

The difficulties with multilateral diplomacy essay sample



The United Nations is an organization that was devised in order to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security. In 1945, 50 countries met and drew up the United Nations Charter. This charter was a collaborative effort of proposals brought forth by representatives of China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States and was signed on 26 June 1945 by the 50 countries. Later, Poland, which was not represented at the original conference, signed the charter later and became one of its original 51 member states. (<http://www.un.org/aboutun/>) This is a true example of multilateral diplomacy at its best. However, today there are 192 member states and with that enters even more challenges in order to achieve multilateral diplomacy.

Before the difficulties can be discussed in detail, first multilateral diplomacy must be defined and explained. Multilateral diplomacy in the eyes of the United Nations is designed to negotiate diplomacy with many countries, even those countries who are not members of the UN. Diplomacy itself is an ongoing and monumental task, but when negotiations involve the various countries of the world, many issues arise from this task. The major challenges that have arisen for the United Nations are: the time necessary to achieve effective negotiations, the procedural and methodological issues, and finally the resistance of outside forces. This report will examine these challenges individually and will attempt to show examples of how these issues have interfered with achieving multilateral diplomacy.

As we examine the procedural and methodological issues associated with the United Nations, it becomes clear to understand why this will hamper multilateral diplomacy at its core. The United Nations is made up of an <https://assignbuster.com/the-difficulties-with-multilateral-diplomacy-essay-sample/>

official hierarchy of committees and sub-committees as well as a quasi official system of groups that are formed on the basis of geographic or economic proximity. As an example of these groups are the European Union States, the Arab States, as well as the groups of African and Latin American States. As described in Vladimir Petrovski's book, "*Diplomacy as an Instrument of Good Governance*", he believes that multilateral negotiations consist of two stages. The first stage is that of exploring and then the second stage is that of treaty-making.

Treaty-making itself could or possibly should be divided into the definition of the parameters of a future agreement and then also the process of working out of it. Following these stages, albeit simple in nature, it should not be difficult to build the negotiation processes in such a way that results are achieved quickly and with the use of minimal resources. As one can see, if parameters are not set out early in the negotiation phase, unrelated issues are often seen to be linked into the negotiation process. This was a common occurrence during the Cold War. When unrelated issues are brought into the mix of the negotiations, the result is often a slow and drawn out process and at some point may even halt the negotiations altogether.

Time is a critical challenge that is faced by the United Nations as it relates to negotiations and multilateral diplomacy. To be truly effective, diplomacy must start with communications by all members that are involved. A relationship must be established between all parties and this, unfortunately, cannot be hurried. The diplomats must not only establish a formal relationship with other parties involved, but they must go beyond that, in understanding the different nuances of the cultures of the societies in which

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they are negotiating with. Take for example the current situation in Iraq, since the attacks on the United States on September 11th, the United Nations has continued to work on negotiations with the country in order to squash further attacks and maintain worldwide peace. These negotiations have been met with much resistance from the Iraqi government and as one can see by the timeline, the negotiations continue now six years later.

With the negotiations for peace and security has brought forth many other issues that must be attended to in addition to the main focus of avoiding further attacks on the United States, the United Kingdom, or other countries throughout the world. Negotiations should never be held to time constraints as full diplomacy will never be achieved in this matter. Another diplomacy issue that is on the current agenda of the United Nations is that of Iran and the countries enrichment of uranium throughout the country. The United States and three of the European nations have recently moved closer to sanctions that will be imposed upon Iran. According to an article in Time on March 13, 2007 by Associated Press writer, Edith M. Lederer, the US and the European nations have come closer to an agreement with both Russia and China that will pose a package of sanctions to the Security Council for a vote by the end of the week.[1] Through many discussions and negotiations, this package will include an embargo on arms exports, a ban on government loans to Iran and an asset freeze on more individuals and companies that are linked to Tehran's nuclear and missile programs.

As seen in Petrovski's book, Diplomats can be more effective, not in stopping aggression once it has occurred, but much earlier, by them being involved

and coping with civil combat, frontier disputes and the danger that has become evident when people are instructed by their leaders that it is their duty to hate and kill others that live within the same geographical area.[2] A clear and present example of this duty relayed to individuals is seen in The Gaza Strip and The West Bank, with the blatant hatred between the Palestinians and the Israeli citizens.

One important fact of timeliness must be brought to the readers' attention, and that is that in order to achieve diplomacy in a world where violence is rampant, diplomacy must be activated earlier and be better organized to secure preventive actions that will strengthen the new role of multilateral institutions as a safety net for crisis and conflict.[3]

The final challenge faced by the United Nations with regards to multilateral diplomacy that is outlined in this report is that of ongoing resistance by outside forces such as militant groups and insurgencies who seek to destroy innocent people throughout the world solely based on their extremist views and beliefs. Kim R. Holmes, the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs realizes that the UN and other international organizations must work together to combat these forces in order to destroy the threat of these terrorists and tyrants who clearly fear freedom's advance and seek to obliterate open societies that foster its growth.[4] There is clear evidence that these terrorist groups and organizations will try to accomplish their own goals at all costs.

An example of the flagrant interference with the goals of the United Nations, one can look back to Somalia. In December of 1992, the United Nations

along side with the United States sent 28, 000 soldiers into Somalia in an effort to supply food to the starving people of the country. The drought had taken tens of thousands of lives and had no signs of ending. What the U. S. troops encountered were daily gun battles and bombing raids that were being waged by not only Somali men and women, and even children, but the drug cartels that were fighting for control of the area.[5] As anyone who read the reports of those few days in Somalia, this was a blatant attempt to destroy a humanitarian effort in order to maintain control of the country at all costs.

As seen by this report there is quite a few difficulties in relation to multilateral diplomacy. However, what is not discussed but of equal importance, is that in the new era of globalization, the United Nations is in need of reform as new issues face the members of the UN which they must face and resolve if peace and security are to be obtained. Other issues that have arisen out of globalization are the growth of disease and crime, the emergence of transboundary pollution and the environmental degradation of global commons, human trafficking and human rights, along with the concerns surrounding multilateral cooperation in war making[6].

According to Anne-Marie Slaughter in her article “ *Security, Solidarity, and Sovereignty: The Grand Themes of UN Reform,*” she notes that the high-level panel offers a blueprint for change that brings forth a re-conception of security, solidarity, and sovereignty. The panel suggests that the United Nations, which has a commitment to the protection of state security, must now subordinate state security to human security.[7] Looking from the perspective of human security, the UN must work towards the total human

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security, whether it is a result of violence or disease. As a result of globalization, death from disease is not within the scope of a possibility. If reform is successful within the United Nations, then all of these global issues will be issues that will be able to solved and handled within the new conceptions and guidelines of the United Nations.

Secondly, human security then redefines solidarity. We all seek to live our lives in peace, dignity, and free from fear and want. As human beings, we cannot be guaranteed long lives, but the government should not attempt to murder us or allow our fellow citizens to do so.[8] Every human being should have some guarantee of equal esteem amongst our fellow human beings. We should also have a promise that neither politicians nor ethnic or religious leaders can declare any group, class, or nation less than human.

Thirdly, the conception of solidarity, in turn, will redefine sovereignty. To be more precise, in order to redefine sovereignty, the United Nations must obtain a radical rethinking of what sovereignty means. This radical thought process moves toward a version of sovereignty that requires a responsibility of all signatories of the UN Charter both to protect their own citizens and also to meet their international obligations to their fellow nations. A failure to fulfill these responsibilities would then subject them to sanction. This change in conception means that membership in the United Nations is no longer a validation of sovereign status and a shield against meddling in a state's domestic jurisdiction, in contrast, it is the right and capacity to participate in the UN itself, working in concert with other nations to sit in judgment of and to take actions against threats to either human security at any time and place.[9]

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In order to succeed in the changes in conception of these three important factors, it will also require changes and reforms to additional international organizations such as the Human Rights Commission. It will also require reforming procedural matters, for instance with regards to a common definition to terrorism, or finding ways to achieve a greater representation of the full membership.[10]

The main structure of the high-level panel reports findings suggest that the central challenge for the twenty-first century is to adopt a new and broader understanding of what collective security means, and of all the responsibilities, commitments, strategies and institutions that come with it if a collective security system is to be effective, efficient and equitable.[11]

It is clear from the research that was conducted for this report suggests that multilateral diplomacy is an ongoing task for the members of the United Nations. It also remains to be determined whether the difficulties that have been discussed will ever be resolved, although from the writer's perspective, these issues will continue to be present but with reform of the United Nations, the difficulties can be handled on an ongoing basis. What is more evident, however, that the United Nations has even more issues that must be addressed and these issues are a result of the birth of globalization.

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[1] Edith M. Lederer, *Nations Close on Iran Sanctions, 2007*

[2] Vladimir Petrovski, *Diplomacy as an Instrument of Good Governance*,

[3] *ibid*

[4] Kim R. Holmes, *The United Nations and American Multilateral Diplomacy: Principles and Priorities for a Better World*, (2003)

[5] Maj. Clifford E. Day, *Critical Analysis on the Defeat of Task Force Ranger*, (1997)

[6] Quoted in John Yoo, *The Powers of War and Peace*, 296 (2005)

[7] Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Security, Solidarity, and Sovereignty: The Grand Themes of UN Reform*, (July 2005)

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Panel Report, *supra* note 1, Synopsis, at 11.