

Thematic Forum AESI - DISPI Siena - Oxford University
“DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL CAREERS”
(18/05/2021)

Student-Speakers Interventions

Greetings: Prof. Massimo Maria Caneva - President AESI

Introduction: Prof. Fabio Casini - University of Siena

Prof. Julia Amos - University of Oxford

Amb. Franco Mistretta - Italian Ambassador and former Director of the Diplomatic Institute

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame - Ministry of Foreign Affairs IC

1) Manuela De Stefano, Law - University “Suor Orsola Benincasa” Naples (Italy)

My question concerns the postgraduate studies and training, which masters and courses do you suggest following for a diplomatic career?

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame

In short, it necessarily requires a master's degree and as regards the masters, I suggest checking those listed on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would like to point out in particular the courses organized by ISPI in Milan and by SIOI in Rome, preparatory to the diplomatic selection.

It is also important to prepare the written tests and the long themes to be developed during selection.

Prof. Julia Amos

I also suggest the preparation on the drafting of long topics during the written tests, even if I do not know specifically the Italian selection processes regarding the diplomacy sector.

2) Solovev Alexey, International Relations - University of St. Petersburg (Russian Federation)

The use of new technologies such as Twitter or the holding of diplomatic meetings online has changed the way international relations between states, especially now during the pandemic caused by Covid-19. They did it?

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame

The use of new technologies, videoconferencing and more has made it easier and cheaper to carry out numerous work activities, including those related to the diplomatic world.

I am convinced that there will be greater use of these applications in the future; on the other hand, I hope that we can return to holding various diplomatic meetings in the presence.

The new technological tools are here to stay and we must necessarily adapt to this new situation to take advantage of the opportunities provided by technological development.

3) **Michele D'Orazio, Political Sciences - LUISS Rome (Italy)**

To undertake a diplomatic career it is necessary to have a very high level of preparation and a very rich curriculum of experience; can the initiatives promoted by AESI be useful in this regard?

Prof. Julia Amos

Speaking of my experience in the UK, it is generally very important during a selection to demonstrate a strong interest in one's career through hands-on activities and volunteer initiatives.

To give a general example, if you want to work as a doctor it is certainly useful to volunteer in hospitals or similar. Another way is to carry out internships at institutions, such as AESI, which can strengthen their skills and put into practice what they have learned.

4) **Francesca La Mura, Law - University "La Sapienza" Rome (Italy)**

My question is about the role and uses of new information technologies in the diplomacy sector; social networks allow you to interact very directly without intermediaries, what can be the effects in relations between states and diplomacy?

Amb. Franco Mistretta

Diplomacy is not limited to mechanically interpret what is being discussed in a meeting online or in person, the role of the diplomat is not only to prepare an official meeting but it is above all to refer to the entire national bureaucracy, civil or military one, what is the meaning of what was discussed in the meeting between representatives and ambassadors.

There is therefore always a need for a figure who acts as an intermediary and who cannot be set aside by the use of new means of communication.

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame

An element that seems important to me to underline is that in a comparison between different cultures and uses, even a simple message via Twitter or other online platform can be interpreted in a very different way and arouse different reactions depending on the reader.

A good diplomat must carry out a meeting between the parties taking into account the cultural elements, the possible interpretations and the differences between the parties in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

The main risk with messages shared by social networks is that they rely too much on the emotional factor compared to a rational analysis of an event or situation, and this can generate unexpected and risky consequences.

5) **Samuele Belziti, Political Sciences and International Relations - University of Messina (Italy)**

What are the training elements that the Diplomatic Institute can offer in preparing for the work of the diplomat? How has the figure of the ambassador changed over the last few years and what are the skills required today?

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame

The selection process is meritocratic from the moment of the competition tests, the diplomatic career provides for a progressive growth of staff through a pyramidal structure on the model of the French state administration.

Once entered as legation secretaries, the new arrivals have knowledge in various fields, such as historical, international law and economics. The training then continues with preparation activities related to public speaking, the study of reports and national and international diplomatic documents.

Another element is related to the various sectors it covers the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where there are many areas relating to national foreign policy; the diplomat's task is to provide a clear and precise report to his decision or policy maker to guide government decisions.

In addition, the diplomat today must manage the information coming through the web and they often do not allow detailed analysis aimed at the full understanding of a phenomenon in the emotional aspect advantage.

The dissemination of misleading or even false news on the web certainly represents a further complication for the diplomat's job. There are also figures of representatives who choose to use very little diplomatic methods in managing relations with other subjects, so much so that they are defined as warrior diplomats.

Amb. Franco Mistretta

Once in service, the new diplomats come into contact through the Diplomatic Institute with the various areas of study of the numerous issues of international relations.

It is a sort of continuous training that differs according to the level of experience achieved and the role that is covered by the diplomat within the Ministry. It is an element that unites all officials at work, aimed at the improvement and professional updating of those who hold a position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6) Prof. Fabio Casini - University of Siena (Italy)

Despite the numerous international crisis scenarios, will it be possible to create a global ethical community among states? In addition, what role can diplomacy play in doing this through figures such as ambassadors?

Amb. Franco Mistretta

I am rather skeptical about the weight of ethics in managing the current international crises, just look at what is happening between Israel and the forces present in the Gaza Strip. Certainly, ethics should be the foundation of human action and of the person as such; the diplomat should be able to speak clearly, openly and without ambiguity in relations with other interlocutors of different cultures and customs.

In this way, the diplomatic official will be able to interact with the counterpart while maintaining the information received from his own Chancellery.

7) Gioele Leone, Biotechnology - University of Florence (Italy)

For those with medical-scientific training, what are the opportunities to play a concrete role in the international relations sector?

Min. Plen. Stefano Beltrame

Given the pandemic crisis, I can say that greater cooperation between the scientific and political-diplomatic worlds would undoubtedly have been useful to stem the problem from the appearance of the first cases due to Covid-19.

For example, we have the WHO which focuses on issues and problems related to the protection of health at a global level and certainly there is a need for trained and trained

personnel in the study of scientific-biological subjects to be able to put into practice effective policies in contrast pandemic emergencies such as the one we are experiencing.

Effective interaction between medical and diplomatic personnel is a very important element in situations that can endanger the health of the entire population. There are also a whole series of non-governmental organizations for humanitarian purposes, which collaborate with diplomatic staff and representatives of various countries in providing medical aid in crisis areas around the world.

Effective collaboration between these two environments is very important especially when interventions in the field take place against populations with habits and customs different from ours; the diplomat can provide their knowledge and experience to support medical personnel in overcoming any obstacles and misunderstandings due to cultural differences.

Prof. Julia Amos

There are specific fields of study such as Global Medicine where medical health personnel work against global threats to human health and are increasingly involved in the foreign policies of countries in support of human health and life.

Even the individual doctor who works in direct contact with individual patients can decide to join international projects for the protection of health and in the fight against diseases in disadvantaged countries.

I conclude by saying that a doctor, a nurse or other health professionals can still make their contribution even without being specifically recruited for the diplomatic world.

Prof. Massimo Maria Caneva

As the two previous interventions underlined, at the international level I believe that it is necessary to integrate the two roles, the medical-scientific and the diplomatic one, in order to foster a collaboration aimed at protecting human health and life, in particular in areas of crisis and emergency.

Humanitarian. Scientific training is undoubtedly also useful for all diplomatic figures and representatives who participate in initiatives related to issues such as health and well-being of the person and thus favor the success of such projects.