



Towards a Sustainable Development Diplomacy:

A Case Study of Freedom, Politics, Policy and Communication in South Africa



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3rd Floor UNISA Building

263 Nana Sita Street

Pretoria

South Africa

PO Box 14349

The Tramshed, 0126

Pretoria

South Africa

+27123376082

+27862129442

info@igd.org.za

www.igd.org.za

Editor: Beth le Roux

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■ About the Contributor

□ Geoff Pigman

Dr Pigman holds a BA from Swarthmore College, MA from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, and a D Phil from the University of Oxford. He heads a global strategy and political consulting practice. He was formerly Visiting Fellow at the Center for Global Change and Governance, Rutgers University, Newark; Member of the Faculty in Political Economy at Bennington College (Vermont, USA); Equity Research Liaison, CIBC World Markets, New York; Director of Graduate Studies, Brussels School of International Studies, University of Kent at Brussels; and Lecturer in International Political Economy, University of Birmingham. His next book, *Trade Diplomacy Transformed*, is due out in late 2014.



■ Table of Contents:

1	Introduction: Development, Diplomacy and Sustainability	7
2	Development as Freedom: Sen's Expansive Vision of Human Capabilities and Choices	8
3	Critical Approaches to Diplomacy and Development	11
4	South Africa's Development Diplomacy: The 2011 'Ubuntu' draft White Paper	18
5	Conclusions: Sustainability in South Africa's Development Diplomacy	21



■ Acronyms and Abbreviations:

AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation (South Africa)
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus infection / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HDI	Human Development Index
IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa
ICT	information and communication technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IGD	Institute for Global Dialogue
ODA	official development assistance
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (US)
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SACOIR	South African Council on International Relations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADPA	South African Development Partnership Agency
US	United States of America

■ Towards a Sustainable Development Diplomacy: A Case Study of Freedom, Politics, Policy and Communication in South Africa

□ Geoffrey Allen Pigman

IGD Research Associate/ University of Pretoria

1. Introduction: Development, Diplomacy and Sustainability

In the nearly seventy years that have elapsed since the end of World War II, the world has undergone sweeping political, economic and social change. More of the world's population has gained access to basic human rights and basic economic needs such as food, water and shelter. The world's population has become healthier and wealthier, and overall material standards of living have improved. Yet in some nations and regions of the world inequality has worsened significantly. Politically, the international system has been transformed from one dominated by a small number of multi-regional empires centred in Europe, to one based on sovereignty and self-governance. The number of sovereign states has increased from approximately 50 at the end of the Second World War to roughly 200 today. And yet the sovereign equality of states remains largely a fiction, as the ability of many sovereign states to exercise power is sharply limited by domestic political instability, poverty and lack of leverage over more powerful states. Against the backdrop of these transformations, the notion of development emerged as an objective of the member states of the United Nations. Whilst each state once independent has undertaken its own development as a core part of its mission of governance, the international community has treated development as an obligation and as collaborative endeavour. Hence development has been a central issue for diplomacy in the post-World War II international system.

After seven decades, development, and the diplomacy that when successful has facilitated it, is perceived by academics, policy makers and the global public as both a success and a failure. Hence the context for thinking about development and about diplomacy has changed dramatically. The objective of this paper is to revisit what is meant by development and to ask what sort of diplomacy is required to pursue a development agenda. The argument reconceptualises development diplomacy, drawing upon economist Amartya Sen's conception of development as the empowering of fundamental

freedoms and upon Costas Constantinou and James Der Derian's understanding of diplomacy as an holistic endeavour embracing state and non-state actors, domestic and foreign, and seeking the mediation of estrangement and the overcoming of alienation. The paper investigates to what extent Constantinou and Der Derian's concept of sustainable diplomacy can be applied to Sen's concept of development as freedom. The paper then considers as a case study the development diplomacy of South Africa, which is at a point of transition from a traditional position as a developing country aid recipient to becoming a development 'donor' state. The South African Government's 2011 'Diplomacy of Ubuntu' draft white paper is analysed in terms of how it measures up to the foregoing reconceptualisation of development diplomacy, and challenges for South Africa looking ahead are identified.

2. Development as Freedom: Sen's Expansive Vision of Human Capabilities and Choices

Amartya Sen was one of a group of economists who developed the Human Development Index (HDI) in 1990 as an alternative way to measure development that takes into account a wider range of factors affecting quality of life other than wealth or income. The HDI includes life expectancy, education levels and the extent of inequality within a state. In his 1999 work *Development as Freedom*, Sen explores at a philosophical level why income or wealth alone is an inadequate measure of development. He first asks why development is something that we value and pursue. He problematises traditional conceptions of development as income level or other familiar measures of wealth (assets, etc.) by questioning whether in fact we value income and wealth for their own sake, and whether we should do so. Sen contends that income, wealth and other measures of economic attainment are instrumental goods: we value them for what they can provide to us. No amount of wealth, for example, can purchase us immortality. Sen frames the objectives of development as a set of interlocking and mutually supporting fundamental freedoms that give us the capabilities to live the kind of lives that reasonable people would have reason to value.¹ The five freedoms that Sen identifies are: (1) political freedoms; (2) economic facilities; (3) social opportunities; (4) transparency guarantees; and (5) protective security. For Sen, what is crucial about these freedoms is that they are instrumental in that to provide them is a means of development, but at the same time the freedoms themselves are ends of development.² This inseparability of means and ends in development will play an important part in conceptualising what development diplomacy is and can be.

As a way of illustrating how the fundamental freedoms interlock with and support each other, Sen takes on the argument that the achievement of economic well-being in a society should take priority over the extension of political freedoms and participatory democracy. That approach to development, which has succeeded in countries ranging from South Korea to Chile, was popularised by former Singapore president Lee Kuan Yew, who contended that civil and political rights can even impede economic development. Sen's position is that we need civil and political rights, participatory

democracy, freedom of expression and media, in order to enable us to debate and make the policy choices that are required to stimulate economic growth and wealth enhancement.³ ‘Our conceptualisation of economic needs depends crucially on open public debates and discussions, the guarantee of which requires an insistence on basic political liberty and civil rights.’⁴ A person with a high income but no opportunity for political participation may not be seen as poor in the usual sense but is clearly poor in the sense that she or he is denied an important freedom of choice.⁵

Sen understands fundamental freedoms as including both processes, which permit people to choose what to do and then to do it, and opportunities, which are a function of individual social and economic circumstances.⁶ Processes and opportunities are reciprocally interrelated: development means that individuals can, and should, become more capable of leading lives that they value. Public policy choices by a society can enhance people’s capabilities to lead such lives. At the same time, individuals’ capacities to participate in public discourse (something that reasonable persons might well value) can contribute to the choosing of such public policies. Giving people fundamental freedoms, including education and good health, enables them to evaluate policies and make choices between them based on what they value.⁷

Poverty plays a substantial part in limiting individual freedoms, Sen argues. He defines poverty as the deprivation of basic capabilities, not just low income and assets.⁸ One of the primary freedoms that individuals value is the freedom to live a long, full and healthy life. Poverty is often, but by no means uniformly, correlated with shortened lifespans owing to higher infant mortality, greater susceptibility to disease and lifestyle-related illness. Sen cites the example of populations in south India with longer average lifespans than minority populations in the United States, notwithstanding the significantly higher per capita income of the minority Americans. Within Sen’s understanding of poverty falls inequality within a society. Being poor in a developing country with extreme inequality of wealth distribution, and being poor in a highly developed country in which most people live comfortably, causes particular stresses on individuals and those around them that contribute negatively to psychological and physical health.⁹ Sen characterises unemployment as a form of capacity poverty, in the sense that the talents and productive capacities are being wasted, and also in the sense that the unemployed are being denied the freedom to contribute to production and exchange. In terms of public policy choices favouring lower structural rates of unemployment, Sen compares the United States favourably to advanced European economies.¹⁰

The problem of poverty Sen frames in an interesting way in terms of its relationship to markets. Poverty deprives people of the freedom to participate in market transactions: to buy and sell goods and services, including their own labour, or to choose not to buy or sell.¹¹ The right of individuals to make choices about what they want to exchange for what in the marketplace is a positive good because it empowers human freedom, and as such is to be preferred to a system in which everyone’s utility was maximised by an economic dictator. ‘The merit of the market system does not lie only in its capacity to generate more efficient culmination outcomes.’¹² Hence extreme poverty,

slavery and indentured labour all deprive individuals of the freedom to participate in market exchange. Markets often do not support human freedoms to the extent that they should, Sen argues, because their structuring and regulation can be dominated by particular, often pre-capitalist, interests. This is a significant problem in less developed countries, where less free political systems permit such interests to tilt markets in their favour through competition restrictions and rent-seeking.¹³ Sen concurs with Adam Smith's contention that the 'Dracula' or 'sunshine' effect of exposure to the light of public scrutiny is an effective counter to market-limiting rent-seeking, another instance of freedom of information and economic openness supporting one another.¹⁴

Political freedoms and economic facilities are relatively straightforward both as ends in themselves and in terms of the instrumental purpose they serve in undergirding one another. However, Sen's other three categories of fundamental freedoms are equally important, both as a means of development and as ends in themselves, even if for less obvious reasons. Social opportunities, which Sen defines as public goods such as health care, literacy and education, are needed to enable individuals to take advantage of their political and economic freedoms. One must be reasonably healthy and able to read in order to participate fully in political debate and market transactions. Transparency guarantees are social conditions that facilitate human interactions, such as trust and openness. In a society in which people do not trust one another enough to sign a business contract or cast a ballot with confidence in its privacy, opportunities for political expression and earning a living may be sharply curtailed. Protective security is how Sen describes a social safety net intended to prevent individuals from falling victim to adverse events, from unemployment benefits to disaster relief. When individuals must take on these costs for themselves, either preventively or at the time required, the costs may be prohibitive from the perspective of development, or their survival itself may be imperilled.¹⁵ As with the relationship between economic development and political freedoms, Sen challenges the argument that income growth must be prioritised over the provision of social services by pointing to the example of Meiji-era Japan, where government investment in social services, particularly education, facilitated Japan's subsequent rapid industrialisation and growth in incomes.¹⁶

Methodologically, Sen's argument is a normative analytical case working from value principles. Following Aristotle, he appeals to principles that derive from the nature of human rationality: what a reasonable person might want and choose. However, he backs up his case with empirical examples documenting the approaches of different countries to development and examples of correlations across countries, e.g. that higher literacy rates are associated with lower fertility rates. His conceptualisation of development as freedom occasions a number of different interpretations of development-related issues. Sen's freedom perspective accords great significance to the choices that people make for themselves as individuals and collectively as societies. For Sen, choices are not reducible to preferences, as utilitarian economists might have it, because, as with Aristotle and also with the social constructivists, people's preferences are shaped and changed as a result of interaction and learning: '...we cannot, in general, take preferences as a given independently of public discussion...'. But in order for people to come to understand

what their economic needs are and to form preferences, they need to be able to participate in public discussion, which in turn requires political rights.¹⁷

Sen does not intend his development policy prescriptions to be detailed or doctrinaire. He does not consider that reasonable people are likely to have the same or similar policy preferences on development issues after public discourse has been allowed to take place. He does argue that public agreement becomes much more likely on problems of ‘identifiably intense injustice or unfairness’: widespread hunger, preventable morbidity, neglect of female children, and the subjugation of women, for example.¹⁸ Sen advocates a balanced use of markets and other institutions to expand fundamental freedoms in development strategy. Market efficiency and equity objectives need to be balanced from a regulatory perspective, for example, because the market mechanism can often break down in its ability to supply public goods. Markets and other institutions public and private should be evaluated in terms of how they contribute to the provision of fundamental freedoms. Institutions need to be assessed in terms of how well they work in combination with one another: the market, democracy, the media, systems for distributing public goods. Developing countries need public policies that create social opportunities in areas such as health and education, which are cost-effective policy choices because the labour-intensiveness of health care and basic education make them inexpensive to provide in poor countries.¹⁹ Ultimately Sen’s policy prescriptions do not favour state or market, but they treat the people’s decision making process as integral to the process of development:

The ends and means of development call for placing the perspective of freedom at the center of the stage. The people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved ‘given the opportunity’ in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs. The state and the society have extensive rôles in safeguarding and strengthening human capabilities.²⁰

3. Critical Approaches to Diplomacy and Development

In light of Sen’s perspective on development as freedom, the next step in the argument is to consider to what extent Sen’s perspective can inform an understanding of how diplomacy is, and might be, used in the service of development. By way of context, there is a range of views concerning whether diplomacy is an appropriate instrument for advancing development objectives. At one end of a spectrum, Opondo argues that the historical legacy of European colonisation of African and other non-European peoples, and in particular the Christian missionary project of evangelising non-European populations, subjectified and infantilised colonised peoples and their subsequent states to such an extent that post-colonial diplomacy has been rendered structurally unequal and disadvantageous to post-colonial peoples and states.²¹ As Constantinou and Der Derian point out, European and ‘western’ attempts to normalise diplomacy between developed countries and Africa, by compelling developing states and peoples to emulate historically European modes of diplomatic interaction, have produced bizarre

caricatures of identity construction and diplomatic interaction, such as those involving the ersatz Napoleonic Emperor Bokassa of the former Central African Empire, Idi Amin as the 'last king of Scotland', Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army, and the 'tent embassy' of aboriginal Australians to the (European) Australian government.²² For Opondo, even critical analysis of diplomacy undertaken by Europeans cannot escape the analysts' intrinsically European subjectivity in such a way that would recognise the essential difference of Africans and open a way for accordingly different modes of diplomacy to emerge.²³

Like Opondo but for different reasons, Moyo's analysis of the use of foreign aid in development is highly critical of development diplomacy. She argues that mainstream development diplomacy since World War II, which took the form of diplomatic interactions between major multilateral development institutions (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, regional development banks) and governments of post-colonial states subsequent to their independence, has achieved the opposite of what it was intended to do. Diplomacy between the development institutions and post-colonial governments has resulted in a steady stream of concessional loans and loan guarantees, grants, aid-in-kind and refinancings, write-downs and write-offs as required. Development institutions and industrialised country governments, in attempting to promote and respect the sovereignty of recently independent post-colonial states and their leaders, and through their efforts to fulfil their own mandates to extend development financing, have encouraged a culture of government corruption and dependency, Moyo contends. Leaders of post-colonial states, of which Moyo cites the former Zaïre's Mobutu Sese Seko as a particularly egregious example, have siphoned off large amounts of development assistance funds for their own personal benefit and have come to rely upon development finance rather than domestic taxation for their principal source of national income. The result, Moyo claims, is that by many metrics most African countries are worse off today than they were when post-colonial development diplomacy began. Moyo advocates less, and different, development diplomacy. She calls for African states to turn away from traditional development diplomacy and wean themselves from aid transfers over ten years. Instead she calls on African governments to take primary responsibility for enacting and implementing policies to achieve their own development: greater use of commercial bond markets, policies to attract greater foreign direct investment, regulatory facilitation of microfinancing, reductions in fees associated with transfers of foreign remittances, utilisation of domestic savings, amongst others. Some of these policies require diplomatic communication and negotiation with other governments, but much can be done through domestic legislative and regulatory initiatives.²⁴

Opondo's critique of development diplomacy and Moyo's development policy reform recommendations raise questions for governments and non-state actors in developing countries concerning whether diplomacy is and can be a useful strategy for implementing development policy and for achieving foreign policy objectives more generally. In the first decade of the 21st century there was considerable pessimism about the prospects for diplomacy to be able to mediate estrangement in the global community in the

context of a series of terror attacks (New York, Washington and New Delhi in 2001, Madrid in Spain and Beslan in Russia in 2004, London in 2005) and responses to the attacks that appeared to treat diplomacy as a short-term, disposable inconvenience, an obligatory ‘going through the motions’ prior to a preordained military solution (as in the US-led invasion of Iraq). Against this backdrop Costas Constantinou and James Der Derian made a vigorous normative case for a different approach to diplomacy, a diplomacy to be judged by criteria of sustainability. Constantinou and Der Derian argue for diplomacy to be practised in a way that is sustainable in two senses. The first is sustainability in the sense of durability and duration: diplomacy should not be viewed as a brief phase in conflict resolution prefatory to the use of force, but rather as an ongoing undertaking that is an end in itself. Wiseman argues that this commitment to ‘keep talking’ has long been an accepted norm of diplomatic culture.²⁵ The second is the sense that sustainability implies respect for difference. If, as Der Derian argues elsewhere, diplomacy is at its essence the mediation of estrangements and difference, the overcoming of alienation, then in order for that process to be possible diplomats (and their sovereigns) must first genuinely respect the differences of the other side.²⁶ Diplomacy in this sense is a reflexive praxis that ‘includes willingness to accommodate and learn from other ways of living but also to revise one’s own way of living and doing things.’²⁷ Constantinou and Der Derian understand diplomacy to be a virtue in the Aristotelian sense of embodying its own *aretē* or functional excellence: what it means to be a diplomat can only be understood in the context of what it means to be a good diplomat.²⁸ The virtue of diplomacy for Constantinou and Der Derian includes the obligation of diplomats to mediate in the active sense of thinking actively and reflectively as well as serving as a passive conduit between sovereigns. ‘The virtuous diplomat should not be an obedient servant but potentially a challenger and modifier of policies, including of the policy one is called to serve.’²⁹

The call for sustainable diplomacy is a response to the evolution in the international system and global economy that has been underway throughout the post-World War II period. Mediation of differences and estrangements, at the core of sustainable diplomacy, is in many ways a greater challenge given the widened range of actors that engage in diplomacy today: state, multilateral, supranational and subnational; public and private; government, business and civil society. This range of actors construct their identities and interests differently, and they have different combinations of sources of power. To mediate between different types of actors requires new techniques of interconnectivity, Constantinou and Der Derian argue. They cite Cardinal Richelieu’s advocacy of ‘continuous negotiation’, contending that sustainable diplomacy involves not isolating adversaries and ‘rogue’ states and an obligation to receive embassies and communications from adversaries, whatever the state of the relationship.³⁰ The revolution in information and communication technologies (ICTs) has made possible a degree of continuity that Richelieu might not have imagined, but diplomats may not yet have imagined fully the implications of the ICT revolution for continuous negotiation.

Notwithstanding the critiques of Opondo and Moyo, the use of diplomacy in the service of development policy is an ongoing reality and probably at least to some extent a necessity. In terms of understanding development diplomacy analytically and for generating normative prescriptions for how it might be done better, Sen's freedom perspective on development resonates with Constantinou and Der Derian's idea of sustainable diplomacy in productive ways. One of the fundamental freedoms that Sen identifies is the freedom of individuals, and by extension their states, to identify interests and preferences and to make policy choices based thereon. In order to exercise that freedom, individuals (and states) need access to necessary information, which is a product of free public discourse, as well as to the basic economic necessities, health care, etc. required for their citizenry to make their choices meaningful. A sustainable diplomacy on development-related issues between actors in the developing and industrialised regions of the world that is based upon genuine respect for difference and that embodies continuous and durable negotiation becomes not just an adjunct to development policy but a core necessity of development strategy. Sen's framing of underdevelopment as a lack of fundamental freedoms effectively captures underdevelopment as a set of particular disadvantages faced by some actors rather than as the cause of difference between actors. Hence the mediation of difference undertaken by diplomacy, and development diplomacy, can and should be a mediation based upon mutual respect of differences between equal interlocutors. This opens the way for development diplomacy to be undertaken by each interlocutor with the reasonable expectation of mutual gain. Many critiques of development diplomacy, such as those of Opondo and Moyo, have been based upon observations that this diplomacy has produced great winners and losers to such an extent that it appears intrinsically to be zero-sum rather than positive-sum. That the distribution of winners and losers extends across the boundaries of industrialised and developing countries – firms and shareholders based in developed countries, multilateral development institutions, leaders and their political cronies in developing countries as winners, the poor in every country as losers – renders these perverse outcomes no less problematic.

Approached from Sen's perspective of development as freedom, what might a development diplomacy that is sustainable look like? First, a sustainable development diplomacy, embodying Sen's sense of development as enabling fundamental freedoms and like Constantinou and Der Derian's vision of sustainable diplomacy, needs to be understood as both a means and an end in itself: a process of diplomacy that is worthwhile to begin, to maintain and to persevere with for its own sake as well as instrumentally in search of the fruits that it may bear. Processes of diplomatic representation and communication on an ongoing basis do the hard work of establishing and sustaining durable relationships that open possibilities for greater successes, in the sense of mutual gains, when negotiating an agreement or resolving a conflict may be needed. But before it can even begin, sustainable development diplomacy must be preceded by a state and its people granting themselves the freedoms to engage in political discourse, choose their leaders (and, by extension, the state's diplomatic representatives), and help one another through open debate to form preferences, develop interests and select policies.

The freedom to engage in debate and make public choices will generate configurations of interests and preferences in a state (whatever the origins of the state, post-colonial or otherwise) that will be different from every other, and in many cases ineradicably so, as Opondo suggests. Hence Constantinou and Der Derian's argument that sustainable diplomacy has at its core the process of learning to live with and to respect differences.

In order for a government (or a multilateral institution, transnational firm, or civil society organisation) to represent its citizens, constituents, stakeholders and shareholders diplomatically, it must engage in ongoing, open dialogue with them. This domestic foundation for sustainable development diplomacy, which cannot be initiated from outside (even as it can be supported and reinforced through sustainable development diplomacy once launched), is a crucial building block for a people developing their own identity, a process that continues and intensifies once interaction with outsiders – diplomacy – begins. Diplomacy not only regulates relations with foreigners, it 'also crucially involves the identification, representation and interpretation of *foreignness*'.³²¹ Through diplomacy, Constantinou and Der Derian assert, people decide how to conceptualise and mediate the 'other'.

A key part of an open political dialogue prior to a developing country's entering into sustainable development diplomacy is consultation between the domestic stakeholders in the polity: civil society organisations, including trade unions, small business alliances, religious and social service organisations; large firms; regional and metropolitan governments. In order to be able to pursue a development agenda based around empowering freedoms, different actors need to be able to choose to collaborate and to form alliances, both domestically within the polity and transnationally with different types of actors abroad. In order for this to happen successfully, domestic stakeholders need to be able to share and have access to relevant information about their own needs and objectives and those of others. Hence open political dialogue between different types of actors is both an end of development understood as enhancing freedom and a condition for sustainable development diplomacy.

Such a consultation process opens the way for diplomatic representation and communication with a range of external actors, public and private, on the basis of equality, respect for difference and the objective of mutual gains. A sustainable development diplomacy, conceived of as an end in itself as much as a means to development and preceded by a free process of political consultation and public choice, is likely to take different forms and lead to types of cooperation different from many of the historical patterns of 'foreign aid' in the post-World War II period. Moyo's evaluation of the failings of traditional development diplomacy illustrates its lack of sustainability. Foreign aid packages negotiated by developing country governments with the World Bank, US and UK governments do not enhance the political freedoms of the public when aid displaces tax revenue as the primary source of public finance and therein erodes government accountability to the public. When aid flows are diverted into offshore bank accounts for personal use by corrupt leaders like the late President Mobutu of the former Zaïre, it neither enhances economic freedoms of the people nor upholds

transparency guarantees of the sort that Sen argues foster trust and openness. Examples of sustainable development diplomacy in this context might be negotiations between relevant government ministries in developing countries and microfinance companies such as Bangladesh-based Grameen Bank over the regulatory conditions under which microlending takes place or relationships established and maintained between Kiva.org, which raises funds online from individuals globally for microlending, and their 202 'field partners', domestic CSOs in 69 countries with which they cooperate on local microfinance projects.³²

From the perspective of developing country governments and non-state actors, a development diplomacy that is sustainable needs to be focused on enhancing all five of Sen's fundamental freedoms. As Sen has argued, enhancing each of the five freedoms supports and depends upon each of the others. Hence development initiatives to improve public health and access to clean water, to feed and house the poorest in the population, to train journalists and to reduce corruption are no less important than economic infrastructure projects and efforts to ensure free and fair elections. One example of development diplomacy the sustainability of which can be measured by the recorded metrics of its success in meeting its objectives is the widely praised US government-led anti-HIV/AIDS initiative known as the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), inaugurated in 2003 by the administration of President George W. Bush. PEPFAR, a partnership between industrialised and developing country governments and CSOs such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, is a systematic programme to treat HIV-positive and AIDS-afflicted populations and to limit further spread of the virus through education and contraception. PEPFAR as a foreign policy included in its design a diplomatic strategy intended to engage governments and CSOs in beneficiary countries to ensure its success. The US government appointed a Global AIDS Coordinator at ambassadorial rank, therein elevating diplomatic representation and communication between the United States and partner countries to the highest level possible. In 2009 the Office of Global Health Diplomacy was created within the US Department of State. The current Global AIDS Coordinator, Ambassador Eric Goosby, is a senior medical academic with a research, practical and teaching background, who prior to his appointment led a major international HIV/AIDS CSO, the Pangaia Global AIDS Foundation.³³

PEPFAR's impact upon the sustainability of societies and economies in developing countries has been significant. By 2013, 13 developing countries, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, had crossed a threshold wherein more individuals were under treatment for HIV than there were new infections.³⁴ In the first five years of the programme, over two million people received anti-retroviral treatment, resulting in 240,000 babies being born HIV-free to HIV-positive mothers, and an estimated 1.2 million HIV/AIDS deaths were averted.³⁵ A strategy such as PEPFAR could only have been successful if diplomacy between the participating governmental and non-state actors was effective in structuring and administering the programme to deliver results over time. PEPFAR has promoted development, in the sense of enhancing freedoms, in a variety of different but interlocking ways. Individuals are being given the prospect of a healthier life and

fuller life span, freeing them to make political and economic choices for themselves and their families and to lead economically productive lives. The balance of healthy adults in the workforce relative to dependent children, the elderly and infirm is being restored. Healthcare costs for families and governments will be reduced, freeing valuable resources for individuals and the public to choose to invest or spend in other ways. The public are being provided with fuller information about healthcare on the basis of which to make informed choices and that has reduced the freedom-limiting social stigmatisation of infected persons. The administration of PEPFAR assistance is far from ideal: Porter and de Wet, for example, argue that caregivers could do a much better job of listening and responding to patients in such a way as to empower them in accordance with Sen's capabilities approach to their freedoms.³⁶ Yet PEPFAR has addressed a severe demographic crisis for developing societies and economies in a relatively short space of time. In order to succeed over the long term, sustainable development diplomacy aimed at limiting HIV infection will require continued investment from public and private stakeholders, even if at a lower level than has been required to stem the spread of the disease, which in turn will require the continuing dialogue that is at the heart of sustainable diplomacy.

Development diplomacy, if it is to be sustainable, must reflect the reality that the distribution of power in the international system and global political economy has changed. Diplomatic actors public and private, governmental and non-state, in developing and industrialised countries alike must also recognise that development diplomacy no longer follows a traditional North-South pattern. Much development diplomacy now takes place among actors in the Global South and between actors in the South and the former Soviet bloc, as emerging diplomatic venues such as BRICS demonstrate. The global shift in the distribution of economic, political and social power towards the Global South has begun to enable actors based in the developing world to collaborate in such a way as to make diplomatic negotiation more likely to yield outcomes that involve mutual gain. Development diplomacy, if it is to be sustainable, must be founded on the expectation of mutual gain for all participants. The ability of coalitions of developing countries in the World Trade Organisation's Doha Development Agenda multilateral trade negotiations to prevent traditionally dominant powers like the United States, European Union and Japan from forcing through a deal that developing countries regarded as unfavourable is evidence of this shift in power, the collaborative capacity of developing countries and rising expectations of mutual gain. To be sustainable, development diplomacy need not yield a result or deal at a particular time if all sides do not perceive gain from it. But the growing effectiveness of diplomatic coalitions of developing countries masks the reality that the Global South is less uniform than ever, as an increasing number of middle-income states make the transition from being recipients of aid to becoming aid donors. This accords with Sen's observation that even in the most industrialised countries there are segments of the population in need of development, e.g. the 'unfreedom' of being poor in a rich land. The Venezuelan government of the late President Hugo Chavez helped to increase the freedom from want of basic necessities of the poor in the north-eastern United States

(in addition to reaping public diplomacy rewards in the developing world) by donating Venezuelan home heating oil to a local US CSO.³⁷ These patterns of development assistance outside the mainstream underscore the broader point that an increasing portion of global diplomacy can be considered development diplomacy, even if it still tends to be concentrated amongst and between certain groups of actors primarily seated in the developing world or multilateral financial institutions.

A final criterion for development diplomacy, if it is to be sustainable, is the need for constant communication between the governments (and non-state actors) whose diplomats are negotiating and the beneficiaries of negotiations: the people whose freedoms are to be enhanced by development. Easterly, although tending to conflate development diplomacy with the ‘bureaucracy’ of foreign aid distribution, highlights the importance of an effective feedback loop between beneficiaries of aid and officials who must engage in both the diplomacy and the administration needed to deliver the aid. Easterly identifies a measurable gap between the rhetoric of beneficiary participation embraced by the World Bank and IMF and its actual practice, which authoritarian recipient governments often actively eschew.³⁸ Only through completion of an information feedback loop regarding progress and results of diplomatic negotiations, e.g. aid programmes, investment plans, etc. can the public continue to be free to understand the policies that their government (or the firm in which they have invested or the CSO that they support) has chosen and to change their policy preferences if they so wish. The importance of continuing communication brings sustainable development diplomacy back to the importance of open domestic political dialogue even before diplomatic engagement begins.

4. South Africa’s Development Diplomacy: The 2011 ‘Ubuntu’ draft White Paper

South Africa is a useful case study for evaluating the prospects for sustainable development diplomacy for several reasons. A relatively large (population 50 million), middle income (per capita income c. US \$11,000) country, South Africa is making a transition from being primarily a recipient of foreign aid to becoming an aid donor, as official development assistance (ODA) to South Africa declines and South African outpayments for foreign aid and development cooperation rise. South Africa has taken a leading role in regional and other South-South multilateral cooperation initiatives, from IBSA and BRICS to SACU, SADC and the African Union.³⁹ South Africa exemplifies one set of economic challenges of development, in that parts of its economy are highly industrialised, e.g. financial services, telecommunications, mining and energy, and yet income inequality is amongst the most extreme in the world. By the government’s own admission, ‘(s)ections of the country represent poverty comparable with that of Least Developed Countries.’⁴⁰ This section of the paper considers South Africa’s development diplomacy from a government policy perspective, evaluating to what extent development policy and diplomacy objectives meet the criteria of sustainability from the perspective

of development as freedom. The concluding section, which follows, considers to what extent South Africa is living up to its development diplomacy and policy objectives.

In May 2011 the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) produced a draft foreign policy white paper, 'Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu', which reviewed the progress of South African foreign policy and diplomacy since majority rule in 1994 and staked out clearly the government's approach to development diplomacy going forward. The draft white paper provides an ideal text for analysing South Africa's development diplomacy objectives for criteria of sustainability. What is striking is the extent to which the draft white paper articulates principles and policy approaches compatible with the ideal of sustainable development diplomacy and how, without consciously setting out to do so, the paper frames development in language compatible with Sen's framing of development as freedom. The foreword sets the stage by situating South Africa's foreign policy and international relations within the context of broader national objectives in language that Sen would endorse: strengthening national identity, cultivating national pride and patriotism, righting past injustices of race and gender, promoting social cohesion and stability, and economic growth and development. It explicitly invites the domestic political dialogue between stakeholders that must precede sustainable development diplomacy:

The business of national interest cannot be the purview of the state alone, but it can encourage an enabling environment of dialogue and discourse among all stakeholders to interrogate policies and strategies, and their application in the best interests of the people.⁴¹

In the preamble to the draft white paper, South Africa is declared to embrace the philosophy of Ubuntu, which translates roughly as 'humanity' and refers to a distinctively Southern African philosophy that focuses on the interconnectedness and interdependence of humanity and 'is reflected in the idea that we affirm our humanity when we affirm the humanity of others'.⁴² Ubuntu is closely associated with South Africa's constitutional process of founding the post-apartheid state and was deployed by Nelson Mandela in helping South Africans to construct a non-racial national identity. Ubuntu-mandated foreign policy goals include supporting the positive development of others, respect for all nations, peoples and cultures, human security as central to national security, and eschewing conflict in favour of collaboration, cooperation, and partnership. This has led to a desire by many South Africans, including the ANC government, to make a clean break with South Africa's Cold War-era security and foreign policy history and to create new international relationships based around solidarity with fellow African states and other developing countries. Vickers argues that DIRCO has created its concept of development partnership, specifically with reference to its development assistance to other African states, to address South African political leaders' discomfort with external perceptions of South Africa as a foreign aid donor. South African officials view the idea of partnership as less likely to engender potentially negative African perceptions of South Africa as a regional coercive hegemon or dominant power.⁴³

The draft white paper notes that South Africa has already made considerable progress since 1994 in building diplomatic venues and vehicles for development cooperation in Africa: facilitating the transition from the Organisation for African Unity to the African Union (AU) in 2002, the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) under the auspices of the AU the same year, and the development of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).⁴⁴ The paper goes on to link specifically South Africa's development diplomacy to reduce poverty in Africa to economic inequality and poverty at home. Domestic development objectives are listed, all of which accord with Sen's agenda of expanding fundamental freedoms: improving education and public health, rural development and land reform, and reduction of crime. The paper highlights the particular problem of high unemployment and lack of skills training of the unemployed.⁴⁵

The draft white paper endorses or proposes a series of policies and diplomatic initiatives in response to changing global conditions in order to meet development goals and that appear intended to ensure sustainability. Increasing differentiation of levels of development, across different metrics, between developing countries and the increasing integration into global governance bodies of the more advanced developing countries (of which South Africa can be counted as one) can lead to increasing divergence of developing country interests. In the face of this the paper argues that South Africa should remain committed to diplomatic solidarity amongst developing countries. Moreover, strong bilateral relationships between South Africa and other developing countries, it is argued, underpin South Africa's negotiating leverage in multilateral diplomatic venues. The paper advocates the coordination of development strategies for Africa through the AU, warning against the use of ODA flows by non-African states to undermine African solidarity and cooperation. South Africa remains committed to peace and security cooperation as political stability foundations for African development and to supporting the AU's African Peer Review Mechanism to promote participatory democracy, in accord with Sen's prioritising of political freedoms as vital to development.⁴⁶

The draft white paper proposes the establishment of new institutional mechanisms to facilitate development diplomacy and cooperation. A South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA), to be situated within DIRCO, is intended to 'facilitate and manage development assistance in support of South Africa's foreign policy objectives', particularly with respect to promoting development in Africa. SADPA will operate through bilateral partnerships as well as through trilateral cooperation with major industrialised powers such as Japan, through the Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD), and the United States, through the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).⁴⁷ Separate from but under the direction of SADPA will be a new Partnership Fund for Development. DIRCO has confirmed subsequent to the publication of the draft white paper that it envisages SADPA, which will be a separate government agency under DIRCO's direction, as leading a more proactive and carefully coordinated partnership strategy for development in Africa than South Africa has hitherto pursued, and which will include a post-conflict reconstruction assistance component.⁴⁸ The draft white paper also endorsed the creation of a South

African Council on International Relations (SACOIR), which would be a ‘consultative platform for engagement with non-state actors’.⁴⁹ SACOIR, were it to be created, could extend political and economic freedoms by enabling labour, business and civil society interests within the country more fully to participate in the political debate on the national interest and appropriate foreign policies and diplomatic strategies to achieve it.

5. Conclusions: Sustainability in South Africa’s Development Diplomacy

The objective of this paper is not to measure quantitatively and exhaustively the extent to which the South African government and non-state actors are meeting all of the development diplomacy objectives put forth in the ‘Diplomacy of Ubuntu’ draft white paper. It is too soon following the release of the 2011 white paper to measure concrete results, either in terms of diplomatic relationships initiated, built and made more sustainable, or in terms of development outcomes achieved. However, the draft white paper can be evaluated to some extent in terms of the alignment of its objectives relative to a sustainable diplomacy designed to promote development as understood in terms of enhancing fundamental freedoms. The draft white paper can also be evaluated in terms of what important issues and measures for sustainable development diplomacy it omits. And crucially, it can assess the extent to which government and non-state actors are already contributing in the broadest sense to making development diplomacy stable. Part of the challenge of conducting sustainable development diplomacy for governments and non-state actors in developing countries is that in a real sense any residual boundaries between domestic and foreign policy disappear. Effectively much of the business of government and government’s relationships with non-state actors contributes to or detracts from the sustainability of development diplomacy to some degree. Some more egregious instances are illustrative of the degree of progress yet to be made in this regard.

As the previous section illustrated, the language of the ‘Diplomacy of Ubuntu’ draft white paper is steeped in conceptions of development as enabling of fundamental freedoms. Constantinou and Der Derian’s two cornerstones of sustainability, durability and respect for difference, are at the core of the very idea of Ubuntu and are featured prominently in the ideals and objectives of South African foreign policy that the paper lays out. Were the draft white paper’s priorities, objectives and institutional changes implemented fully, South Africa would be and would come to be seen internationally as an exemplar of a state that practices sustainable development diplomacy. This would be the case irrespective of the results of its policies and diplomatic engagement, for with diplomacy, as opposed to domestic policy and unilateral foreign policy, results depend upon the willingness of two or more interlocutors to cooperate, to make concessions, to find solutions that yield mutual gain. A number of the major institutional innovations envisaged in the paper, such as SADPA and SACOIR, hold significant promise but are yet to be executed, so their viability and contribution cannot yet be assessed. Perhaps the greatest weakness in the draft white paper is the omission of a section detailing

mechanisms for achieving the domestic development goals as noted above. A South African development diplomacy that is sustainable is reliant in substantial measure upon the achievement of domestic development goals in order to grant its population enough of the freedoms that development entails to empower them to advance development diplomacy with partner states in Africa and farther afield. Simply to leave this process to a different, exclusively domestic, policy space is no longer an option.

Hence it remains to consider the broader context of how South African government policy and relations with non-state actors are contributing to or detracting from the sustainability of development diplomacy. South Africa's liberation struggle and largely peaceful transition to non-racial democracy based upon one person, one vote and guarantees of free media fulfil Sen's political development preconditions for sustainable development diplomacy. Political debate has remained vibrant in the nearly two decades since majority rule, notwithstanding the dominance of a single political party, the African National Congress (ANC), at the federal level. Yet a cursory review of a series of major high-visibility news events touching on development diplomacy covered by South Africa's relatively free media in recent years suggests that either the government has a serious problem with political communication to the public, to domestic stakeholders and to the external world, or else, more seriously, that significant problems exist in policy making and implementation. For example, political discourse in the media is filled with allegations and investigations of corruption by government officials and major actors in the private sector. In order for the public to avail themselves of their freedom to debate interests and policies openly, they rely upon open flows of information. Sustained public criticism of the current government's proposed Protection of State Information Bill or 'Secrecy' Bill reflects popular fears that the government intends to limit the access of journalists to information about government on a systematic basis on the grounds of protecting national security. This appears patently inconsistent with the government's emphasis on human security as the centrepiece of national security in the 2011 white paper, in addition to threatening the public's access to information about government that helps to preserve accountability and maintain trust in the political system.

Diplomatic relationships between South African public and private actors and BRICS partners China and India, by definition development diplomacy, are amongst South Africa's most important and productive, and arguably, sustainable, relationships in the sense that they are based upon respect for difference (of cultures, political and economic systems, etc.) and that their many aspects are genuinely structured for mutual gain. Yet these relationships appear to fail to meet other criteria of sustainability in the sense that the government has shown a lack of willingness to communicate straightforwardly, fully and promptly to the South African people about the grounds on which these relationships are founded and the resulting impacts upon particular policy decisions. For example, in 2011 the South African government was widely criticised for refusing to issue a visa to the Dalai Lama so that he could accept an invitation to the 80th birthday party of Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the behest of China's government, and then for dissimulating with the public for weeks concerning the grounds for the visa denial. Interestingly, the 2011 draft white paper says little about the importance

of South Africa's relationship with China in the context of development diplomacy in Africa or within South Africa itself. Internationally, South Africa's refusal to grant the visa elicited widespread public criticism from advocates of human rights, who associate South Africa's post-apartheid diplomacy with a more principled stance in favour of human rights, even as other seasoned practitioners of diplomacy expressed sympathy for the South African government's need to appease one of its most important development partners in pursuit of mutual economic gains for both.

Similarly, in early 2013, the South African government was pilloried in the popular press for allowing a chartered jet carrying government ministers and private investors from India to land at the Waterkloof Air Force Base near Pretoria without following proper approval, immigration and security procedures. The Indians were en route to attend the wedding of a member of the Gupta family, a family actively contributing to South Africa's economic development and politically close to many senior members of the ANC, giving rise to the media dubbing the incident 'Gupta-gate'. As in the Dalai Lama visa affair, the government dissimulated with the public concerning the circumstances for many days before an investigation was ordered and personnel were dismissed for violating established rules. But subsequent investigations of both cases notwithstanding, government in these high profile cases failed to meet Sen's transparency guarantees as freedoms that promote public trust, which they need to do if they aspire to a development diplomacy with BRICS partners that meets criteria of sustainability.

Public criticism of government in South Africa overshadowed another project of development diplomacy in central Africa when in March 2013 thirteen South African peacekeeping forces were killed in the Central African Republic (CAR) during a coup d'état against the government of François Bozizé. Media reports linked senior ANC politicians to business interests involving arms, diamonds and other minerals associated with the overthrown Bozizé government.⁵⁰ Peacekeeping in many African countries is a vital function needed to grant populations the most basic of freedoms enabling them to begin to construct a viable polity, provide for basic needs such as health and education, and grow their economies. South Africa is particularly well suited to provide these needed development goods, but perceptions of corruption both in South Africa and in CAR undermine the sustainability of the development project on every level.

Another recent story that illuminates South African development diplomacy in a more positive light is US-based transnational firm Wal-mart's acquisition of South African retailer Massmart. In 2010 the global retailer Wal-mart proposed to acquire 51 percent of Massmart for ZAR 16.5 billion/US \$ 2.4 billion. Wal-mart officials argued that the deal would create jobs in South Africa and in other African states by enabling Massmart to expand into significant African markets such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Senegal. The deal, Wal-mart's first major investment in Africa and a significant inward investment in South Africa, elicited criticism from various domestic interests: in an economy still registering 25 percent unemployment, South African trades unions and domestic manufacturing firms feared the takeover could lead to job losses at Massmart and to Massmart purchasing more imports, which in turn could result in lower

demand for domestically produced products and job losses at other domestic firms. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), an historically important ANC political ally, brought pressure on the government to oppose the Wal-mart acquisition. Wal-mart officials negotiated with South Africa's competition authorities, offering to guarantee not to cut any jobs for two years and to honour extant labour agreements for three years. In the negotiations COSATU unsuccessfully sought additional guarantees that Wal-mart would continue to use local suppliers. The South African Competition Tribunal approved Wal-mart's offer in May 2011.⁵¹ It remains too early to assess the results for development of Wal-mart's acquisition, although anecdotal evidence suggests Wal-mart's move into South Africa has created new opportunities for South African exporters to supply Wal-mart's overseas stores.⁵²

The Wal-mart example, whilst not representing a diplomatic engagement that produced gains for every actor, nonetheless illustrates the virtues of full participation of the interested parties, open communication and relative transparency in the negotiation process. Wal-mart's ability to make good on its promises to deliver development gains for South Africa and surrounding SADC countries as well as earnings gains for its own shareholders worldwide will depend upon the ability of Wal-mart and the South African government to sustain their diplomatic engagement (durability) on the principles of respect for the different needs of the public and private stakeholders affected. This series of recent episodes in development diplomacy underscores the conclusion that for South Africa, as for every other state hoping to engage in development diplomacy that is sustainable, the process must begin and end with free and open political discourse that promotes and is underpinned by constant and full communication between government and the people. Hence sustainable development diplomacy, anchored in durability and respect for difference, must begin and end with the freedoms of the people and access to the information that they need to make free and democratic choices.

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Institute for Global Dialogue

3rd Floor UNISA Building
263 Nana Sita Street
Pretoria
South Africa

PO Box 14349
The Tramshed, 0126
Pretoria
South Africa

+27123376082
+27862129442
info@igd.org.za
www.igd.org.za

