

Globalisation and Diplomacy: How Can Small States Improve the Practice of Diplomacy to Secure Their Foreign Policy Objectives?

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Abstract : Much of what is written on diplomacy, globalization and the global economy addresses the changing nature of relationships between major powers. While the most dramatic and influential changes have resulted from these developing relationships the world is not, on deeper inspection, governed neatly by major powers. Due to advances in technology, the shifting balance of power and a changing geopolitical order, small states have the ability to exercise a greater influence than ever before. Increasingly interdependent and ever complex, our world is too delicate to be handled by a mighty few. The pressure of global change requires small states to adapt their diplomatic practices and diversify their strategic alliances and relationships. The nature and practice of diplomacy must be re-evaluated in light of the pressures resulting from globalization. This research examines: how small states can best secure their foreign policy objectives? Small state theory is used as a foundation for exploring the case study of New Zealand. The research draws on secondary sources to evaluate the existing theory in relation to modern practices of diplomacy. As New Zealand lacks the required economic and military power to play an active, influential role in international affairs what strategies are used to exert influence? Furthermore, New Zealand lies in a remote corner of the Pacific and is geographically isolated from its nearest neighbors how does this affect security and trade priorities? The findings note a significant shift since the 1970's in New Zealand's diplomatic relations. This shift is arguably a direct result of globalization, regionalism and a growing independence from the traditional bi-lateral relationships. The need to source predictable trade, investment and technology are an essential driving force for New Zealand's diplomatic relations. A lack of hard power aligns New Zealand's prosperity with a secure, rules-based international system that increases the likelihood of a stable and secure global order. New Zealand's diplomacy and prosperity has been intrinsically reliant on its reputation. A vital component of New Zealand's diplomacy is preserving a reputation for integrity and global responsibility. It is the use of this soft power that facilitates the influence that New Zealand enjoys on the world stage. To weave a comprehensive network of successful diplomatic relationships, New Zealand must maintain a reputation of international credibility. Globalization has substantially influenced the practice of diplomacy for New Zealand. The current world order places economic and military might in the hands of a few, subsequently requiring smaller states to use other means for securing their interests. There are clear strategies evident in New Zealand's diplomacy practice that draw attention to how other smaller states might best secure their foreign policy objectives. While these findings are limited, as with all case study research, there is value in applying the findings to other small states struggling to secure their interests in the wake of rapid globalization.

Keywords : diplomacy, foreign policy, globalisation, small state

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