Why do we need diplomats?

Diplomats are members of a profession developed over many centuries. But why do we still need them in a world transformed by electronic communications? This course examines the nature of diplomacy; when it is appropriate; the advantages and disadvantages of different diplomatic methods; and the lexicon of diplomacy.

By the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Describe and explain with clarity the shape and functions of the contemporary world diplomatic system.
- Identify and describe the different stages of negotiations, the objectives for each stage, and techniques for securing agreement, providing examples from diplomatic practice.
- Compare and contrast the various missions, offices, conferences, techniques and procedures of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy.
- Analyse what contributes to successful mediation.
- Justify the role of summits and their place in the negotiating arena.
- Defend the value of diplomacy with authority and enthusiasm.

Course outline

1. The Diplomatic Moment: diplomacy: a specialised activity; the diplomatic moment: the conditions that encourage diplomacy; diplomatic systems and diplomatic styles; the world diplomatic system in outline.

2. Negotiations: pre-negotiations, formula, and details stages; the objectives sought in each and the difficulties peculiar to them; techniques for securing agreement, for example linkage.

3. Diplomatic Momentum: how the momentum of negotiation can be maintained and, if lost, regained; deadlines, metaphors of movement, publicity, and raising the level of the talks; packaging agreements and following up.

4. Telecommunications: forms, uses, and limitations of telecommunication in diplomacy, including particular reference to telephone diplomacy in crises (including “hot lines”) and videoconferencing.

5. Bilateral Diplomacy: embassies, consular posts, and unconventional resident missions such as interests sections and representative offices; why they are the major part of the modern counter-revolution in diplomatic practice.

6. Multilateral Diplomacy: ad hoc and standing conferences; questions of procedure: venue, membership, agenda, transparency, and above all decision-
making; the triumph of 'consensus-decision making' and its various techniques, for example, NATO's silence procedure.

7. **Mediation**: good offices, conciliation, and mediation; the motives of mediators (track one and track two); multi-party mediation; is there an 'ideal' mediator? The ripe moment and whether there is such a thing as a premature mediation.

8. **Summitry - The Diplomatist's Bane**: the case for the defence: serial summits, ad hoc summits (including funeral diplomacy), the high-level exchange of views; secrets of summit success.

**Methodology**

This course is conducted entirely online over a period of ten weeks. Reading materials and tools for online interaction are provided through an online classroom. Each week, participants read the provided lecture text, adding questions, comments and references in the form of hypertext entries. Lecturers and other participants read and respond to these entries, creating interaction based on the lecture text. During the week, participants complete additional online activities (e.g. further discussion via blogs or forums, quizzes, group tasks, simulations or short assignments). At the end of the week, participants and lecturers meet online in a chat room to discuss the week's topic. To complete the course successfully, participants must write several essay assignments. Courses are based on a collaborative approach to learning, involving a high level of interaction.

**Lecturers**

**Dr Katharina Höne**

Dr Katharina (Kat) E Höne researches, writes, and teaches on a number of issues in the area of diplomacy, global governance, and the impact of technology on international relations. Over the last years, she has focused on research at the intersection of diplomacy and technology. She was part of a research project on Data Diplomacy: Updating diplomacy to the big data era and the lead researcher and author of Mapping the challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence for the conduct of diplomacy report, both supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. In addition, she has more than 10 years of experience in teaching international relations at universities in the UK and Germany, and in delivering in-situ, blended, and online training to diplomatic practitioners. Kat holds an MA in Diplomatic Studies (University of Leicester, UK) and a PhD in International Politics (University of Aberystwyth, UK). In her work, she is driven by her aim to level the playing field at international negotiation tables through capacity development, and to provide out-of-the-box thinking and inspiration by drawing on her passion for science-fiction.
Amb. Asoke Mukerji

Ambassador Asoke Mukerji's diplomatic career spans 37 years, from 1978-2015. As India’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York (2013-2015) he oversaw India’s negotiations on Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, focusing on prioritising the use of technology for achieving the SDGs. He represented India in the inter-governmental negotiations that recommended a text-based outcome for UN Security Council Reforms in September 2015. He led India’s successful initiative in the UN General Assembly in 2014 for adopting a resolution to declare 21 June every year as the International Day of Yoga.