

# **Parliamentary Diplomacy: Its Evolution and Role in International Relations**

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## **Abstract**

This paper tries to examine the role and position of parliamentary diplomacy in today's international relations with a brief review of the history of diplomacy, its evolution in the span of time, and the formation of new types of diplomacy. The paper also seeks to answer questions about the role of parliaments in today's international relations as well as the position of parliamentary diplomacy within the framework of regional and international cooperation. However, it is generally opined that parliamentary diplomacy is not competing with traditional state-oriented diplomacy as parallel diplomacy. Rather, by emphasizing the continuation of the Westphalian model of nation-states in today's international system, it serves as a complementary tool to state diplomacy in favor of securing the national interests of countries.

**Keywords:** Parliamentary Diplomacy, Parliamentary Organization, Multilateral Organizations, Parallel Diplomacy, Complementary Diplomacy.

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## **Introduction**

The increasing role of parliaments in international relations characterized by prominent feature of parliamentary diplomacy has led to the emergence of a phenomenon with tangible influence across the world. Parliamentarians are becoming more interested and involved in foreign affairs; a policy usually reserved for national executives and traditional diplomacy. Parliamentary diplomacy is not only a complement to the existing diplomatic channels, but also it reflects specific characteristics that are considered to be among the peculiarities attributable to the parliamentary composition and organization. Unlike national governments, parliaments and parliamentarians represent different political positions, thus guaranteeing national and regional political pluralism. As a result, some parliamentary discourses will differ from those of their national governments. In addition, parliaments can act as moral tribunes on international and regional politics in defense of shared values such as respect for human rights and democracy.

Today, Members of parliaments participate in international relations not only through official institutions, but also through informal transnational networks. As a result, much of their activities have shifted from formal parliamentary functions to less conventional tasks, including complementary diplomatic relations (known as parliamentary diplomacy). Accordingly, daily interest in the study of parliamentary diplomacy is steadily increasing. In recent years, significant articles and

commentaries have been published which have duly analyzed parliamentary diplomacy.

Early works including Klebes (1988) and Kuper (1991) only offer some preliminary definitions and descriptions. More recent differentiated typologies, functions, and conclusions concerning International Parliamentary Institutions (IPIs) can be found in Cutler (2001), Sabic (2008), and Cofelice (2012). The last begins to further discuss definitional and conceptual problems such as typologies, and develops hypotheses concerned with the empowerment of IPIs vis-à-vis their affiliated regional organizations by focusing on ten globally spread cases. Most recent works include Costa et al. (2013) who provide a research agenda framed in terms of globalization and regionalization as well as an in-depth analysis of several types of IPIs ranging from supranational parliaments to inter-regional institutions. Furthermore, Cutler (2013) links the current research program on IPIs to organizational understandings of ROs, which provides fertile grounds for further research on the interplay between RPIs and their regional environment (Giesen, 2017, p. 7). For example, the book *Parliamentary Diplomacy in the Governance of Europe and the World*, edited by Stelios Stavridis and Davor Jančić, examines the role and performance of parliamentary diplomacy in regional and global governance both on a theoretical level and on a practical and comparative level (Stavridis, 2017).

Authors of the articles are both people who directly participate in interparliamentary dialogues (members of parliaments, officials of interparliamentary organizations, etc.) and experts who have looked into the issue from outside. Apart from the introduction, the Article also analyses some other issues, including diplomacy in the passage of history, definition of parliamentary diplomacy, the goals of parliamentary diplomacy, the evolution of parliamentary diplomacy from

different angles and various aspects of the role of parliamentary diplomacy. Finally, while the perspective of parliamentary diplomacy is concerned, final remarks are presented. The method applied in this research is descriptive-analytical using library resources.

## **I- History of Diplomacy**

The term and meaning of diplomacy have changed in different times and contexts, from ancient Greece and the Roman Empire in the West to ancient China and Persian Empire in the East, but the key elements of this concept have been preserved until now. There are dozens of definitions for diplomacy. Each one expresses a facet of its aspects and dimensions. What has been the common denominator of this definition in the transition of time until the last century is "the management and leadership of relations between countries by official representatives" and in recent centuries, their "relations among them". The executors of the classic concept of diplomacy or traditional diplomacy, i.e, diplomats try to secure the national interests of their respective governments through communication with representatives or official agencies of other governments. In the last two centuries, the conceptual evolution of diplomacy has accelerated. At this stage, effort is made to review evolution of the concept of diplomacy and its functions throughout history.

Diplomacy has its roots in the Greek word diploma, which means a double document, letter of recommendation or transfer of license or privilege. Historically, the origin of diplomacy dates back to the earliest decisions taken by human societies to reach an understanding with their neighbors about the limits of their hunting territories and the boundaries of their identities through interaction and reaction to each other. Like other human customs, diplomatic practices had to be invented and

thus, was not necessarily a common tradition among all peoples. Although early diplomatic exchanges allowed for some basic rules of representation, communication, and conflict management, they did not lead to the creation of any permanent institutions. At this time, diplomatic interaction was not frequent or important enough, and thus lacked the necessary incentives to develop complex institutional relationships. Since the 3rd millennium BC—the period in which international relations and diplomacy emerged in their present form—the development of diplomatic practice around the world has been marked by a lack of uniformity. Different regions of the world have had and still have different perceptions of the role of diplomats in their governance systems. Therefore, the goals, methods used, responsibilities, influence and power of diplomats have been very different and diverse (Bjola, 2018, p. 13).

The international relations system of the 21st century with multi-dimensional diplomacy includes many actors from governmental to non-governmental. The importance of new forms of diplomacy, such as parliamentary diplomacy, reflects changes in the international diplomatic environment, which requires facilitation of relationship management by other actors, such as parliaments, alongside the government actors.

Parliaments are institutions that serve as the mainstay and centerpiece for dialogue. Members of parliament deliberate, discuss legislative proposals and monitor the work of governments through questions. They may also be places where governments explain and justify their policies. Their main responsibilities include drafting and reviewing laws. The parliamentary system also refers to the distribution of power and responsibility in each country.

Adoption of diplomatic approaches in parliamentary affairs provides a good opportunity for members of parliament to

create networks between foreign counterparts, exchange policies and legislative procedures, and improve the structure of their performance. Basically, parliament is the place to protect the interests of the people, where it can act as the voice of the people and the interests of the people both inside the country and abroad at the international level.

## **II- Parliamentary Diplomacy**

To give a precise definition of parliamentary diplomacy, other theoretical explanations should be used instead of defining traditional diplomacy. Scholars of diplomatic studies and political representatives who are familiar with parliamentary affairs and relations refer to parliamentary diplomacy as the development of traditional diplomacy. According to them, parliamentary diplomacy is a set of international diplomatic activities that are carried out by members of parliaments through their committees in order to establish or strengthen the existing relations with other foreign parliaments (Chaitep, 2013, p. 38).

There are numerous viewpoints on the definition of parliamentary diplomacy. At this stage, it will be difficult to provide a fully developed and broad-based definition of parliamentary diplomacy, because the study of parliamentary diplomacy is relatively new and the existing research on this dimension of diplomacy is limited. It can be said that parliamentary diplomacy is actually similar in nature to traditional diplomacy. The only distinct difference lies in the nature of the actors who perform diplomatic procedures. As a result, interpretation of the term is based on the relevant sources and nature of the parliamentary diplomacy procedure depending on the international diplomatic duties of the parliamentarians.

Parliamentary diplomacy is defined as follows: A full range of international activities that are adopted by parliamentarians to increase mutual understanding between countries; Help each other in improving the control of governments and the representation of people; and increase the democratic legitimacy of intergovernmental institutions (Mudyadzo, 2016, p. 3).

It is also defined as a tool used by two or more parliaments to discuss important international issues. The mentioned definitions specify acceptance and recognition of the role of parliaments in inter-state relations. It is through parliamentary diplomacy that national parliaments discuss the most important political, economic, social and cultural issues (Chaitep, 2013, pp. 36-38).

Parliamentary diplomacy is also a useful tool for promoting bilateral and multilateral friendships and cooperation between like-minded national parliaments and parliamentary institutions. Parliamentary diplomacy has not yet been recognized as an extension or branch of foreign policy in most countries, because some researchers consider it as a medium for improvement of procedural matters in national parliaments.

In the current academic works, a set of definitions for various parliamentary assemblies and networks has been presented. On the other hand, a distinction can be drawn between the networks of parliamentarians and international parliamentary organizations. Since networks bring together parliamentarians as individuals, while international parliamentary institutions bring together institutions, and most research analyses have focused on international parliamentary institutions (Vrieze, 2005, p. 13).

In defining what parliamentary diplomacy means, the Inter-Parliamentary Union provides a useful classification. Parliamentary diplomacy consists of a large number of

activities, including inter-parliamentary cooperation agreements to promote relations between countries, regular meetings between parliamentarians with the aim of resolving conflicts and building trust and exchanging knowledge, creating friendship groups and committees, expertise, acceptance and sending of parliamentary delegations and participation in multilateral inter-parliamentary delegations and conferences. Also, parliamentary diplomacy has been extended to interaction with executive actors. Thus, in a broad sense, parliamentary diplomacy can be defined as the individual or collective actions of parliamentarians with the aim of facilitating and strengthening the existing basic functions of parliaments through peer-to-peer dialogue about numerous political issues of countries in different regions (Stavros's, 2017, p.6).

Parliamentary diplomacy is a relatively new form of diplomacy that has developed in the past decades as a result of the increasing role of national parliaments in international affairs (Wachira, 2017, p. 22). Based on this, parliaments enter diplomacy in three main ways: 1- by influencing foreign policy through parliaments, 2-by establishing parliamentary assemblies as representative bodies of regional and international organizations, and 3-Managing diplomatic relations with the government and other non-governmental actors. *Stavridis* lists various examples of what he calls parliamentary diplomacy:

1. Multilateral activities of international parliamentary organizations,
2. Bilateral parliamentary groups and especially governmental groups,
3. International agreements between parliaments,
4. The activities of parliamentary foreign affairs committees,



5. Plenary sessions dealing with foreign policy questions,
6. Parliamentary participation in the election monitoring process (Stavridis, 2006, p. 7).

According to Daniel Fiott, parliamentary diplomacy is a general definition of the activities of parliamentarians, which aims to increase mutual understanding between countries, help each other improve government control and represent the people. Parliamentary diplomacy can be called legislative diplomacy, because the ability of legislative assemblies to influence the direction and shape of the regional bloc using institutional mechanisms is a binding condition of a treaty. From this definition, it becomes clear that the binding agreement is a legal necessity for effective parliamentary diplomacy. Parliamentary diplomacy is the starting point for discussion on important topics such as development and governance, which promotes bilateral and multilateral relations. This form of diplomacy has a pragmatic and long-term approach to dialogue by building trust and understanding (Wachira, 2017, pp. 23-31).

Parliamentary diplomacy can be understood as a procedure. As a procedure, parliamentary diplomacy is a process in which discussions and decisions are made. Parliamentary diplomacy as a process has characteristics such as the fact that it takes place in an organization with a broad agenda, that public discussion is formed by formal rules and procedures, and that participants have the power to reason and make decisions with the vote that is taken. It is done as a process or method of negotiations in multilateral situations. Parliamentary diplomacy means the work of diplomats in multilateral organizations that make parliamentary diplomacy. In this situation, diplomats represent their respective governments in multilateral assemblies that are considered for parliamentary diplomacy. Another approach to the concept of parliamentary diplomacy considers parliaments

(parliamentary representatives) as actors and agents in international relations, that is, legislative assemblies themselves carry out diplomatic interactions. Some experts consider this approach as a newer phenomenon than parliamentary diplomacy, which refers to a wide range of international activities carried out by parliamentarians in order to increase mutual understanding between countries, help each other in improving government control and people's representation, and increase the democratic legitimacy of intergovernmental institutions. By adopting this approach, Nolas (2011) describes parliamentary diplomacy as "the activities carried out by the parliament in international relations. This is the understanding of parliamentary diplomacy, which is considered by the active attention of parliaments around the world to play a role in the international environment. With the increasing number and diversity of parliamentary actors internationally, following the "third Huntingtonian wave of democratization" and the "flourishing of parliamentary activism in Eastern, Central Europe and Africa "there have been calls for more interaction between MPs (Masters, 2015, p. 76).

Therefore, parliaments are not only involved in foreign policy processes, but also are directly active as participants in international relations. This includes members of parliament as part of national delegations in international negotiations, parliamentary delegations in intergovernmental meetings, parliamentary study groups and research trips, and even establishing parliamentary liaison offices abroad. The Interparliamentary Union also runs some other activities as components of parliamentary diplomacy such as: bilateral cooperation between parliaments, creation of friendship groups, interaction between parliaments in the regions, receiving and dispatching parliamentary delegations, participation in ad hoc activities such as election monitoring or conflict resolution,

meeting with ambassadors, and technical cooperation between parliaments.

Historically, there have been different views about the role of parliaments in international relations. For example, it is said that the nature of international relations requires bypassing the legislature, a point supported by Joseph Frankel with the argument that, in general, inexperienced and nascent parliamentary institutions cannot effectively initiate to act and their participation disrupts diplomacy. Despite the adverse views, parliaments today have a decisive position in international politics (Masters, 2015, p. 77).

*Malamud and Stavridis* have argued that parliaments step into diplomacy or international affairs in three ways, that is, by influencing foreign policy through national parliaments, promoting parallel diplomatic relations with state and non-state actors, and establishing and empowering parliament as the representative bodies of international and regional organizations. Parliament, as one of the three pillars of a state, is an important player in a country's foreign policy, while directly or indirectly entering into international relations issues. Since foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy, therefore, parliament deems it as an inevitable part of its task to play a role in the process of foreign policy through legislation and approval of the policies before they are approved and put into law.

Noulas (2011) mentions that the form of state, either unitary or federal, democratic or dictatorial, determines the nature of parliamentary diplomacy. Accordingly, the nature of parliamentary diplomacy should be in harmony with the existing form of government to ensure that it has a functional cooperative governance of a suitable system. Also, parliaments enter into parliamentary diplomacy in order to deepen the relations with other parliaments and strengthen people-to-

people relations within the context of bilateral and multilateral interaction. Parliamentarians who perform their duties abroad are considered democratic diplomats. The knowledge and insight they gain from performing this task is considered important in scrutinizing the national government's foreign policy processes and improving the management of their constituencies.

Although some experts consider parliamentary diplomacy as a type of parallel diplomacy to the diplomatic activities of the executive branch, parliamentary diplomacy is a type of complementary diplomacy that can act as a useful tool and add value to the government's foreign policy processes. Parliamentary diplomacy helps to scrutinize the foreign policy processes of the country as a way to protect the national interests and to advance concept of the country's foreign policy. Therefore, parliamentary diplomacy does not operate in a vacuum, rather it completes foreign policy goals pursued by the government.

Parliamentary diplomacy is a viable instrument in modern diplomacy where diplomacy has transformed from the traditional form which involved the executive agencies dealing with foreign policy formulation, implementation and evaluation, to involve almost all government agencies and non-state actors. There are many resolutions adopted in parliamentary diplomacy which are aimed at developing the world in one way or the other in areas like climate change, trade, science and technology, peace and security, human rights or sustainable development as a way of improving relations between states. Parliamentary diplomacy has played a key role in resolving some of these challenges working with state and non-state actors. Some critics of parliamentary diplomacy have argued that it is irrelevant and worthless in the modern world to the extent of labelling it ‘‘parliamentary tourism’’. This

negative view of parliamentary diplomacy ignores the positive, complementary role it plays in enhancing a country's foreign policy processes and programs, promotion of international democratic and legal order, and the management of a country's prestige and image abroad. (Mudyadz, 2016, p. 20).

In recent years, transnational parliamentary institutions of all kinds have multiplied in the world. Historically, parliamentary diplomacy began to develop largely during the period followed by 1945, when it was duly decided to help legitimize international relations in general and diplomacy in particular, considering the connectivity with popular governance. There are three main reasons for the expansion of parliamentary diplomacy in the international system after 1945: Strengthening international relations; Democratization around the world; and Technological advances and other similar initiatives.

This process gained more impetus in the last decade of the 20th century after the end of the Cold War and the emergence of economic and political globalization.

In fact, it is possible to draw a distinction between the three types of parliamentary cooperation at the international level: Parliamentary diplomacy; Inter-parliamentary cooperation; and Parliamentary technical cooperation. Based on this, parliamentary diplomacy is considered beyond mere parliamentary cooperation.

As it was mentioned, parliamentary diplomacy has evolved significantly during the second half of the 20th century. In the 1950s, when the term was coined, parliamentary diplomacy was referred to the use of certain parliamentary procedures in intergovernmental negotiations to facilitate classical diplomacy. On the contrary, modern parliamentary diplomacy focuses, *inter alia*, on independent activity of parliaments around the world. It originates from the political practice of parliamentarians and remains largely uncodified in

international and domestic law. Therefore, parliamentary diplomacy, by nature, is mainly political and informal movement. It is also a relatively new phenomenon in both theory and policy. Not long ago, the concept of parliamentary diplomacy was severely contested. However, though it is in its infancy, nevertheless the academic literature in this area is gradually developing. At the same time, many of parliaments today consider this type of diplomacy as a normal activity and an important element of their work. It is claimed that parliamentarians are in an ideal position in their task to build a bridge between conflicting parties and are not bound to adhere to the frameworks designated by the government (Stavridis, 2017, p. 5).

Various activities may be included in the context of parliamentary diplomacy, including:

1. Institutionalized or informal methods through which national parliaments and their members are involved in international affairs and foreign policy. This certainly includes bilateral relations (e.g. friendship groups and exchange of delegations) between parliaments, as well as relations between national parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations.
2. Multilateral activities are at the center of parliamentary diplomacy. Parliamentary diplomacy is more institutionalized than simple parliamentary cooperation. The institutional framework in which multilateral parliamentary diplomacy is mostly applied are international parliamentary institutions (Vrieze, 2005, p. 14).

### **III-Objectives of Parliamentary Diplomacy**

Although parliamentary diplomacy deals with many issues, according to many researchers, one of its most important goals

is to promote participatory democracy and strengthen international peace and security. In this regard, on March 26, 1994, the Inter-Parliamentary Union issued a global parliamentary declaration on international standards for free and fair elections in Paris. Based on this initiative, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and all member parliaments emphasize the values and criteria of free and fair elections and the principles of equality, justice, integrity, freedom and transparency in all electoral processes and consultations in order to establish rights (IPU, 1994).

The growing role of international parliamentary organizations in international affairs is one of the most important features of the huge development of communication tools and technology in the modern era, especially in the 21st century, along with the continuous growth of its role. Accordingly, many parliamentary interfaces at regional, continental and international levels have been created to respond to the requirements of emerging parliamentary concerns regarding international relations, cross-border organizations in terms of geographic composition, comprehensive and even specialized in relation to goals. New working methods were also devised concurrent with the development of institutions and tools, because external dimension was manifested in the process of internal control of economic and social policies, in which cases we can refer to the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Referring to its objectives, despite various advantages of parliamentary diplomacy, international relations experts attach to it the following commonly disadvantages:

1. Parliamentary diplomacy puts governments under direct pressure in front of public opinion, especially in the

negotiation phase, so that it may force them to adopt emotional positions to satisfy public opinion.

2. Parliamentary diplomacy causes continued differences of opinion on issues between the majority and the minority.

Some international relations experts respond to these criticisms:

1. The main pursuit of diplomacy is to defend vital interests of the people. Therefore, the reliance of diplomatic work on public supervision is a positive phenomenon.
2. Ensuring freedom of the press, being attentive to the opposition parties and public opinion when discussing provisions of the treaties to which their subject countries are members and should act in a convincing manner to justify and accept their obligations. These discussions help to adjust contents of the obligations under the concerned according to national interests (Tayie, 2018, p. 171).

#### **IV-Parliamentary Diplomacy In Recent Years**

We are only at the beginning of a long process to define parliamentary diplomacy, its working methods, objectives and impact. In some cases, more study can be done, including what has been the effect of parliamentary exchanges so far and how to be more effective both politically and institutionally. Moreover, there are countless additional questions that need to be addressed. For example, what, if any, relationship should there be between state and parliamentary diplomacy? Can these actually be, if they act in a complementary way, or that in some cases this endangers the role or effectiveness of each? After that, specific suggestions can be made about how MPs can better use diplomatic tools and what they should avoid in the long term (Weisglas, 2007, p. 98). It will also be useful to make a connection between the concept of parliamentary diplomacy



and rather difficult debate about the rationalization of inter-parliamentary cooperation that aims to increase effectiveness and reduce overlap in the work of the growing number of organizations in which parliamentarians negotiate international issues.

Perhaps within a few decades, the term "parliamentary diplomacy" will be as well-known as the concept of state diplomacy today. The future will show. However, study and reflection alone do not lead to public attention or acknowledgment of its relevance. Therefore, there is a double challenge: first, the international parliamentary organizations must act more efficiently and prove that democratic institutions are transparent and real. Second, members of the parliament should be ready to explain the relevance of their international work at the national level. Better procedures for translating foreign policy into domestic policy should be considered. In this regard, parliamentarians should look beyond the borders and realize that the outside world is inside (Weisglas, 2007, p. 99).

A number of factors contribute to the effectiveness of parliamentary diplomacy. For example, the size of the parliamentary institution is important. The more MPs there are, the more likely it is that skills and expertise for conflict prevention, mediation and dialogue will be acquired. The financial resources and the institutions at the disposal of the parliament will affect its ability to conduct parliament (that is, the ability to send representatives to a third country), nevertheless smaller parliamentary institutions should not be underestimated. Parliamentarians with high expertise and experience can still be found in smaller parliaments, and a smaller parliament may have added value in interacting with a situation with which it is more concerned and closer (Fiott, 2011, p. 3).

Although international parliamentary organizations were a rare phenomenon before the 1990s, since then international politics has experienced a gradual process of parliamentarization. In fact, one third of international organizations have international parliamentary bodies (Schimmelfenning, 2019, p. 2). While international parliamentary mechanisms have become a widespread feature in the institutional design of international organizations, mainstream theories for their emergence are not convincing. One of the reasons for the establishment of international parliamentary organizations is the effort of member countries to establish the democratic legitimacy of international organizations.

The strategic perspective of the democratic legitimacy of international institutions raises several questions. First, what is the perspective of the process of international parliamentarization due to the strategic reliance of member states on the institutional fit between international parliamentary organizations and the general goal of international organizations? Second, how likely are weak international parliamentary organizations to become more powerful over time, despite the reluctance of member states to delegate significant authority to them? Third, how effective is the creation of international parliamentary organizations in influencing the legal beliefs of citizens (Schimmelfenning, 2019, p. 24).

An analysis suggests that the parliamentarization of international organizations does not follow a linear path, but rather waxes and wanes with regionalism, in the form of a largely state-centered process for building and maintaining institutions. And formal regional organizations are understood with an open political agenda and the goal of community formation (Schimmelfenning, 2019, p. 25). The logic behind

later establishment of international parliamentary organizations was different from the one which led to the establishment of the World Inter-parliamentary Union, instead of creating a network of like-minded activists, the later international parliamentary organizations as proper instruments of the parliament. They seem to monitor the growing activities of governments in international organizations and their foreign policy. Therefore, it is not surprising that many international parliamentary organizations are connected with regional institutions (Wagner, 2017, p. 14). From this angle, the role of an international parliamentary organization depends on the type of international organization that it is a part thereof (Sabic, 1995, p. 2).

Overall, in today's increasingly complex and interdependent world, the role of parliaments remains a relatively understudied research topic. The various models of global governance are mostly influenced by the executive powers of the governments and the parliaments are sidelined. Anne-Marie Slaughter, in her book *A New World Order* (2004), describes the world order as a network of supra-governmental network relations. At the same time, she mentioned the role of parliaments in network globalization. Her analysis came to the conclusion that parliaments do not have the ability and interest to communicate with other parliaments of the world and are basically behind the advanced governmental interactions that effectively shape global governance (Raube, 2019, p. 1). Despite this viewpoint, regional parliaments can be considered as a suitable tool for the development of parliamentary diplomacy and democratization of regional integration, by leading parliamentarians, political parties and finally citizens to discuss regional issues in common (Mariano, 2017, p. 14).

## **V-Parliamentary Diplomacy in Practice:**

Parliamentary diplomacy adds what can be called a democratic perspective to international politics. Parliamentarians usually evaluate international problems in terms of universal values. They promote the discourse of human rights, peace, solidarity and cooperation in the face of global challenges. The evolution of the international activities of parliamentary organizations is a very complex process that makes it difficult to evaluate their effectiveness. The core influence of parliamentary assemblies is revealed with the development of multi-level parliamentarism. International parliamentary organizations that are not established or recognized through an intergovernmental treaty do not have any supervisory, legislative, budgetary or advisory powers. International parliamentary organizations that are independent organizations, although established through intergovernmental treaties, may at best have supervisory or advisory powers.

With the growing importance of regional integration and creation of complex institutions that are supposed to be the site of regional policy-making, concerns have been expressed about the possible effects of such a process on the democratic legitimacy of political decisions. One of the ways to improve this legitimacy has been the creation of integration parliaments, e.g., examples that should ideally represent the interests of citizens at regional level. However, the creation of integration parliaments raises other questions that directly affect the search for legitimacy through improved democratic practices. What powers do different parliaments of integration have? Are their members directly elected or appointed by national parliaments? How are they selected?

In this way, international parliamentary organizations provide moral legitimacy for international decision-making with greater transparency, accountability and participation. They exert public pressure on powerful governments that is

sometimes significant and has real political effects. Furthermore, as institutions consisting of elected representatives who are accountable to their constituents, international parliamentary organizations, in principle, ensure that the people are not ignored and that public participation is guaranteed. Ultimately, they bring the world closer to international decision-making, while at the same time being more aligned to make decisions in the public interest, rather than solely based on national interests. What is to be emphasized is the policy of overcoming international democratic deficit, which is increasing day by day by transferring decisions to other levels of both regional and international sectors. Of course, international parliamentary organizations are not sustainable and are sometimes hampered in their effectiveness through structures that favor boring participatory procedures and debates. Public ignorance of actions and their importance is widespread and makes international parliamentary organizations appear less appropriate than they could be. Also, the amount of information and issues that need to be addressed overextends the capacities of international parliamentary organizations, as is often the case with other public or private institutions.

Issues in today's world increasingly require to be decided at higher levels, while, many at the global level, if expected to achieve effective solutions or regulations. Therefore, regional or subject-oriented integration is progressing. The increasing number of international parliamentary organizations is a proof to this effect that there is a need for exercise of parliamentary control over these regional and global problems. We have entered into a new era; an era of regional cooperation and integration that requires certain degree of parliamentary control, a supranational parliamentary dimension.

Considering the growing popularity and importance of international parliamentary organizations around the world, it is noteworthy that the main international organizations still do not have any official parliamentary bodies, even in a consultative capacity. This is especially true for the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund. Those parliamentary bodies that exist and are associated with the activities of these international organizations, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Conference of the World Trade Organization, or the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank, are unwilling and legally unable to exert any significant influence on the agenda and exercise of their decision-making power, let alone the exercise of formal oversight. This is the case with the United Nations and its vast subsystem of programs, funds, specialized agencies and other related bodies. The establishment of a parliamentary body; a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, is sufficient in itself for international cooperation. It can act as a parliamentary umbrella and thus, even help to overcome the growing discord related to the issues at the global level.

What is the vision for parliamentary diplomacy? Does it have a bright future? Can it be successful in achieving its goals? Extensive research should be done to answer these questions, while limited research has been done on parliamentary diplomacy at the national and international levels. In response to these questions, researchers such as Stavridis (2005) tried to say what role parliamentary diplomacy plays in the international affairs and what the normative consequences of such a phenomenon could be for democracy, diplomacy, policymaking and conflict resolution. Weisglass and Boer (2007) point out that parliamentary diplomacy is actually only in its early stages.

In general, it can be said that the perspective of parliamentary diplomacy depends on whether parliamentarians consider themselves diplomatic actors and how they apply the idea of parliamentary diplomacy in practice. This means that if the representatives and employees of the parliament understand and acknowledge the purpose of diplomatic duties of the parliament, the results will be more successful. On the other hand, if there is only a bureaucratic and administrative approach in performing diplomatic duties and it does not have the necessary strategic depth, in this case, the prospect of parliamentary diplomacy may not be so successful. As researches indicate, the most important fact now is to understand that parliamentary diplomacy is a tool for creating and expanding political identity among the actors who represent their subject institutions (Chaitep, 2013, pp. 82-83).

### **Conclusion:**

since governments are no longer the only actors in the international arena, parliaments and parliamentarians play a role as people's representatives through regional and international parliamentary organizations in the field of international relations. Also, regional and international parliamentary organizations provide moral legitimacy for transnational decision-making procedures. They become the voice of the people, represent common sense and make their practices more transparent, accountable and participatory. Regional and international parliamentary organizations make it possible to use dialogue, parliamentarians in different countries can better understand each other, help each other and show their regional identities and commonalities. Hence, they introduce a democratic and popular element to regional and international governance. In addition, due to the fact that the goal of governmental organizations is to acquire transnational

characteristics and degrees of harmonization of laws and regional integration, parliamentary structures act to facilitate these goals.



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