics with German scientists who are doing research in similar areas. The first such House of Science opened in Sao Paolo, Brazil, and more are planned in Moscow, New Delhi and New York.<sup>40</sup>
  - Becoming aware of the popularity of batik fabrics in **Namibia**, the Indonesian Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia hosted five workshops on batik design and culture aimed at increasing identification with **Indonesia**.<sup>41</sup>
  - **Japan's** Agency for Cultural Affairs launched Japanese Culture and Art Online as a tool for art directors, producers and curators in foreign countries.<sup>42</sup>
- Engagement with the Middle East continues to be a priority for western societies. In May, France and the **UAE** celebrated the groundbreaking of the Louvre Abu Dhabi, intended to display "works of various periods and geographical origin, with an emphasis on the dialogue between civilizations."<sup>43</sup> That same weekend, President Nicolas Sarkozy inaugurated a new French military base, adding to France's existing air force and naval presence in the area.
- In March, the Kennedy Center held "Arabesque: Arts of the Arab World," the largest Middle Eastern arts and culture festival in American history (over 800 singers, dancers, painters, musicians and actors). That same month, American jazz musician Alvin Atkinson traveled to Baghdad with the U.S. State Department for a new diplomacy program called Musical Overtures. Similar to the concept of *Rhythm Road*, the program has taken American musicians to conflict zones including Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon.<sup>44</sup>
- This month, New York City hosted "Muslim Voices: Arts and Ideas," a 10-day festival featuring 20 countries and over 100 artists and performers. Organizers aimed to challenge American impressions of Muslim culture that they called monolithic, negative and or superficial.<sup>45</sup> The Middle East was also strongly represented at the Book Expo America in New York, featuring over 600 representatives from



Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the UAE, and more than 300 Arab-language children's books.<sup>46</sup>

Scholars and practitioners continue to engage in discussions about cultural diplomacy, internationally. In March, Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage organized "Artistic and Cultural Heritage: A Contemporary Vision." The forum featured panels such as "Cultural Diplomacy from the Arabic Perspective, Constructive Dialogue with the West," and "Cultural Strategies of the Arab World: Pre- and Post-Museum."<sup>47</sup> That same month, the Association of Public Diplomacy Scholars at the University of Southern California hosted "Cultural Diplomacy: Clash or Conversation," and invited speakers from Mexico, Azerbaijan, Hollywood and the U.S. Department of State.

Indicative of a recent trend in consolidation

of cultural relations apparatuses, France has launched the 'Institut Francais'. The goal of the institute is to communicate France's new cultural diplomacy. It will replace the myriad of French cultural centers that have mushroomed over the years. The Alliance Francaise, which offers language courses, will remain, but Culture France, which promotes cultural events, will be scrapped.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, the British Council announced a two-year transformation and investment program to ensure the UK's cultural relations body "remains efficient, delivers value for money can rapidly respond to new external environmental post-recession."<sup>49</sup> One of the proposed "transformations," is the consolidation of overseas financial hubs in Warsaw, Mexico, Beijing, Delhi and the UK into one center.

BY LORENA M. SANCHEZ

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# NAVIGATING THE MIDDLE



In today's increasingly multipolar world, with only one country considered a true superpower, the middle is where most of the nations that influence shifting international agendas exist. This crowded space necessitates particularly innovative public diplomacy if countries are to distinguish themselves, and garner international attention for their niche causes. In short, it is a contested space where the players themselves struggle to determine what roles they want to take on.

In addition to dealing with the inherent problems of crafting public diplomacy strategies that prove complementary to domestic and foreign policy priorities, many of these countries must also confront a scarcity of resources related to their size, and must operate within their respective geopolitical realities. Many middle power countries must perform a balancing act, carving out a space in which they are indispensable to the international community and in command of the attention they crave, while continuing their development at home. They have fewer opportunities in the international spotlight, therefore it is all the more imperative that their messaging, and branding, is strategic and memorable. It must convey their capabilities and aspirations; replacing outdated stereotypes with realistic contemporary narratives. The fact that middle powers often engage in multilateral coalition building and exercise good global citizenship speaks to the rising importance of norms-building in the 21st century, as well as the spirit of collaboration implicit in the concept of "new public diplomacy."

In **Navigating the Middle**, our contributors offer a framework for defining and analyzing the behavior and characteristics of middle power nations. **Eytan Gilboa** asserts that the foreign policy priorities of middle powers are distinct from those of small and great powers, and that public diplomacy provides them with the most effective tools to accomplish their goals. **Andrew Cooper** argues that 'middle power' status is fluid, with shifting global power structures allowing countries to move around the middle, either increasing or losing soft power in the process. In his book "Branding Canada", which we excerpt here, **Evan Potter** offers recommendations for reconstructing Canadian public diplomacy that could also prove useful for many other countries.

## THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF MIDDLE POWERS

BY EYTAN GILBOA

Following the end of the Cold War, with the decline of superpowers and the rise of “soft power,” the middle power concept has become more popular than ever. Although the concept is hardly new and could be traced back to classic works on international relations by thinkers such as Kautilia and Machiavelli, there is very little agreement among scholars and practitioners on what it means and how useful it is. Many observers have raised questions and reservations about the validity of the concept for both international relations theory and public diplomacy.

This work argues that despite the reservations, the concept may be useful for analyzing the foreign policy and behavior of many states. It further argues that public diplomacy has become a major characteristic of contemporary middle powers and that their ability to influence international relations depends on effective use of this instrument.

The work first explores the theoretical dimensions of the concept. It then analyzes the public diplomacy challenges middle powers face and alternative ways to cope with them. The next section explores several examples of diplomacy and public diplomacy employed by various middle powers from different parts of the world to achieve their foreign policy goals and build a better and safer world.

### Middle Powers

The middle power concept suggests a comparative place on an international hierarchy of states. By definition, in order to determine the “middle” it is necessary to define the other two high and low extremes. A typical and trivial statement would read: “A middle power is a state that is neither a great power nor a small power.”

But which criteria determine power and the power hierarchy or range? Attempts to calculate power have been based on material variables such as territory, population, economic output, military capability and technological infrastructure. States ranked in the middle of these areas were called “middle powers,” “secondary powers,” “middle-sized states,” “non-great powers” or “would-be great powers.” It became clear, however, that these measures have failed to provide a valid description of power relationships and that other variables affected the ability of states to influence major processes in international relations. Influenced by the United States’ failures in Vietnam, one approach added two softer elements to the material components: “strategic purpose” and “national will.”<sup>1</sup> But even this addition didn’t resolve the fundamental difficulty in measuring the power of states.

Power is always comparative, relative and perceived. Since there is no objective and accurate formula to measure power, actors can only perceive their relative strength against other actors. Moreover, a perceived power relationship between the same actors may vary over time and from one situation to another. By definition, most states are weaker than great powers such as the United States. At the same time, however, a state could be stronger than one state but weaker than another. Kenya, for example, may be stronger than Ethiopia but weaker than South Africa; Greece may be stronger than Cyprus but weaker than Germany; and Japan may be stronger than Thailand but weaker than China.

Scholars and officials have invented and employed the middle power concept to cope with the theoretical challenge of explaining the considerable influence some states have

on international relations even though their resources are much smaller than those of great powers. To be a middle power, a state must exercise international leadership but usually does so only on certain issues and in cooperation with other states or through international organizations. Cooper, Higgott and Nossal offered one of the first behavioral definitions of the concept, suggesting that middle powers should be recognized by the types of issues they choose to resolve and the nature of their actions.<sup>2</sup> By this definition, middle powers provide technical and entrepreneurial leadership on global issues other than security (first agenda). These include economic development and foreign aid (second agenda), and human rights, human security, environmental protection and health (third agenda). Middle powers provide leadership on these issues through multilateral solutions, compromise and “good international citizenship.”

This definition helped to distinguish between great and middle powers based on some unwritten division of work. Middle powers tend to focus on second and third agenda issues because they feel they can deal with them more effectively, and because they cannot or do not wish to challenge the great powers. While great powers can act unilaterally or through coalitions they form and dominate, middle powers need to create partnerships and work through international organizations and forums.

Ravenhill combined five hard and soft characteristics of middle powers: capacity, concentration, creativity, coalition-building and

credibility.<sup>3</sup> The first two are hard power elements. Middle powers have limited resources and must concentrate on a few issues at any given time. Creativity refers to innovative entrepreneurial approaches to conflict resolution, while the last two components focus on foreign policy behavior defined in terms of international interest, multilateral institutions and alliance-forming with like-minded states.

Theoretically, any big or small state could become a middle power, and a state could function as a middle power in one specific area at one particular period. A small power, however, may function as a middle power in one particular area, but this doesn’t make it a middle power. The confusion doesn’t end here. It is quite amazing to note how many adjectives, qualifications and interpretations scholars have attached to the term. Just consider the following: “traditional middle power,” “middlepowermanship,” “emerging middle power,” “pivotal middle power,” “activist middle power,” “reluctant middle power,” “revisionist middle power,” and “specialized power.”

A synthesis of existing approaches and definitions suggests that states are viewed as middle powers if they have less material resources than great powers, and if they exercise good global citizenship, work through international organizations and agencies, promote mediation and peaceful conflict resolution, and participate in peacekeeping operations. Based on these criteria, states such as Canada, Australia, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and Japan are

**States are viewed as middle powers if they have less material resources than great powers, and if they exercise good global citizenship, work through international organizations and agencies, promote mediation and peaceful conflict resolution, and participate in peacekeeping operations.**



middle powers, while states such as Brazil, South Africa and India could be described as “emerging middle powers.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Middle Powers and Public Diplomacy**

Since the beginning of this century, scholars and practitioners have employed the term the New Public Diplomacy (NPD) to distinguish between the public diplomacy (PD) of the Cold War and the PD of the post-Cold War, and to adjust PD to the conditions of the information age. Potter cited the following changes in international relations and communication that have affected PD: the increased importance of public opinion, the rise of more intrusive and global media, increased global transparency, and the rise of a global culture leading to a reflexive desire to protect cultural diversity.<sup>5</sup> Melissen focused on the rise of non-state actors, the difficulty of reconciling domestic and foreign information needs, and the two-way communication pattern of exchanging information between states.<sup>6</sup> Gilboa offered an expanded list of characteristics, including the interactivity between states and non-state actors, two-way communication, strategic PD, media framing, information management, PR, nation branding, self presentation and e-image, domestication of foreign policy, and addressing both short and long term issues.<sup>7</sup> This work keeps the term PD but uses the attributes associated with the NPD.

PD provides middle powers with ample opportunities to gain influence in world affairs far beyond their limited material capabilities. The constant search for a unique niche and extensive PD programs to promote it distinguishes today’s middle powers from other states. States face different challenges and have different needs, and therefore the PD of middle powers is different from the PD of great or small powers. The great powers like the U.S., China and Russia receive substantial attention

because of their standing and influence in the world. Middle powers like Australia, Canada and Norway have been searching for a mission or a niche that would best serve their political and economic interests in the world. Small states, especially developing countries, seek attention and acknowledgement that they exist and have something to contribute.

Middle powers face several fundamental challenges. Peoples around the world don’t know much about them, or worse, are holding attitudes shaped by negative stereotyping, hence the need to capture attention and educate publics around the world. Since the resources of middle powers are limited, they have to distinguish themselves in certain attractive areas and acquire sufficient credibility and legitimacy to deal with them on behalf of large global constituencies.

Middle powers have developed various approaches to evaluation, development and conduct of PD programs. They have established investigative committees, commissioned research, held hearings, consulted experts, and even solicited views and ideas from the general public. Middle powers employ two basic approaches to mission searching: a closed one that primarily is held in house and involves extensive consultations among officials responsible for PD with the help of outside experts, and an open one which involves the public in the evaluation process. Norway employed the closed process, while Canada and Australia preferred the open approach.

Following the end of the Cold War, Norway was concerned with its diminishing visibility in world affairs, and in 2002 it contracted the Foreign Policy Centre in London to produce a new PD strategy.<sup>8</sup> In 2002 and 2003, the plan was discussed in a series of seminars with selected representatives of several government and non-governmental agencies, journalists, scholars and businessmen. The results were released to the public in 2003.<sup>9</sup> Norway decided to focus on

four major themes: humanitarian superpower - defined in terms of foreign aid contributions, role in peacemaking and peacekeeping, and commitment to developing new kinds of global governance; living with nature - exploiting nature while protecting the environment; equality - while being one of the richest states in Europe, still having the lowest level of inequality; and spirit of adventure. The plan also called for several actions to build on the themes including the creation of a PD strategy, ending fragmentation, training of qualified staff, and creating flagship events and evaluation.

Canada and Australia adopted a different approach to reforming their PD systems. They opened up the process for direct wide public participation. In January 2003, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade published a 'Dialogue Paper' and invited the public to discuss major questions of diplomacy and PD. Many organizations and thousands of individuals responded online, and many participated in town meetings and conferences. The results were presented to the public in a special report and had some impact on the formulation of Canadian PD.<sup>10</sup> A parliamentary committee in Australia initiated a major study of PD in 2007 and made many interesting and useful recommendations.<sup>11</sup> The committee opened up the process, inviting heads and leaders of relevant organizations to submit papers and hold hearings. The report offered criticism of existing programs and new directions.

These few cases may suggest that states select approaches to reform based on their respective PD systems. The Norwegian system was centralized and selective, while those of Canada and Australia were more fragmented and inclusive. Both the processes of reforms and the conduct of PD may reflect the different societal composition of the states: more homogenized in Norway and more multicultural in Canada and Australia.

### Middlepowermanship in Practice

The campaign to ban landmines is one of the best examples of middle powers collaborating with NGOs and employing public diplomacy to resolve a significant global human security problem. An average of 18,000 people were killed or injured every year around the world by anti-personnel landmines. The natural forum to deal with this issue was the U.N. Conference on Disarmament. The great powers however, including all the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, opposed any attempt to ban landmines. A middle power, Canada, led an effort to promote the ban both through collaboration with like-minded states and a coalition established earlier by several NGOs, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). The collaboration produced the Ottawa Process and an extensive effort to cultivate public support for the ban around the world, ensuing public pressure on recalcitrant governments to end their opposition to the ban.<sup>12</sup>

In October 1996, Canada hosted in Ottawa an international conference titled "Towards a Global Ban on Anti-Personnel Landmines: An International Strategy Conference." The participants included about 50 states, hundreds of NGOs and many UN agencies. Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy set a deadline of one year to prepare and sign a comprehensive treaty ban. In December 1997, 123 nations signed the Ottawa Treaty. As of May 2009, 156 states have joined the Ottawa Treaty, but the U.S., Russia and China haven't yet added their signatures.

Canada, ICBL and the ban-supporting states effectively and successfully employed public diplomacy tools to push for the ban.<sup>13</sup> They initiated many activities to create awareness about the problem and put public pressure on governments to join the treaty. The tools included detailed reports on states where the problem was the most serious such as Angola,

Iraq, Somalia, Mozambique, Cambodia, El Salvador and Nicaragua; media campaigns via op-ed articles and letters to the editor; television documentaries; petitions; demonstrations; lobbying parliaments; and recruiting celebrities such as Princess Diana to speak in favor of the treaty. NGOs initiated the ban, but without the leadership of a middle power it wouldn't have been possible to approve the treaty or get it adopted and signed so quickly by so many states. The close collaboration between a middle power and NGOs and the effective use of public diplomacy helped to overcome the resistance of the great powers. This example also challenges the claim that middle powers only follow the great powers or are refraining from confronting them, especially in the security field.<sup>14</sup>

Several approaches define regional powers as middle powers. The argument is that these states pursue at the regional level the same tasks middle powers pursue at the global level. In addition, regional middle powers may also bridge the gap between a region and the international system or between North and South. Two examples could illustrate this argument: Japan and South Africa. Yoshihide defined middle powers as states that are influential economically or strategically in certain areas and don't aspire to rival the major powers such as the U.S. and China.<sup>15</sup> Japan has traditionally followed U.S. leadership in the security area and supported the American presence in Southeast Asia through defense treaties and bases. Since the end of the Cold War however, Japan has adopted middle power roles primarily in the human security areas of Southeast Asia. Many of these roles had public diplomacy dimensions.

Japan engaged in conflict resolution and reconciliation in Cambodia, Indonesia, East Timor and Mindano; provided financial assistance to the region during the 1997-98 Asian economic and financial crisis; helped states to cope economically and medically with the

SARS epidemic; and even deployed the largest contingent of Japanese troops since World War II to assist tsunami-stricken Aceh in Indonesia.<sup>16</sup> Because of sensitivities stemming from the Japanese aggression of World War II, in order to avoid both domestic and regional opposition and resentment, these roles had to be carefully designed and executed. This way Japan was able to improve its image and reputation in states badly damaged by the Japanese aggression of World War II, while accomplishing this goal without antagonizing the U.S. or China.

In 2003, South Africa was defined as an "emerging middle power" because it accumulated a mixed record in performing roles expected of middle power.<sup>17</sup> On the one hand, South Africa has become an exemplary state in two critical contemporary areas: nuclear proliferation and democratization. On the other hand, it didn't sufficiently participate in peacekeeping operations and failed to prevent or end genocides, conflict and violence in Africa. South Africa also cultivated friendly relations with rogue or terrorism-sponsoring states such as Iran, Libya, Syria and Cuba.

South Africa destroyed its own nuclear arsenal and became a role model for NGOs, movements and states advocating non-proliferation. It also played significant roles in the international effort to ban anti-personnel landmines. South Africa peacefully moved from the apartheid regime to a democratic system and created reconciliation models such as the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. This model has been used in other conflict-ridden states such as Argentina, Chile and Peru. South Africa has mediated between the rival political forces in states such as Sudan and Zimbabwe and sent 1,500 troops each in the peace missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, but it has failed to lead serious and effective campaigns against genocides and waves of violence and instability in Rwanda, Sudan and Congo.

South Africa employed various public diplomacy tools including cooperation with NGOs, multilateral diplomacy, cooperation with like-minded states and international broadcasting. It transformed, for example, the South African Broadcasting Corporation into a leading regional television network. It has also successfully employed cultural diplomacy and “celebrity diplomacy” capitalizing on the enormous global popularity of Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

South Africa represented an emerging middle power located in the Southern developing hemisphere. It participated in an effort to create an alliance with similar southern powers whose goal was to lead the South in negotiations on global issues with the North. In June 2003, three emerging middle powers - India, Brazil and South Africa - created the IBSA Dialogue Forum. The stated purposes of the forum included “respecting the rule of international law, strengthening the U.N. and the Security Council, and prioritizing the exercise of diplomacy as means to maintain international peace and security.”<sup>18</sup> This statement expressed typical general positions of middle powers, but the immediate motivation was to challenge the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The three powers were also interested in forming a joint stand on pressing global issues such as climate change, energy, disarmament and trade.

The forum planned to employ a strategy of “soft balancing,” which meant use of soft power and public diplomacy to counter the hard power of the great powers such as the U.S. Despite follow-up summits and activities, the IBSA Dialogue Forum has failed to have any significant impact on general or specific issues. “Soft balancing” of big powers has been difficult to implement because of contradictions and differences in opinions among the three states and the tendency to transfer responsibility to the major powers and international institutions. For

example, while South Africa and Brazil renounced their nuclear programs, India went in the other direction. Moreover, utilization of soft power to delay, frustrate and undermine the great powers wasn’t a constructive strategy.

### Conclusions

By definition, middle powers have limited resources, yet they aspire to influence central events and processes in contemporary international relations. They have adopted different global agenda and foreign policy priorities than the great powers, and therefore face different challenges. PD provides them with the most effective tools to accomplish their goals. The PD of middle powers is different from the PD of both the major powers and the small states. Moreover, middle powers have been aware of the need to develop and adjust their PD programs to the challenges and opportunities of the post-Cold War era and the information age. They have invested considerable resources in evaluation and creation of new initiatives.

Following the Cold War, several established middle powers such as Canada, Norway and Australia were searching for new missions and new tools to accomplish them. The search went primarily through investigation and evaluation of PD and produced several alternative approaches. The last section in this work briefly presented a few successful as well as failed cases of specific middle powers employing PD individually or in cooperation with other like-minded states to achieve foreign policy goals. Scholars and practitioners, however, have not yet been able to translate the findings of these cases into a more general theoretical approach to the PD of middle powers. It is vital from both theoretical and practical perspectives to investigate how different middle powers have approached PD and utilized PD programs for different goals and in different circumstances.

A comparative analysis may yield a list of strategies which middle powers may adopt and modify according to their specific needs. A comparative analysis of reform strategies may also contribute observations and findings to the slowly emerging field of comparative PD.<sup>19</sup>

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## MIDDLE POWERS: SQUEEZED OUT OR ADAPTIVE?

BY ANDREW F. COOPER

Global power structures are continuously in flux. Domestic and international forces can elevate a state to a level of prominence as well as remove it from its international pedestal. In the case of middle powers, those that were traditionally positioned within the center have become squeezed by a number of different forces - be they economic, diplomatic or cultural.

In economic terms, middle powers have been overtaken by the big emerging powers. These economies are garnering significant attention from the great powers, not to mention institutions like the G8. Whether all the optimism surrounding the projection of the structural weight of the BRIC<sup>1</sup> states - an invention of Goldman Sachs - is warranted or not, these states nevertheless have huge ambitions as well as the capacity to back those ambitions up. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, states such as India and Brazil were self-identifying as middle powers. Yet this is certainly not the case in the 21st century, as these states have come to see themselves as much more. A good indication of this transformation is the way that each of these BRIC states has re-branded itself through public diplomacy.

As an emerging power, China's government has begun restructuring its own understanding of what it means to be a socialist state in the 21st century and how that image is presented abroad. The state's leadership under President Hu Jintao has capitalized on its growing power, focusing on the fostering and maintenance of solidarity within the developing world. In this capacity, China's impact has been felt throughout Africa and much of Latin America.

Brazil has retooled its foreign policy priorities under the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Since his coming to power, Brazil has sought to present an alternative to what it views as a hegemonic United States. Through its support of forums and organizations such as MERCOSUR<sup>2</sup>, IBSA<sup>3</sup> and the G20 focused on the international trade system, it allows Brazil to act as a protector of the global south in the face of the traditional pattern of domination imposed by the U.S. and the North more generally.

Meanwhile, India sits at the forefront of technological advancement and cultural promotion. Both the rapid progress it has achieved in science and technology and the creation of a tech-savvy work force have worked to elevate India towards a brand of leadership in telecommunications. This is specifically true in the city of Bangalore, which has been coined the "Silicon Valley of India" by *the New York Times* and *Business Weekly* and is the host of companies such as Infosys Technologies and Wipro. This entrepreneurial spirit within the field of information technology is succeeded only by India's other great industry: Bollywood. Although currently suffering from its own economic difficulties as well as heated disputes between producers and theater operators, Bollywood continues to be a diasporic force; its popularity is seen in the Middle East and Africa, throughout Asia and in the growing market in the United States - notably witnessed through the success of *Bride and Prejudice*.

The case can therefore be made that from a diplomatic perspective, the space formerly occupied by middle powers is becoming more crowded. BRIC states are already giving way to

a greater number of emerging economies. The publicity given to the concept of the Next 11<sup>4</sup> is one way of looking at this, but so are the actions by select smaller states on an individual basis - that is, using resources or roles that have long been the hallmark of middle powers. Small or micro states like Trinidad and Tobago, Qatar, and Singapore have all pursued national branding strategies pursuant to an international course of action dedicated to eroding the vulnerabilities associated with their geographical space.

Trinidad has branded itself as the hub of the Caribbean from an economic (oil production), regional governance (hosting two major summits in 2009 alone) and cultural (Carnival) standpoint.

Qatar has pursued an internationalist profile, becoming a primary actor within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and hosting a Middle East-North Africa regional economic meeting with full support from the U.S. as well as a major WTO ministerial meeting at its capital city, Doha, thus becoming synonymous with the most recent round of trade negotiations. Qatar was even elected to a two-year term on the U.N. Security Council in October 2005.

Similarly, the Republic of Singapore, stigmatized because of its sometimes-strict nationalist practices, has sought to establish itself as a “world class” state. Former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Anan has marveled at the city-state’s rapid progress from Third World to first world in a single generation, and it is this concentration on an ethic-driven perfectionist nature that Singapore has sought to display throughout the world. Meanwhile, one of Singapore’s leading academics, Kishore Mahbubani, has gone as far as arguing that in its pursuit of becoming a “world class

state,” it has in effect surpassed the standards set by other states labeled as world class.

Certainly with such a rapid permutation of states within the spheres of global influence, traditional middle powers face greater challenges in maintaining their position of effectiveness within the international system. Yet it is precisely because of these challenges by both the new “Bigs” and the up-and-coming “Smalls” that it is so timely and necessary to reassess the positions of those countries that can be considered middle powers.

**It is precisely because of these challenges by both the new “Bigs” and the up-and-coming “Smalls” that it is so timely and necessary to reassess the positions of those countries that can be considered to be middle powers.**

At the end of the Cold War, I co-authored a book titled *Relocating Middle Powers*. The major theme was an optimistic one: Within some basic boundaries and guidelines, middle powers had an ascendant future. In the absence of the divisiveness that drove the latter half of the 20th century, middle powers needed to discard some of their habits of the past, specifically status seeking and explicit claims of moral superiority.

The best pathway forward appeared to be a selective one: an updating of “functionalism” and the seeking or finding of niches in issue-specific areas. The two countries featured most heavily in the book, Canada and Australia, have since interchanged the way they have interpreted the middle power in the years since.

Canada under the Liberals relocated niches in a number of high-profile and exciting but highly specialized areas such as land mines and the International Criminal Court. These initiatives allowed Canada to create a different brand, and a different approach to public diplomacy, positioning itself as a country on the cutting edge of new forms of coalitions, mixing middle powers, small states and NGOs.

Under the Conservatives, Canada has alternatively relocated itself in a varied form of functionalism - one that focuses on big and risky endeavors - with its significant troop deployment in Afghanistan dominating attention.

Both variations confirmed that the “what” and the “where” of middle power activity could be contested. The Liberals referred to Canada as a middle power, and so too have the Conservatives. Prime Minister Stephen Harper stated such a fact before the Council of Foreign Relations in 2007. But how each government qualified the term displayed a difference of opinion.

For Lloyd Axworthy, a former liberal foreign minister, Canada’s importance was to be found in positioning Canada normatively - doing good and being seen to do so. Under Axworthy’s management of foreign affairs, Canada’s primary focus was on human security through a utilization of soft power and alliance formation. For Stephen Harper, the current Prime Minister, this approach was misguided. It sent the wrong signal of who Canada was and who it should be allying itself with internationally - neglecting traditional partners like the U.S. and U.K. It also was interpreted as devaluing the issues on which Canada could make a difference. Such issues were more militaristic in nature and less dedicated to diplomacy and multilateralism. Under the Harper government, funds slowly began eroding from Canada’s traditional soft power organs like the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), while the Department of National Defense received significant increases in funding.<sup>5</sup> In keeping with this approach, Afghanistan is not only seen as important in of itself, but also as a signal to the world that Canada - the country that fought at Vimy Ridge, the beaches of Normandy and in Korea - is back.

But of course this alternative view raised controversy as well. Critics argued against the position of subordination inherent in the strategy, which involves removing Canada from a position of leadership in world affairs and reducing it to a helpful follower. Members of the opposition were quick to argue against Harper’s streamlining of Canadian foreign policy with that of the United States, arguing instead for greater ties with Europe and Asia. Steven Staples, president of the Rideau Institute on International Affairs, an Ottawa-based advocacy group, has pointed out that under the Bush-Harper years, Canada’s natural foreign policy tendencies were held back and suppressed to harmonize with the United States. With the new Obama administration, this course of action puts Canada at a disadvantage largely due to the new president’s advances towards renewing a sense of global multilateralism in international politics.

In contrast, while the definition of a middle power in Canada transformed from multilateral internationalism to great power ally, Australia went in the other direction. Under the Australian version of the Liberals (more akin to the Canadian Conservatives), John Howard’s government branded Australia as a reliable ally to the United States and United Kingdom, most notably in the country’s stance towards the invasion of and subsequent armed conflict in Iraq. With the return of the Labor Party to government, however, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has sought to rebrand Australia as an assertive middle power with keen interests in furthering multilateralism. Since coming to power in 2007, Rudd has expressed his desire to get Australia a seat on the Security Council at the U.N. and to increase Australian involvement in discussions on issues such as multilateral security, economic engagement, human rights and the environment. Rudd’s version of a middle power has served Australia well in getting to the table in events that have

allowed not just the traditional large powers, but some middle powers as well. The classic case is the push by Australia to join the G20 at both the finance and the leaders' level.

If Canada and Australia have shifted their identities as middle powers, the same can be argued for traditional European middle powers. In some ways it can be said that this cluster of middle powers has become entrapped in the Brussels architecture, surrendering sovereignty for a position within the EU. Certainly they do not have the capacity to exert or project the middle power image of independence as they did through to the end of the Cold War. Sweden, with its arms sales and immigration issues, is no longer considered the moral superpower it once was. Meanwhile Norway, a non-EU member, has continued to maintain a high level of dynamism in its diplomacy, which is based on the model of traditional middle powers with respect to mediation (Sri Lanka and the Middle East).

The EU structure has also made it more difficult for European middle powers to gain access to forums such as the G20 on any continual or sustained basis. While sometimes awarded one off entry to such forums, states like Spain and the Netherlands must do so often on the coattails of other EU leaders and countries; such was the case when French President Nicolas Sarkozy allowed Spain to use one of its seats at the November 2008 G20 meeting in Washington, D.C.

Yet if the state-centric diplomatic approach has ebbed within the global hierarchy, other forms of branding have become ascendant. Few if any countries have as many distinct or clear commercial brands as the traditional European middle powers. Some commentators, like the University of Leipzig's Dr. Jürgen Häusler, have argued that in the current global marketplace, it is indeed the brands that create nations and not the other way around, in the way that the quality of a brand represents the craftsmanship, work

ethic, etc. of an entire state. The term "Made in Germany" is associated with the high level of craftsmanship of its auto industry. Italian fashion is thought to be of top quality thanks to brands such as Armani, Zegna and Brioni.

Other states associated with brands include the Netherlands, synonymous with ING and Shell Oil, and Finland, with Nokia. Sweden is now synonymous with Ikea, whose founder Ingvar Kamprad was listed by *Forbes* as the fifth wealthiest person in the world in 2009 and whose large bold blue and yellow box stores represent Sweden worldwide.

European middle powers also have built on their brands in other ways, marketing cultural institutions, former leaders and NGOs. Sweden, once more, is recognized the world over much in part through the Nobel Prize. NGOs such as Switzerland's Médecins sans Frontières or Green Peace, which was founded in Vancouver and is now headquartered in Amsterdam, also serve to buoy and/or sometimes define their respective states' images even as the organization, itself, grows global in scope.

This increasingly multiplied or diversified role seems to be the template for the growing number of non-European middle powers as well. South Africa no longer has the unique advantages of the Mandela factor in state terms, though, as a former leader and human rights activist, he certainly aids the country's image. Moreover, the record of South Africa in mediation has been less than exceptional as of late. Its policy of quiet diplomacy with respect to the Mugabe regime has been labeled an embarrassment, leading only, it is argued, to the greater suffering of Zimbabweans. Meanwhile, its attempt to aid negotiations between Israel and Palestine through diplomatic contact with Hamas has been panned as naïve, with skeptics warning such diplomacy puts South Africa at risk of appearing accepting of Hamas' methods.

Still, if South Africa has hit the wall diplomatically, it maintains abundant advantages familiar to most middle powers. The country has access to many international forums, including the G8 through its involvement with the so-called Heiligendamm 5<sup>6</sup> as well as being represented within the G77, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth. South Africa has had success with its variety of commercial brands, and it has democratic credibility, something the state shares with its IBSA partners Brazil and India. Finally, it has a huge cultural and symbolic presence, as evidenced by its hosting capacity for the World Cup of Soccer in 2010.

Arguably, Mexico has some similar forms of opportunity. In terms of diplomatic access, Mexico stands up well in comparative terms to other middle powers, championing humanitarian issues like migration. Dominated by isolationist tendencies for most of the late-20th century, the government of Mexico has grown beyond its self-imposed seclusion with respect to its foreign policy, choosing a more open international position, as evidenced through its work with the G-77, the WTO and the OECD. In doing so, the modern progressive Mexico has managed to combine marketable commercial brands such as Corona with new forms of democratic credibility and growing international renown.

Yet Mexico's international persona is held back much in the same way by that which stagnates South African progress, namely crime and social inequality. The current problems surrounding the state's warring drug cartels and the subsequent fighting located throughout much of Mexico's northern region have done much to harm the image of Mexican progress. Yet Mexico's international status is also hampered by some of its more traditional foreign policy norms such as its practice of non-intervention in the affairs of other states. Such policy issues limit

the potential for global reach available through practices like peacekeeping.

One of the most striking features of a middle power is the diversity of ways it is projected in the world, be it diplomatic, commercial and/or normative. Sometimes this leads to internal debates, as evidenced in Australia and Canada. In other cases it means that some states fit more awkwardly into the model. Another feature of a middle power is persistence. All middle powers concentrate on maintaining some form of middle power status through smooth and rough times. Their role is not one-off but sustained, albeit expressed differently on a case-by-case basis.

What is true of the traditional middle power states mentioned above remains true for the growing number of countries that have moved into what appears to be a new form of middle power role. As was the case in the past, some of the new middle powers will be more edgy than others. A good example in Asia is Malaysia, a democracy with good diplomatic access through multilateral organizations like APEC<sup>7</sup> and the ASEAN<sup>8</sup>, but also a country that has sought to assert its will where possible.

In Latin America, the putative models of middle powers cover a huge spectrum, something akin to the variants on the Left. At one end of the spectrum is Venezuela, a country that has shifted completely away from its reputation for mediation in the 1980s to a country that builds coalitions largely on the basis of opposition to the United States. At the other end of the spectrum is Chile - arguably not a MP by size, but one by tone of behavior - which has consistently acted as a mediating presence in locations like Haiti and has developed a strong commercial acumen as well as connections with civil society.

There is then not one single model for a "middle power." Each state belongs to the categorical middle ground between the weak and the strong while maintaining its own unique qualities and

nuances critical to each state's middle power status. Still, there are characteristics that give this international position some embeddedness: working well with others, a mix of commercial and NGO strengths, and an ability to modify the state's brand. If flexible in style, it is the comfort in the middle that binds them as a category. Many other countries have diverse identities, including, of course, the BRIC states, while some are tied into a status that they don't like, such as the more progressive states in the Middle East - states

that have a strong desire to improve their global brand. Middle powers can be squeezed hard by the prevailing forces of power in the world. By their very nature, middle power states are sometimes seen as floundering or in decline. Certainly each state can differ on where the middle is as well as their place within it, but all have a high degree of aptitude as well as a sense of safety associated with being in the middle. It is identities such as these that play well for how middle powers project themselves in the world.

### NOTES

- 1 Brazil, Russia, India, China
- 2 The MERCOSUR (Merado Común del Sur) trading block includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, with associate members Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.
- 3 India, Brazil and South Africa's trilateral development initiative.
- 4 The Next 11 (or N-11), identified by Goldman Sachs as the economies that promise growth in the 21st century are Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico,

- Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam
- 5 Jennifer Campbell, "Erosion of Diplomatic Corp will cost Canada, Clark says", *Ottawa Citizen*, 14 February 2009. Available at: <http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Erosion+diplomatic+corps+will+cost+Canada+Clark+says/1289517/story.html>.
  - 6 China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico.
  - 7 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
  - 8 Association of Southeast Asian Nations



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## A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR CANADIAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

EXCERPT FROM “BRANDING CANADA: PROJECTING CANADA’S SOFT POWER  
THROUGH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY” [MCGILL-QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009]

BY EVAN POTTER

Canada has a high positive rating in the world and does very well within its limitations, the biggest of which is that it is in the shadow of the United States. Moreover, it is competing for attention with other G8 members, a growing number of emerging powers (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), and the so-called “pathfinder” nations, such as Spain, Poland, and Norway. The problem for Canada is that it has not generated a critical mass of programs. Its public diplomacy machinery and capacity has been fragmented for too long.

Each country’s approach to public diplomacy is based on widely different needs and goals. For Canada, a country whose relative power has been in decline since the end of World War II, public diplomacy is a means of slowing the loss of power. Samuel Huntington demonstrated in “The Clash of Civilizations,” in which he conceptualized power as a three-dimensional chessboard (with military, economic, and soft-power planes), that a nation can be vulnerable on one plane and make up this power deficit with gains on another plane- what Nye has referred to as the fungibility of power.<sup>1</sup> Applying this idea to Canada, one could conclude that while Canada’s international power capacity at the political and security levels was degraded in the 1990s as a result of budget cuts implemented

mostly by the Liberal government under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, there was at the same time an effort to redress this loss of power through Canadian involvement in soft-power initiatives such as the Rio Summit (1992), the Ottawa Convention on landmines (1997), the Kimberly Process to ban conflict diamonds, and the creation of the International Criminal Court.

However, some academic observers and media commentators harshly criticized the government for engaging in foreign policy on the cheap (“penny-pinching diplomacy”), as

it was becoming all too apparent that the rhetoric of Canada’s global engagement was straining credulity at home and abroad. But by 2003, with Canada’s deployment of troops to Afghanistan (the largest Canadian deployment since Korea), Canada was once more raising its profile on the international military stage.

The paradox of Canada’s image is that its non-threatening and “non-imperial” nation-brand is both a strength and a curse. International surveys repeatedly show that the Canada brand - “warm but fuzzy” - is among the most popular and well liked in the world.<sup>2</sup> The curse is that unless Canada’s brand is broadened to include being seen as an “innovation nation,” it risks becoming the Argentina of the twenty-first



century.<sup>3</sup> Trying to *re-brand* Canada as a high-tech nation (a goal of all industrialized nations), as opposed to *stretching the brand*, would be akin to throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Nor would it be a successful enterprise, given that it would be impossible to “hide” the fact that Canada is a large, sparsely inhabited country with abundant natural resources. The challenge will be to leverage the benefits of the existing brand - prosperous, open, diverse, trustworthy, law-abiding, and free of corruption - to promote Canada as an innovative nation. As a senior Canadian official has argued, the fundamental challenge is to decide what is most critical: “[y]ou can’t be all over the map. You want to have two or three messages to come forward ... [and] be a little bit prudent about that, a little bit focused.”<sup>4</sup>

**Transforming public diplomacy**

This book has argued that we need to think about public diplomacy in a number of dimensions: (1) temporally, in three time frames; (2) as an essentially contested concept that has many labels, such as cultural diplomacy, political communication, international public relations, democracy building, propaganda, branding, and military information operations; (3) as an endeavor whose effectiveness is linked to the level of societal support and understanding at home; and (4) as a form of statecraft that is not exclusive to foreign ministries but that, according to Bruce Gregory, “cuts across all political, economic, and military instruments and is essential to their implementation and success.”<sup>5</sup> Public diplomacy is not a single instrument or the exclusive preserve of a country’s foreign ministry; rather, it is a process, and as Gregory writes, it has “multiple components, each with their own organizations, budgets, tribal cultures, and rules for applying principles to behavior.”<sup>6</sup>

The primacy of the military as a public diplomacy actor is often overlooked, but the military is in fact the biggest public diplomacy player during conventional wars (after diplomacy has failed), or in other forms of conflict. The military is the first group in a theatre of operations, and because it is responsible for maintaining security as a necessary precondition for economic development and political negotiation, it must reconcile the interests of all government and non-government players (aid workers, media, NGOs) to achieve the mission’s military and non-military objectives. Increasingly, military intervention to stabilize failed and failing states requires a sophisticated understanding of local information space in both the lead-up to the intervention, when psychological operations aimed at both civilian and opposing forces will be necessary, and during the peace-building phase (e.g., as in the case of joint military-civilian Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan).

Public diplomacy in the developing world is most visible through the activities of outside aid workers and aid agencies (even if some national aid agencies have sought to hide any evidence of their affiliations), not diplomats.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, for French policy-makers, the act of providing assistance to less-developed countries is part and parcel of France’s *diplomatie ouverte*, or “open diplomacy”; aid is considered a necessary precursor in order for France to be able to influence external attitudes and policies. Not to be overlooked as well are the international public diplomacy activities of foundations linked to political parties such as Germany’s Konrad Adenauer Foundation or the United States’ National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

Each of these examples describes public diplomacy activity, because governmental actors (diplomats, soldiers, aid workers) or organizations affiliated with national political parties seek to understand, inform, and influence foreign and

domestic audiences on matters relating to a nation's international interests, whether narrowly or more broadly defined.

This is not to say that there is necessarily a dichotomy between values and interests in the conduct of foreign policy. As David Wright, former Canadian Ambassador to NATO, has written, "[i]nterests can be pursued in ways that reflect a country's values."<sup>8</sup> Canada's foreign policy interests are seen by the world through the prism of its values. This book has shown how these values - this soft power - is projected through an array of government-sponsored programs and instruments. A strong effort to build consensus at home on a country's international vocation, implemented through the domestic public affairs activities of foreign ministries, will contribute to building a stronger international brand. A country's citizens are the key building blocks of its brand.

How can Canada's public diplomacy be transformed in the years ahead? Government will need to make certain changes in outlook and approach in order to improve Canada's public diplomacy. Some of these changes are identified below.

The first area concerns the need to have a much better understanding of the societies that are being targeted, which entails a much greater investment in public opinion research, including surveys, focus groups, media analysis and the use of social science methodologies such as the Delphi method (a systematic process of expert consultation), to obtain a deeper understanding of local conditions and local populations.

Foreign ministries in the Anglo-American world (in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand), when they do consult civil society, tend to seek the views of political scientists (area studies experts or strategic-studies scholars); however, more attention needs to be paid to the views of sociologists and cultural-studies specialists, who

may have a better sense of the fault lines of future conflicts. And while most diplomats will have a fair understanding of the views of Western-educated elites in Islamabad, they may be unaware of the currents roiling in the provinces and the seventy-six million Pakistanis under the age of twenty, who will determine the country's future. As Gregory opines, "[g]overnments invest disproportionately less in [the] tools they need to understand cultures than in the tools they use to engage and influence cultures."<sup>9</sup> In other words, governments have been more comfortable spending billions on the tools of public diplomacy, such as expensive international broadcasting operations, attractive publications, and even websites, than they have in going out and discovering what foreign populations actually think and feel. "Knowing thine audience" is indeed the *sine qua non* of effective public relations and should be the mantra of every Canadian public affairs officer abroad.

Second, while interpersonal communication and audience research are important, Canada must nevertheless do much more to marshal its presence in global information networks, particularly television and the Internet. With the growth of the terrestrial and satellite television industry, a significant percentage of the developed world's citizens and a growing proportion of the developing world's citizens receive their information from these media sources. Yet, Canada is unique among G8 member states in not having a visual presence on the global airwaves. The only international outlet for news on Canada is through TV5, which carries French-language Canadian content. The irony is that although Canada is one of the world's largest exporters of television programming, much of it is not identified as Canadian.

Canada is missing an international information strategy that would develop a critical mass of new media (CanadaInternational.gc.ca portal) and old (TV5, RCI). Consideration could be given

to marshalling the CBC's resources to create an international Canadian broadcaster that would broadcast in both English and French, and also to creating a governance structure to give Canada's government-supported international broadcasting a much-needed strategic direction. As a result of decades of inattention to information-based programming, Canada lags behind its G8 competitors not only in the scope of its international broadcasting efforts but also in the emphasis it places on relationship-building in foreign countries using audience-research measurement tools.

Third, Canada needs to align its public diplomacy efforts more closely with its international priorities. This seems obvious, but too often in the past, public diplomacy programs at embassies ran on automatic from year to year, with little reflection on how local public diplomacy strategies needed to change to reflect shifting foreign policy priorities. Following the publication of *Canada's International Policy Statement* in 2005, DFAIT embarked on a major effort to align public diplomacy strategies for missions abroad with departmental business planning. This strategic approach to public diplomacy meant hard choices. In the future, it will mean taking resources away from some regions and transferring them to higher-priority regions or to countries such as Brazil, China, and India.

Simply put, public diplomacy programs should support Canada's foreign policy priorities (both generally and specifically). The assumption is that the foreign policy priorities will directly support government-wide priorities. If public diplomacy is to be taken seriously, it must be given strategic direction, which means there must be an authority to direct, task, and assign operational responsibilities to departments and diplomatic missions.

A fourth proposal for transforming Canada's public diplomacy concerns the role of the private

sector. A common recommendation on the future of public diplomacy found in American and British reports since 9/11 is for the need to leverage the creativity and the resources of the private sector.<sup>10</sup> The guiding premise is that the government alone cannot be responsible for coordinating and promoting the national brand internationally. Indeed, in any advanced industrial country with a free market, free citizens, and multiple levels of government, it is not realistic to assume that one level of government, let alone a single government department such as a foreign ministry, could single-handedly change the national brand.

As the history of Canada's public diplomacy demonstrates, some efforts -ultimately stillborn - have been made to coordinate public diplomacy by establishing a whole-of-government governance structure. However, less attention has been paid to devising a whole-of-country approach (including the private sector) to the management of Canada's international brand. Since more than 80 percent of Canada's exports and 44 percent of its foreign direct investment go to the United States, Canada's private sector does have substantial experience in marketing itself to different foreign audiences.<sup>11</sup> As Gregory points out, much of what public diplomacy needs to be successful actually lies outside government.

As the Upper North Side and Think Canada campaigns have shown, the business community can play an important role in helping to showcase Canada abroad through sponsoring particular events. Indeed, an effective public diplomacy mission strategy will explicitly seek to incorporate trade and investment objectives. What should always be remembered, however, is that Canadian companies, with the possible exception of Crown corporations, will promote Canada abroad in concert with government when it serves their corporate interests commercially. The summary paper from the Wilton Park Conference of March 2006, entitled *Public Diplomacy: Key Challenges*

*and Priorities*, stressed that “[t]here are difficulties in harnessing non-governmental actors ... because non-governmental organizations and businesses do not share the same objectives, or limitations, as national governments.”<sup>12</sup> It is understandable that corporate interests may not always be best served if these “Canadian” companies cooperate with Canadian missions in countries where they have business interests; as a result, they may wish to disassociate themselves from the mission. The private sector will thus make decisions about cooperating with government on branding campaigns on a case-by-case basis. But accepting this fact should not prevent the federal government from establishing some general guidelines for how the private sector’s presence can be leveraged on a more systematic basis in support of image building, just as it does when it invites Canadian firms to participate in the Canadian pavilion at world fairs.

Finally, under certain circumstances, it makes eminent sense for countries to work together to project themselves to each other. In essence, this would mean engaging in *mutual public diplomacy*. Assuming the inherent benefits of such mutual public diplomacy, Canada has worked in cooperation with Afghanistan to explain the purpose of Canada’s substantial contribution of Can\$3.5 billion (2004-9) in aid and security assistance to this country.<sup>13</sup> When Afghanistan’s ambassador to Canada travels across Canada to explain to the Canadian public the efforts that Canada and the international community are making to bring stability to his country, the Afghan government is indirectly supporting Canada’s own public diplomacy efforts in Afghanistan.

Such mutual public diplomacy is not limited to relations between Canada and developing countries but can be extended to any foreign campaign in which Canada’s foreign policy interests intersect strongly with the national interests of the host country. For instance, in 2008 Canada and France

jointly celebrated the four hundredth anniversary of Quebec City.

A variation on this mutual public diplomacy is the need for more cooperative public diplomacy by two (or more) like-minded countries in a third country. For example, it does not make sense for donor countries in a failed state to engage in competitive public diplomacy, since this suggests a duplication of efforts and contradictory messages. The international media regularly reports the lack of coordination of donor efforts in response to natural disasters and the rebuilding of failed states. Some of this is inevitable as national bureaucracies mobilize to send aid as quickly as possible. However, there would be a distinct whiff of national politics being played out in these international reconstruction efforts if donor countries sought to plant national flags on their donations and their aid projects, and thus their national public diplomacies, in order to prove that taxpayers’ money was being well-spent. This is not to say that the international division of labor whereby one country, for example, trains local NGOs on how to monitor human rights violations and another country helps to build an independent media system is counterproductive. However, there are cases where the fragile host government, beset by insurgencies and instability, must wonder why the need for visibility by donor countries sometimes seems to trump a coordinated effort at communicating with and distributing aid to its citizens. The need for more cooperative public diplomacy in third countries is certain to expand, as identity conflicts become the predominant source of international conflict.

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Projecting one’s country abroad is not superfluous. It is of fundamental importance to national survival. In the end, Canada needs to adopt a more strategic, whole-of-government and whole-of-Canada approach to its public

diplomacy, one that will take into account a multitude of interests such as tourism, culture, sports, export promotion, immigration, investment attraction, and the promotion of international peace and security. This approach must anticipate controversial issues, develop clear policies that are in line with Canadian

interests, and ensure that certain images (e.g., the image of an environmentally friendly country) do not negate others (e.g., the image of a country that is open to foreign investment). Canada needs public diplomacy strategies that combine, in an optimum fashion, traditional and new public affairs tools and techniques.

## NOTES

1 Nye, Joseph S. Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Book Group, Public Affairs 2004.

2 This is the conclusion arrived at by Daryl Copeland at Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, after having surveyed foreign attitudes towards Canada in 2000.

3 This statement refers to the disappointing performance of Argentina, a country that held great promise early in the twentieth century and then faded into delinquency.

4 Curtis Barlow, personal interview with Evan Potter, 11 July 2006, Ottawa.

5 Gregory, Bruce. "Not Your Grandparents' Public Diplomacy." Presentation at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, 30 November 2005. Transcript, 6.

6 Ibid.

7 The United Kingdom's Department for International Development was criticized in the media when its staff apparently painted over the Union Jack insignia on their vehicles.

8 Wright, David. *Managing Global Crises - and the U.S. Colossus*. Commentary 207. C.D. How Institute, December, 2004. 2.

9 Gregory, "Not Your Grandparents' Public Diplomacy," 6.

10 See Mark Leonard. *Public Diplomacy*. London: The Foreign Policy Centre 2002.

11 Canada, Statistics Canada, Imports, Exports and Trade Balance of Goods on a Balance of Payment Basis.

12 United Kingdom, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Report on Wilton Park Conference*, 10.

13 Canada's contribution of Can\$3.5 billion to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world, makes it the single largest recipient of Canadian aid.



*"Branding Canada: Projecting Canada's Soft Power through Public Diplomacy", pages 279-281 and 257-264, is excerpted here with the permission of McGill-Queen's University Press.*

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# PERSPECTIVES

## CHILE

### MIDDLE POWERS AND CONCEPTUAL LEADERSHIP

BY JORGE HEINE



*Financial Times*

On March 27-28, 2009, the Progressive Leaders' Summit took place in Viña del Mar, a resort on the Chilean coast, some 75 miles from Santiago. Hosted by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, it brought together British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden, Spanish PM José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Norwegian PM Jens Stoltenberg, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Argentine President Cristina Fernández, and Uruguayan President Tabaré Vázquez. The purpose of the summit was to engage in some "brainstorming" on the global financial crisis, ahead of the April 2 G-20 in London, to be attended by four of these leaders, and to be hosted by Brown himself.

This was the first time the Progressive Summits, an initiative launched by Tony Blair and Bill Clinton in the late nineties, were held outside Europe. It was also the first official visit by a British Prime Minister to Latin America and the first visit to the region by U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden.<sup>1</sup>

The location of the meeting underscores the degree to which the days of European and North American leaders meeting among themselves in their own part of the world to make decisions about the course of international affairs have become a matter of the past. Some gestures towards the realities of the new century are warranted, and the ideas and proposals of emerging powers in the Global South merit some consideration.

Yet, the choice of Chile as the location for such a meeting is puzzling. Chile is not a member of the G-20, like Argentina and Brazil are, and both in territory and population is much smaller than quite a number of other Latin American nations. This summit was only one expression of the many ways Chilean foreign policy and its diplomatic initiatives have managed to put it in a privileged position in world affairs, "punching far above its weight," as the expression has it.

In one month, from March 17 to April 19, President Michelle Bachelet undertook a five-day state visit to India, hosted the above mentioned summit in Viña del Mar, attended the Arab-Latin American summit in Doha, made a three-day state visit to Russia, and participated in the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Port-of-Spain.

The notion that any Latin American president would conduct such a whirlwind program - spanning three continents in four weeks, meeting close to seventy heads of state and government, more than a third of those holding office - would have been unthinkable twenty years ago. And these visits are not just to show the flag. They express the opening of Latin American economies, the globalization of Latin American societies and expanded interaction of Latin American nations with the broader world.

More importantly, for the purposes of this article, they show the degree to which a relatively small country at the end of the world, like Chile, has managed to overcome such structural determinants as size and geographic location

(one is reminded of Henry Kissinger's mocking comment, "Chile is a dagger pointing straight at the heart of Antarctica") and become, for all intents and purposes, one of the region's leading middle powers, with an impact that often reaches far beyond the confines of the region.

Traditionally, the Latin American middle powers were identified as Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, with everybody else in a second or third tier. Lately, the emergence of Brazil as a power to be reckoned with in international affairs, something that has happened only during



Official photo from Progressive Leaders Summit in Vina del Mar, Chile (March 27-28, 2009)

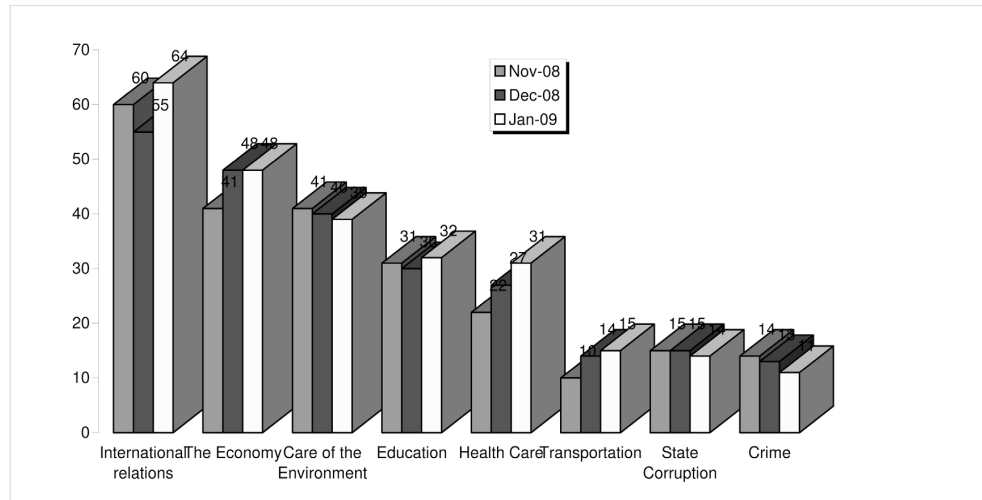
the past 15 years, under presidencies of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-2002) and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (2003-2011), has put Brazil in a different category. This in itself is an object lesson in international affairs: The reason Brazil made the jump from just another Latin American middle power to a different category

is not structural - its growth has been rather low in this period, and so has been its defense spending. Rather, it has to do with a different way of approaching its international environment, embracing ambitious foreign policy projects and reaching out to Africa and Asia.

With Brazil carving a singular path, this leaves us with Argentina and Mexico on the one hand, and with Venezuela and Chile on the other.

There is a definitional problem in dealing with middle powers. Some prefer a structural approach that relies on GDP, military might, landmass and population size. Others emphasize behavioral traits - that is, whether we find the diplomatic conduct traditionally associated with middle

Regardless of political affiliation, "do you approve or disapprove of how the Bachelet government is handling the following..."?  
 \* shows approval in Nov 2008 - Jan 2009



Statistics from Adimark Gfk

Approval ratings of public policies in Chile showing public opinion of the Bachelet government's international relations policies.

powers, in areas such as international activism, commitment to multilateralism and the rule of international law, as well as coalition building and log-rolling on issues of common interest.

My own view is somewhere in between. To sort out which states might qualify for middle power status, one first needs a structural approach that separates middle powers from those that clearly are not and will not become one. Having done that, the real question becomes whether the powers so identified actually *behave* as middle powers, which is by no means a given.<sup>2</sup>

A story related to the protracted 2005 election for Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) illustrates this point. The election was so close - with Mexican foreign minister Luis Derbez, and Chilean home minister José Miguel Insulza tied with 17 votes each - that five consecutive votes were held. The election was eventually postponed, and resolved only in a subsequent meeting in Santiago, with the withdrawal of Derbez and the election of Insulza, the current incumbent.

One of the ironies of this election was that the Caribbean largely sided with Chile. This is odd, since Mexico itself is a Caribbean nation and Chile is not only much smaller, but about as far as one can get from the Caribbean without actually reaching Antarctica. As a former high-ranking Mexican official told me shortly thereafter: "What made the difference is that Mexico *is* a regional power that does not behave as one, whereas Chile is *not* a regional power that *does* behave as if it were one." It was a brilliant insight that tells us much about the conduct of foreign affairs.

Unlike Brazil, Chile does not have the size to aspire to join the P-5 at the United Nations Security Council; unlike Argentina, it has not even been invited to join the G-20; unlike Mexico, it is not considered to be part of BRICSAM<sup>3</sup>, the acronym of choice for the newly emerging powers. But over the past nineteen years, ever since its return to democracy after the tragic years of Pinochet's military rule, it has carved for itself a unique niche in the international system.

In these years, it has been elected twice, in 1996-1997 and again in 2002-2003, to be a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, although according to the rotation system, its turn should only come once every seventeen years; a Chilean has thrice been elected the director-general of the International Labor Organization (ILO), one of the UN's largest agencies, in 1998, 2003 and in 2008; a Chilean has been elected the secretary-general of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2005; Michelle Bachelet is the founding, pro-tempore chair of UNASUR<sup>4</sup>, the South American community of nations; in 2008, Chile had, for the first time, a Special Representative for the United Nations Secretary-General at a UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti in 2004-2006. It is also the country that has signed the largest number of Free Trade Agreements - some 54, as of the last count, a key element for Chile's export-led development.

It was Rafael Bielsa, Argentina's foreign minister at the time, who coined the term "Chile's conceptual leadership," by which he meant Chile's ability to articulate key issues in international affairs and put them on the agenda.

To some extent, this has been made possible by the success of Chile's peaceful transition to democracy and its fast clip of economic growth. In recent years, Chile has had the highest rate of growth of any country outside Asia. This has led the *Financial Times* to comment that Chile should be considered an example not just for Latin America, but also for Europe - as can be seen in the cartoon below - which shows Chilean Finance Minister Andrés Velasco teaching a class to British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

All this, however, is not enough. An accurate diagnosis of the current international system, and a robust but realistic sense of the role that one's country can play in it, is also needed. Then, the necessary diplomatic follow-up and allocation of resources is needed. Over the past twenty years,

with the continuity provided by the same ruling coalition, the *Concertación de partidos por la democracia*, that has elected four presidents in a row, this is exactly what has happened.<sup>5</sup>

It is interesting that, as Raúl Bernal-Meza has pointed out in a fascinating book on International Relations theory in Latin America, Chile has lagged behind its neighbors in contributing to the development of scholarly theory and systematic thinking about the region's place in the world.<sup>6</sup> Instead, academic specialists in international relations have been drawn into government, and especially into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - not just as advisers or speechwriters but, crucially, as Ministers and Deputy Ministers.<sup>7</sup>

The net result has been a diplomatic service "front-loaded" with IR specialists. The service has been able to articulate a foreign policy discourse that is closely attuned to the needs of a rapidly changing environment, and has often been able to make the most of the opportunities offered by that environment.

Revealingly, Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not have a Public Diplomacy unit, and its budget for exercises in "country image" is limited. The Ministry itself also faces severe budgetary constraints, and is tied down by all sorts of self-imposed, legal obstacles that do not make it easy to contend with a rapidly changing environment and to compete with the much better endowed Ministries of several neighboring countries.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, Chile, which is often singled out as one of the countries in the Global South that has been most successful at navigating the treacherous waters of globalization, has managed to do so by pursuing quite single-mindedly a "diplomacy-for-development" approach. In it, international trade policy has been backed up by diplomatic "charm offensives" in key markets around the world.<sup>9</sup> This has gone hand in hand with a clear sense of the principles and values that have historically

inspired Chilean foreign policy: the rule of international law, a commitment to multilateralism and the principle of non-intervention, as well as to democracy and human rights.

The rise of Chile from its condition of international pariah during the Pinochet era, to one of Latin America's key middle powers -

seen as an "honest broker" by North and South, East and West, in less than two decades - is a remarkable case of the power of ideas and their impact on the relative standing of nations in the international system. Conceptual leadership in foreign policy and in diplomatic theory and practice is here to stay.

## NOTES

1 For an earlier discussion of the significance of the Progressive Leaders' Summit in Viña del Mar, see Jorge Heine "Los árboles no dejan ver el nuevo orden", *Foro 21* (Santiago), 9: 84 (April 2009), pp.13-16.

2 For a broader discussion of Chilean foreign policy and its use of "soft power" to position itself as a middle power in international affairs, see Jorge Heine "Between a rock and a hard place: Latin America and multilateralism after 9/11", in Ramesh Thakur, Edward Newman and John Tirman (eds.) *Multilateralism under Challenge? Power, International Order and Structural Change* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2006), pp. 481-503.

3 The BRICSAM countries are Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and Mexico.

4 The Union of South American Nations/Unión de Naciones Suramericanas

5 These presidents have been Patricio Aylwin (1990-1994), Eduardo Frei (1994-2000), Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) and Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010).

6 See Raúl Bernal-Meza, *América Latina en el mundo: El pensamiento latinoamericano y la teoría de las relaciones internacionales*. Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 2005, pp.286-294.

7 Of the seven individuals who have occupied the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile since 1990 (Enrique Silva Cimma, 1990-1994; Carlos Figueroa, 1994; José Miguel Insulza 1994-1999; Juan Gabriel Valdés ,1999-2000; Soledad Alvear 2000-2004; Ignacio Walker ,2004-2006; Alejandro Foxley, 2006-2009; and Mariano Fernández (2009-), three are political scientists : Insulza (MA, U. of Michigan), Valdés (PhD, Princeton) and Walker (PhD, Princeton). Of the seven Deputy Ministers that have occupied the position, since 1990, three have been political scientists (Insulza, 1994; Heraldo Muñoz, 2000-2002; and Alberto van Klaveren (2006-).

8 For example, the number of embassies Chile is fixed by law. The opening of any new mission has to be preceded by the closing of an already existing one. Initiatives such as that in Brazil under President Lula, a country that opened 32 new embassies between 2003 and 2008, would be impossible in Chile from a strictly legal perspective.

9 As can be seen from Graph 1, this has also meant that the conduct of its international relations has been systematically the best evaluated of all public policies ever since 1990.

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## **SOUTH AFRICA**

### **WORLD CUP 2010: AFRICA'S TIME HAS COME**

BY JEANETTE T. NDHLOVU

In June 2010, South Africa will host one of the most important and popular events in all of sports—the FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. The event will allow South Africa (and indeed the entire African continent) to showcase the nation's ethos: a people-centered culture that prides itself on its humaneness.

South Africa has committed to sharing the spotlight with the rest of the continent; hence the event's slogan *Africa ke Nako—This is Africa's moment*. It is a moment we are eagerly awaiting, so that we may show the world the many positive attributes of the continent: its rich culture and cultural artifacts; the land and the sea, which remain largely unspoiled by unsustainable human consumption; and production patterns that characterize many of the so-called developed countries.

The spirit of the people of South Africa will capture the imagination of many of the visitors who will come to our shores in 2010, a spirit of no-surrender even in the face of the incredible odds that characterized the dark era of Apartheid in our country. Then there are the blue skies, the mountains that rise so high as to want to kiss the sky, the white sand beaches and the wildlife that roam our national parks—a clear testimony of our determination not only to live in peace with our fellow human beings but also to peacefully

co-exist with the wild life that is part of our heritage. There is a lot to look forward to.

June, in the history of our country, can be characterized by what Charles Dickens called the best of times and the worst of times. It was in June 1976 when the world watched in horror as the children of Soweto were mowed down for demanding freedom from the throngs of Bantu Education. It was also during the month of June that the people of South Africa met in Kliptown Johannesburg to draw up one of the most democratic documents ever to be produced in South Africa, the Freedom Charter, which remains a lodestar

for the promotion and protection of the rights of all. From these two events one can proudly proclaim that, as a people, South Africans, united in their diversity, came to the conclusion that we have to work together in the interest of all South Africans and build a country based on respect of the rights of all its peoples. We endeavored to make sure the rights of all our peoples would be protected by a strong Bill of Rights.

South Africa is known for its peaceful, democratic transition from the Apartheid era to a country that promotes human rights globally. In our quest to play a meaningful role in global affairs we have engaged in a process of self-definition that will tell the world who we are and what role





we want to play in the world. The negative images others send across the globe that seek to portray the peoples of the continent as victims, rather than as survivors of a global order that tends to undermine and underreport the many successes of the continent, needs to be challenged. The World Cup will afford us an opportunity to show the world who we really are.

South Africa, since the advent of democratic rule has and continues to play a pivotal role in the African Renaissance—the economic, cultural, social and political renewal of its own people. This renewal is premised on the need for Africans to take charge of their own destiny. It is based on the premise that for too long Africa's priorities were not focused on the advancement of the continent and its peoples, but instead were formulated to advance the interests of colonial masters with very little consideration for the developmental priorities of the continent; siphoning off huge resources to benefit the peoples of distant lands with no consideration whatsoever of all the development needs of the African continent itself. A new breed of African leaders who believe that the development of the continent can only be advanced through Africa-grown solutions was ushered in. This new era emphasized the need for Africans to formulate Africa-grown priorities to tackle the problems of underdevelopment and poverty that continue to plague the continent.

At the center of this new approach is the need for Africa to put out into the global media the images that Africans want to convey to the world, in order to replace the images of hopelessness that currently dominate the world media, especially the western media. Hosting the FIFA World Cup presents South Africa—and Africa—with an opportunity to deliver a world-class event with modern communications and information technologies. Thousands of jobs will be created, in the construction of new stadiums, roads, hotels

and other necessary facilities. Already, work is at an advanced stage with the Airports Company of South Africa working at fever pitch speed in upgrading the airports' facilities.

South Africa is going to ensure that as visitors arrive the first impression they get is that indeed this country is ready to receive them. Measures have been put in place to ensure that entry into South Africa is as smooth as possible without compromising the security of the country and its visitors. Before they reach their final destinations, visitors will have been exposed to beautiful displays from different parts of the country—courtesy of the Department of Arts and Culture. The rich cultural heritage will be part of the spectacle. This will be an authentically African World Cup and other African nations will benefit from it either by hosting some of the world soccer teams, as neighboring countries are doing, by providing much needed training and accommodation facilities, or through social "Legacy Projects." These projects will remind the peoples of Africa that they benefited directly from Africa having finally hosted the World Cup.

The public diplomacy benefits for South Africa and Africa will be enormous. Those who have been proponents of Afro-pessimism, arguing that Africa is not ready for investments and trade, will get a rude awakening as they discover that there are tremendous opportunities for doing profitable business with South Africa and other countries of the continent. Some potential investors have been reluctant to invest in the continent because they base their impression of business opportunities on ill-informed and negative coverage of Africa. They know very little about how richly endowed the continent is. They will discover there is low cost to doing business in Africa, ensuring healthy returns on investments. Africa, the cradle of humankind, is ready to do business. Potential investors will realize that "South Africa is Alive with Possibilities." This slogan so widely popularized

by South Africa Tourism, encapsulates the endless opportunities that are waiting to be exploited to the mutual benefit of all.

FIFA World Cup South Africa 2010 will afford South Africa and Africa yet another chance to show the creativity of the continent and its great potential. During their periodic visits to the continent, FIFA officials have confirmed that the work that has been done has far exceeded expectations and that South Africa and Africa are on track in their quest to deliver a world class sporting event that will pleasantly shock the critics of Africa. The Public Diplomacy benefits will be immense as skeptics and Afro-pessimists realize that the continent is ready for business; that indeed when you do business in South Africa

and in Africa you can earn enormous amounts of money that will benefit the investor and also help to eradicate absolute poverty that can lead to global instability.

We know that those who will come to our shores in 2010 and beyond will have the time of their lives. They will leave the continent having learned that the best way to learn about a people and a continent is not by relying only on media reports but by actually visiting the country and forming impressions that are based on the reality of the situation rather than on the interpretation of others.

South Africa and all of Africa will dazzle!

AFRICA KE NAKO!

AFRICA'S TIME HAS COME!



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## MEXICO

### MEXICAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: HOBbled BY HISTORY, INTERDEPENDENCE, AND ASYMMETRIC POWER

BY PAMELA K. STARR

History, interdependence and asymmetric power have hindered Mexican public diplomacy for nearly three decades, contributing to a cycle of bold efforts, a domestic and international backlash, and self-imposed restraint. Until the late 1970s, an unsystematic promotion of Mexican culture dominated the Mexican government's public diplomacy efforts. Even though the country has made more concerted efforts since then, the strategies employed have been inconsistent and only marginally effective at modifying Mexico's image abroad. This unimpressive record reflects the history of Mexican foreign policy and the country's unique geostrategic position as a developing country tightly integrated economically and demographically with a superpower on its border.

During much of the 20th century, Mexico had little need for a foreign policy designed to promote the country's interests internationally. Mexico's insular economic development model in an era prior to globalization, lack of real border conflicts and the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella helped shield the country from international developments. This reality allowed Mexico to develop a principled, legalistic foreign policy that did not require the systematic use of public diplomacy. While Mexico has actively promoted its culture abroad, the driver of this cultural diplomacy was Mexican pride in its rich cultural heritage rather than a reasoned public diplomacy strategy. As a result, when the time came for Mexico to think more strategically about public diplomacy, it lacked

the experience needed to employ these foreign policy instruments well.<sup>1</sup>

Mexico's relative isolation from global affairs also allowed the government to use foreign policy as a tool in domestic politics without suffering serious international repercussions. Modern Mexico is a direct descendant of the country's revolution, from 1911 to 1917, fought in the name of peasant and labor rights and against imperialist oppression and the Catholic Church. Revolutionary acts such as land reform, union empowerment and anti-imperialism became central to the legitimacy of its post-revolutionary governments. As the Mexican economy grew to be more capitalist and pro-business during the 1950s and 1960s, however, the aggressive promotion of peasant and labor rights became more difficult. Foreign policy thus developed into a favored tool for demonstrating the government's revolutionary credentials. This helps explain Mexico's enduring support for the Cuban revolution, its leadership of developing country demands during the 1970s for increased economic assistance and an expanded decision-making role in international affairs, and its steadfast opposition to U.S. military intervention throughout the world during the Cold War.

The tendency to target this "revolutionary" foreign policy against the United States is further due to Mexico's difficult history with its northern neighbor. Mexico has a long history of unpleasant experiences with the United States, beginning immediately after Mexican Independence when the U.S. Ambassador

actively promoted a government favorable to U.S. interests and continuing with the U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848) in which Mexico ceded nearly half its territory to the United States, the naval occupation of Mexico's principle port in 1914, and a military intervention led by General Pershing in 1917. This history is taught to every school child and forms the basis of a Mexican nationalism born of the Revolution and steeped in anti-Americanism. Nevertheless, since Mexico only rarely took positions the United States considered provocative and never posed a direct security threat to the United States, U.S. governments have generally ignored Mexico's anti-imperialist and occasionally anti-American rhetoric in the interest of reinforcing the stability of a non-threatening regime on its southern border. The combination of Mexico's revolutionary heritage, its history with the United States and the U.S. willingness to ignore the anti-imperialist cast of Mexican international behavior spawned an increased reliance on foreign policy as a domestic political tool as the economic and political legitimacy of the post-revolutionary regime began to fade in the late 1960s and 1970s. This reality would complicate Mexico's late 20th century efforts to use public diplomacy to improve its image and thereby its relationship with the United States.

The need to think more strategically about public diplomacy was impressed on Mexico during the 1970s as a consequence of its growing integration with the U.S. economy. During the 1960s, incipient globalization in the world economy dovetailed with successful Mexican efforts to promote growth by attracting U.S. investment and tourism. The result was a gradual erosion of Mexico's economic insularity and its parallel acquisition of real international interests that could be damaged by a "revolutionary" foreign policy pursued for

domestic political gain.<sup>2</sup> This fact was made abundantly clear following Mexico's 1975 vote in the United Nations Security Council supporting a resolution equating Zionism with racism. In response, the American Jewish community organized an effective and very costly boycott of Mexican tourist destinations. Events during the 1970s also impressed on Mexico how its interdependence with the United States meant that domestic actions could unintentionally undermine the country's international image and harm its national interests. In the wake of violent crackdowns on student protesters in 1968, the Mexican government implemented a series of anti-business economic policies designed to demonstrate its "revolutionary" cast. These actions angered Mexican businessmen and scared off U.S. investors, paving the way for Mexico's 1976 peso devaluation and economic crisis.

Mexico's 1986 decision to open its economy to international trade and the 1993 NAFTA trade agreement dramatically deepened its economic interdependence with the United States, making a sound bilateral relationship key to Mexican national interests. Yet the domestic policy utility of anti-Americanism in Mexican foreign policy remained largely intact. A public diplomacy strategy aimed at rebranding Mexico as a loyal partner of the United States thus tended to produce a backlash at home as opposition politicians attempted to exploit the anti-American overtones of Mexico's revolutionary brand of nationalism.

This process of economic integration has also extended to the explosive growth of the drug trade since the 1980s. Mexican memories of past U.S. interventions, reinforced by revolutionary nationalism, however, produced suspicions about the real motive behind the U.S. drug war. Concerns that deeper cooperation would lead to increased U.S. political influence

in Mexican domestic affairs hindered Mexico's ability to cooperate effectively and frustrated U.S. officials for years. Mexico's growing demographic integration with the United States, meanwhile, has established an additional obstacle for Mexican public diplomacy. Efforts to use cultural and educational diplomacy to improve Mexico's image among U.S. citizens of Mexican descent and Mexican immigrants, both legal and undocumented, have been greeted by loud complaints that Mexico is trying to interject itself into U.S. politics by creating an ethnic lobby sympathetic to its interests.<sup>3</sup>

The public diplomacy implications of the economic and demographic interdependence between Mexico and the United States are further complicated by the power differential between these two neighbors. It is inevitable that the enormous asymmetry of power in this bilateral relationship will cultivate feelings of superiority and arrogance among Americans and feelings of vulnerability and resentment among Mexicans. Mexico's public diplomacy in the United States thus has constantly been on the defensive, fighting against perceptions of Mexico as a backward, violent, insecure and corrupt country. While poll after poll have demonstrated that Americans have generally warm feelings toward Mexico, the opportunity to exploit and build on these sentiments has been limited.

Despite the constraints of history, interdependence and power asymmetries, Mexico has twice pursued a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy to rebrand Mexico in the minds of Americans, from 1989 to 1994 and from 2000 to 2002. The Mexican government initiated its first wide-reaching public diplomacy strategy following the 1989 decision to negotiate a trade agreement with the United States. The strategy's objective was to

win approval of NAFTA in the U.S. Congress and it included an aggressive lobbying campaign in Washington, DC, a systematic attempt to build a "Mexico lobby" among U.S. citizens of Mexican descent, and a multi-faceted public relations campaign to sell the image of Mexico as both a responsible partner of the United States and a modernizing country on the brink of joining the first world.<sup>4</sup> The strategy included high profile arrests of Mexican drug traffickers, a series of dramatic economic reforms, trips to Mexico for members of the U.S. Congress to witness these changes, constant reminders of the Ivy League pedigrees of Mexico's new generation of leaders, and the explicit promise that NAFTA would make the Mexican economy flourish and thereby reduce migration. While this campaign did help win NAFTA's approval in 1993, it also generated a sharp backlash in both countries following Mexico's ensuing economic crisis and multi-billion dollar bailout from the United States. Mexicans and Americans felt deceived by Mexico's "propaganda campaign," undermining support for NAFTA in both countries, seriously damaging Mexico's image in the United States, reviving Mexican doubts about closer ties with the United States, and producing a severe setback for Mexico's public diplomacy.

Six years later the election of an opposition president, Vicente Fox, solidified Mexico's transition to democracy and opened another window of opportunity for Mexican public diplomacy. This time, Mexico's policy objective was the expansion of NAFTA beyond the free flow of goods, services and investment to include two items that would benefit Mexico greatly - free labor flows and economic development assistance. The government again concluded that success depended on changing the image of Mexico in the United States. It thus exploited Fox's election as proof that Mexico had finally become a democracy

and reinforced this democratic image by aggressively promoting democracy and human rights abroad. It marketed the appealing image of President Fox as the underdog who defeated a 70-year old authoritarian regime and as a bilingual, charismatic former Coca-Cola executive dedicated to a market economy. It employed lobbyists and increased cooperation in the drug war. Additionally, it adopted an aggressive cultural diplomacy strategy that included opening Mexican cultural institutes in key foreign cities and sending young artists, film directors and writers abroad as cultural ambassadors.<sup>5</sup> The centerpiece of the strategy, however, was an effort to reach a migration agreement with the United States. Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda calculated that such an agreement would not only benefit Mexico economically, it would eliminate a constant irritant in the bilateral relationship that perpetuated the image of Mexico in American minds as a problem rather than an opportunity.<sup>6</sup> But migration was a domestic matter rather than a purely foreign policy issue for the United States and the negotiations quickly stalled amid the often byzantine character of U.S. congressional and interest group politics, magnified by occasional Mexican policy missteps. Even before the September 11 terrorist attacks nullified any chance of reaching a migration accord, negotiations had become bogged down.<sup>7</sup>

The Fox administration's embrace of the United States, meanwhile, generated nationalist discomfort at home, including opposition complaints that Fox was surrendering Mexican sovereignty to the "gringos." This domestic discomfort broke into the open in the aftermath of 9/11 when a small but significant portion of politicians and editorialists expressed publically what many Mexicans were feeling privately - that the imperialists had gotten

what they deserved. This reaction left President Fox paralyzed, unable to quickly and formally express Mexican sympathies for the loss of life for fear of the domestic political repercussions. For Americans, this reaction merely demonstrated Mexico's unreliability as a neighbor and partner. Although Mexico would try for another year to achieve approval for a migration agreement, the window of opportunity had passed. Without a migration agreement, the opposition began to paint Fox's effort to create a better relationship with the United States as merely caving into U.S. demands without receiving anything in return. Mexico's second effort at rebranding itself in the United States was over.

In the wake each of Mexico's aggressive rebranding efforts - the post NAFTA backlash and the failed Fox effort - Mexican public diplomacy toward the United States retreated into a largely defensive posture. Rather than employ a comprehensive strategy to affect the broad "Mexico brand," Mexican public diplomacy adopted a risk-averse strategy designed to avoid the policy pitfalls created by facts of Mexican history, interdependencies and power asymmetries.<sup>8</sup> Current Mexican public diplomacy incorporates three core elements: a sharply focused effort to promote tourism, trade and investment; a visit diplomacy program for members of the U.S. government; and low-key cultural, educational and sports programs directed at the Mexican and Mexican-American communities in the United States. Mexico also kept a low profile during the 2006-2007 immigration debate, employing a lobbying strategy that flew under the radar rather than a more public form of diplomacy. This strategy of self-imposed restraint is a pragmatic response to the historic and structural realities of the U.S.-Mexico relationship. It is designed to maximize policy gains while reducing the



risk of a counterproductive policy backlash at home or in the United States. And it reflects the peculiar constraints on the public diplomacy of a developing middle power that is interdependent with a much more powerful neighbor.

## NOTES

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# IRAN

## IRAN AS A MIDDLE POWER

BY ANOUSH EHTESHAMI

Iranians are now second generation revolutionaries and one might have expected that the country would have settled down into a clearly visible, if not well defined, development path, and that path would have helped carve its role and position in the international, and by extension the regional, system. But in the two decades since its 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has yet to decide what real role it will play on the international stage. The country's growing geopolitical importance since the late 1990s and a tense regional setting have undermined this decision-making process.

Developments in the region and security turmoil seem to have had a direct effect on the domestic politics of the country, and so long as Iran sees itself as a beacon of resistance, it will not be able to chart an accommodating role, which in turn fuels tensions with its neighbours and the wider international community. Also, so long as Iran and the U.S. see each other as regional hegemonic rivals, Tehran will find it uncomfortable to swim with the currents sweeping the region.

Iran's regional stature has grown considerably in recent years as a result of President Mohammad Khatami's soft diplomacy and reform-minded presidency, the polarization and fragmentation of the Arab order that allowed for a wider distribution of regional power, and the 2001 and 2003 military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, which resulted in the removal from power of two hostile ruling regimes on Iran's doorstep. Of the two military engagements, by far the more significant was the April 2003 U.S. overthrow of the Sunni-dominated Baathist

regime in Iraq, which effectively opened the way for an extension of Iranian influence to the heart of the Arab world.

Iran's soft power has been growing for over a decade and its views are now an important consideration in regional diplomacy. Besides the benefits of geopolitical changes in the region, Iran's own policies have played a key part in its role-conception and regional power politics. Its irredentist position in relation to U.S. power in the region, post-9/11, has enabled Tehran to propel itself forward to a position of dominance in Middle East radical-Islamist politics. This repositioning has strengthened Hezbollah in a weak Lebanon as a power base in the Levant and deepened Iran's financial, political and military links with the essentially Sunni Palestinian rejectionist groups ( Hamas and Islamic Jihad), giving Tehran new levers to pull at the heart of Arab politics. Iran in the twenty-first century has grown into a regional broker, competing and cooperating with Arab actors at will.

Iran's nuclear program, of course, has added a new layer of authority, despite the international controversy and the regional fears that its comprehensive nuclear and satellite launch ambitions have generated. The benefits and hindrances of being an independent political, military and now scientific actor are debatable and in some ways immeasurable. But these actions do reinforce the impression and image of a powerful Iran acting in its national interest on the international stage.

There is a heavy price to pay for the image and content of Iran's power. Iran's apparent prowess has invited counterbalancing rather than

“bandwagoning,” leading to relative international isolation. Regionally, some neighbors have chosen to draw closer to the U.S. and seek protection from not just the West, but also India and China, as a way of heading off Iran’s influence. The West, in turn, has sought Arab allies to contain Iran’s irredentism. There is also a domestic price for its growing regional role. At home, there has been a securitization of public life and politics as well as immeasurable mismanagement of the country’s political economy since 2005, as misguided populism and militarism took hold.

A combination of the above, added to the perceptible de-liberalization of public space in Iran since the 2005 presidential election, indicates that the Islamic state has entered a new stage in its evolution, in which personnel changes at the top have brought to the fore new priorities. But these changes have also underlined the force of revolutionary values and ideology in the system. It is quite striking that the rhetoric of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has set him apart from many of his predecessors, including even Ali Khamenei, who served as president during the 1980s. It is a consequence of the fluidity of Islamist Iran and the undeniable power of the ballot box that someone like Ahmadinejad can take center stage and dramatically change the tempo and mood of the country, and at the same time renegotiate the country’s regional role on its own terms.

Interest in Iran has grown as its president has chosen unorthodox ways of approaching international agendas. At the same time, he has been so out of step on so many fronts, like on the Holocaust, that his utterances have damaged Iran’s standing and therefore its public diplomacy. Looking back, Ahmadinejad’s policy pronouncements clearly unsettled nerves at home and abroad, and again raised suspicions of Iran’s motives and strategic objectives in the region.

As has been evident in recent years, Iran’s image can certainly be modified under different

leaders and under changing international conditions and its policies can be altered to meet its new priorities. This has already happened under President Ahmadinejad.

In the final analysis, despite his neoconservative leanings, Ahmadinejad has had to govern a modern and complex state, as well as rule over a restless population which no longer responds positively to pressures from above and is desperate for its fair share of Iran’s bounties. The geopolitical realities of today, as well as some 16 years of constructive policy making at home, have generated their own policy momentums which cannot be overlooked, such as maintaining close economic relations with the European Union; continuing to seek trade links with key industrial powers, seeking foreign investment in Iran’s energy and other strategic sectors, dealing diplomatically with all UN agencies (including such sensitive agencies as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Commission on Human Rights); and continuing to interact with Iran’s Arab and non-Arab neighbours.

Although it cannot be said with any certainty that Ahmadinejad’s populist yet neo-revolutionary administration has been able to reorient the Islamic Republic in the long run, the issue must be this: Which ideology will have to give way for the sake of national stability and wider security? My suspicion is that it will have to be the neo-revolutionary who has to give way, given Iran’s shifting demographic balance, its economic difficulties, its role in the international political economy as a major hydrocarbons producer, and the pressures associated with geopolitics.

Thirty years after the birth of the Islamic Republic, Iran is still looking to find its “natural” place in the order of things, a struggle that has not been helped by the dramatic international and regional developments since the early 1990s. With each new administration since 1989, Iran

has tried to put into place the building blocks of a forward-looking country that is comfortable with its past while cautiously optimistic about its future. Since 2001, however, securitization of international politics and the grand geopolitical developments in west Asia have had such a dramatic impact on the Iranian polity that today it has an administration dominated by the security focus of the revolution, even though the personnel is different.

With political Islam re-emerging as the ideological principle of some of its elite's

worldview, it was inevitable that the tone, if not the content, of Iran's relations with the outside world would also change. As elsewhere, policy in Iran is not shaped in a vacuum. For all the emphasis that Iranian neoconservatives have placed on the role of identity and ideology in the Islamic Republic, I would still venture to suggest that the wider context is ultimately what determines the agenda. Therefore, to understand Iran's policies, we must first recognize the domestic backdrop as well as the regional realities in which they take form.

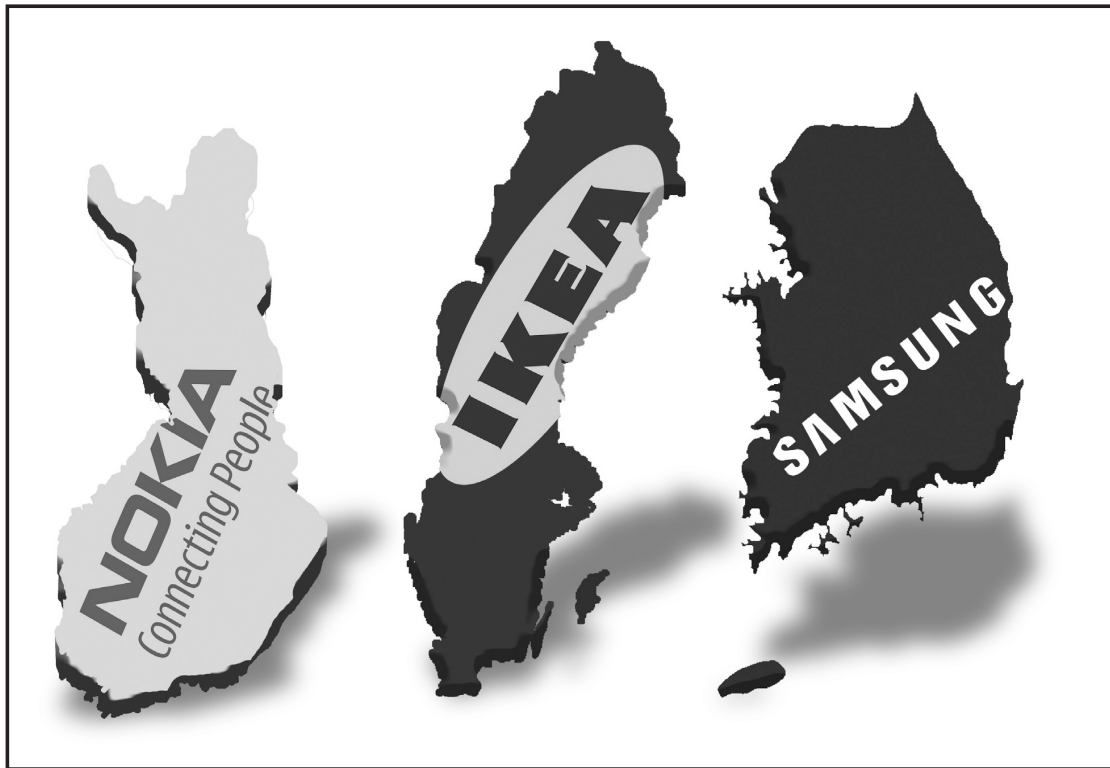


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*His many publications include Globalization and Geopolitics in the Middle East: Old Games, New Rules (Routledge, 2007), Iran and the Rise of its Neoconservatives (with Mahjoob Zweiri) (I.B. Tauris, 2007), and Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System (with Ray Hinnebusch) (Routledge, 1997).*



## CASE STUDY: BEYOND THE BRAND



Original Illustration by Robert McDavid

The national branding of the three countries in our case studies may not be as recognizable as the global corporate brands that were conceived within their borders. Yet Sweden, Finland and South Korea have identities that go beyond the cultural constructs that IKEA, Nokia and Samsung evoke. In this section we examine what it's like to negotiate a public diplomacy strategy that communicates the broader complexities of a nation brand, when the global image of your country has been largely shaped by a corporate brand strategy. Does Sweden need to develop a public diplomacy beyond IKEA's iconic blue and yellow packaging? What does Jorma Ollila's chairmanship of both Nokia's board of directors and Finland's delegation responsible for its nation branding say about the common interests of the company and the country? And is South Korea's emotional approach to PD surprising in light of the streamlined efficiency of its high-tech brands?



# THE SYMBIOSIS OF SWEDEN & IKEA

BY OLLE WÄSTBERG

Frankly, IKEA is doing more for the image of Sweden than all governmental efforts combined.

That might be a sad statement coming from a governmental official tasked with enforcing “the brand of Sweden.” But IKEA’s 285 stores in 37 countries feature the blue-and-yellow national colors, serve Swedish meatballs and sell blond-wood Swedish designs and books about Sweden. To visit IKEA is to visit Sweden.

Every “nation brand” is a simplification. But even though it may be paradoxical in a globalized world, most countries have found that they must stress their individuality to be able to compete. Reputation is the new currency now that countries are beginning to understand that soft

power can be more forceful than the hard power that has so often failed.

Enhancing Sweden’s image involves creating a clear position for Sweden internationally – a unique place in people’s consciousness that distinguishes Sweden from other countries. Specifically, we, Sweden’s image makers, must define what unites all things Swedish, and also dare to identify the associations people around the world make with Sweden. The leading Swedish agencies dealing with “Sweden” – the Swedish Trade Council, Visit Sweden, Invest in Sweden Agency and the Swedish Institute – have together established a mutual brand platform, which places the word “progressive” in the center, with four core values around it:





To elaborate, four words represent these core values:

**Innovative** means new ways of thinking. Seeing things from a new perspective. Seeing opportunities and solutions and having faith in a better future. Not allowing oneself to be limited by ingrained opinions or traditions.

**Open** means having a positive attitude toward free thinking and differences among people, cultures and lifestyles. It involves being curious and sensitive to others as well as giving people space and creating exchanges; space for the ideas and views of individuals, as well as physical space to move freely without obstacles, fences, or crowding, in our readily accessible countryside, cities and places in between.

**Caring** means safeguarding every individual. Providing safety and security as well as respecting and including all people. It means feeling empathy and sharing with those who are most vulnerable; becoming involved with others and trying to see to the needs of every individual.

**Authentic** means being natural and unaffected. It means being reliable, honest and informal. It also involves being straightforward, unpretentious and clear, as well as standing up for one's values even when it is not comfortable to do so. To be authentic means to be in touch with your past and your roots, while open to the future.

This might not be entirely unique, but the combination says a lot about Sweden and research shows that these are values that people from other countries associate with Sweden.

IKEA fits very well in that context. The company has been a forerunner in corporate social responsibility, putting emphasis on the working conditions of their contractors as well as on sustainability. The IKEA brand could very well be categorized by the same progressive descriptors as the public diplomacy platform of Sweden outlined above.

The brand of IKEA is not independent; it is closely interlinked with the image of Sweden, drawing from Swedish design innovation going back more than a hundred years. It is not by chance that The Museum of Modern Art in New York last year published the book *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*, which presented the first English translations of three seminal texts by pioneers of Swedish design. The three founding texts are "Beauty in the Home" (1899), by the philosopher and critic Ellen Key; "Better Things for Everyday Life" (1919), by Gregor Paulsson, art historian and director of the Swedish Arts and Crafts Society from 1920 to 1934; and "acceptera" (1931), co-authored by Paulsson and the architects Gunnar Asplund, Sven Markelius, Eskil Sundahl, Uno Åhrén and Wolter Gahn.

Those texts were written long before IKEA was established and were part of what founded the international view of Swedish design: spartan and blond, which may have communicated a national character, if such a thing exists.

The Stockholm Exhibition in 1930 established the term "functionalism" which has since been dominant in Swedish design and architecture, even though Sweden also has its neoclassical buildings. Function, not decoration, is the framework for what could be called the typical Swedish design creed.

On another level, the book *Sweden: the Middle Way* by the American journalist Marquis Childs had an enormous impact on the image of Sweden, especially in the U.S., and sold several editions in 1936. The book painted Sweden as the ultimate compromise between capitalism and socialism, a sort of paradise where basic class conflicts were gone. It offered a social design that interplayed very well with functionalism. This has been beneficial for Sweden. However, it is largely a stereotype, as today's Sweden is one of the most market-oriented countries in the world.



Does Sweden use design as a tool for nation branding today? Yes, the Swedish Institute continuously has exhibitions of Swedish design that travel the globe. Sweden is a small country, about the size of California, with a population equivalent to New York City, and a GNP the size of New Jersey. To be successful from that small base, Swedish companies must add value and special knowledge to their products. Some companies have learned the hard way that neglecting design will hurt. Ericsson's problems with cellular lines at the end of the 1990s were the result of the engineer-driven company's late realization that people first looked at the surface, before inquiring about the content of the product. Consider products made of alcohol distilled from potatoes—often called “vodka.” Absolut, with its well designed bottle and brilliant ad campaign, has made that simple product an international status symbol, proving how well design can work.

It's obvious that Sweden's nation branding is linked to Swedish design. When the U.S. established its embassies and consulates in a devastated Europe after World War II, it built transparent modern buildings with many glass windows that were meant to send the message that the U.S. is an open, democratic society. Similarly, when Sweden built the new House of Sweden in Washington D.C. a couple of years ago, a driving focus was to showcase contemporary design. Designed by the architect Gert Wingårdh, the building is a combined embassy, exhibition hall and meeting place. It incarnates Sweden.

But Sweden can still do more to showcase its aesthetic innovations while its official representatives could be much more consistent in the details. Does everyone who represents Sweden drive a Volvo and carry an Ericsson cell? Is every embassy furnished with the latest in Swedish furniture design? Regrettably, no. You would have to search long and hard to find IKEA furniture at embassies or consulates.

For business, the image of a country can be decisive. Simply put: if you just have a couple of minutes to present your product, it helps if you don't need to use that scarce time to explain the nature of its origin. In fact, the country of origin could actually add to the value of a product—a phenomenon sometimes called “the country of origin effect.”

I recently met with the CEO of Volvo Trucks. He told me that, clearly, Volvo is very affected by the image of Sweden. Both because Volvo as a brand is so interlinked with Sweden, but also because Volvo needs to entice some of the best car engineers to move to Gothenburg. Therefore Sweden has to spread the image of a country that is nice to live, study and work in (which actually, according to Simon Anholt's Nation Brands Index studies, is one of the areas where Sweden excels).

The Swedish Institute is in the process of forming a network of companies wanting to use place branding as a marketing tool. It goes both ways: Sweden benefits from the way IKEA markets itself; and IKEA is one of the companies that benefits most from the image of Sweden. IKEA would not be IKEA without its Swedish background.



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# FINLAND: PAYING BACK ITS DEBT AND CONDUCTING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

BY PETRI TUOMI-NIKULA AND RENÉ SÖDERMAN

Finland was one of many European countries that, in the early 1920s, received loans from the U.S. Government. In 1929, a sudden collapse in the stock market triggered the Great Depression, leading to a worldwide economic downturn. All but one country ceased making repayments to the United States. That country was Finland.

This period also marked the start of Finnish public diplomacy.

Approximately three thousand articles were written in the U.S. about a Scandinavian country in the north of Europe that had repaid its debt to America. Even today, older generations of Americans who lived through the Great Depression remember the story of the trustworthy and honest Finns.

Public diplomacy, as a phrase and paradigm, found its way to the Finnish Foreign Service less than a decade ago. Media relations, cultural

diplomacy and exchange programs had all been part of the communications portfolio of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since the early years

of independence; but with the introduction of public diplomacy, the “attempts to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public”<sup>1</sup> have become more strategic and focused.

“Half of the work of an embassy consists of traditional diplomacy, while the other half consists today of public diplomacy” stated Alexander Stubb, Finland’s Minister for Foreign Affairs last August, at the annual gathering in Helsinki of Finland’s ambassadors.

Soon after that, the Foreign Minister appointed a high-level delegation to lead efforts to develop a country brand for Finland. Jorma Ollila, Chairman of Nokia Corporation and Royal Dutch Shell, was invited to chair the delegation.

The delegation is charged with the creation of a country brand for Finland; a strong national image that will

enhance Finland’s international competitiveness. The appointment is based on the present Government Programme, an action plan wherein

**FINLAND BEYOND NOKIA**  
Finnish public diplomacy makes use of the shining star of its economy, Nokia, whenever it can. For Nokia, a global business, Finnishness in itself does not seem to represent any special advantage, although it is not a detriment, either. In theory, Nokia could have been born elsewhere, as well. The high level of education, especially the pool of talented engineers, formed one of the reasons for the company’s success. The Finns’ positive mindset towards technology also contributed, as did Finnish management culture and values.  
Finland, like many other countries, has created a project to decide how its brand should be developed, and in which direction. Leading this work is the chairman of Nokia’s board of directors, Jorma Ollila. However, one shouldn’t draw the conclusion that Nokia is seeking a role in Finnish public diplomacy. To be precise, Nokia is always associated with Finland anyway. It lies in the company’s best interest to influence the way the country brand is developed. In this matter, Nokia and Finland have a common interest.

the strengthening of Finland’s image is one of the government’s objectives.

The purpose of the country brand is fourfold: strengthen the operating potential of Finnish businesses; increase foreign political influence; promote interest in Finland as an investment target; and increase tourist flows to Finland. The country brand is regarded as a cornerstone for success and prosperity.

As with any national endeavor, the branding project has become a target for skeptics. Some claim nation branding is just another marketing and communications project. Others claim that as a top performer in international comparisons, Finland need not worry about its brand and, therefore, does not require a high-level delegation. Responding to such criticism at a business seminar last January, Jorma Ollila declared that countries which fail to foster their brand could find themselves in the company of North Korea, Myanmar or Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the Finnish national brand project will rely on hard facts rather than simply a shiny veneer.

The delegation’s tasks include defining key strategic selections, networking, raising critical questions regarding content and devising services that will enhance Finland’s prestige, in addition to monitoring and steering the project. The country brand project can thus be described as the first layer of the Finnish public diplomacy concept and a broad framework for public diplomacy operations.

The second layer of Finnish public diplomacy consists of large-scale public-private cooperation among Finland’s main actors on the international scene. Those actors include the Finnish Tourist Board (MEK), Invest in

Finland Agency, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology (Tekes), the national airline Finnair and the Finnish Forest Foundation, among others. This public-private partnership is chaired by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Joint public diplomacy efforts include Finnish participation at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 and “This is Finland” (<http://finland.fi>). Such cooperation makes it possible for other stakeholders to be informed about and partake in public diplomacy operations if they believe it will benefit them.



The third layer of the public diplomacy concept consists of specific country programs. Public diplomacy efforts are currently focused on eleven countries Finland considers most important and where a relatively small investment can yield strong returns. These countries are Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Poland, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States.

For each of these countries the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and its embassies have developed a public diplomacy program. Each program includes an analysis of the operational environment, the status of the nation brand, definitions of objectives, key messages, target groups, tools and, ultimately, an action plan. The Finnish Embassies and Consulates in the above-mentioned countries will receive additional funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to execute the programs.

The action plans of the public diplomacy programs include a variety of activities. For example, in China, an important market place for Finnish products, Finland’s Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Finland will, this year and next, develop a comprehensive website

for the Moomin characters in Chinese; present Finnish food safety guidelines for Chinese journalists and food authorities; promote Finnish environmental know-how by planting trees in Beijing; distribute Chinese-language books about Finland to Chinese universities; and administer an exchange program for Chinese civil servants to come to Finland for a month-long training period.

And what of Finland's debt to the United States? Firstly, Finland received goodwill for decades for repaying its debt to the U.S.

Secondly, part of the paid debt was converted into a fund to finance Finnish-American scientific and educational exchanges—the ASLA-Fulbright program. The fund, managed jointly by the U.S. and Finland, is certainly one of the most important and long-lasting investments in public diplomacy. It has opened invaluable contacts and international avenues for many Finnish scholars and scientists in the United States, and many Americans in Finland. It may sound cliché, but nothing beats the joint will of two countries to understand each other.

### NOTES

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1 From the definition of public diplomacy in "Public Diplomacy: Lessons for the Past" by Nicholas J. Cull, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, April 2007.



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## KOREA'S EMOTIONAL DIPLOMACY

BY DAVID C. KANG

There are many aspects to Korea's public diplomacy, and many possible ways to approach the topic. Certainly the "Korean wave" of movies and television dramas that are popular throughout East Asia is one aspect of Korea's public image; there is also the stellar reputation and visibility of world-class Korean companies like Samsung and LG that help Korea become more widely known. Of course, when foreigners think of Korea, other things might also spring to mind, such as the seemingly erratic behavior of North Korea.



I want to take a different approach, and focus on one aspect of Korea's image abroad that may be a bit more subtle but also has a direct effect on Korea's position in the world. That is Korea's public diplomacy problem vis-à-vis the United States. In order to deal more adroitly with its changing and evolving relationship with the United States, Koreans must directly confront this fact. The problem is this: Koreans are emotional.

Koreans are passionate, outspoken, and animated. Everybody knows it, everybody says it, and nobody challenges it. Indeed, this passion and emotion is one of the great strengths of Korea. After all, Korea has a rich heritage of citizen involvement in politics: even during the rule of authoritarian regimes, Koreans loudly and clearly let their leaders know how they felt about issues. Today, with a strong democracy in place, Koreans are even more willing to hit the streets.

As a national characteristic, "passionate Koreans" is as fitting a generalization as "stoic Germans" or "egalitarian Americans." Of course, there is a wide range of attitudes among the population, there are numerous exceptions to the rule, and everybody is a unique individual who acts and reacts according to a number of factors. At the same time, passion and emotion have deep roots in Korea's rich history: a lively and egalitarian Korean culture overlaid with a thin veneer of Confucianism, combined with a long history of heartbreak, followed by success, then further heartbreak, led to a Korean culture that is both formal and hierarchical, but also centrally grounded in a firm belief, in every Korean, that Koreans are worthy of being treated with respect and are willing to bop you on the nose to make sure you know it.

But this national characteristic is also at the heart of why the outside image of Korea might be in need of some strategic updating. The Korean government under Lee Myung-bak has realized that Korea's external image could be better, and has launched a "global branding" initiative, spearheaded by the Presidential Council on Nation Branding. While this is laudable, I wonder to what extent it will be successful.

Although Koreans are proud of Samsung, Michelle Wie, and their successful hosting of the 2002 World Cup, the outside world sees other aspects to Korea as well: fistfights in the National



Assembly, mass demonstrations against U.S. beef imports, and collective anger at the continued Japanese claims to the Dokdo islets.

In fact, the dispute over whether the Dokdo islets are Japanese or Korean is a good example of both Korean passion and the need to be a bit more strategic in how Korea presents itself to the outside world. These islands, called "Dokdo" in Korean and "Takeshima" in Japanese, are an uninhabited set of rocks located in the waters between Korea and Japan. Both Korea and Japan have claimed these islets to be their sovereign territory, and there is no formal treaty that delineates this maritime border.

Thus, although South Korea-Japan economic relations continue to deepen, and although South Korean president Lee has pledged to improve political relations, it is not clear whether good intentions will be enough to overcome the enduring "historical" issues between the two countries. Japan and South Korea have never formally agreed on their maritime border, and there is no treaty in place that formalizes ownership of the Dokdo islands. Last year, in the first few months of his presidency, Lee met twice with his Japanese counterpart, Yasuo Fukuda. During their April 2008 summit, Lee promised a policy of "not dwelling on the past but proceeding forward." Lee also said that Japan's past deeds are a matter for Japan to judge, and emphasized that the historical disputes between South Korea and Japan should not interfere with their future relationship.

However, despite good intentions, this underlying issue between Japan and Korea has not been resolved.

And thus, almost inevitably, the Dokdo issue—once again—overwhelmed any goodwill between Japan and South Korea last year. During the winter of 2008, the Japanese Foreign Ministry claimed on its website: "Takeshima is an inherent part of the territory of Japan...The occupation of Takeshima by the Republic of Korea is an illegal

occupation undertaken on absolutely no basis in international law." There were also reports that the Japanese Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry would instruct all social studies textbooks for middle school students to describe Takeshima as Japanese territory. Thus, little over a month after the April 2008 summit meeting, Seoul expressed "strong regret" to the Japanese ambassador to South Korea and sent a message of protest to Tokyo over the proposed textbook changes.

In attempting to influence global public opinion, South Koreans welcomed a full-page advertisement in the July 9, 2008 issue of *The New York Times* claiming South Korea's sovereignty over the islets. Kim Jang-Hun, a popular singer who paid for the ad, became a national hero. Some 110,000 South Korean internet users funded another full-page advertisement in the August 25, 2008 edition of the *Washington Post*. A Korean-American dry cleaner puts pictures of the Dokdo islands on the plastic bags in which he returns New Yorkers' clothing<sup>1</sup>, and this April in Los Angeles at Dodger stadium, Korean-American baseball fans chanted "Dokdo is ours" at a game between the Japanese and South Korean baseball teams. A U.S. decision to change the official name of the islets from "Dokdo" to "Liancourt" provoked a deluge of emails.

So yes, Koreans are somewhat emotionally involved over the issue of Dokdo. However—and this is important to remember—the fact is, everybody, *everybody*, is emotional about Dokdo. Koreans are emotional about Dokdo. The Japanese are emotional about Dokdo. Even the Americans, who made expedient decisions about postwar treaties in the 1950s, chose to avoid the issue of ownership of the islands and are thus "emotional" about this issue.

Of course the Japanese are as emotional about this as the Koreans. Certainly it is not the case that the Japanese decided that Dokdo

was Japanese territory through some rational, meditative thought process where they weren't sure, looked at the "facts" with an open mind, and then decided to claim Dokdo. It is the exact opposite. The Japanese claim is in many ways even more emotional than the Korean claim. After all, it was only in the 20th century that Japan had any thought of claiming Dokdo; so Japanese clinging to a belief that they can somehow prove their ownership of the islands is based on even more fantasy and wishful thinking than on any kind of considered thought process.

But, this is the key point: Japanese and Americans don't *appear* to be as emotional. That is, we all know that a person can be very emotionally involved and yet express that anger quietly and without yelling. The term is passive aggressive. By comparison, a soft-speaking person comes across as much more calm and levelheaded than does a more animated and loud person, no matter what the reality. Thus, because the Japanese in general do not express themselves as loudly or directly as do Koreans, Americans don't believe that Japanese are as emotional as are Koreans.

Rightly or wrongly, in the U.S., being emotional is considered to be less legitimate, and less convincing, than is being calmly rational. Now this may seem odd; after all, one could easily make the argument that the more emotional we are about something the more we care. So the Korean mindset makes perfect sense: "Koreans really care about Dokdo; our claim is justified and the more resistance we face, the more emotional we become in order to convince you." Yet, in American culture, it works in reverse. The more emotional a person becomes, the less he or she is perceived to be serious. The belief in the U.S. is that one needs to "calm down" and that only when the people are rational can we really make headway into solving the problems and issues.

I have been in meetings with sitting U.S., Korean, and Japanese officials, and watched an American official say "Koreans are emotional about this issue," while the Koreans nod approvingly, thinking the Americans understand how important this is to Koreans. Yet the exact opposite message is sent! The message the American sent was: "You guys are crazy and we just try to avoid you;" not "your emotional claim means you are more serious than the Japanese." To that end, shouts about politics at a baseball game serve to undermine, not enhance, Korea's claim on Dokdo in international and, in particular, Western eyes.

Koreans are emotional, and they should be. This is one of the strengths of the country, and it has made Korea the vibrant and exciting democracy that it is today. But Koreans should also remember two things: Japanese are just as emotional as Koreans about Dokdo; they merely express it differently and more quietly. Second, the more emotional Koreans get, the less this is convincing to American ears.

In conclusion, I welcome and support the South Korean government's branding initiative. It is important that Koreans be aware of their public image and conscious of how it can affect real interactions with people and governments in other countries. I am a bit skeptical that a marketing strategy by itself will be successful. A nation's global image is formed over decades and by innumerable interactions and actions, not with just a few flashy advertisements.

Yet I would never try to change an entire country's approach to an issue; Koreans need to be Korean and they should be proud of being Korean. But they should know how their actions and voices are perceived overseas so that perhaps some middle ground can be found, where the working diplomats, the government, academics, the media, and the general public work to find effective ways to communicate their views to the outside world.

Persuasion, convincing, and thoughtfulness are all elements of modern diplomacy, whether that diplomacy is carried out formally by Korean officials or informally by Korean citizens at a baseball game. Merely yelling will not solve the Dokdo issue, and Korea's global image will not

be enhanced by more advertisements in *The New York Times*. Instead, it will be enhanced bit-by-bit, person-by-person, as Koreans meet other citizens, travel to other countries and gently help them understand the Korean point of view.

### NOTES

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- 1 Karim Faheem, "On City's Plastic Bags, an Old and Distant Dispute" *The New York Times*. March 21 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/21/nyregion/21islands.html> (accessed June 1, 2009).



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# PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN PRACTICE

## LEVERAGING SOFT POWER CURRENCY AGAINST HARD POWER WEAPONS:

### THE ROLE OF MIDDLE POWERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND NONPROLIFERATION EFFORT

AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES WURST, PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE MIDDLE POWERS INITIATIVE

While the exact definition of a middle power state remains ambiguous, these countries are often thought to be “good international citizens” giving them a position of moral esteem. Through specialization and niche diplomacy, they lead movements of great international relevance and find new ways of interacting in the global power structure.

Among the behavioral assumptions made about prototypical middle powers are that they support and engage in multi-lateral diplomacy, cooperate with states that share similar interests, and promote and engage in peaceful conflict resolution or mediation. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines is a well-known example of middle power states working with non-governmental organizations to create an international network with a common goal. The recognized success of this group has brought further attention to organizations working to build similar connections and create platforms for discussion around pressing issues of international concern.

Nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation is another globally significant issue that requires international cooperation. Through the Middle Powers Initiative—a program of the Global Security Institute—eight international NGOs are able to work primarily with middle power governments to educate and to encourage nuclear

weapons states to take immediate practical steps that reduce nuclear dangers and can lead to negotiations to eliminate nuclear weapons.

To further discuss leveraging the moral authority of middle powers in the nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament effort, PD’s **Tala Mohebi** and **Desa Philadelphia** spoke with **James Wurst**, the Middle Powers Initiative’s Program Director.

**PD: What is the Middle Powers Initiative? Please tell us about the organization and why it was founded.**

**WURST:** The Middle Powers Initiative was founded in 1999. After the end of the Cold War, without the superpower balance (regardless of whether you thought it was good or bad, it existed) we ended up with a uni-polar world. Our belief was that if you could forge an informal coalition of middle power governments that would work in diplomatic circles—not only for the nonproliferation treaty but in international relations in general to forge a common strategy for the realization of nuclear disarmament through international law—that it would serve as a counterbalance to the United States. That was the idea.

Then what happened was, independent of us, other countries had the same idea and created what’s called the New Agenda Coalition;

these seven U.S.-friendly, mid-sized, non-nuclear countries<sup>1</sup> created a coalition of middle power governments to advance the nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation agenda. So we ended up working very closely with them and we still do, but of course we have our own particular agenda and the New Agenda Coalition has theirs, and over the years other ad-hoc groupings of midsized governments working on these issues formed. As more countries became involved, and as our capacity allowed, we were able to work with a broader range of governments.

In 2005 after the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference ended in failure, the Middle Powers Initiative started a new program, which we call the Article VI Forum. Article VI is the article of the NPT in which the nuclear states commit themselves to disarmament.

The insight there was that while 2005 was a failure, a vast majority of countries agreed on most issues and that only a few sticking points in a few countries were really blocking consensus. So the idea was to start a series of consultations that worked on strategies for the NPT and beyond.

Now we've just completed the sixth forum in Berlin in January and, without getting into the review conference itself, the forums tended to be extremely successful in forging common policies and giving the middle power countries an informal setting where they can work out some issues by themselves and come up their own strategies that they take back to their capitals and introduce into the UN system.

**Why work with middle power countries specifically? And, how do you define what the middle power countries are?**

Well as a term of ours, there's no definition. We talk about like-minded middle power countries—these are countries that already pretty much agree

with/among each other on disarmament and nonproliferation questions. They're politically, economically, and militarily significant countries that do not have nuclear weapons and that are actively engaged in these issues.

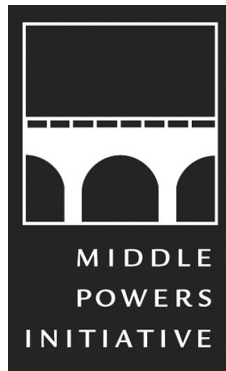
By that definition it's not at all difficult to figure out what countries we're talking about: Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Egypt, South Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and Australia. Those are the countries that most regularly attended these conferences. It's a self-selected group, if they want to attend they attend, if they don't they don't. There's no coercion, it's all by invitation—we just try to bring them together. It's not like NATO where you are a member by treaty, or like the

nonaligned movement that has a very distinct list of countries. Middle powers is an amorphous term and we prefer it that way; everyone prefers it that way—they don't want to be seen walking into some coalition or some sort of position. Sometimes, that actually depends on the government at bat too—it's up to countries if they want to engage with us; if they don't want to, then they don't.

**What standard has the Middle Powers Initiative used to measure its effectiveness as a forum?**

Well, that's always the interesting thing about diplomacy because what you see is the final product, you don't always know how it was created, and if you do know how it was created you're not supposed to talk about it. So sometimes it can be difficult.

I can tell you this because this is now pretty much a matter of public record, that before we started the Article VI forum of the Middle Powers Initiative at the invitation of President Jimmy



Carter, we had a consultation at the Carter Center in Atlanta on the future of the NPT in 2000, did it again in 2005, and we'll do it again ahead of the 2010 review conference. In other words, these are consultations/meetings that happened just ahead of the review conferences that occur every five years. So, we do know that what we were able to do in 2000 was to help create a political focus and momentum to come up with an agenda which did turn into thirteen steps that were agreed to at the 2000 review conference, solidifying the general statements on making progress towards nuclear disarmament. We do know we had a role in that because it's a matter of record that the people involved have talked about it.

Otherwise, we provide a space. We not only get governments together but international experts in a much more informal session where they can work out their own strategies. We're very upfront about what we want and there's nothing that says they've got to listen to us, but it's very heartening that they do keep coming. We always try to hold these annual meetings in different middle power states' capitals and we have more offers for hosting than we have forums planned; that's been quite encouraging. As I've pointed out, you don't join MPI. It's not a membership, it's not a coalition, so any country that doesn't want to be involved in this can walk away at the drop of a hat—and they don't. This encourages us that we are doing something, that we are providing a service not only to these countries but also to the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

**When you said you're upfront about what you want, how do you talk to the participating governments about what it is that you hope they would commit to?**

Well, upfront is when you call yourself the Article VI Forum, there's no room for ambiguity there. What we want them to do is to fulfill the treaty obligations, all of them, of the NPT—not just

nuclear disarmament. We consider that the lynchpin. Without disarmament the other elements, the other commitments of the NPT will not be fulfilled. So we believe in the fulfillment of all of the articles of the NPT but we do put special emphasis on Article VI.

**How do you hope that the conversations that you're having, and the willingness of the middle power governments to participate, might influence the countries that do have nuclear weapons and those that are trying to obtain them?**

Well, the thing here is that in most cases we talk about like-minded middle powers and the New Agenda Coalition—an important point of those seven countries is that they were allies of the United States or are allies of the United States. You're not talking about countries that are coming in with hostile intent either toward the treaty, toward their neighbors, or towards the nuclear powers or specifically the United States. How they might have some influence is that they come in with the basic position that they're here to help, that they're here to fulfill treaty obligations.

They intend to fulfill all of their treaty obligations and they will actively engage in any new negotiations—for instance, over a fissile material cut-off or any sort of negotiations on further steps for disarmament. So again, they go to the nuclear countries, particularly the United States, as allies, and say we don't have a hidden agenda, we're friends and we want you to fulfill your obligations. We hope that this open-hand approach will resonate with the target governments. And in the past it has. It doesn't always resonate of course—the last administration was not particularly receptive to any outside critique—but we're turning the page.

**With regards to the countries that do participate, do they see this as really helping their image with the other allied countries or**



**with publics around the world? Is it a way for them to kind of say ‘here is our government, our country, making an effort on this issue that’s important to every person on the planet’?**

That’s a difficult question for me to answer; I mean that’s the sort of question you should ask representatives of a country that you’re referring to. I wouldn’t presume to answer that question on behalf of 25 different countries. I would say that it does improve their standing in the international community in the UN body. People do listen, and people do respect their opinions. That would probably happen without us, but the collective work that we’re doing to make it a collective force, a single unified voice, could reflect well.

**Do you see any role for MPI in addressing issues other than nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, or branching out into other areas of interest and creating new forums for middle powers on those issues?**

The short answer is no. Our expertise is on nuclear weapons. Our chairman Ambassador Henrik Salander is an internationally renowned expert in the field. It is an organization which exists to promote nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. The expertise that would be necessary for other issues isn’t there and we don’t really have that kind of mandate from either our board or from our international steering committee, or from any of the countries that are involved in this.

This is not to say that the model cannot work. Other organizations, or groups of organizations, could very easily do something similar. Off the top of my head I can think of the Coalition for the

International Criminal Court. Here is an example of a coalition of organizations working with an ad-hoc coalition of governments. And there was the same thing with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines—here again you had coalitions of NGOs working for a common cause.

**Do you think there’s something special about the position of middle power countries? Something special about where they stand in the world order, and their ability to operate from a place that gives them some moral standing because they are not considered imperialists, but have enough resources and influence to make a difference.**

Yes. You see, many of these countries (northern or southern) are highly industrialized, have a very strong infrastructure and an education system that, if they had chosen to do so, they could have developed a weapon. It seems absurd now to think about it, but Sweden could have developed a bomb if they had wanted to. Some countries like South Korea or Japan had the capability; other countries gave them up. South Africa, for example, had it and they said, ‘no, our security is not served by this.’

You can’t underestimate the moral authority of a country, or a group of countries that have made that decision. One of the stories the president of the Global Security Institute often talks about is that you can’t preach temperance from a bar stool and you can’t tell somebody to quit smoking when they’ve got a cigar in their mouth. These people have sworn off the bottle, to continue that metaphor, so, yes, in the international community that does carry some weight.

### NOTES

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1. The New Agenda Coalition members are Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden.

## CREATING IMAGES OF AUSTRALIA

### THE ORIGINS OF AUSTRALIA'S APPROACH TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

INTERVIEW WITH CONSUL-GENERAL CHRIS DE CURE, OAM

The Honorable Chris De Cure, OAM is the Consul-General of Australia in Los Angeles. A senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, he previously held a range of senior appointments in Canberra including Senior Media Spokesman and Assistant Secretary of the Parliamentary Media Branch (2001-02) and Assistant Secretary of the Images of Australia Branch (1999-2000). In the latter role, he had oversight of the Department's international public affairs and cultural programs and its involvement in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

PD asked **Consul General De Cure** to describe the development

of public diplomacy in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He sat down with Editor-in-Chief **Anoush Rima Tatevossian** in May 2009 for a discussion about the way Australia approaches public diplomacy.

**Could you tell us about the Images of Australia Branch (IAB), and describe your involvement with it in its beginning years?**

Up until 1987, the Australian government's Overseas Information Service operated as an international public affairs service with staff posted in Australian overseas missions around the world. It operated in parallel, rather than in concert, with the then Department of Foreign Affairs. In 1987, the government integrated the OIS into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as an International Information Branch

sitting alongside a separate Cultural Relations Branch that was responsible for promoting Australian arts and culture internationally.

Part of the reason for bringing the Overseas Information Service into the department was a sense on the part of the Australian government of the day that the two weren't operating as a

single voice of Australia. They weren't necessarily conveying the same or coordinated messages. And in public affairs, it's important that you are consistent and persistent in the way that you convey messages.

There was a recognition that diplomats engaged in

policy advocacy need to reach out effectively, not just to governments, but also to the wider community, including through the media. Equally, public advocacy — including cultural advocacy — had to support the government's policy objectives. This required a change in approach from everyone involved in diplomacy.

Various strategies were put into place by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to break down walls between practitioners of what you might call traditional diplomacy and those engaged in public diplomacy. One of the early steps was to out-place public affairs officers into other areas of the Department to work alongside staff working on policy issues.

In the Americas & Europe Division of the Department, for example, an out-placed public affairs officer would seek out opportunities to



complement particular diplomacy initiatives being managed out of that division with a public diplomacy component. If the division was organizing a seminar to promote an Australian government policy position, the public affairs officer might work within the team to develop media messages, propose ways to engage the wider community, including civil society, or develop and implement a strategy to promote the outcomes of the seminar internationally. This was an important first step in integrating public diplomacy in broader diplomacy, but it only took us part of the way.

Another view at that time was that the Department was not always particularly effective at conducting strategic communication campaigns or public affairs strategies either to manage issues that were damaging Australia internationally or to take advantage of positive developments to promote Australian interests. If, for example, a negative story was running internationally about something that was happening in Australia, diplomats were often very effective and quick to provide the government's perspective on these issues to foreign governments and the business sector, but we weren't always that good at going out to the wider community or to the media and explaining the government's position to them.

So the challenge was to use the resources available to deliver more effective and better-coordinated public advocacy in support of the government's international objectives. And that led to a plan to create the Images of Australia Branch (IAB), which was essentially bringing together the cultural affairs and international public affairs branches, including the department's Web site management group, into a single unit with a more strategic focus.

I was given the job of heading this new branch — as somebody who had worked most of his career on foreign and trade policy issues,

but who also had a bit of an understanding of the media and public affairs, having undertaken some discrete projects in this area from time to time. My task was to develop a more strategic approach to international public affairs, cultural promotion and media relations, and also to integrate this work more broadly with the policy work of the Department.

It was important that I came to the job with a background in foreign and trade policy. While I lacked some of the professional public affairs and cultural relations skills and knowledge of some of my staff, I was able to act as a conduit between the public diplomacy practitioners and the foreign and trade policy staff. I think prior to that, such an approach from the International Public Affairs Branch might have been seen by some of my colleagues as a request to "help me do my job" rather than as a plea for collaboration in pursuit of a common objective.

A lot of our early work in IAB involved going out to other areas of the department and saying, "We can actually help you do what you're trying to achieve through public communication and advocacy." And often we were able to do this for them at no cost to their budget. Because we were given a reasonably sized budget to do our job, we could provide the resources to do the work, but we still needed to get the content from them. Getting this acceptance was a challenge and it took time because our colleagues had competing demands on their time and resources. It didn't help that, more often than not, when we saw the need or opportunity to develop a public diplomacy strategy for a policy area of the Department, it coincided with times when they were under the most pressure. While we tried to take a long-term strategic view when setting our priorities, the reality is that, in public diplomacy, the greatest demand for services comes when things are not traveling well.

**So, in a way, not only was IAB encouraging positive projections of Australia internationally, but it was also introducing Australians and policymakers to the importance of engaging in public diplomacy.**

That's right. In those early days, a lot of IAB's effort went into developing a broad understanding in the Department that international issues management in the public domain had to be much more an integral part of our international advocacy. We also needed to learn how to identify the opportunities and the tools for public diplomacy.

We also spent some time working out what the most effective public diplomacy tools were. We looked very critically at all of the tools we were using and at the effectiveness of individual strategies, and then we made some adjustments. One change was to use the internet much more as a tool for promoting our messages and as a database of information about Australia — conscious that, particularly in those days, the internet was a relatively passive, albeit inexpensive, tool. As a result, we were able to cut down dramatically on the amount of hard copy publishing we did and redirect these resources to other public diplomacy activities.

For a long time, like other foreign ministries around the world, the Department also conducted sponsored visiting programs for foreign journalists with the expectation that they would use knowledge acquired during their visits to write about Australia. This can be a very effective tool of public diplomacy, particularly if you have a large budget. Our problem was that our budget for this sort of activity was much more limited than in many other countries, and Australia's distance from many of the countries we were seeking to influence meant that the cost and time required for such visits was great.

To maximize the benefits of the 20 to 30 media visits we could afford to host each year,

we decided that the best way for us, at that time, to gain maximum influence was to focus our program on editorial writers, columnists, editors, TV show editors — in other words, the opinion makers within the media. Because what we found was that if you invite a journalist out and run the program for a week, then they go home and write two or three articles, but you never hear from them again. But if you get an editorial writer or columnist to visit, their writings are typically much more influential, and they also influence the writing of a much wider group within their media outlet.

The other thing we did was we began to organize more group media visits — often with media people from very different countries — around a theme. So you might have 10 people from 10 different countries on a visit. The advantage of this approach was that the journalists would get to know each other, and they shared ideas and information in casual conversation because they weren't competing with each other. So they had a good lively conversation about Australia, and we could complement their program to respond to their needs. It also meant we and the people they met got value for our effort. By that I mean we could often get much more senior appointments with senior group media visits and individual journalist visits because these people could see a much greater return for their investment of time. If you want busy ministers and business executives to meet people or journalists, you have to convince them that it's worthwhile. If you could say, "We've got 10 editors from 10 different countries in Asia who want to talk to you about X or Y," they'll probably think that's something worth doing — it's half an hour or an hour of my time, and there's a fair bit of potential benefit. So we were able to put together very good, high-quality programs for these people because of the quality of the group.

**Why were the Sydney Olympic Games, or other internationally showcased events, so important for Australia? Does Australia generally actively seek out the opportunity to host these types of large-scale events?**

We certainly have sought out major events in the past — sporting events in particular. Australia tends to see them as something more than standalone events. Certainly, major international events are of great interest to Australians because our geographic remoteness means that we are not always on the route of world-class artists and sportspeople. Major events provide an opportunity to overcome the tyranny of distance. Tourism is also an important industry for Australia, and major events attract tourists, both to attend events and as a result of publicity that the event attracts around the world.

Another layer of opportunity comes from the international exposure that a major event attracts, not just from the global media but also from political, economic and social elites and opinion makers. The Sydney Olympics in 2000 brought to Sydney world leaders, senior business executives and celebrities, not to mention a broad range of global media who otherwise might never cover stories about Australia. While they may have come to the Sydney Olympics to watch sporting events, they also absorbed other things about our culture, our economy and our people.

When the Olympic Games are on, it is the biggest story across the globe, so the media need to be able to devote a lot of space or time to the event and the things happening around it. They need not just sports stories, but color or filler pieces that present and analyze the country and the city where the event is being held. This provides the host with a unique opportunity to encourage and facilitate more comprehensive and nuanced views of the country.

So it's not just about sports; an event like the Olympic Games provides invaluable prime time

exposure — exposure that you cannot buy. It's a massive opportunity. The challenge for the host is to take advantage of this by being strategic about the messages it wants to communicate and the people it wants to influence. This was something that Australia understood and looked to exploit in 2000.

**What were some of the key elements or strategies used at the Sydney Media Centre during the Olympics?**

The Media Centre was established in the heart of Sydney and focused exclusively on supporting media representatives who were not accredited to the games or who were looking to report non-sports news. The center provided news and broadcast facilities, media briefings on a diverse range of issues, and consultancy and advisory services to visiting journalists seeking story ideas or interviews. It proved a huge success and generated a lot of media participation and output. Most importantly from our perspective, we were able to assist in ensuring that reporting on Australia at that time was more accurate and comprehensive than it might otherwise have been.

During the games we provided both free one-on-one media advisory and consultancy services as well as a comprehensive program of seminars, press conferences or briefing sessions on a range of issues. There were as many as 10 sessions held each day. We brought in a diverse group of people, including prominent scientists, successful business people, community leaders, etc. to talk about their achievements. We had people who had invented new technologies to explain their work, sessions on quirky things about Australia such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service, volunteer lifesavers or bushfire fighters to talk about the way they work — essentially things that provide a more complete picture of the country and that show the character of the

country and how we deal with various issues. We even had the odd Olympic champion come in to conduct a press conference.

Part of the strategy was to use that platform — the Olympics — as an opportunity to talk to the media about how Australia had gone about the preparation for and staging of the games, the expertise and the skills that we brought to the task, and how things had been improved from previous years. We highlighted Australian capability: technology, telecommunication, construction, complex event management and organization, and tourism infrastructure — the capacity of hotels, restaurants and so forth to handle large crowds. These were the sorts of things that would give comfort to a business considering establishing a presence in Australia or someone looking for providers of goods and services to assist them in hosting a major event. We were also looking to show that there was more to Australia than cuddly koalas and kangaroos and beaches, but that Australia was a sophisticated and capable country with a diverse population that could undertake quite large, complex and sophisticated tasks in a flexible way and do it very efficiently and with a smile on our faces.

**In your opinion, are there particular challenges to being a “middle power,” such as working with a smaller budget than a larger country?**

In terms of being a middle power, I think there are some interesting issues there for public diplomats, like where you spend your money and how you maximize the return on your spend. Smaller countries typically have a lower profile and start from a lower base in terms of international awareness. They also typically have less to spend in order to raise their profile.

Having a lower profile can be a positive and a negative. The positive is that the world’s view of you is less set in stone so it can be easier to

shift. The negative is that it can be very difficult to be noticed unless you have a lot of money to spend on promotion and advocacy. However, if you are a larger country with a very high profile in the world, such as the United States, it is much harder for a public diplomacy campaign to shift attitudes — hence the cost is also much higher. A smaller country will find it more difficult to attract attention from the international community, but if it wants to change its image, it is often working with a less cluttered canvas.

Every country is different, of course. I think there are probably some middle powers that spend a lot more than Australia does on public diplomacy. We like to think we are more effective than most because we focus on getting value for money. And that’s why we do a lot of multiplier initiatives rather than doing big advertising campaigns. Our programs tend to be much more strategic, focusing on influencing people who influence others and on issues that are important to our national interests. It’s all about influencing where it matters.

**Overall, Australia generally ranks very positively on various nation branding indexes. However, a 2007 Australian Senate Report concluded that the “effectiveness of the whole of Australia’s public diplomacy is less than the sum of its parts.”<sup>1</sup> Would you agree with that, or would you say that the fact that Australia’s brand is so positive is proof that even though efforts might be disjointed, they are succeeding?**

The large number of players working in public diplomacy does present challenges for coordination and integration, but we work hard at consultation. IAB undertakes extensive planning consultations with overseas posts and geographic and multilateral divisions at this time of year to ensure our public diplomacy efforts next financial year are closely aligned



with policy development. DFAT also holds a bi-annual Interdepartmental Committee on Public Diplomacy involving some 20 other government agencies to ensure a good shared understanding of the breadth of activity underway and consistent messages on key policy.

As you've noted, we consistently score well in nation branding studies, so a diversity of

approaches does not seem to be undermining positive perceptions of Australia. Of course, there is always room for improvement, particularly in improving perceptions of Australia's creativity and innovation, but government-sponsored public diplomacy efforts will only ever be one factor in achieving a policy objective or in contributing to changing perceptions of Australia.

### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fadt\\_ctte/completed\\_inquiries/2004-07/public\\_diplomacy/report/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/fadt_ctte/completed_inquiries/2004-07/public_diplomacy/report/index.htm)



## AT POST: SUAT KINIKLIOGLU

AT POST ASKS PRACTITIONERS TO BREAK DOWN THE MECHANICS OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

**Suat Kiniklioglu** is Deputy Chairman of External Affairs for the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) and Spokesman for the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Turkish Parliament. He is also director of the Center for Strategic Communication (stratim), a non-governmental organization that facilitates strategic communication for Turkey both at home and abroad. Mr Kiniklioglu writes a weekly column for Today's Zaman, an English-language daily and is a frequent contributor to media outlets such as the International Herald Tribune, the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal. He is based in Ankara.



Turkey, specifically with the aim of succeeding in accession to the European Union.

### **2. What activities are imperative to doing your job and reaching your PD goals?**

It is imperative that we have a sound understanding of current affairs, its consequences, and how our foreign policy behavior is being perceived in different target countries. It is also very important that we set specific targets and measure them after our efforts are completed. We also have to monitor the dynamic debate on Turkey in the many different European countries, particularly in view of the ever-changing policy environment in our region. Our neighborhood is extremely volatile and eventful which means there is pressure to get timely messages to a variety of audiences.

### **1. Definitions of public diplomacy, including the role of public diplomats, abound. What, in your own words, is your job description?**

Public diplomacy is an effort that seeks to inform and influence foreign audiences on issues pertaining to Turkish foreign policy interests. I believe every citizen is a public diplomat in one-way or another. Yet, professional public diplomats must first understand the strengths and weaknesses of our nation as well as the nature of target audiences. The role of the public diplomat certainly involves good appreciation of the public debates about Turkey in target countries. My job description is to plan, coordinate and construct the right tools for a successful public diplomacy campaign for

### **3. Describe a recent project that is demonstrative of your organization's PD initiatives.**

We are in the process of inviting dozens of European parliamentarians of Turkish origin or with backgrounds related to Turkey for a summit. We aim to facilitate a dynamic network, and have them debate the future of Europe through this network. We will also inform them about the progress we've made in our quest for accession to the European Union. The summit will serve to better enlighten them about their ancestral home and to help them appreciate the diversity and richness of culture in Turkey.

Such a summit will involve high-level meetings with President [Abdullah] Gül, Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip] Erdogan and other relevant authorities.

**4. How does your organization establish its public diplomacy goals? Who sets the priorities? Is there an emphasis on specific issues or regions?**

We have a board that discusses the activities of our organization regularly. Strategic goals and direction are a natural component of the board meetings. Of course, we cooperate with our Foreign Ministry and the Prime Ministry but we are autonomous and only consult with them. The Stratim board sets the priorities. As indicated earlier, we have a specific emphasis on Turkey's EU drive but as we grow we intend to tackle other areas as well. Turkish-American relations and Turkey's neighborhood outreach would be natural new areas.

**5. Who are your strategic partners - within and outside your organization - in executing your projects?**

Primarily think-tanks and some media outlets. We also work closely with opinion-makers, columnists, NGOs, civil-society leaders, etc.

**6. What is the most constructive piece of advice you have received for practicing public diplomacy?**

I am always amazed by the diversity and

complexity of the many debates within different countries about Turkey. The best advice I have heard was to work hard in understanding these debates and then construct the right tools, messages and messengers for the PD effort. In a globalized world the best advice is to follow the fluid and dynamic target audiences very closely. Secondly, I am sure about what I have to offer, I am fully confident about Turkey's capacity to join the EU, and know that the EU will

be a stronger and more credible global actor with Turkey on board. When you believe in your work and mission it is much easier to be convincing.

**7. Share a personal experience (good or bad) about PD in practice. Something that was surprising, interesting or otherwise influenced**

**the way you practice public diplomacy.**

Turks generally feel the French are very much opposed to Turkish entry to the EU. They feel that regardless of how much Turkey will reform and make progress in the accession negotiations the French will not change their minds. During a trip to France, I was pleasantly surprised to see that there is much more diversity in opinion and far more positive sentiments toward Turkish accession than we were aware of. I was particularly struck by the warm wishes of French citizens in cities beyond Paris. I am convinced that we will be able to bring the French to a point where they will not object to Turkey's eventual entry. We have been structuring our PD efforts according to these nuances.



## NATO CAMPAIGNS WASHINGTON: TELLING THE STORY OF ALLIED CONTRIBUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES THOMAS SNYDER, NATO INFORMATION OFFICER

Between March 23rd and April 19th riders of the Washington D.C. metro system saw a unique ad campaign about NATO's efforts in Afghanistan. The poster campaign, which featured photos of allied troops performing a variety of civil service as well as military tasks above slogans like "Defending Freedom," "Working for Peace" and "Securing Afghanistan's Future" was the brainchild of NATO Information Officer **James Thomas Snyder**. Snyder, who is based in the Brussels headquarters, works in the section responsible for public diplomacy towards Denmark, Norway and the United States. He spoke to PD's **Alexis Haftvani** and *Lorena M. Sanchez* about the goals and outcomes of the campaign.

**PD: How did the NATO display campaign originate?**

SNYDER: The original impetus behind it was a visit I made to Washington in February 2008 with the head of my division, the Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy. I was amazed to see that regardless of party or ideological affiliation—Pentagon, State Department, civilian, military, think tank, non-think tank—everybody I talked to had this almost knee jerk skepticism of the weight that the allies, that is the non-Americans forces, were carrying in Afghanistan. The endpoint of the campaign was to tweak that perception. It was policy makers and policy thinkers that I wanted to target. It's an idea that has been kicked around a while, but because we are uncomfortable, institutionally, with such a direct approach it took us a long time to get to this point. But there was enough institutional

support by the time I came up with this idea, and a lot of the allies saw a national interest in promoting their contributions to the Washington community.

**Was it intended to serve in conjunction with the April 3rd and 4th summit [in Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany] celebrating the 60th anniversary of NATO?**

One of the points of the campaign was to maximize attention on the summit—leading up to it, during the summit itself, and during its wind down as people were talking about what happened. I specifically chose the days from March 23 to April 19 to bracket what I expected to be the highest point of interest in the summit from a media standpoint and from a policy standpoint, particularly in the Washington community.

**Did you prioritize particular Metro lines for high traffic reasons?**

We didn't have the choice of picking where it would go in the Metro, it's a random distribution. But I ran an average and it would be one per train and about one per car so we figure it had a reasonably good penetration. And most people I talked to who live and work in Washington, and certainly those who commute saw it.

**Some of the messages within the posters are particularly evocative including "Democracy Echoes Security" and "Working for Peace." Can you tell us how you came up with these messages?**

The initial idea was to include Afghanistan as part of a much larger campaign that would be

In Afghanistan, progress on security and development echo one another. Mission success requires strong relationships with local communities. Here, an Afghan woman speaks with a Lithuanian soldier assigned to the NATO Provincial Reconstruction Team at Chaghcharan in fall 2008. Lithuania has commanded the Chaghcharan PRT since 2004.

**WORKING FOR PEACE**

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NATO writ large, that would be NATO history, the founding of the organization, the Cold War, the resolution of the Cold War. But that got whittled down, basically because we didn't think we could do a large enough campaign and we were definitely concerned the message would get muddled. So we really had to focus on Afghanistan which was the right choice to make. In developing that we came up with several lines. One of them was "Working for Peace." That is ultimately what NATO is about and that's what a part of the broad structuring of the campaign is about. We want a peaceful stable Afghanistan for everyone's sake—for the Afghans, for us in the North Atlantic Region, and also in the Central Asian region as well.

When it came to "Democracy Echos Security" that gets to one of the ways we think of Afghanistan, which you could call a counterinsurgency strategy or what we call the comprehensive approach. The security environment affects the economic environment which affects the governance environment and all of these are connected and

you can't just focus on one piece of the puzzle. You have to work the whole puzzle together at the same time.

Part of what was important about communicating "Democracy Echos Security" was we wanted to show the Washington audience that we, at NATO, got the concept of this comprehensive approach; that we have to apply all of these tools of national power in order to fix Afghanistan; that while NATO is a security organization, security is only one piece of the puzzle. And we're also working on these other pieces as well.

**Were you able to measure the success of this campaign? Did you have certain metrics you used to evaluate effectiveness?**

That is the first thing we wanted to know after it ran but it wasn't the first question we had when we [were planning the campaign because] one of the systemic problems of the campaign was cost. Therefore the only [measure] that we

have is basically: What was the outcome of the campaign that we saw in the external media and in web traffic?

But here are two things that we do know: One is that natochannel.tv reported this staggering spike in viewership from one day to the next. From Monday, March 23 to Tuesday, March 24 we saw a spike from 64,577 page views on Monday to 301,854 page views on Tuesday. That seems to suggest that something was happening. The second bit was that we saw from the District of Columbia a 50% increase in traffic to nato.int compared to the same monthly period from the previous year, which again is indicative. The lesson that we learned is that we have to be a lot more sophisticated the next time we do something like this in measuring traffic with the Internet. And we also have to pay the money to do a serious viewer survey and figure out not only what kind of impact it had but how we can improve the campaign the next time around.

**Were there any surprises in the feedback that you got? Perhaps people responding to it whom you didn't anticipate?**

I had [envisioned] kind of a proto-typical audience member—a career civil servant or military person who is working on policy, particularly related to Afghanistan—who had a preconception about the allies in Afghanistan that I thought these graphic depictions of allied operations would change. And [I got] comments that pretty much said almost exactly what I wanted to hear: “The allies are doing stuff. They’re getting their hands dirty. They’re doing the full spectrum of operations. They’re really stepping up. They’re doing what we’re asking them to do.”

One of the negative pieces of feedback I had was: “Why are we doing this at all?” I think there’s a certain kind of person out there—and this was a concern related to a lot of the visuals we had— who would be put off by pictures of

people in uniform and the military-esque aspect of the mission in Afghanistan. So I wanted to emphasize the full spectrum of operations from the actual physical bridge building to the medical contributions and the civil-military outreach.

Most of the people I talked to about this recognized that fact and they felt that the photographs were dramatic and compelling. It showed the allies in a positive light, but in an accurate light, and it tweaked some perceptions.

**Having gone through this experience and created this display, how will you build on the success of the campaign and continue to generate awareness?**

It was really exciting because the key thing was we set the precedent. We did it so we could do it again. And because the thing was portable I was literally able to send it off. I’ve had it displayed at various conferences and various venues.

What we want to do now is figure out how we can do this in different environments—in other public transit systems, other media. And I want to push this on some of my colleagues to figure out ways to adapt this concept to reach people directly such as young, educated, often times decision-making people in capitals like Berlin, Oslo, London, Ottawa. Because we feel confident that we’re accurately representing NATO and we’re raising awareness.

The problem is this campaign couldn’t necessarily work outside the Anglo-Saxon context. As full spectrum and soft edge as it is for the American context, there’s no way it would work in most of the European capitals. That is, many of the countries would prefer to see their own people, their own forces, in a NATO operation as opposed to the French, the Americans, the Brits, the Spanish. So conceptually it’s very flexible but when you actually boil it down to “How’s this going to play in Madrid?” or “How is this going to play in Copenhagen?” you really have to think very

In Afghanistan, progress on security and development echo one another. NATO Provincial Reconstruction Teams harmonize these efforts. Here, Hungarian soldiers and Afghans check a bridge project in Baghlan Province in June 2007. The international community has built more than 4,000 km of roads since 2001, improving trade and transport across the country.

**SECURING  
AFGHANISTAN'S  
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clearly about how you're going to communicate in that very particular national culture.

What [is also a problem with] this campaign is that it's mostly static. I think what we'll probably do next is limit the campaign to a handful of images but then make sure those images are about real people whose stories we can tell through multimedia modules on our website. A lot of campaigns work this way now. It's called "multi-platform" where you've got TV, various forms of print, and web and they're all mutually reinforcing. They're all telling the same story but in different formats.

**Do you think this campaign represents a new paradigm in thinking about the need for outreach to global publics, to have organizations like NATO speak not just to government officials but beyond them to larger publics?**

Absolutely. That was part of the intent, definitely on my part, which was to get out of

NATO headquarters, get out of the conference rooms and reach the public. And we have a strategy of reaching out to a younger demographic and successive generations. We're trying to develop new tools like this but it's not easy. We have NATO TV because we know we have to feed things to viewers and media. We have a reputation-building campaign which is a web-based video found on our platform. We took up ads in publications prior to the anniversary summit in *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy* and other magazines in order to try to reach a broader public.

A good chunk of what we do is an attempt to broaden the base, to reach larger numbers of people and we're trying to figure out how to do that. It's not the easiest thing in the world and you can do it wrong very easily. But you can always improve. Public diplomacy should put the public first. I talk to thousands of Americans and Europeans each year and it's one of the greatest pleasures of this job so if I didn't have that, if I didn't feel like I was reaching the public, I wouldn't feel effective.



# IN PRINT

WANGARI MAATHAI

## *THE CHALLENGE FOR AFRICA* [PANTHEON]

BY KENYA DAVIS-HAYES

When those residing in the Western world consider the continent of Africa, many conjure images of devastation, famine and war. Televised news agencies flock to disasters or conflicts in Africa only to feed an insatiable appetite for images of chaos and deprivation suffered by the darker peoples of the world. NGOs, as well as for-profit and non-profit organizations flock to the Continent in an effort to alleviate suffering. While their humanitarian aid can, at times, be successful and is often welcomed, these aid institutions tend to transmit an unintentional message of continental helplessness and retrogression. With a hegemonic gaze, the Western world watches the ebb and flow of African misfortune—both real and overblown—and defines the Continent by these images.

Wangari Maathai's book, *The Challenge for Africa*, stands as a call to dispel with the stereotyping of Africa and to recognize the region as an international equal. Unearthing Africa's colonized history, acknowledging its faults, and calling for a new day, Maathai declares, "Africa has been on her knees for too long." She then calls for a new corps of African leaders to construct public diplomacy agendum to be



carried out by a new generation of personally and civically responsible individuals. According to her text, Africans hold the key to a renewed continent, not outsiders.

This discussion of solutions for Africa fits nicely into an existing canon of works including Dambisa Moyo's recent and controversial text, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*. But Maathai's work stands apart from others in regards to its optimistic vision of Africa's future and for her willingness to acknowledge that Africa's image on the global stage is both self-constructed and devised by outside entities. She also concentrates heavily on the role of aid in this dynamic.

Throughout *The Challenge for Africa*, Maathai clamors for a shift from the images of corrupt or ineffective African leaders and those of children with distended bellies and dying women with flies in their eyes. She also raises the question of why such images are maintained, and her answers relate to both Africa's media outlets and the failure of its political leaders. Citing the Ethiopian famine of 1985, Maathai recalls that Kenyan cameraman Mohamed Amin traveled with musician Bob Geldof to chronicle the effects

of the famine on the populous. Only because of the interest of a Westerner did the neighboring Kenyan population become aware of a distressed Ethiopia. She then asks why a highly progressive and capable Kenya did not mobilize to alleviate the suffering of their northern neighbors.

Gratefully, she does employ examples of current public diplomacy efforts throughout the Continent that aim to alter the current image of Africa. Citing organizations such as the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC) which outreaches to civil society organizations, Maathai chronicles efforts that allow Africans to be heard and acknowledged within the African Union, and which give ongoing internal support to Africa-based aid and development organizations. The ECOSOCC also works to redevelop cultural institutions and traditions that have faded, due to a history of colonization and, to some degree, Christianization. Even African religious leaders have begun to lobby to entities like the Catholic Church for a role for African traditions within their Christian faiths. In response, a new dynamic has appeared, giving credibility to the power of African tradition and culture in the Continental practice of Western religion. In 1995, Pope John Paul II apologized to Africans for the Catholic Church's past declarations that many African practices were "Satanic or incompatible with Christ's teachings." Reversal in sentiments like that of the Pope's, help the slow but persistent efforts of Africans to reconstruct their image in the Western mind. Still, Maathai makes it clear that aid-giving societies and even celebrities could begin to assist in constructing a more balanced image for the world, thus allowing Africa to enter the global community as a proud equal—not as a degraded charity case.

Maathai argues that the image of a distraught Africa is a comfort to the West; these images, which often go unquestioned, have a devastating effect on the global policies for the region. To a large degree, such images downplay the existence of unfair trade policies and the overwhelming debt held by the majority of African nations. As of 2004, "Kenya owed \$6.8 billion dollars and sends...a million dollars a day in debt payments." The illogical relationship between receiving aid while paying off debts only encourages Africa's cycle of poverty.

In summary, it must be considered that a deconstruction of the West's hegemonic gaze and its hegemonic policies throughout Africa would shift our perceptions of ourselves. As stated in the work of Michael Maren in his memoir, *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity*, "...Africa was more than a place on the map, it was a location in our collective psyche. The 'starving African' exists as a point in space from which we measure our own wealth, success and prosperity. The starving African transcends the dull reality of whether or not anyone is actually starving in Africa. Starvation clearly delineates us from them." If Maathai's challenge for the region is indeed met within the next few decades, the delineation will no longer exist.

*The Challenge for Africa* is a fascinating read for all those interested in the effects of aid on Africa, the importance of global perceptions towards the Continent, and understanding the complex relationship between Africa and the West. Maathai's desire for an autonomous and democratic Africa echoes existing calls, and only a new cadre of African leaders—local, national and continental—can truly meet her challenge.

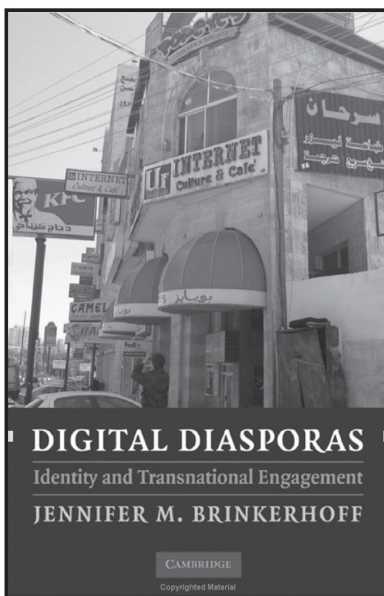


JENNIFER M. BRINKERHOFF

DIGITAL DIASPORAS: IDENTITY AND TRANSNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT [CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS]

BY ERIN KAMLER

In *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement*, Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff explores the complex realm of CGOs (cyber-grassroots organizations) and their social and political effects on diaspora communities in the United States. Brinkerhoff focuses her analysis on diasporans from Afghanistan, Somalia, Egypt, Tibet, Nepal and the corresponding online organizations that have become hubs for interactions among members of these communities—Afghanistanonline, Somalinet, MyCopticChurch, Tibetboard and Thamel.com, respectively. By examining the structures of the online forums as well as the interactive threads, or comments, posted on these sites over time, the author assesses the ways in which these CGOs foster democratic values among community members, support integration into the host society, and contribute to security and socio-economic development in the homelands. She argues that when diasporans have a forum for expressing their hybrid identities within a host society, many problems and difficulties of migrant integration can be eased. In fact, Brinkerhoff challenges widely held assumptions that transnational IT poses security threats to nation states' sovereignty and/or fosters increased terrorist activity, arguing instead



that diasporans' use of IT actually helps foster democratic policies and liberal values in the corresponding homeland communities. Brinkerhoff begins her analysis by describing the recent history and political situations of the five countries in question. Thereafter, she examines the social interactions and online posts of users participating in corresponding diasporas CGOs, drawing connections between the content of these interactions, the debate-oriented frames created around important political issues, and the resulting social conclusions. With a heavy focus on the issue of identity-exploration, the author argues that diasporan interaction in CGOs contributes to the creation of "bonding social capital," or positive inter-connectedness. By using the digital realm to explore questions of identity, participants in *Afghanistanonline*, for instance, foster empathy, understanding and pride among their fellow diasporans, thereby creating a social safety net and dissolving the "othering" process that they would otherwise typically experience. By contrast, the personal attacks and socially inflamed interactions that persist on *Somalinet* result in decreased bonding social capital and pride about the homeland (however,

the author still argues that having a forum to express these feelings ultimately contributes to conflict mitigation within the Somali diaspora community).

While the author carefully and thoroughly explores the social interactions on all five websites, the larger question, which must ultimately be asked, has to do with the limitations of the digital realm. This brings up complex issues of anonymity and responsibility within CGOs and other online forums. While Brinkerhoff makes noteworthy observations about diasporan communities, identity exploration and political mobilization, her analysis is fundamentally limited to a superficial understanding of the users of the online forums in question because she

was unable to track the actual lives, relationships and political behavior of the users. Hence, she is unable to quantitatively show what direct impact CGOs are having on real world behaviors.

Despite these limitations, *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement* provides an excellent introduction to CGOs and the ways in which diaspora communities interact and function within the digital realm. Brinkerhoff's conclusions about the ability of CGOs to promote and reinforce liberal values, and facilitate conflict resolution should be added to the ongoing discussion in public diplomacy about how diasporans are using technology to respond to social and political events in both their home and host countries.



# ENDNOTE

## NATION “BRANDING”: PROPAGANDA OR STATECRAFT?

By SIMON ANHOLT

The middle powers, in their struggle for stability, prosperity and recognition, have in recent years developed an intense interest in the question of national image. Nation “branding” is an idea that has gained much currency during the last 10 years, although we are far from reaching any consensus on what such an operation might involve, and indeed whether it really exists outside the realms of pure conjecture and wishful thinking.

Nobody doubts that countries depend on their images much as companies do: With a good national image, attracting tourists, investors and talent, enhancing exports, and winning the approval of other governments and international public opinion is relatively cheap and easy; with a negative or weak image, everything is a struggle. But there is little consensus on whether a good image is merely the natural consequence of successful statecraft, or whether in fact it is possible to address image directly and thus in some way reverse the process: an enhanced image leading to enhanced respect and increased business, and thus an improved reality. Does reality merely produce perceptions as an illness produces symptoms, or can working on the symptoms somehow influence the course of the illness?

These are fascinating questions to ponder, but there is little research or other evidence to help us decide. My own view is that attempting to manipulate perceptions directly, without recourse to the conditions that created those reputations

in the first place, is a pretty good definition of propaganda, and what’s more, it doesn’t work. Propaganda depends on a closed society and control over the sources of information reaching the target — two conditions which the forces of globalization have made very difficult to achieve in most countries and starkly impossible in the international sphere.

Trying to operate directly on national reputation is like trying to lose weight by applying creams or vibrating belts to the fat bits: The fat isn’t on the surface but under the skin, and it can only be reduced gradually by taking more exercise and eating less. In the same way, the nation’s reputation isn’t inside the country but deeply buried in the perceptions of countless people around the world — indeed, it is often rooted in their national cultures — and can only be rebuilt slowly and painstakingly by altering its causes. (And my view of the firms that sell logos and slogans to image-conscious countries is that they are even more contemptible than the firms that sell creams and vibrating belts to weight-conscious people.)

In the current climate, some might add that such questions about the images of countries are simply trivial when compared with the harsh facts of economic survival, and that the whole business of understanding and managing public perceptions is a luxury that can only be afforded in times of growth and prosperity. I would argue the opposite: We live in a world where perceptions regularly trump reality — the economic crisis

itself is surely proof of that — and today it's all about the survival of those *perceived* to be the fittest. Knowing how to deal with intangibles is just as important in such times as traditional military, political or fiscal competence.

Once the decision has been made that "something needs to be done" about the country's image, there are a number of preliminary questions that really need to be answered and that the governments of the middle powers seldom seem to ask — or at least not in any very rigorous way. Few of these governments, for example, trouble to measure their own country's reputation, rather unwisely relying on received notions, personal perceptions and hearsay to establish whether there is a problem or not with the way their country is perceived around the world.

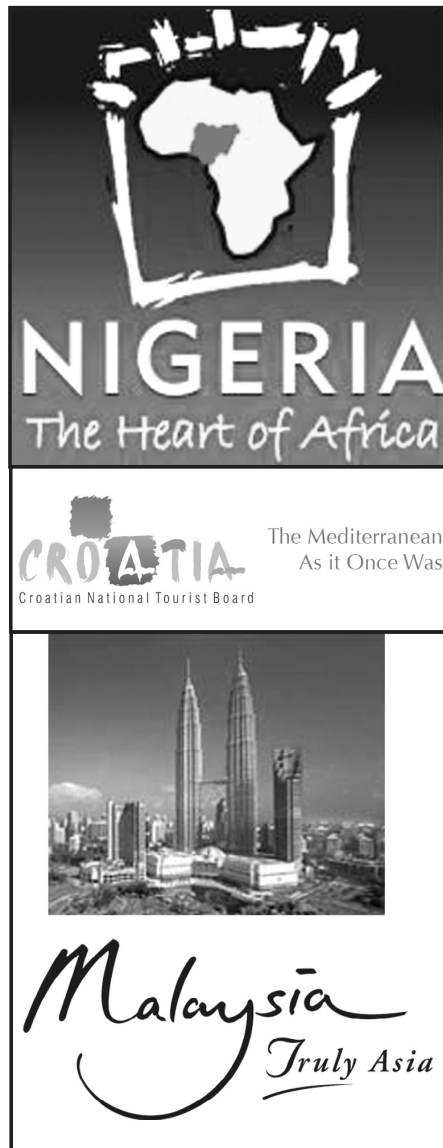
Assuming that some measurement and analysis of national reputation has been made, the next most important issue to address is whether and to what extent this reputation is actually deserved. In most cases, this is a foregone conclusion: If people don't like us, they're wrong, and if they don't know us, they're ignorant. The truth is liable to be a little more complex.

For any country with a weak or negative reputation, the remedy will be very different depending on whether that reputation is deserved

or not. If the weakness or negativity is largely deserved, then the country needs to alter its behavior and its offerings in a very substantial way in order to earn a better or stronger reputation. In the rarer event that the negative reputation is largely undeserved, and that it is truly the case that if only people knew the country better they would appreciate it more, then simply encouraging more "product trial" (through tourism arrivals, service and product exports, foreign direct investment, talent and educational recruitment, business and diplomatic visits, major cultural and sporting events, film location promotion, media invitations, and so forth) is likely to be the main aim of any image enhancement program.

If the substance needs to be altered in any significant way, this is clearly going to take far longer and cost far more; if, on the other hand, the reputation is seriously out of kilter with the reality, things can be improved more quickly and more cheaply, and there will be somewhat more emphasis on communication, promotion and incentivizing rather than on policy change, major investment and innovation.

The distinction is easily described but far harder to carry out in any rigorous way. How do



you decide whether a country’s image is deserved or not? It is almost impossible for governments or populations to have a sufficiently informed or objective viewpoint on this matter, and since the consequences of making the wrong call are serious, it is very important to get it right. Most people think their own country deserves a better reputation than it has, so such subjective opinions are virtually worthless. (And in my whole career, I have never come across any government, citizen or business that genuinely feels that the reputation of its home country is as good as or better than it deserves.) Patriotism and civic pride are good things, but they do interfere with objectivity, an essential component of any realistic and effective strategy.

Many countries have wasted enormous sums of public money on communications campaigns, based on the assumption that people don’t respect their country simply because they don’t know enough about it. In most cases, they are deluding themselves, and the real reason why their country has a negative reputation is that it doesn’t deserve a positive one.

When we’re talking about the middle powers, the issue is very often one of relevance: Most people don’t care very much about most other countries, especially if they don’t possess a great deal of economic, military, political or cultural clout. Rather than asking themselves “what

can we say to make ourselves more famous?” the governments of such countries should be asking “what can we do to make ourselves more relevant?”

The problem is that even if a country truly does deserve a better reputation, simply telling people about it is not enough to alter that reputation. The images of cities and countries scarcely ever change, as the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index and Anholt-GfK Roper City Brands Index abundantly prove, and when they do change, they change very slowly as a result of major changes in the city or country and never as a result of more expensive or more imaginative marketing efforts. People are very firmly attached to their views about cities and countries. In general, they will only change them if they simply have no other choice and the evidence is overwhelming.

They don’t generally pay much attention to communications campaigns — especially when there is no “product” or offer, and when the “brand” that is speaking is a government rather than an exciting consumer goods company — so even if a lack of information is indeed the problem, simply providing more information is never the solution.

A reputation can never be constructed through communications, slogans and logos: It needs to be *earned*.



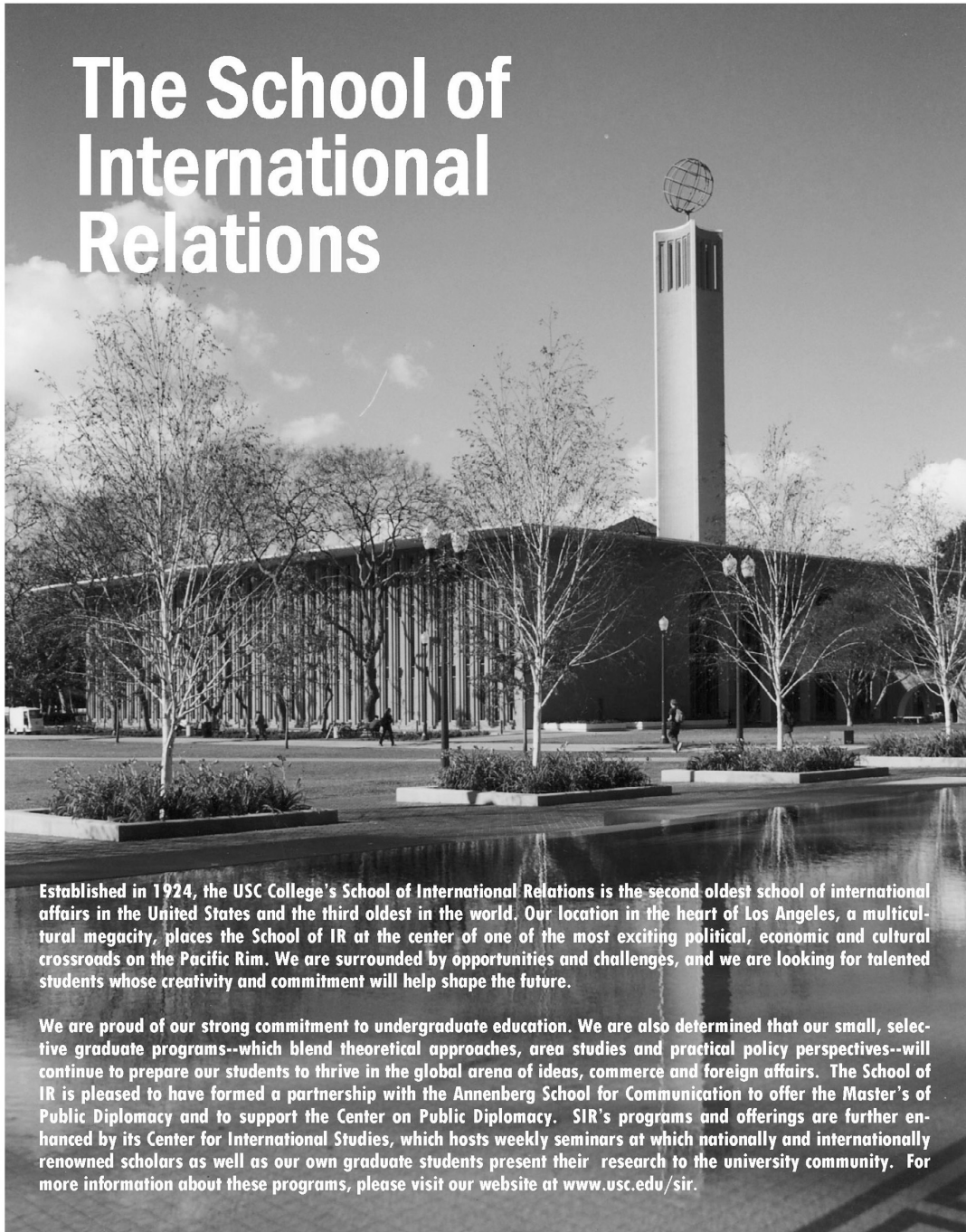
*Simon Anholt is the leading authority on managing and measuring national identity and reputation. He is a member of the UK Foreign Office’s Public Diplomacy Board and has advised the governments of some 30 countries from Chile to Botswana, Korea to Jamaica, and Bhutan to the Faroe Islands. He is Founding Editor of the quarterly journal Place Branding and Public Diplomacy and author of several books. He also publishes two major annual surveys, the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index and City Brands Index.*







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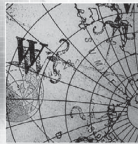
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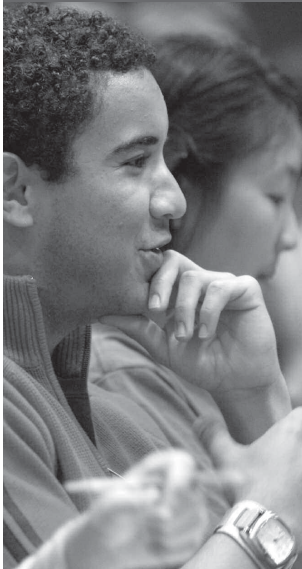
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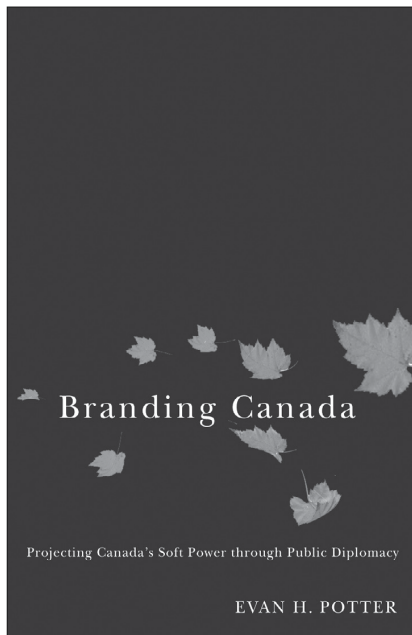
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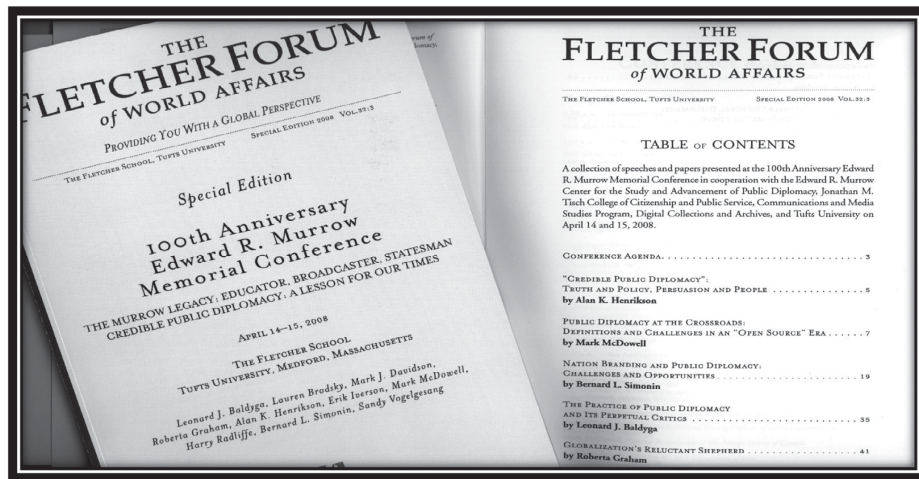
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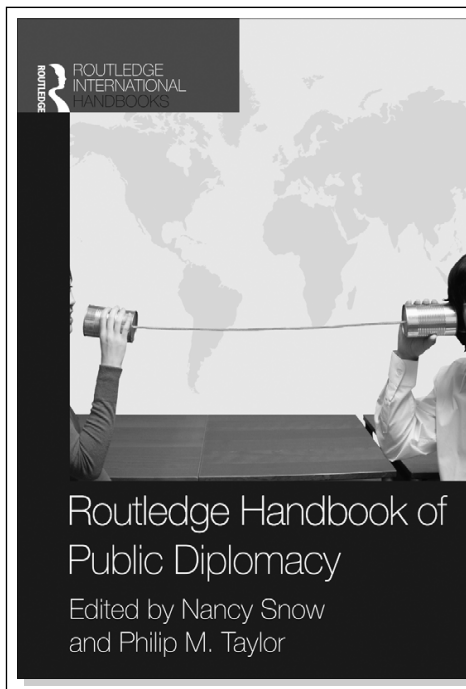




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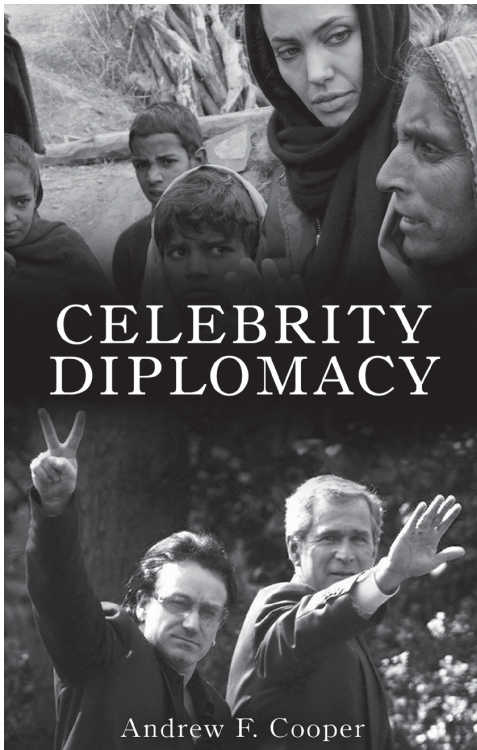
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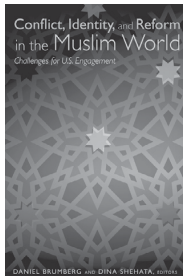
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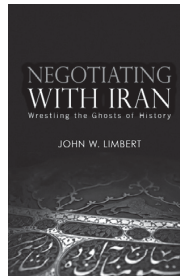
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