

**Book Launch of  
*The Oxford Handbook of Modern  
Diplomacy*  
and  
Seminar on “Diplomacy”**

**October 24, 2013**



**THE INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES,  
ISLAMABAD**

*Book launch of “The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy” and a seminar on “Diplomacy”*

The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) organized a launch of book titled *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* and a seminar on “Diplomacy” on October 24, 2013. The eminent speakers were Mr. Gareth Evans, former foreign minister of Australia & Chancellor, Australian National University, Canberra and Mr. Ramesh Thakur, Director, Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation & Disarmament, Australian National University, Canberra. Mr. Najam Rafique, Director America at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) welcomed the guests.

Mr. Ramesh Thakur, while introducing the book *Diplomacy in the 21st Century: An Introduction to the Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* said that diplomacy is the conduct of business, using peaceful means, by and among international actors, at least one of whom is usually governmental. He said that the formulation and adoption of policy is the responsibility of ministers whilst its implementation or execution is the job of public servants and, in the case of foreign policy, of diplomats. And this relies on the tools of persuasion-cum-negotiation and pressure-cum-coercion i.e. soft power and hard power respectively. Further, he mentioned the requisite skill-sets for diplomacy i.e. intelligence, discretion and circumspection, patience, teamwork, creative imagination, the ability to signal and communication messages to the target audience and the capacity to present negotiated compromises as win-win outcomes.

He explained the modes, types, and techniques of diplomacy and the issues including war, human rights and international humanitarian law, environment, global pandemics, food, fuel and water security, migration, refugees, diasporas and IDPs and uncivil society (people, arms and drug trafficking, terrorism) that are covered in the different chapters of the book.

Mr. Thakur said that the marketplace of diplomacy has become congested with an explosion in the number and types of actors, the number and density of interactions between them, the number of personnel engaged in the interactions, the number and types of issues that are covered, and the levels at which they are engaged.

In addition, while explaining the subject matter of diplomacy, he said that it has expanded from high politics of war and peace to health, environment, development, science and technology, education, law, and the arts. He said that the diplomats are engaged in an expanding range of functions, from negotiation, communication, consular, representation and reporting to observation, merchandise trade and services promotion, cultural exchange and public relations.

Further, he said that the new diplomatic procedures consolidated and initiated by the League of Nations included multilateral diplomacy, public debates, international parliamentary procedures and collective decision-making.

He concluded by quoting Andrea Baumann that “power and influence depend ever more strongly on the ability to navigate and exploit global networks, to form effective partnerships, and to combine different instruments of statecraft in a flexible, agile way”.

Mr. Gareth Evans (former foreign minister of Australia & Chancellor, Australian National University, Canberra) explained the “Commission Diplomacy”. He said that the high level panels and commissions of the global great and good, delivering themselves of weighty reports on matters of international policy moment, were almost unknown until the later Cold War years but has become in recent decades a very busy second track diplomatic industry.

Further, he explained the following ten factors in determining whether a commission or panel makes any kind of useful contribution, or is destined to be consigned directly to bookshelves or hard drives and forever thereafter unread and unremembered, falling into three broad categories: task definition, process and context.

1. Clarity of Objectives
2. Leadership,
3. Membership,
4. Staffing and Resources,
5. Consultation,
6. Recommendations,
7. Branding and Packaging,
8. Advocacy and Follow-Up,
9. Ownership, and
10. Timing.

While explaining the normative impact of the global commissions, Mr. Evans said that the greatest of all contributions that global commissions are capable of making and have made in a number of notable instances are generating potentially game-changing *ideas* i.e. new ways of thinking about unresolved policy issues with which policymakers have long wrestled. He said that the overwhelming contribution of the Brundtland Commission in 1987 was to establish a new normative point of departure for virtually all environmental policy since, one which changed both the language and substance of international (and often national) discourse, by identifying “sustainable development” as conceptual ground that could be commonly shared between one dimensional pro-growth supporters and environmental protectionists.

In addition, he said that the Commissions focusing on governance issues have had varying operational impacts, with the most ambitious generally being the least visibly successful. For instance, the Carlsson-Ramphal Commission on Global Governance (1995) produced a hugely wide-ranging set of recommendations, many of which (like reform of the structure of the Security Council) have stimulated debate and remain on the international agenda, but only a handful i.e. business recognise its responsibility and contribute more to good global governance, translated by Kofi Annan at the World Economic Forum in 1999 into the “Global Compact” – have borne much fruit.

While talking about the commissions of the future, Mr. Evans said that future commissions are more likely to acquire modern network characteristics, with broad-based memberships becoming more common, a greater commitment to consultative outreach, and electronic communication ever more dramatically speeding and opening up information and idea sharing.

He concluded by saying that there is no such sign that the attractiveness of commission diplomacy is palling. He said that the new commissions and panels will continue to be established, by the same kinds of governments, international institutions and foundations that have been initiating them for the past half-century and with the same kinds of hopes and expectations that they will come up with new kinds of conceptual and practical solutions to problems that have eluded policymakers.

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The discussion was followed by a question/answer session. A question was raised by Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik, Senior Research Fellow ISS, regarding the Australian Government's decision to export uranium to India which is still non-signatory of CTBT. Mr. Evan replied that a hang-up about joining the NPT, and things regarded by the virtue of membership and non-membership of the NPT is being in and out of the civilized plea. The reality is that whether the world likes it or not, India, Pakistan and Israel will be nuclear states. Under the current circumstances, we think of the obligations of countries like India and Pakistan on the nuclear policy issue as being not to make the NPT deal in-door. But really think in terms of having parallel commitments to the disarmament objectives which we all opt to share in the interest of civilised and safe universe and for the objectives of non-proliferation; and to move that forward in terms of their contributions is otherwise. In terms of what should have been done about the Indian uranium and fissile technology, my view very strongly and in the early stages of that debate was that India should not primarily be excluded from the possibility of being the beneficiary of such an arrangement. It has to pay the price in terms of meeting some of the parallel objectives, ratify either CTBT and not to hang around waiting for US, China, and Pakistan to do so. It has to clear the moratorium about the fissile material production that is a sensitive issue in Pakistan territory. India has to be prepared; may be parallel to others or simultaneously with others, and to set the sealing for the future production of nuclear weapons; if not to commit reduction, at least stop getting the situation worst in South Asia. He opined that if India prepares to do any of these things the international community will jump into it. He praised India for doing a good job. Otherwise it will be very disappointing for the international community. He said that Pakistan is always a difficult place because of its very embarrassing proliferation records that it has with A.Q. Khan Case. It is also difficult because of the larger geopolitical environment, and anxiety people have about the security situation here; although policy makers and the people in authority work very hard to dispel concerns of that kind. And it is very hard in the foreseeable future to get even a deal to procure any major commitments. He said that very little has been contributed to this debate internationally in the last twenty years.

Tahira Abdullah, Human Rights Defender commented on the UN high level reform and coherence panel that was set up with Pakistan, Mozambique, Norway head of governments to address the UN system reform and to bring about some coherence in the UN system. She said that the products of commissions have always recommendations and advice that are non-binding. In further she inquired about the binding and moral forces of those recommendations and asked that how can we ensure that commission shall be heeded? Mr. Evan replied that one cannot expect any international commission to be established on the basis that recommendation would be self-executing and binding, that is just not the real world in a way which these things are ever created. It would be either no executive authority in UN system that could execute anything very much anywhere except with consider of member states. It's just not a sort of thing that any executive authority likely to do it or to abdicate its own executive decision to some independent panel. What you are force back-on is just the effectiveness and quality of the recommendation, the durability in the real world of those recommendations, and the results of reliability in mapping clearly that can be done and other important things can be done. Conservative coherence reports can be wished. There is greater conservation in the UN system, in privatization and all the things to be addressed.

Whilst Mr. Thakur divided his response into two parts, first, any commission whether its national or international is focusing on the distinction between aspiration and programmatic approach. To aspire for global governance, you can set the ambitions, and says it's good, and

should be done. Programmatic is what is important; who are the stake holders, the constituencies; what are the interests involved; what are the potential obstacles; what is the relevant time frame; how then do we mobilize the support of existing and likely constituencies that will benefit or will be identified with this; how do we cooperate and neutralize potential opponents and spoilers; what are the practical steps that are achievable, leaving out those or not, and that requires careful thinking and hard work. One has to think about these issues, identifying the measures of success, explaining what accounts for success or failure, doing so in an analytical way rather than a descriptive account of the history of one commission, drawing on the combination of the wealth of writings, and literature, and personal reflections and getting engaged in parts of these. Secondly, since I was UN official, I was principal writer for Kofi Annan's second reform reports in 2002. I know a lot about the internal thing. You can divide the topic of the UN reforms into three categories i.e. first; there are some things that can be done internally because they pertain to the matters of the secretariat. Most of that was done by Kofi Annan in his first reform reports in 1997. Second, there are some issues that are at the intersection of the secretariat servicing member states, and third are the big political issues that only member states can reform. So, the high level panel was in the third category. The coherence report was essentially in the first. The UN system has a Chief Executives' board where the CEOs of different entities meet in couple terms of year and is chaired by the Secretary General. That is back stop by another high level panel that dealt with the coherent report and issues. This too much issues of identity of different entities; too much turf and jurisdiction matters; too much reluctance on the part of different member states that control the different entities; to seed anything in a name of common thing and that is best reflected when in anyone capital for example in any conflict country a potential donor will have a dozen different companies to come and see money for essentially the same thing and not one common platform. That coherence report in the end essentially gave it up as too hard a task and reduces into platitudes and clichés.

Mr. Akram Zaki complemented the speakers and asked about the prospects of humanizing the humanitarian interventions and not creating political objectives that camouflage the humanitarian interventions and destroying the established system of the UN charter. Mr. Evan replied that humanitarian interventions are sent in marines, right to intervene, right of the big powers to throw world out, it was the language of the debate of 1990s and actually it was really divisive language between the north and south. What we did with the responsibility to protect the report is to not only change the language of the report but also the concept. And what matters is not the notion of intervention but the notion of protection. And to develop inner concept that is multidimensional, prevention, reaction, post crisis rebuilding and multidimensional in terms of reactive responses in military terms. He said that we got this whole concept and embraced this concept in 2005 unanimously under fifty head of states in the UN world summit on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are doing pretty well to build-up a consensus. In 1998, when the concept of responsibility to protect power of vote was put forward, Kofi Annan led a diplomatic mission and came up with a diplomatic solution. What we have to do is to recreate the consensus on the UN Security Council. I think that is possible, provided the P3 get the message. UNSC has to restore credibility for the future.

Mr. Thakur said that the concept of responsibility to humanize the interventions should follow five things i.e. (1) it is victim centred, its primary focus is on the victims of the crime not on the state or other people, (2) its focus is on protection not on intervention that is humanizing it, (3) it is based on the international solidarity not on us versus them, (4) it has stress on the

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responsibility not on rights and privileges, and (5) it redefines sovereignty as responsibility meaning citizens wherever they live have rights, states or duties to people and they owe those duties individually and collectively.

Mr. Evan while responding to the nuclear capability question said that its time to rethink the utility of nuclear deterrence. The context is different when one talk about nuclear balance between major powers likes U.S. Russia and China and context is different when one talk about Australia which has desires to eliminate the nuclear weapons and is comfortable under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. However, the case is different when we talk about states that feel vulnerable compared with other large states. So, it is important in that context to rethink the extent to which security of Pakistan really improved by the accusation of nuclear weapons. Nuclear capability is a blind confidence that people have in it while in practical terms its really unusable military tool. These weapons are unusable because of the damage and risk it cause. Minimization strategy to aim simply in terms of number of weapons and to set sealing to further increases, and reducing nuclear deployments.

In the end, Ambassador Retired Gul Haneef, Chairman Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) thanked Mr. Gareth Evans and Mr. Ramesh Thakur for a candid and knowledgeable discussion.

- *Prepared by*

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