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## Chapter Two : Understanding Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

### Foreign policy

- It is the actions, decisions and goals that states pursue towards the outside world
- the **deriving motives** behind foreign policy is the pursuit of **national interest**
  - ✓ States adopt foreign policy to achieve and promote their national interests
- Foreign policy is shaped by both external/systemic factors and internal factors
  - **external/systemic factor**
    - International regimes, international organizations
    - the prevalence of great powers at international level
  - **internal factors**
    - economic, technological and military capabilities of states

### 2.1. Defining National Interest

#### National interest

- the **raison de`tat**, (the reason of state), **to justify its actions and policy towards other states at international level**

- **set of values, orientation, goals and objectives** a given country would like to achieve in its international relations

**controversies on the exact meaning, scope and contents of national interests**

➤ According to A. K. Holsti

- ✓ **an image of the future state of affairs and future set of conditions** that governments through individual policy makers **aspire to bring about by** wielding influence abroad and by changing or sustaining the behaviors of other states
- ✓ **Power or the ability to influence** the behaviors of other states is underscored as the **primary instrument to implement national interest**

➤ According to Seabury

- ✓ In **normative sense** - set of purposes which a nation...should seek to realize in the conduct of its foreign relations
- ✓ **descriptive sense** - those purposes which the nation [states] through its leadership appears to pursue **persistently over time**

**whether national interest can be defined objectively( science ) or whether it is a subjective enterprise ( art )**

➤ For Plato

- the good of the polis (that is the public good) could best be arrived at by **philosopher king** aided by a few highly learned, detached and fair-minded advisors
- Plato's ideas have been used as the inspiration for **dictatorial forms of government**
  - ✓ assuming that they should **emphasize substance and wisdom of policies** rather than procedural issues such as public debate, consultation, participation and criticism
  - ✓ **one person** with strength, wisdom, knowledge, and, above all, power can make good decisions **than participatory decision making**

### Note

- foreign policy decision is **not necessarily a clear-cut and rational process**, Policies are often generated through great internal political and bureaucratic debates

### criteria used in defining national interest

#### 1. Operational Philosophy

- Depending on **time, location**, your **orientation toward the world** around you, and in particular the action of your predecessors, you may choose one of two major style of operation
  - **act in a bold and sweeping fashion/ synoptic orientation**

- ✓ Up on taking office, **introduce major new** practices, policies, and institutions and discontinue
- ✓ **assuming there is enough information** to develop a major policy with some confidence that its consequence can be **predicted or controlled**
- **act in caution, probing, and experimental fashion/ incremental**
  - ✓ following the **trial and error approach**
  - ✓ assuming **complexity of political and economic problems and worrying about their consequence**
  - ✓ seeks to **perfect existing** legislations, policies, institutions and practices

## 2. Ideological Criteria

- identify their friends or enemies countries using the **litmus test of ideology**
- Example: During cold war, the **ideology of communism and capitalism**

## 3. Moral and Legal Criteria

- act **morally**
- moral behavior, in international politics involves
  - ✓ **keeping your promise** –treaties
  - ✓ **living and letting others live** (the poor and the disadvantaged)
  - ✓ **avoiding exploitation and uneven development** between the developing countries and the developed ones

- Generally **standing up for the principles** to which you are morally committed and that are widely accepted in your culture

#### 4. Pragmatic Criteria

- **orientation is low key, matter of fact**, not on emotions and professions
- look at issues and events around you and the world **with sense of prudence and with sort of rationality**
- Act on the basis of the **scientific analysis of cost and benefit or merit and demerit** to your country interest
- **without considering normative issues**, issues that involves judgment, be it bad or good

#### 5. Professional Advancement Criteria

- consideration of your **professional survival and growth**, in short your **personal success**
- leaders might choose conformity to either to popular pressure or to strong elites whose support they consider indispensable for their political survival
- This attitude has been referred to cynically as the “**go along to get along effect**”

#### 6. Partisan Criteria

- equate the survival and the success of **your political party**, or **ethnic or religious origin** with the survival and success of your country

- equate the interest of **your organization** (the army, the foreign office, and so forth) with the national interest

## 7. Foreign Dependency Criteria

- usually applies to **less developing countries**, who had **fallen under the yoke of colonialism**, and now, even after political independence, kept the colonial ties with their ex-masters intact
- **dependent on their ex-colonial states** for technical aid, expertise and technology, sometimes even for their security
- As a result of this state of dependency, the less developing countries face **difficulties to defend and promote their national interest**

### Views on determination of national interest

#### A. Realist view

- ✓ **prioritize pragmatic criteria** when defining national interest and employing foreign policy
- ✓ defines national interest in terms of **pursuits of power**
  - **power** is about establishing control or influencing the behaviors of others, either diplomatically or use of coercion
- ✓ International politics is a struggle among states and thus **the prime interest of state is survival and security among other things**
- ✓ national interest - **ensuring survival and security of a state, than talking about justice and morality**

- ✓ Leaders must be aware of that **scope of national interest** and their foreign policy should be **proportional to their capabilities**
  - prudence should be the virtue of leaders
  - **Prudence** is the ability to assess one's needs and aspirations while carefully balancing them against the needs and aspirations of others

### **B. Idealists view**

- ✓ strong belief in the relevance of **legal, ideological and moral elements**
- ✓ They **don't see legal and moral factors apart from the so called "reality"**
- ✓ specific actions and objective of foreign policy have often been derived from **general moral and legal guidelines and principles** etc.

### **Note**

- **Realists fail to recognize and prescribe solutions for addressing global problems** because of the exclusive emphasis given to state and national interest
- **Idealists believe on the prevalence of common problems of human beings** as environmental pollution, ecological imbalance, depletion of resource
  - ❖ **The establishment of new institutions with global orientation may play vital role** in addressing global problems, instead of the state-centric

particularism, States could no longer be viable actors in addressing cross-cutting problems by themselves

## 2.2. Understanding Foreign Policy and Foreign Policy Behaviors

### 2.2.1. Defining Foreign Policy

#### Foreign policy

- ✓ It is **something that a state would like to achieve** in its external relations with others
- ✓ It involves the **general purposes** and **specific strategies** a state employs to achieve or promote its national interest
- ✓ According to Rochester, foreign policy refers to
  - the **set of priorities and percepts** established by national leaders to **serve as guidelines** for choosing among various courses of action in specific situations in international affairs
- ✓ These objectives, **visions and goals state aspire to achieve** is commonly referred as national interest
  - All states would like to promote their national interest as their capability or power allows them to do
  - **scope and content of foreign policy of a state is often determined by the capabilities** of the concerned state



- ✓ **minimum goal a state would like to achieve is survival** - protect their physical, political, and cultural identities against any encroachment by other states
- ✓ Foreign policy also involves **specific instruments and tactics** that must be employed to realize those objectives and goals. The most widely employed **instruments** include
  - diplomatic bargaining
  - economic instruments
  - propaganda
  - terrorism (sabotage)
  - use of force (war)
  - ❖ Each instrument is used to **affect** the behaviors of other states, and **has an element of power**
- ✓ **Diplomacy** - states attempt to affect the behavior of others through bargaining that involves **less element of power** as compared to other instruments

### 2.2.2. Foreign Policy Objectives

- Foreign policy, just like any policy, sets **short term, middle term and long term goals and objectives** to be achieved in proportion to a state's capability
- Such classifications of foreign policy objectives is **based on the combination of the three criteria**

- the **value** placed on the objective
- the **time** element placed on its achievement
- the kind of **demands** the objective imposes on other states in international system
- the foreign policy objectives of states categorizes in to three
  - 1. **Core Interests and Values (Short Range Objectives)**
    - those kinds of goals for which most people are willing to make ultimate sacrifices
    - stated in the form of **basic principles of foreign policy** and become article of faith that society **accepts without any questioning it**
    - related to the **self preservation** of political and economic systems, the people and its culture, and the territorial integrity of a state
      - ✓ **core interests and values**, is to ensure the **sovereignty** and **independence**
    - **others goals cannot be realized if the existence of the state and its political units are not ensured**
    - The exact definition of core value or interest in any given country depends on the attitudes of those who make foreign policy
      - Some governments place great values on controlling or defending neighboring territories

- ✓ **Extraterritoriality** - when the national interest and claims of a country is projected **beyond the limit of its geographic boundary**. Example: Israel and the United States
- States may think that their national interest is at risk when the interests and security of citizens, or kin ethnic or religious groups living in the **neighboring states and other states are threatened**
  - ✓ So, liberating or protecting the interests of such individuals and groups might be considered as part of its core national interest

## 2. Middle Range Objectives

- Unlike, the short range objective, the middle range objectives drastically varies across states, **due to** difference in the level of economic and technological progress, as well as the military capability
- Yet, **bottom point** that a state would like to achieve in its medium term is
  - to take a course of actions that have the **highest impact on the domestic economic and welfare** needs and expectation
- **Social welfare and economic development, ca not be achieved through self-help**, as most states have only limited resources, administrative services, and technical skills.

- ✓ **Interdependence** means that to satisfy domestic needs and aspirations, states would have to interact with others
- ✓ Trade, foreign aid, access to communication facilities, sources of supply, and foreign market are for most states necessary for increasing social welfare

### 3. Long- Range Objectives

- Long range goals are those plans, dreams, and visions concerning the ultimate political or ideological organization of the international system, and rules governing relations in that system

Note: In pressing for middle range goals , states make particular demands against particular interest

- in pursuing long range goals, states normally make **universal demands, for their purpose is no less than to reconstruct an entire international system** according to a universally applicable plan or vision
- long range visions and dreams may have **international repercussions** as far as they are complemented by the capabilities and powers
- Every country has its own visions and ambition proportional to its relative strength and capabilities to be realized in the long run

### 2.2.3. Foreign Policy Behavior: Patterns and Trends

- **Foreign policy behavior** refers to the **actions states take** towards each other
  - ✓ these actions usually **are not as ends in themselves, but are tied in some way with larger purposes**, from long range objectives to short term objectives
- **all foreign policy behavior ultimately boils down to three possible pattern**
  - 1) self-preservation (maintaining the status quo)**
    - **maintaining** the status quo/ the existing reality **for one own benefit**
    - **Example: USA**
      - ✓ international institutions (IMF, World Bank, GATT/WTO) that were established following Second World War have been strongly shaped by United States
      - ✓ underlying philosophy of such institutions, and even the decision making procedures are all shaped to serve the global interests of the country
      - ✓ These days U.S has become the sole defender of the international system and the liberal economic-political order
  - 2) self-extension (revising the status quo in one's own favor)**
    - **Changing** the reality **for one own benefit**

- Newly emerging powers such as China, India, Brazil, Germany and others are competing to **restructure** the international institutions and different regimes so as to **create enabling environment** to **promote their national interest**

### 3) self-abnegation (revising the status quo in some else's favor)

- reflects the foreign policy trends that are being **displayed in Less Developing Countries**
- Such countries may succumb to such challenges and **compromise its long lasting national interest for temporary and immediate benefits**

#### 2.2.4. Foreign Policy Dimensions

- behavior can change over time and with different style of leaderships and circumstances

- **There are three Foreign Policy Dimensions**

##### I. Alignment

- **alignment tendencies** - whether national leaders choose to ally with certain countries or to remain neutral
- A country's alignment behavior can vary from time to time during its history in response to changing circumstances and policy decisions
- alignment tendencies classified in to three

##### A. Alliances

- ✓ formal **agreements** to provide mutual military assistance

- ✓ Allied countries can pool their military resources, acquire access to foreign bases and stake out territories that enemies are on notice
- ✓ alliance state also risks interference by allies in its domestic affairs, the possibility being dragged

### B. Neutrality

- ✓ stance of formal **non partisanship** in world affairs
- ✓ **keeping a low profile, neutrals** may avoid some of the problems associated with alliances, particularly the generating of potential enemies and counter alliances
- ✓ **Example: Switzerland** - neutrality to an extreme case in refusing membership to United Nations till 2002

### C. Nonalignment

- ✓ foreign policy pattern of most **developing state during cold war**
- ✓ movement-Non Alignment Movement (NAM) in which they called for a new foreign policy path/choice/ to be followed disregarding the both the West and East bloc politics and alliances
- ✓ Although that was practically impossible, NAM had noble agenda that called for the South-south cooperation

## II. Scope

- Refers the scope of a country's activities and interests
- There are three kind of actors regarding scope
  1. **Global actors** – act in Global terms
    - interacting regularly with countries in nearly **every region of the world**
    - Example: USA, China
  2. **regional actors** – Act in regional terms
    - interacting primarily **with neighboring states in the same geographical area** except for contacts, frequently concerning economic issues such as trade
    - Example:
      - ✓ **South Africa** - in Africa in general and in Southern Africa in Particular
      - ✓ **India** - in South Asian region
  3. **Isolationism**
    - scope of a country's foreign policy to become **so narrow** that isolationism
    - Result by Some moments in history, such as **key weakness or geographic remoteness**
    - Few countries have ever been totally cut off from the outside world



- in an age of interdependence, isolationism becomes an increasingly **less viable foreign policy orientation**
- Example: Burma in 1960 and 70s,

### III. Mode of Operation/ “Modus Opernadi”

✓ the method of operation to address different issues

#### ➤ Multilateral means

- ✓ greater its tendency to seek solutions to problems through diplomatic forums in which **several states participate, such as the United Nations**, rather than utilizing purely bilateral, country to country approaches
- ✓ **Most developing countries** used the multilateral approaches because
  - multilateral forum would **enhance collective barraging power** of these countries vis-a-vis other developed countries
  - **establishing bilateral relations** (establishing Embassies and assigning diplomatic staffs) are often found to be **costly**
- ✓ **Regardless of the power and capability question**, countries may opt to use multilateral frameworks as the best strategy to address issues. Example: Germany, Scandinavian countries

#### ➤ Unilateral means

- ✓ They play the **carrot and stick diplomacy** to affect the outcomes of events or influence the behaviors of others
  - like **Intervention, threat of use of force** and some time, use of force
- ✓ The **more unilateral a state** is the more likely to **initiate actions in international relations or to resist initiatives taken by others**

## 2.2.5. Instruments of Foreign Policy

### 1. Diplomacy

- **Diplomacy** - process between actors (diplomats, usually representing a state) who exist within a system (international relations) and engage in private and public dialogue
  - ✓ diplomacy can promote exchanges that enhance trade, culture, wealth and knowledge
- **Diplomacy is not foreign policy but part of foreign policy**
- state's foreign policy has two key ingredients; its actions and its strategies for achieving its goals
  - The interaction one state has with another is considered the act of its foreign policy. This act typically takes place via interactions between government personnel through diplomacy

- Diplomacy is a **complex game of maneuver** in which the **goal is to influence the behaviors of others in ones interest**

#### Past democracy

- practiced in **formalistic** and somewhat **rigid manner** that was limited to the **bilateral** relations of countries

#### Now days democracy

- **involves powerful actors that are not states** like international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and international governmental organizations (IGOs), These actors regularly partake in areas of diplomacy and often materially shape outcomes.
- There arose **multilateral diplomacy, public diplomacy, leader-to-leader (summitry diplomacy)** in sharp contrast to secret diplomacy and bilateral diplomacy.
- The **essence** of diplomacy is **bargaining**
  - a means of settling differences over priorities between contestants through an **exchange of proposals** for **mutually acceptable solutions**
  - Diplomatic bargaining is used primarily to reach agreements, compromises, and settlements where governments objectives conflict

- The attempt to change the policies, actions, attitudes and objectives of other government and their diplomats by persuasion, offering rewards, exchange concessions, or making threats
  - ✓ Thus, like any foreign policy instruments, **diplomatic bargaining also espouses an element of power or influence**
- **Rules of Effective Diplomacy**
  - **Be realistic** - have goals **that much your ability** to achieve them
  - **Be careful about what you say** - **plans out** and **weighs** words carefully
  - **Seek common ground** - maintain a degree of **flexibility**
  - **Understand the other side** - Like appreciate an opponent's perspective even if you do not agree with it
  - **Be patient** - Being overly anxious can lead to concessions that are unwise and may convey weakness to an opponent
  - **Leave avenues of retreat open** - it is important to leave yourself and your opponent an "**Out**"
- In general, states make considerable use of what are known to be "**carrot and stick**" approaches
  - **stick approach**
    - ✓ **Threats** - involve hypothetical action
    - ✓ **Punishment** involve - area action
  - **carrot approach**

- ✓ **Promise** - is hypothetical action, aims at influencing the behaviors based on the future hope of giving something
- ✓ **Reward** - is a promise in action

## 2. Economic

- modern states rely up on each other for resources and commodities that enable them to develop and sustain viable economies
- degree of dependence and interdependence varies across states
- states often **uses their economic muscle to influence the behavior (action, perception and role) of others**
  - ✓ States may reward or punish states through the manipulation of economic policies
- economic, particularly trade instruments of foreign policy are normally used for three purposes, namely
  1. to achieve any foreign policy objective
  2. to increase a state's capability or deprive a potential enemy's capabilities
  3. to create economic satellites (guaranteed markets and resources of supply)
- When rewards are offered or economic punishment are threatened, at least two conditions must be fulfilled to make the exercise of influence effective

- the target of the influence or act must **perceive** that **there is a genuine need** for the reward or for the avoidance of the punishment
- **no alternative market or source of supply must be easily available** to the target

- **Techniques of economic reward and punishment**

- 1. Tariff**

- Almost all foreign made products coming into a country are **taxed** for the purpose of raising revenue, protecting domestic producers from foreign competition, or other domestic economic reasons
    - tariff structure can be used effectively as an inducement or punishment

- 2. Quota**

- To **control** imports of some commodities
    - supplier usually sends his goods into the country at a favorable price, but is **allowed to sell only a certain amount** in a given time period

- 3. Boycott**

- **eliminates** the import of either a specific commodity or the total range of export products sold by the country against which the boycott is organized

- 4. Embargo**

- to **deprive another country of goods prohibits its own business men from concluding its transactions** with commercial organization in the country against which the embargo is organized
- An embargo may be enforced either on specific category of goods or on the total range of goods that private businessmen normally send to the country being punished

## 5. Loans, Credits and Currency Manipulations

- Rewards may include **favorable tariff rates and quotas, granting loans** (favorable reward offered by the major powers to developing countries) or **extending credits**
- The choice of a technique or combinations of techniques to be used will be influenced by
  - ✓ the goals being pursued
  - ✓ the type of economic sensitivity & vulnerability

## 6. Foreign Aid

- **transfer** of money, goods, or technical advice from donor to recipient
- There are main type of aid program including, **military aid, technical assistance, grants** and **commodity import program**, and **development loans**
- **Note**
  - Most aid programs are obviously **not undertaken solely for humanitarian purpose**

- vast portion of the aid goes to a few countries-and sometimes not the countries with the most pressing needs Because their **strategic and symbolic importance in world politics**
- **Donors can easily manipulate economic and military aid program to change the internal and external policies of a government**

## 7. Military Aid

- probably the **oldest type of aid** which had been used for **buttressing alliances**
- In this aid scheme, the donors supply money and material, while the recipient provided most of the man power
- By helping recipients build up modern forces, the **donors hope to obtain some immediate political or security objective**
- military aid is used **to create local power balances** or preponderances, thus **reducing the likelihood that the donor will have to station troops abroad or intervene militarily to protect its interests**

## 2.3. Overview of Foreign Policy of Ethiopia