



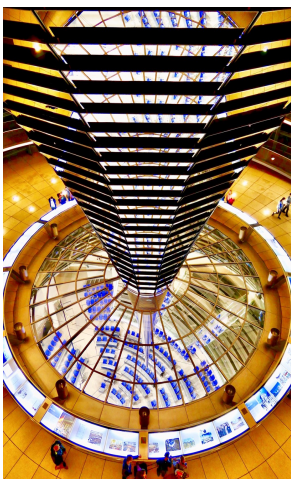
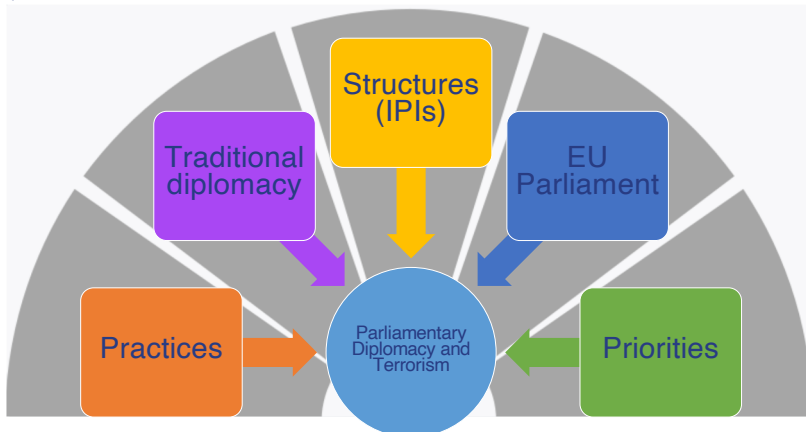
What is the role of parliamentary diplomacy in advocating for an issue of global relevance such as international terrorism?

Background

As new forms of diplomacy acquire relevance in the contemporary international system, the interaction of parliamentarians at the international level deserves special attention. Parliamentary diplomacy is a practice that increased over time to facilitate mutual understanding among countries, foster dialogue in institutionalized forums and improve the democratic legitimization of international society. Parliamentarians can raise attention to issues of global relevance. One of the major topics of their discussions has been countering and preventing terrorism, a phenomenon that has important implications for both state security and the citizens' well-being.

Having a strong international nature, terrorism has, over time, reduced the distance between internal security and safety mechanisms and the international activity of states. Furthermore, the whole-of-society approach to preventing and fighting terrorism entrusts parliaments with a central role. They are bridge-makers between society and the state, and at the international level, they regularly meet, exchange, and deliberate in institutionalized frameworks.

As the role of parliamentary diplomacy becomes increasingly relevant, existing inter-parliamentary associations and organizations (IPIs) include terrorism as an important pillar in their strategies and in some cases create permanent dedicated structures.



Definitions and delimitations

Parliamentary diplomacy

An institutional, non-governmental diplomatic practice performed by parliamentarians, either at the sectorial or geographical level, to enhance dialogue, and cooperation and promote best practices; usually taking place at the multilateral level, within inter-parliamentary structures.

Issues of global relevance

Matters of importance that necessitate a transnational coordinated and collective effort to be solved. These issues are, by nature, pressing and urgent and affect human security and well-being.

International terrorism

Although a universally agreed definition of terrorism does not exist, for the research, the concept of 'terrorism' will be referred to as a particular type of political violence carried out by non-state actors that set the objective to create a psychological impact beyond the act itself.

International Parliamentary Institutions (IPIs)

Building on previous definitions (Kleibes, Cutler, Šabić, Stavridis and Jančić), the study defines IPIs as structured and institutionalized bodies that facilitate dialogue, cooperation, and initiatives carried out by parliamentarians at international level. IPIs are either attached to the work of an Intergovernmental organization or fully independent. IPIs normally possess international legal personality and have some form of international recognition, such as the observer's status at the UN General Assembly.

Delimitations

- Focus on multilateral diplomacy within IPIs and not within privately run platforms.
- For the European Parliament: focus on practices, policies and decisions with an external effect.

Main References:

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Going in depth: Sub-questions

- How can practice theory explain parliamentary diplomacy at the international multilateral level when discussing terrorism prevention?
- How does parliamentary diplomacy differ from traditional diplomacy in raising issues of global relevance, such as terrorism? How do they relate?
- What is the role of International Parliamentary Institutions (IPIs) in raising issues of global relevance? To what extent do parliamentarians create a counter-terrorism community beyond these structures?
- How does the European Parliament address the issue of terrorism beyond the EU?
- To what extent do the priority areas discussed and deliberated in the field of international terrorism respond to the role of parliamentarians as moral tribunals?

Hypotheses

1. Practice theory can help explain parliamentary diplomacy by identifying typical practices that are unique to parliamentarians acting at international level, such as transposing national parliamentary practice to the international level, by informally addressing relevant issues, deliberating to influence other actors and enabling agendas on matters of international relevance.
2. Parliamentary diplomacy differs from traditional diplomacy by its different nature - transparent, democratic, informal - , practices - parliamentary rather than governmental - , mandate -complimentary and parallel to traditional diplomacy - and objective - influence and soft power rather than national interest - .
3. IPIs provide a platform - or many - for parliamentarians to raise awareness on issues of global relevance. Although they present different objectives and mandates, the repeated exchange of parliamentarians around a topic of global relevance create a community that transcends these structures.
4. Despite the limited capacity and powers conferred to the European Parliament by the treaties, in the field of external relations, the European Parliament can adopt impactful positions in countering and preventing terrorism on concrete political issues that have consequences beyond the EU.
5. Parliamentarians tend to raise issues that are in line with the existing strategies agreed upon by inter-governmental organizations that reinforce the role of parliaments as moral tribunals and that are relevant to contemporary international society.



Methodology

Currently mapping research in the field and engaging in occasional scoping interviews with practitioners and researchers.

The study will apply qualitative analysis mainly through interviews, observation, and document review.

The research will include analysis of existing academic literature, official documentation from the internet and archives (approved resolutions, policy papers, activities reports), qualitative interviews with selected parliamentarians and officials, and participant observation of parliamentarians' meetings and conferences within IPIs.

During the first phase, I will investigate existing academic work, grey literature produced by IPIs and other international organizations and official documents to identify and select the most relevant cases to be analysed. Following the preliminary phase, interviews will be carried out with parliamentarians and civil servants.

To address the research questions, I will explore how parliamentarians work and interact at the international level, how their negotiating stances are formed and how parliamentarians understand their international role. This foresees an exchange of perceptions, personal opinions and experiences that make the qualitative approach more appropriate. Another important element behind qualitative interviews is the possibility to remain flexible. As interviews progress, findings and new evidence might change initial hypotheses and drive the course of further interviews.