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Diplomatic negotiation : essence and evolution

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Citation

Meerts, P. W. (2014, November 4). *Diplomatic negotiation : essence and evolution*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/29596>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

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Title: Diplomatic negotiation : essence and evolution

Issue Date: 2014-11-04

Propositions of the dissertation

Diplomatic Negotiation – Essence and Evolution

1. Trust is the key to starting and concluding a negotiation process between sovereign states. People can build trust among each other; countries cannot. Therefore, lack of trust will have to be compensated by mutual control.
2. The stronger the international organization of diplomatic negotiation, the more likely it is to assure outcomes, but the more complex the negotiation process. Interpersonal relationships and informality are indispensable for managing complexity, even though they diminish transparency.
3. Secrecy and room for manoeuvre of diplomats have been important assets of successful diplomatic negotiation. Politicization, democracy and technology complicate the process, but they enhance implementation.
4. Negotiators from cultures where bargaining is part of daily life are not necessarily effective diplomatic negotiators, since in diplomacy the honour and prestige of the country are at stake. Negotiation is to give something in order to get something. As conceding might be viewed as losing, these negotiators will not be winning.
5. The aim of negotiation research is to explain the outcome by analyzing the process. This aim can never be fully reached because of the many factors involved in that process, foremost the human factor.
6. There is no real difference between human behaviour in real life and in simulation. Simulation is therefore an essential tool in practice and in academia.
7. It is difficult to understand the significance of international law for international relations if one does not study the way in which it has been politically reached.
8. Globalization creates interdependency, which multiplies the number of frictions and thereby the need for dialogue.
9. The European Union is first of all a process bringing the people of Europe together, helping them to digest the traumas of the past. As long as the past overshadows the present, it will not be possible to build a peaceful future.
10. Publications about the origins of Israel's population wrongly ignore the academic presumption that a substantial number of Israelis are of Turkic origin, as during the ninth century the elite and a substantial part of the population of the Khaganate of Khazaria in Ukraine and southern Russia converted to Judaism, and many Jews from that area migrated to the state of Israel.
11. During the period from 1815 to 1830, Dutch and 'Belgian' parliamentarians reached an average age of 73 years. The life expectancy of the population at the beginning of the nineteenth century was half that of their parliamentarians. Nothing could better illustrate the cleavage between the political class and the population at large at that time, nor the importance of wealth for health.
12. Think tanks are cheaper than tanks.