

MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY AND CONFLICT RECONCILIATION IN FRAGILE AND FRAGMENTED WORLD.

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Abstract

Multi-track diplomacy emerged as a shift from traditional diplomacy though not dampening it. The world keeps evolving with new trends in nations' interactions across borders and continents. Though the world is interconnected, it is fragmented based on ally alliances, regional cooperation, and multi-polarity with intersections of nations having diplomatic relations with other nations based on common purpose. Fragmentation arises as a result of conflict over resources, differentiated national interest, identity, ally issues and the polarity of the world. The result of this is having a complex yet a fragmented world. All of these have come to be instrumental to the differentiation experienced in the world and as it appears, the world is against itself. In order to address the multi-level nature of contemporary conflicts, peace practitioners have sought to conceive – and deal with – peace processes that encompass initiatives on different societal levels (or “tracks”), ranging from community-based peacebuilding to high-level negotiations. Multitrack approaches can be understood as a way of considering different peacebuilding initiatives taking place at different levels of society, with the intention of leveraging the positive impact of linkages between initiatives, while preventing or mitigating negative impact. The study adopts ex-post factor as its methodology. The study provides an exposition to the prime position multi-track diplomacy has taken in international relations. It finds out that hybridity in diplomacy (state and non-. state actors) is effective. It concludes that Multi-Track Diplomacy views international peacemaking as a living system. Since 1992, it has worked to improve the web of interconnected relationships that operate together for a common goal: a world at peace.

Keywords: Multi -Track, Diplomacy, Reconciliation, Fragmented

Introduction

The world emerged from a space void of compartmentalization to segmented world. Homo sapiens in an enthroned power of war lords embarked on conquest and drawing up territories. this created differences and suspicion among nations especially where national doctrines are pushed forward to influence other nations to toe the line. Akamo(2020) says that differences and divisions are common denominators in fragmented contexts. A form of conflict between and among social and political actors, while not necessarily armed or violent, is an essential component of the very definition of fragmentation.

The world is divided across territory, race, religion, national interest, political and economic ideologies, ally issue, colonized and un-colonized, developed and underdeveloped. The result of this is having a complex yet a fragmented world. All of these have come to be instrumental to the differentiation experienced in the world and as it appears, the world is against itself.

In order to address the multi-level nature of contemporary conflicts, peace practitioners have sought to conceive – and deal with – peace processes that encompass initiatives on different societal levels (or “tracks”), ranging from community-based peacebuilding to high-level negotiations. Multitrack approaches can be understood as a way of considering different peacebuilding initiatives taking place at different levels of society, with the intention of leveraging the positive impact of linkages between initiatives, while preventing or mitigating negative impact.

In the past, diplomacy had two parties, but contemporary diplomacy encompasses multiple aspects, including multilateral agreements among several nations to pursue shared political and economic objectives, as well as the establishment of international organizations through agreements. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, countries engaged in peace conferences to form multilateral agreements, leading to the creation and transformation of global, regional, and continental organizations..... (Moshirzad et al., 1390). Mark Zacher, a Canadian political science scholar, has referred to the “Westphalia temple” as the traditional framework for international politics, where only countries were considered as key players in international relations, as being in decline. The diplomatic landscape has evolved significantly. In the past, international relations were primarily defined by interactions between states. However, today, other entities such as international governmental and non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, and humanitarian institutions have gained influence and are actively shaping international relations. These diverse actors are working to maintain the existing interconnectedness among nations (Mashirzad et al., 1390).

Initially, the notion of ‘tracks’ comes from the field of diplomacy. Track One diplomacy is engagement by officials “Track Two diplomacy” was used to describe an alternative to official “Track One” interactions between official representatives. During the 1990s, Diamond and McDonald presented a “multitrack diplomacy” framework with nine tracks and Lederach developed his transformative model, featuring a pyramid with three system levels: top leadership (Track I), middle-range leadership (Track II) and grassroots leadership (Track III). The Lederach model has inspired many peace practitioners, resulting in the growing salience of multitrack approaches as a way to promote peace in a “holistic and inclusive fashion” (Dudouet, Eshaq et al. 2018, p. 183). The logic and language of multitrack approaches have also influenced the policies of international organisations and governments.

Despite the common assumption that linking initiatives within and across levels of society creates beneficial outcomes, little attention has been paid to how to create linkages in practice and what kind of impact these linkages generate. While linkages often create positive impact – such as information-sharing, consensus-building or increased ownership – sometimes linking initiatives, especially across levels of society, generates negative impact. Trying to link initiatives upwards towards high-level, political negotiations may not always be the best fit. The report presents five main points for reflection:

i. Questioning what is behind the terms and concepts:

Despite constant references to the mainstream terms and conceptual models, there is little common understanding about these terms and models. Peace practitioners need to be aware of the different ways in which these terms are understood and clarify the way they are used in relation to multitrack approaches to peace processes.

ii. Building sustainable peace requires working at various levels of society:

A variety of initiatives at different levels of society, with different objectives and timeframes, are needed to build sustainable peace. Therefore, national and international peace practitioners need to acknowledge the existence of a multitude of initiatives, and aim to ensure complementarity among them.

iii. Considering effective contributions to sustainable peace:

Dialogue, negotiation and mediation initiatives can make important contributions to building sustainable peace at different levels of society, independently of formal linkages to peace processes, for example, by creating horizontal linkages in a polarised society. Often there is only limited consideration of different theories of change in the design of peace processes.

iv. Fostering positive linkages between initiatives within and across different levels of society:

When useful, a multitrack approach to a peace process fosters linkages between initiatives – horizontally within a level of society and vertically across levels of society. It is important to consider clearly what the purpose of fostering a particular linkage is, and how it should be done.

v. Linking initiatives and actors must be done in a conflict-sensitive way:

Different initiatives may have a positive or negative impact on each other. Therefore, it is essential to consider sensitivities around a conflict, based on an in-depth conflict analysis, when promoting linkages between different initiatives.

Considering the multifaceted nature of conflicts, peace processes need to be viewed comprehensively to understand how initiatives at different levels of society, and their linkages, can foster change to support sustainable peace. Taking into consideration these initial reflections on when – and how to – leverage multi-track approaches, peace practitioners and scholars are invited to comment on this report in order to contribute to clarifying concepts and providing practical guidance on multi-track approaches to peace processes.

Reconciliation is a *process*, not a remote goal to be achieved when war has ended. This definition lies in line with others who see reconciliation as a pragmatic process in which relations are rebuilt to enable coexistence and sustainable peace (Bloomfield, 2006; Staub, 2006; van der Merwe, 1999). Track diplomacy is basically to resolve conflict and in furtherance to reconcile all belligerents. Reconciliation is the end result of diplomacy.

The paper intends to bring out the various areas of fragmentation in the world, to highlight the significance and the role multi-track diplomacy play in uniting and reconciling nations and to evaluate the effectiveness of actors hybridity in diplomacy.

CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is the process and practice of communication and negotiation between actors in the international system, with the aim of achieving their goals and resolving their conflicts and disputes. Diplomacy involves the use of various methods and tools, such as dialogue, persuasion, compromise, and coercion, to influence and shape the behavior and outcomes of other actors.

“Diplomacy is the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist.”

Diplomacy is viewed as a tool of state politics in dealing with other state and international actors (Ulfat,1394). They generally encompass the process of resolving foreign policy-related issues with other states, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Diplomacy is also characterized by the continuous exchange of information between states, nations, groups, and individuals to advance national interests.

Diplomacy is not monolithic or homogeneous, but rather diverse and complex, and it can be classified and analyzed in different ways. One common way is to divide it into two broad categories: traditional and modern.

Traditional diplomacy is the type of diplomacy that is based on the formal and official relations between states, and that is conducted by the professional and accredited representatives of the states, such as diplomats and ambassadors.

Modern diplomacy is the type of diplomacy that is based on the informal and unofficial relations between various actors, such as non-state actors, civil society, and the public, and that is conducted by the various agents and channels, such as NGOs, media, and celebrities.

Another type of diplomacy is international diplomacy which refers to the negotiations and interactions between states and other actors on the global stage, aimed at achieving specific goals and advancing national interests.

Multi-Track Diplomacy

The notion of tracks comes from the field of diplomacy. The term “Track Two diplomacy” was first used by US Foreign Service Officers Joseph Montville and William Davidson in 1981 in a ‘Foreign Policy’ article describing an alternative to power-based, official “Track One” interactions between official representations. “Track Two diplomacy” was understood as “unstructured, unofficial interaction” (Davidson & Montville 1981, p. 156), such as scientific or cultural exchange between unofficial actors like academics (Kelman, 2012). In 1996, then US Ambassador John W. McDonald and scholar Louise Diamond further developed the track concept in theory by viewing the process of international peacemaking as a living system (Diamond & McDonald, 1996). Their effort birthed the nine tracks which are:

- i. government,
- ii. professional conflict resolution,
- iii. business,
- iv. private citizens,
- v. research, training and education,
- vi. activism,
- vii. religious,
- viii. funding, and
- ix. public opinion/communication.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is the *process* of addressing conflictual and fractured relationships and this includes a range of different activities. We see reconciliation as a voluntary act that cannot be imposed (IDEA, 2003)

A reconciliation process generally involves five interwoven and related strands. These are:

1. ***Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society:*** The development of a vision of a shared future requiring the involvement of the whole society, at all levels. Although individuals may have different opinions or political beliefs, the articulation of a common vision of an interdependent, just, equitable, open and diverse society is a critical part of any reconciliation process.

2. ***Acknowledging and dealing with the past:*** Acknowledging the hurt, losses, truths and suffering of the past. Providing the mechanisms for justice, healing, restitution or reparation, and restoration (including apologies if necessary and steps aimed at redress).

To build reconciliation, individuals and institutions need to acknowledge their own role in the conflicts of the past, accepting and learning from it in a constructive way so as to guarantee non-repetition.

3. ***Building positive relationships:*** Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process, resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us.

4. ***Significant cultural and attitudinal change:*** Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard. A culture of respect for human rights and human difference is developed creating a context where each citizen becomes an active participant in society and feels a sense of belonging.

5. ***Substantial social, economic and political change:*** The social, economic and political structures which gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed.

It is “a psychological process for the formation of lasting peace”. In this process, past rivals come to mutual recognition and acceptance, have invested interests and goals in developing peaceful relations, feel mutual trust, positive attitudes as well as sensitivity and consideration of the other party’s needs and interests

Reconciliation implies building or rebuilding relationships today that which are not haunted by the conflicts and hatreds of yesterday.”(Hayner, 2001). To ascertain whether a process of reconciliation is under way in a post-conflict society, Hayner suggests that

three areas can be observed: how the past is integrated and spoken about between former enemies; if relationships are based on the present or past; and if contradictory versions of the past have been reconciled – not into one truth of the past but to versions not based on lies and denial.

Lederach(1997) defines reconciliation as being constituted by both “a focus and a locus”. The focus of reconciliation is upon building new and better relationships between former enemies. Relationships are both the root cause and the long-term solution of conflict according to Lederach. Thus, relationships must be the core focus. As a locus, Lederach argues, “reconciliation represents a space, a place or location of encounter, where parties to a conflict meet.” In this place, the traumas of the past and the hopes for the future must be formulated and brought together by discussing the issues of truth, forgiveness, justice, and peace

Fragmented World

A fragmented world is a world that is a segmented or divided across ideologies, culture, civilization, allies/proxies, multi-level governance structure, ethnicity, race, religion and the multipolarity of the world. According to Zartman (2023), it is noteworthy that both the expressions of a ‘fragmenting’ and ‘fragmented’ world are used in literature. Arguably, some use the two expressions in an interchangeable way, and one can argue that they are similar, as they focus on the same problems. And yet, a difference between the two terms exists. While fragmenting world refers to ongoing trends that cause the world to become more divided at various levels and focuses on these processes, a fragmented world refers to a world that is divided and separated, implying an end-state of entropy. The former implies an increasingly divided world and the latter one that already divided. In that sense, the expression ‘fragmenting world’ is both more cautious and possibly also more optimistic. After all, a fragmenting world is one where entropy exists alongside integrating processes.

The world is experiencing a drift away from globalized world owing to some political, social and economic dynamics. There is a growing concern about the impact of a de-globalising or fragmenting world on the globally economy. It is telling that the 2023 Davos Forum focuses on ‘Cooperation in a Fragmented World’, and considers ‘political, economic and social forces creating increased fragmentation on a global and national level’.

METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts ex post facto research design and gathered data through secondary sources like, books, journals articles, manuscripts, internet materials, conference papers etc. the study is qualitative laden ad relies on studies done on multi track diplomacy from where deductions and inferences are made for the empirical pursuit of this study.

Therefore, content analysis is leveraged upon for the analysis of the qualitative data gathered.

MULTI-TRACK APPROACHES TO PEACE PROCESSES

Nine Strands:

Their “multitrack diplomacy” framework identifies nine tracks that reflect a set of interconnected activities, individuals, institutions and communities operating together for the common goal of peace. In addition to Track I (official government diplomacy) and Track II (non-official conflict resolution), they identify seven additional tracks (business; private citizens; research, training and education; activism; religion; philanthropy; and media) in an interconnected circle. No one track is more important than the other or independent from the other, and each track operates more powerfully when they are coordinated.

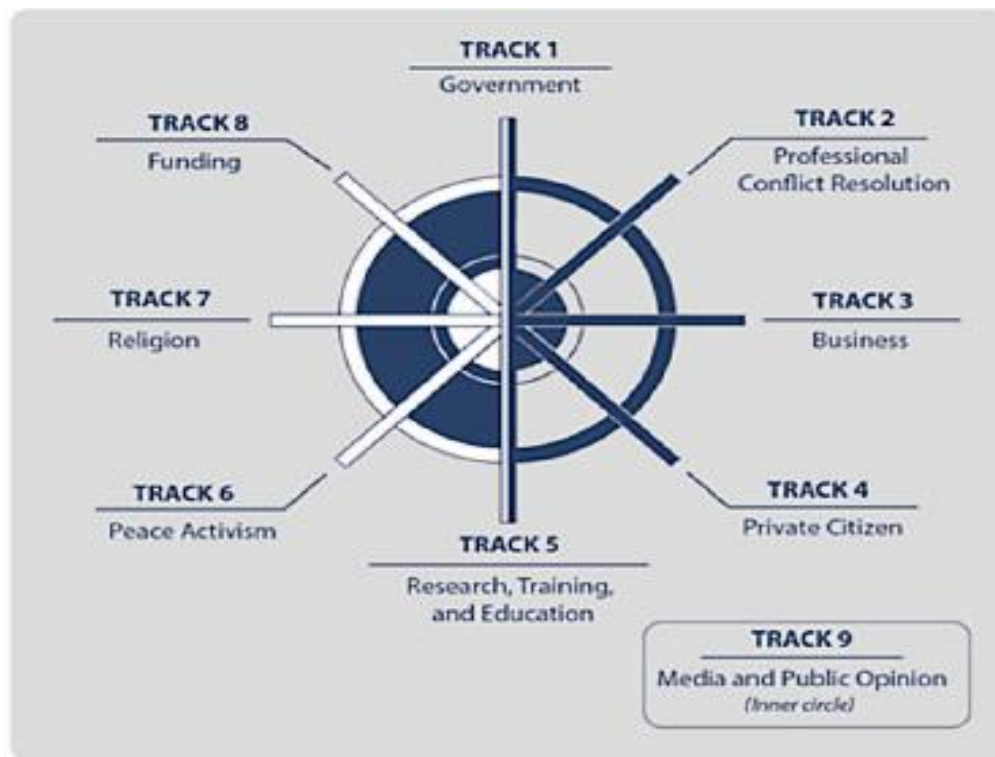


Figure 1. Diamond and McDonald’s Multitrack Diplomacy Model (Diamond & McDonald, 1996).

Track 1 – Government, or Peacemaking through Diplomacy. This is the world of official diplomacy, policymaking, and peacebuilding as expressed through formal aspects of the governmental process.

Track 2 – Nongovernment/Professional, or Peacemaking through Conflict Resolution. This is the realm of professional nongovernmental action attempting to analyze, prevent, resolve, and manage international conflicts by non-state actors.

Track 3 – Business, or Peacemaking through Commerce. This is the field of business and its actual and potential effects on peacebuilding through the provision of economic opportunities, international friendship and understanding, informal channels of communication, and support for other peacemaking activities.

Track 4 – Private Citizen, or Peacemaking through Personal Involvement. This includes the various ways that individual citizens become involved in peace and development activities through citizen diplomacy, exchange programs, private voluntary organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and special-interest groups.

Track 5 – Research, Training, and Education, or peacemaking through Learning. This track includes three related worlds: research, as it is connected to university programs, think tanks, and special-interest research centers; training programs that seek to provide training in practitioner skills such as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution, and third-party facilitation; and education, including kindergarten through PhD programs that cover various aspects of global or cross-cultural studies, peace and world order studies, and conflict analysis, management, and resolution.

Track 6 – Activism, or Peacemaking through Advocacy. This track covers the field of peace and environmental activism on such issues as disarmament, human rights, social and economic justice, and advocacy of special-interest groups regarding specific governmental policies.

Track 7 – Religion, or Peacemaking through Faith in action. This examines the beliefs and peace-oriented actions of spiritual and religious communities and such morality-based movements as pacifism, sanctuary, and nonviolence.

Track 8 – Funding, or Peacemaking through Providing Resources. This refers to the funding community—those foundations and individual philanthropists that provide the financial support for many of the activities undertaken by the other tracks.

Track 9 – Communications and the Media, or Peacemaking through Information. This is the realm of the voice of the people: how public opinion gets shaped and expressed by the media—print, film, video, radio, electronic systems, the arts.

Lederach's three-level, pyramid-based model

John Paul Lederach's analysis of peacebuilding as part of a long-term transformation from war to peace. Lederach built further on systems thinking and catapulted the theory into the mainstream by analysing conflict-affected societies in terms of system levels and the types of peacebuilding activities. Lederach's conflict transformation theory depicts peacebuilding taking place through changes in the personal, relational, cultural and structural dimensions of conflict, brought about over different time periods (short-, mid- and long-term) and affecting different system levels (often referred to as tracks). John Paul Lederach peacebuilding pyramid divides society into three levels: Track I – the top leadership; Track II – the middle-range leadership; and Track III – the grassroots leadership. In his "middle-out approach", Lederach argued that the middle-range leadership (Track II) has the "greatest potential for establishing an infrastructure that can sustain peacebuilding over the long term" (Lederach 1997, p. 60) and serve as "a source of practical, immediate action" (Lederach 1997, p. 61), because it can influence both the top (Track I) and grassroots (Track III) levels. Responding to scholarly critiques of an overemphasis on Track II actors, often understood as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Lederach later replaces the middle-out approach with a web approach that focuses on the centrality of relationships between different actors (Lederach, 2000, Paffenholz, 2013). In his later work, with relationships being considered at the heart of social change, Lederach emphasises the relational space that links vertical and horizontal capacities. Therefore, peacebuilding essentially requires thinking strategically about social spaces, as the places where relationships build and sustain themselves over time and across divides (Lederach 2000).

Lederach's three-level, pyramid-based model has had considerable influence on peacebuilding practice in the last 20 years, affecting a whole generation of peace practitioners through the "mantra status of the middle-out approach as an almost unquestioned theory of change

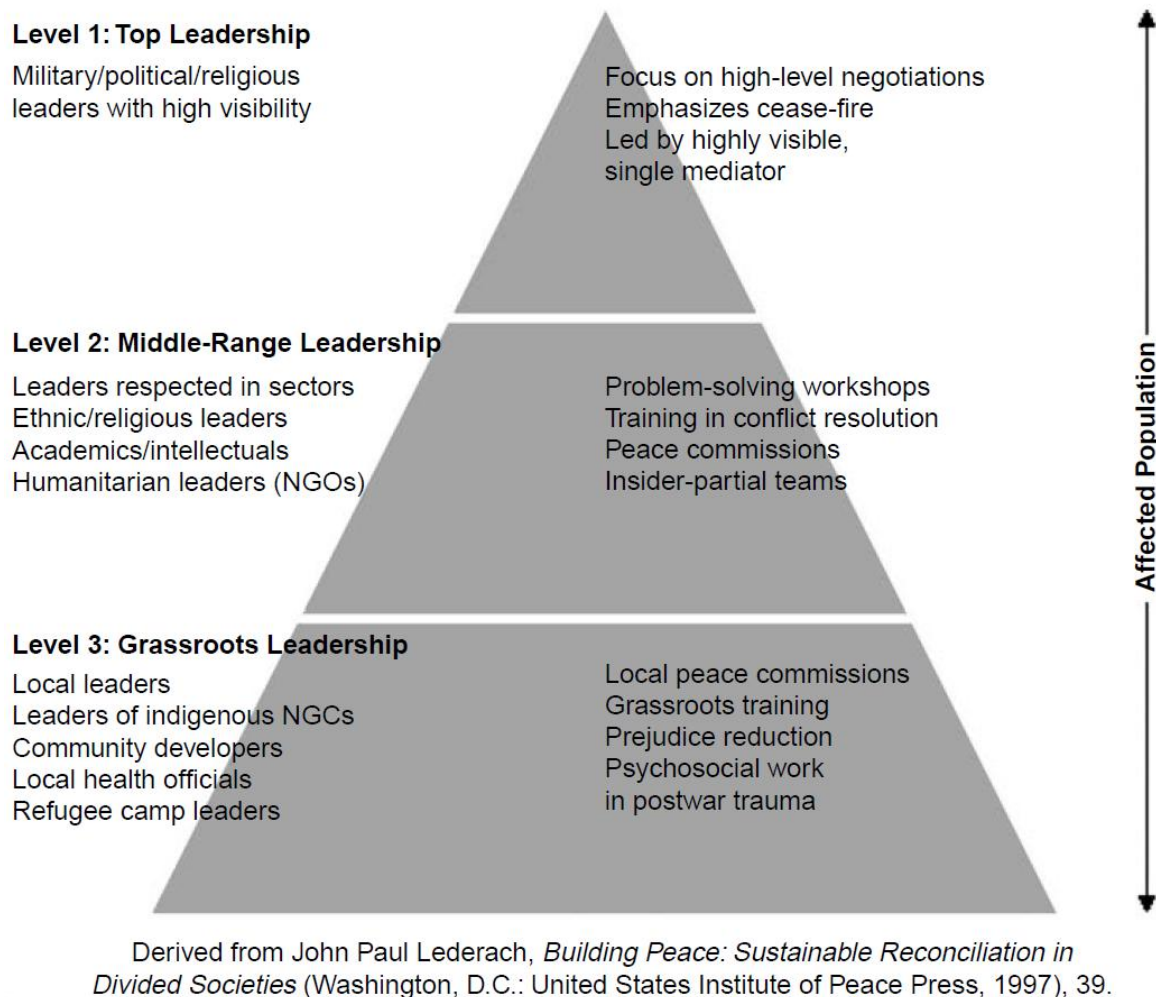


Figure 2. Lederach's 'Pyramid' Model (Lederach, 1997)

Track Three actors represent a dense array of grass roots groups, enlightened persons, cultural minorities, networks and popular movements who have marginal clout on decision making power and are unable to achieve requisite social change without external help. This track tries to influence indirectly by transitional media advocacy, lobbying and citizen activism. Conflict transformation at the grassroots level lies with the peoples and communities directly affected by it (Lederach, 2003).

Actors in Track Three engage in various activities and do not engage with any government. The rich mix of ideas among people offers new opportunities, synergies and formulas for addressing global problems (Handelman, 2012). Track Three initiatives are often ignored or given minor coverage by the official press which often dominates the media landscape (Payne and Sarah, 2006). However, this is not true since some countries such as the US, Canada, Mexico, just to name a few, have publicly encouraged Track

Track Three diplomacy as one of the best initiatives of enhancing security relations in their official forms of the press. Besides, such countries understand the power of people. In addition, apart from the official press, other alternative media channels that are less controlled by the government and the dominant discourse such as blogs, Short Message Service (SMS), social networks, just to mention a few, have been used by a majority of people as a means of communication and they provide a lot of essential information as regards Track Three diplomacy.

Track Three requires people to people interactions involving creativity, compromises and innovation of brave individuals and groups who have refused to surrender in their struggle for peace. Its efforts are manifested through different structures, initiatives and programs seeking to bring people together in order to give a human face to the other and hopefully generate sufficient momentum and pressure from below to bring about the long overdue political will to move forward towards a peace agreement (Shemesh, 2012). For example, the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords gave scope to a multitude of Track Three initiatives which sought to encourage ordinary Israelis and Palestinians to better understand one another and thereby to initiate processes of mutual reconciliation (Atieh, *et al*, 2004). According to Atieh *et al* (2004), Track Three diplomacy's role in facilitating real change is undeniable and irreplaceable. Atieh *et al* (2004) further note that this track is indispensable since mutual reconciliation is crucial to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, and such reconciliation can only be achieved through the people themselves. Since peace requires a profound mental shift on both sides, the deliberate, concrete efforts of groups and individuals working together to reshape the society are necessary (Atieh *et al*, 2004).

In a multi-polar world, with multi-level government and cluster of identities, the postulation of Joh Lederach to the effect that involving other strata in the governance structure is portent for reconciling the fragmented society.

PERISCOPING THE FRAGMENTED WORLD

The global trend towards entropy at social, political and geopolitical levels is felt in many different ways across the globe. Economic but also political and cultural divisions go hand in hand with the rise of nationalist and populist tendencies. People, communities and countries are increasingly divided and hostile. Violence and conflict are marking various divides. New actors, including violent non-state actors play an increasingly visible role. At the same time, the fragmenting world results in decline of multilateralism, international organizations and fora for cooperation and negotiation.

The business and financial world has long been concerned about the impact of a de-globalising or fragmenting world on the globally economy. It is telling that the 2023 Davos Forum focuses on 'Cooperation in a Fragmented World', and considers 'political,

economic and social forces creating increased fragmentation on a global and national level' and their impact on economic development, resilience and a number of interconnected issues such as 'energy, climate and nature; investment, trade and infrastructure; frontier technologies and industry resilience; jobs, skills, social mobility and health; and geopolitical cooperation'(Annual Meeting Davos 2023).

Clearly, such fragmenting process also affects issues related to national and international security, peace, conflict as well as the role of diplomacy, mediation and negotiation. Thus, the fragmentation not only creates problems in itself, but also renders tools which could be used to overcome the divides less effective.

BETWEEN TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY AND MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY (MTD)

In the past, diplomacy had two parties (States and its representatives), but contemporary diplomacy encompasses multiple aspects, including multilateral agreements among several nations to pursue shared political and economic objectives, as well as the establishment of international organizations through agreements. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, countries engaged in peace conferences to form multilateral agreements, leading to the creation and transformation of global, regional, and continental organizations such as the Vienna Conference, the League of Nations, the United Nations, and the European Union (Moshirzad et al., 1390). Mark Zacher, a Canadian political science scholar, has referred to the "Westphalia temple" as the traditional framework for international politics, where only countries were considered as key players in international relations, as being in decline. The diplomatic landscape has evolved significantly. In the past, international relations were primarily defined by interactions between states. However, today, other entities such as international governmental and non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, and humanitarian institutions have gained influence and are actively shaping international relations. These diverse actors are working to maintain the existing interconnectedness among nations (Mashirzad et al., 1390).

THE CRUX OF THE 'TRACK DIPLOMACY'

Track One Diplomacy

Track One Diplomacy or Official Diplomacy has a long history whose roots lie in the remote history of humankind. De Magalhaes (1988) describes Official Diplomacy as, "an instrument of foreign policy for the establishment and development of contacts between the governments of different states through the use of intermediaries mutually recognized by the respective parties" (p.17). The most important feature that distinguishes Track One diplomacy from all other forms of diplomacy is its formal application at the state-to-state level. It follows a certain protocol to which every state is a signatory. Track One

Diplomacy is usually considered to be the primary peacemaking tool of a state's foreign policy. It is carried out by diplomats, high-ranking government officials, and heads of states and is aimed at influencing the structures of political power.

Also included among the Track One players are the United Nations, the Vatican, and regional economic and political groupings such as the European Union, the Arab League, the African Union (AU), the Organization of American States (OAS), and many others. Negotiation is sometimes used as a synonym for Official Diplomacy, whereas in fact it is simply a conflict resolution process used by all those mentioned above to resolve conflicts. Making this distinction, Christer Jonsson and Martin Hall (2005) said, "once again, we are reminded of the universalism-particularism dimension of diplomacy: While negotiating to further the interests of their polities, diplomats typically identify the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the avoidance of war as common interests".

Strengths of Track One Diplomacy

Track One Diplomacy was developed as a foreign policy tool to specifically improve relations among nations.

- i. Track One Diplomacy has the ability to use political power to influence the direction of negotiations and outcomes (Sanders, 1991). This power might include using the threat of military force if a party decides to go against international treaties.
- ii. Track One Diplomacy has the capacity to access material and financial resources that give high leverage and flexibility in negotiations (Bercovitch and Houston, 2000).
- iii. Track One Diplomacy can employ in-depth knowledge about the parties' interests because of the use of various intelligence sources (Stein and Lewis, 1996).
- iv. Track One mediators have the competence to use broad knowledge of their states' foreign policies, and also the foreign policies of the conflicting parties.

Weaknesses of Track One Diplomacy

- i. Its conflict resolution approaches are corrupted by power. State power can be a liability to durable peace, rather than a facilitative tool. Power can suppress underlying issues of weaker parties, thereby undermining the sustainability of a peace agreement (Diamond & MacDonald, 1996).
- ii. Diplomatic missions, an asset to Track One Diplomacy, are normally closed down at the peak of conflicts between countries "thereby reducing communication when it is needed most" (Ziegler, 1984, p. 27).

- iii. Officials cannot, of course, speak against their country and, as a result, may either be too rigid or delay negotiations through consultations with their leaders at home (Volkan, 1991; Sanders, 1991).
- iv. Track One Diplomacy is affected by electoral cycles.

Track Two Diplomacy

Traditional diplomacy or Track One Diplomacy has for a long time been complemented by another form of diplomacy called Track Two Diplomacy (Montville, 1991). Like many other conflict resolution theorists and practitioners worried about the failures of Track One Diplomacy, Montville coined the phrase ‘Track Two Diplomacy’ (Volkan, 1991). Montville (1991) defines Track Two Diplomacy as, “unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aim to develop strategies, to influence public opinion, organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict” (p. 162). Montville emphasized that Track Two Diplomacy is not a substitute for Track One Diplomacy, but compensates for the constraints imposed on leaders by their people’s psychological expectations. Most important, Track Two Diplomacy is intended to provide a bridge or complement official Track One negotiations (Nan, 2004; Agha, Feldman, Khalidi, Schiff, 2003). Examples of Track Two organisations are Search for Common Ground, West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP), and many others.

Strengths of Track Two Diplomacy

- i. Track Two parties are not inhibited by political or constitutional power; therefore, they can express their own viewpoints on issues that directly affect their communities and families.
- ii. Track Two officials do not have the fear of losing constituencies because they are the constituency.
- iii. Track two empowers the socially, economically, and politically disenfranchised groups by giving them a platform from which they can air their views on how peace can be achieved in their own communities or nations.
- iv. Track Two is effective both at the pre-violent conflict and post violent conflict stages; therefore it is a very effective tool for violent conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding.
- v. Track Two involves grassroots and middle leadership who are in direct contact with the conflict.

- vi. Track Two is not affected by electoral cycles.

Weaknesses of Track Two Diplomacy

Regardless of its advantages, Track Two Diplomacy also has several weaknesses. The first weakness is that

- i. **Track Two participants have limited ability to influence foreign policy and political power structures because of their lack of political power.**
- ii. Track Two interventions can take too long to yield results.
- iii. Track Two has limited ability to influence change at the war stage of a conflict.
- iv. Track Two participants rarely have resources necessary for sustained leverage during negotiations and for the implementation of agreements.
- v. Track Two is not effective in authoritarian regimes where leaders do not take advice from lower level leaders.
- vi. Track Two actors due to their lack of political power, are in most cases not accountable to the public for poor decisions.
- vii. Because of their multiplicity Track Two actors/organizations are notoriously known for their lack of coordination.

Track One and Track Two Diplomacy do not cover the full range of peacemaking activities found in the current field of conflict. In addition, both tracks, because of their limitations leave certain gaps in the peacemaking and peacebuilding activities which have already been filled in by certain unique individuals such as retired politicians, religious leaders, and by organizations such as The Carter Center, the Community of Sant'Egidio (Bartoli, 2005), the Conflict Management Group, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Caucasus Links (Nan, 2005), the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, and the Crisis Management Initiative. Since these individuals and organizations' activities do not fit in the definitions of Track One and Track Two Diplomacy, evidence in the following section shows that these activities can be labelled Track One and a Half Diplomacy.

Track One and a Half Diplomacy

Track One and a Half is a term that has been used in conversations by many people in conflict resolution. The origins of the term "Track One and a Half Diplomacy" are elusive and its operationalization confusing. However, Dr. Susan Allen Nan, in her PhD dissertation writes:

There is a type of conflict resolution effort that defies categorization with other types above (Track One and Track Two diplomacy), and is commonly called “Track One and a Half.” This is the long-term unofficial facilitated joint analysis among negotiators, LUFJAAN for short, that Conflict Management Group conducted January 1996, May 1996, June 1997, and July 1998 (Nan, 1999, p. 202).

Inspired by Nan, and in an effort to operationalize Track One and a Half Diplomacy for The Carter Center interventions, Mapendere (2000) defined Track One and a Half Diplomacy, ...Public or private interaction between official representatives of conflicting governments or political entities such as popular armed movements, which is facilitated or mediated by a third party not representing a political organization or institution. The aim of such interaction is to influence attitudinal changes between the parties with the objective of changing the political power structures that caused the conflict (p. 16).

Nan (2003) defined Track One and a Half Diplomacy as “unofficial interactions between official representatives of states” (p. 9). In 2005, Nan redefined Track One and a Half as “diplomatic initiatives that are facilitated by unofficial bodies, but directly involve officials from the conflict in question” (p. 165). Nan’s definitions are not dissimilar from Mapendere’s (2000) definition in that the parties are official representatives, but facilitators are ordinary citizens.

Therefore, the main feature that distinguishes Track One and a Half from Track One is that the third party is not a representative of a political institution. Pure Track One conflict resolution efforts are facilitated or mediated by government representatives or representatives of political institutions such as the UN and regional groups. President Clinton’s Camp David mediation between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak is purely Track One, while Former Finnish Prime Minister Martti Ahtisaari’s mediation in Aceh is Track One and a Half.

On the other hand the main feature that distinguishes Track One and a Half from Track Two is the parties to the process. In Track Two Diplomacy, the parties involved in the conflict resolution process are not official representatives of the conflicting sides, but influential citizens. This is not the case for Track One and a Half where the parties involved in the conflict resolution process are official representatives of the conflicting groups. Therefore, Track One and a Half Diplomacy can also be called “hybrid diplomacy” because it is a cross-fertilization of Track One and Track Two that gives the third party diplomatic agility to flip from Track One to Track Two conflict resolution techniques in accordance with the situation.

The Carter Center is an example of an organization that practices Track One and a Half Diplomacy. In December 1999, Former President Carter and his staff mediated between President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of

Sudan. This is a pure Track One and a Half activity because The Carter Center's involvement was not driven by a political institution's agenda but by its own philosophy. By operating at a Track One and a Half level, The Carter Center has the advantage of applying an eclectic approach to international and ethnic conflict, such as the use of high-level diplomacy, private problem-solving workshops, direct mediation, interactive conflict resolution, and other confidence building interventions.

In 1995 the Carter Center negotiated the "Guinea Worm Ceasefire" between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement in order to allow the Carter Center to treat communities affected by the guinea-worm disease (Carter, 1995). In addition, in 1994 Former President Carter helped neutralize the nuclear tension between North Korea and the United States. Again in 1996 President Carter together with Retired General Colin Powell prevented an imminent disastrous military confrontation between the Haitian military government and the U.S. government (ibid). These activities are cited here not because they are the only Track One and Half activities undertaken so far in the field of international and ethno-political conflict, but because they have been widely documented.

Conduct of the Process

Track One and a Half as a hybrid form of diplomacy can be conducted in various ways. It can be carried out privately in the same manner Track Two activities are conducted, or publicly like Track One Diplomacy. President Carter's intervention in Haiti in 1996 was carried out in the full awareness of the public and the media, whilst his go-between role in the North Korean- U.S. conflict in 1994 was private. The Sudan-Uganda mediations that were undertaken by the Carter Center from 1999 to 2003 were mostly private and confidential, except for the agreement signing ceremony in Nairobi. The decision to have a private or public Track One and a Half process cannot be prescribed, but is determined by the situation and the people involved.

Characteristics of Track One and a Half Third Parties

The uniqueness of Track One and a Half Diplomacy necessitates a close examination of the characteristics of the third parties who practice this type of peacemaking. The most notable characteristic of these third parties is their international political visibility. Former Presidents Nelson Mandela and Jimmy Carter are people of great visibility because of the political posts they held. The Carter Center's International Council for Conflict Resolution (ICCR) roster is composed of similar eminent persons who are very suitable for Track One and a Half activities (Carter, 1995). This characteristic carries with it influence and perceived power that enhances their leverage capabilities during negotiations. However, this characteristic does not automatically translate into

effectiveness because of other variables such as personality of the third party, characteristics of the parties, and the situation.

Another characteristic is academic visibility. Well known scholar/practitioners such as Bill Ury and others are also members of the ICCR, and have been involved in Track One and a Half Diplomacy efforts with The Carter Center. Even though professors employed in the field of conflict resolution have worked extensively at a Track Two level, they have the potential to operate at a Track One and Half level on their own or, if assisted by politically eminent persons, to secure access to high level parties. Also indirectly, academic/practitioners have for a very long time advised the politically eminent peacemakers in their peace efforts.

Another very important characteristic of Track One and a Half third parties is national and international respect. Again, to use former President Carter and Nelson Mandela as examples, these former presidents command international respect among both politicians and ordinary citizens. It is this respect that facilitates their access to other world leaders or important players in conflicts around the world.

Related to respect is the importance of trust. Most people involved in conflict resolution know that trust of the third party is the cornerstone of every conflict resolution intervention. The continued involvement of the Carter Center in the Sudan conflict is a sign of trust between the Carter Center and the conflicting parties. This trust is not limited to third parties only, but also other stakeholders, who have an interest in the outcome of a peace process. These former presidents' well-known record for reliability enables serving presidents and rebel leaders to trust that the third party will facilitate the attainment of common interests among the parties without bias (Hoffman, 2006).

The last characteristic is that Track One and a Half interveners whether they are individuals or organizations have reasonable resources to carry out peace initiatives. It is due to their reputation that third parties are more likely to get funding from private and public organizations than most Track Two practitioners. This is facilitated by the fact that former high-level politicians and leading scholars interact with highly influential and powerful people who have personal or public funds. However, it is important to mention that these third parties whether they are former presidents, scholars or organizations, can never have unlimited funding or resources because of the numerous conflicts that require their attention. The characteristics of Track One and a Half actors mentioned above are also important to the third parties' entry into the peacemaking process.

THE IMPACT OF MULTI-TRACT DIPLOMACY

- i. Increased representation: MTD involves diverse stakeholders, ensuring that various perspectives and interests are represented.

- ii. Improved communication: MTD fosters dialogue and communication among parties, helping to break down stereotypes and mistrust.
- iii. Enhanced trust: By engaging multiple stakeholders, MTD helps build trust and credibility among parties.
- iv. Holistic approach: MTD addresses the root causes of conflict, promoting a comprehensive understanding of the issues.
- v. Empowerment: MTD empowers local communities and stakeholders to take ownership of the reconciliation process.
- vi. Sustainability: MTD promotes long-term sustainability by addressing the underlying structural and social issues.
- vii. Inclusivity: MTD ensures that marginalized or excluded groups are included in the reconciliation process.

CHALLENGES OF MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY

- i. Complexity: MTD involves multiple stakeholders and sectors, making it complex to coordinate and manage.
- ii. Power imbalances: MTD may struggle to address power imbalances among stakeholders, potentially marginalizing weaker parties.
- iii. Cultural and linguistic barriers: MTD must navigate cultural and linguistic differences, which can create challenges for communication and understanding.
- iv. Funding and resources: MTD requires significant funding and resources, which can be difficult to secure.
- v. Measuring success: MTD's impact can be difficult to measure, making it challenging to evaluate success.

SOME MILESTONES ACHIEVEMENTS OF MULTI TRACK DIPLOMACY

- i. The Oslo Peace Process: A multi-track approach to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- ii. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A multi-track process to address human rights abuses during apartheid.

- iii. The Northern Ireland Peace Process: A multi-track approach to resolving the conflict in Northern Ireland.

CONCLUSION

Multi-Track Diplomacy views international peacemaking as a living system. Since 1992, it has worked to improve the web of interconnected relationships that operate together for a common goal: a world at peace.

With People, Communities, Nations increasingly divided and hostile, violence and conflict are marking various divides while new actors, including violent non-state actors play an increasingly visible role. The fragmented world results in decline of multilateralism, international organizations and fora for cooperation and negotiation the reverse of which would reconcile the world especially with the common and interconnected issues such as ‘energy, climate and nature; investment, trade and infrastructure; frontier technologies and industry resilience; jobs, skills, social mobility and health; and geopolitical cooperation the world must reconcile itself rather than fragmented.

However, by adopting a multi-track diplomacy approach, reconciliation efforts can be more effective, sustainable, and inclusive, ultimately contributing to lasting peace and stability.

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