Summitry: The Ancient And Modern Of Diplomatic Dialogue

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ABSTRACT
The piece defines the concept of summitry under diplomatic and consular law, and also x-rays the historical background and evolution of summitry, dynamics of the concept from antiquities to the modern-day diplomacy, and projects the future roles of summitry in international, regional and national diplomacy. This author argues that the practice of summitry is a critical and indispensable concept in modern diplomacy. The author also juxtaposes and evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of summit-diplomacy. Considering the present prevalence of the adoption of summitry in global, regional and national policy setting, the paper further discusses the forms, benefits and adverse effect(s) of the method, alongside proposed remedial steps. The author finally recommends a firm stand on the viability of summitry.

Keywords: Summitry, Diplomacy, Ancient, Modern and Dialogue

1.0 INTRODUCTION
Over the years, the literature on summitry has focused on a fairly limited number of subjects. One of the top questions confronting scholars has been the definition of the term itself. Summits have generally been defined as meetings of heads of state, but early approaches insisted on power as a central criterion for participation. Although it is difficult to measure the success of summitry, it is easy to see that this form of dialogue has distinct diplomatic functions. The flexibility of the summit is beyond any doubt. For leaders without international experience, it is of educational value. It alerts them to the importance of international issues and provides them with an opportunity to become familiarized with their peers. In contrast, the experienced politician may employ the summit to get a personal impression of counterparts, sound them out or use the occasion of the meeting to ‘fly a kite’. Summits are ideal for private consultation, bypassing multiple bureaucratic layers, and they may take place at any stage of international negotiations. Some summits have performed a pre-negotiation function, whereas others were meant to keep up the momentum of ongoing talks or to confront specialists’ talks with an impending negotiation deadline. While some summits have led to important breakthroughs, others merely rubber-stamped a deal that was in fact concluded at lower levels. The typical summit communiqué is a masterpiece in the art of compromise, with a degree of ambiguity so as to leave room for maneuver, for follow-up talks or the leaders’ post-summit confrontation with their domestic constituency, such as domestication of summit treaties or agreements.

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Summits come in many shapes and sizes, and serial ones seem particularly well suited for purposes of negotiation. Their functionality in the sense that they are driving forward the policy process should not be underestimated. Their broader agenda allows for complicated package deals and at the multilateral level there also seems to be more scope for careful preparation at the highest level. The frequently made claim that the dangers associated with summitry have disappeared in the case of the institutionalized multilateral summit is not corroborated by the crisis atmosphere surrounding a large number of recent meetings. Even if employed judiciously and sagaciously it does not necessarily serve the diplomatic purposes which it is purported to fulfill. The existing literature on summitry perhaps needs supplementing to take in these recent developments.3 Having considered the concept at length, it is hereby submitted that, summitry like the name implies is the act or practice of holding a summit meeting with the aim of carrying out diplomatic negotiations. It can be explained as the coming together of heads of government to hold a conclave with the aim of reaching an agreement on germane national, regional or international issues. The word is often used in other walks of life, especially in business and religious conventions. This paper shall briefly look into the history of the concept of summitry; consider its effectiveness in international diplomacy and shortfalls associated with this method of summit-diplomacy. It will also aim to proffer solutions to the identified problems in summitry.

1.1 THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUMMITRY

It is not easy to see how matters could be worsened by a parley at the summit. Winston Churchill coined the term ‘summit’ in 1950, during some of the darkest days of the Cold War. It is generally agreed that it is part of Winston’s contributions to the diplomatic lexicon.4 In the second half of the twentieth century summit meetings became a central element of international diplomacy - John Kennedy at the end of the 50s: opined that “It is far better that we should meet at the summit than at the brink.” In other words, at the brink of nuclear war, on the edge of the abyss… Professionals in diplomacy happen to hold a different view, some diplomats had during this formative period of the concept of summitry viewed the process with skepticism. For example

Sir Alexander Cadogan, who was Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office in the Second World War was noted to have said that; “It is always the same with these conferences: the great men do not know what they are talking about and have to be educated5.” The prima donnas again to strut their act on the stage, while the diplomats, the people who really know how to handle these things, have to sort out the mess that they create. But there is relatively little reflection about what summit meetings are supposed to achieve or about their costs as well as benefits6. In the fifteenth century a diplomat was noted to have felt so strongly about this form of diplomacy that he exasperated that, ’If great princes have a desire to continue friendship, in my judgement, they ought never to meet.” It is pertinent to note that historically, leaders did not usually engage in direct negotiation; they avoided personal contact, for a variety of reasons. Some of which are; security, on the whole, great princes avoided meeting because of possible dangers to their own security. There was also the issue of status: who goes to whom? If you go to somebody else’s court, almost by definition, you are saying “I am subordinate to you - I am inferior to you.” This is classic example, Canossa in 1077, when the Emperor Henry IV goes to the gates of Canossa, - the Papal Castle, and in a sense, is forced to pay homage to the Pope, Gregory VII. So, security and status were two reasons why you did not meet if you were a leader, and thirdly, bureaucratization. In the sixteenth/seventeenth century, diplomacy becomes bureaucratized. It is left to the diplomats, to the

3 For many examples on differences and misunderstandings between leaders from disparate cultural backgrounds, see Raymond Cohen, Negotiating Across Cultures: Communication Obstacles in International Diplomacy, United States Institute of Peace (Washington DC), 1997.
ambassadors, resident ambassadors in different countries, they were expected to adeptly yet the job done. These were all reasons why statesmen did not meet for much of the early modern period. However, in the 20th century the political leader as a statesman is essentially responsible for the security and welfare of his state. This new era can be traced from the 1930s, from one of the most unlikely or one of the most denigrated Prime Ministers of the twentieth century in Britain, Neville Chamberlain. The fear of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a dictator prompted Chamberlain to visit Hitler at Berchtesgaden, the first of three meetings. It is worth noting, that when Neville Chamberlain went to see Hitler, those three visits in 1938 he was almost 69 years old. He had flown once before but it was only a joyride round an airfield in Birmingham, one loop. This was a very different tiling: four hours in a really rather precarious flight to see the German Dictator, to try and talk man-to-man about the issues of war and peace, because Chamberlain believed that diplomacy now was too important to be left to the diplomats, too important to be left to the diplomats because of the issue of what we would now call weapons of mass destruction7.

It can be stated that modern summity is made possible by air travel, the fact that Chamberlain can fly to Berchtesgaden in four hours. So, it is made possible by air travel; it is made necessary by weapons of mass destruction8.

The Prime Minister was terrified of the unprecedented threat of airborne destruction that makes the English Channel no longer a barrier, in the air age, to the aggressor. For much of British history, the Channel, though it is only twenty miles across, 21 miles wide, is what Shakespeare called our “moat defensive”. It provided a reasonable barrier against aggressor: Philip II of Spain, the Armada, in 1588; Napoleon, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. That is no longer the case in the era of air power. One of the most moving documents of 1938, I think, is the record in the Cabinet Minutes of Neville Chamberlain, after his second visit to Hitler, flying back, as he told his Cabinet colleagues, up the Thames, on a beautiful evening, rather like this one, and looking down over what was then the Docks, over Woolwich and Deptford and the East End, looking at rows upon rows of little terraced houses, and asking himself what he could do to save those people from massive destruction. Note that, in 1938, they imagined bombing is going to have the effect that in the 1960s people thought nuclear war would have: in other words, huge destruction, thousands and thousands and thousands of deaths in the first 24 hours. So, that is a serious issue for a leader. Summity was made necessary by weapons of mass destruction.

In 1961, Kennedy and Khrushchev, we’re the Heads of Government at the heart of the Cold War, at that time it was an issue that was threatening the peace of the world9. In essence modern day summity is made possible by air travel, made necessary by the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and made into household news by the mass media; which can assertively claim to be the third ingredient of twentieth century summity. The media ensures that summits are in the headlines all the time - for meetings of the African Union, European Union, G8 and G20. Today, Summity has become slightly different for a number of reasons, which are similar to those mentioned earlier as the pre-conditions of twentieth century summity. Leaders are now in constant communication; people communicate in all sorts of ways. They do not have to meet face-to-face. They can do it through all the electronic technologies that we now have. The idea of a face-to-face meeting so that leaders can understand each other will still be useful, but it is much less necessary than it was. Secondly, the threats are now much more diversified and thirdly, the media has become much more individualized10. It is noteworthy that in the last few years, summit

7 <www.britannica.com/biography/Neville Chamberlain> accessed 16 October, 2017
Neville Chamberlain: Prime minister of the United Kingdom from May 28, 1937, to May 10, 1940, whose name is certified with the policy of” appeasement”
8 As it is now commonly called, “nuclear weapons”
9 Ironically the same face-off was witnessed between President Donald Trump and Kim Jong Hu, the Supreme Leader of Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea
10 With the advent of social media, everyone has a voice and most recently, heads of government opt to use social media to conduct summity.
diplomacy has become institutionalized. Rather than one-on-one meetings between leaders, we now have institutional summitry. We shall now consider the different types of Summits

1.2 THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS
The failures of the Treaty of Versailles have been comprehensively discussed and this is not the medium to repeat the discussions. But in one area at least it provided the bug of an idea which after a false start would take root. The new diplomacy has, above and beyond its requirement for openness, a yearning for an international organization to settle disputes and deter those who sought to use their will by force. In its faltering steps towards world government (the League of Nations), the Versailles conference changed the nature of diplomacy decisively even if another World War had to intervene before this became apparent. The League of Nations was first proposed—ironically given Britain’s obsession hitherto with balance of power politics—by the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, to President Wilson’s personal adviser, Colonel House, as far back as 1915. Wilson made the idea his own and presented it first in May 1916. It then became one of his Fourteen Points, and Wilson pursued the idea at Versailles with characteristic eloquence and vigor.

But the League was emasculated by the US failure to ratify the Treaty and by the non-participation of Germany (excluded till 1926, and then withdrawing in 1933) and Soviet Russia (which was a member only for the years 1934-9, when it was expelled). Its limitations were demonstrated by its failure to impose sanctions on Japan in 1931 after its invasion of Manchuria, its response to Haile Selassie’s famously pathetic and personal plea to the League for justice and assistance (equally pathetic), and its failure to act when Hitler occupied the Rhineland, in direct contravention of the Versailles Treaty. Collective security, the very purpose of the League, was hopelessly undermined. The failure of the League to prevent the slide into the Second World War as Hitler and Mussolini treated it with rank contempt marked the temporary eclipse of the new diplomacy. The alliances and pacts, the territorial acquisitiveness, and the suppression of self-determination, all features of the old order, returned with a vengeance. Once the war was over, however, there was a clearly recognized need to create a new international organization to replace the League and to be significantly different in its basic design.

1.3 THE COLD WAR, CONTAINMENT, AND DETENTE
The shape of the post-war world was as we know however not set by a world forum but by a series of summit meetings of the three Allied Leaders, Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at Tehran and Yalta and of Truman, Stalin, and Churchill then Attlee at Potsdam. Churchill foresaw that Stalin, the ultimate apostle of Realpolitik would never compromise the Red Army’s gains for abstract principles and proposed instead that each of the Allies should have its sphere of influence. This was anathema to Roosevelt as a return to discredited balance of power and colonial politics which US public opinion would never support. Roosevelt, who famously described the Soviet Leader as having something of a Christian gentleman about him, did not live to see the final unmasking of Stalin’s bad faith as he took as his sphere of influence the whole of Eastern Europe and Germany to the Elbe. Thus, until the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, new and old diplomacy coexisted. East and West were grouped in two mutually antagonistic alliances while a new world body, the United Nations, struggled to fulfill its potential. The West attempted to deal with the Soviet Empire and Communist China by a policy of containment which lasted 40 years. Containment as a policy was first articulated by the American Diplomat, George Kennan. In what became known as the ‘Long Telegram’, Kennan brilliantly analysed Soviet motives and political perspective: they were, he said, an unholy combination of Communist ideology, traditional Russian insecurity, and Tsarist expansionism. To deal with this threat, the West

needed ‘a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world’\textsuperscript{12}. But containment was very much a policy for the long haul, reactive and predicated on the eventual collapse or transformation of the Soviet system. The Communist threat was not of course monolithic. When the US began to take advantage of the ideological split between the two Communist mammoths, the Soviet Union and China, in the early 1970s, President Nixon demonstrated his attachment to old balance of power politics by daringly opening up US contacts with Communist China and providing a triangularity among the three major nuclear powers which had hitherto been absent. At the same time Nixon initiated the policy of \textit{detente} with the Soviet Union. For Kissinger, the architect of this and so many other aspects of Nixon’s foreign policy, ‘detente, desirable though it was, could not replace the overall balance of power’. In other words, it flowed from equilibrium and was not a substitute for it. This Sino-Soviet-US geopolitical triangle with the US in pre-eminent position was, as Otte points out, ‘precisely the kind of policy for which he [Kissinger] had praised Mettemich and Bismarck in his earlier academic writings’. In fact, while Kissinger’s conceptual approach to diplomacy was traditional, his practice was highly innovative. Given the limitations of nineteenth century means of transport, neither Metternich nor Bismarck would have been able to follow Kissinger’s practice of diplomacy even if they had wanted to. But Kissinger’s uses of back-channel and shuttle diplomacy were remarkable. Kissinger as an academic had always been allergic to bureaucracy. His and Nixon’s institution of back-channels, early on in the latter’s presidency, stemmed from the need for secrecy both to prevent their radical foreign policy initiatives being undermined by State Department leaks and to ensure that opposition to his enthusiasm for linkage, negotiating on a broad front, was stymied. Kissinger himself put it more prosaically. His use of back-channels was designed to open up potentially blocked channels without completely sidelining the State Department. Once the back-channels ‘gave hope of specific agreements, the subject was moved to conventional diplomatic channels. If formal negotiations there reached a deadlock, the channel would open up again.’

Kissinger used back-channel or secret diplomacy extensively in his time as US National Security Adviser, initially to implement the policy of detente with the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, Anatoly Dobrynin, through what ‘Kissinger called “the Channel” used over and over again … on every key problem in Soviet-American relations’. Later he used a back-channel with Le Duc Tho of North Vietnam in an attempt to bring the Vietnam War to an end. Kissinger added a new word to the diplomatic lexicon in being an early proponent of shuttle diplomacy, whereby the intermediary in a conflict shuttles backwards and forwards repeatedly between the parties in conflict or in dispute to secure the desired result. Of course, this type of diplomacy is not guaranteed to succeed, as General Alexander Haig found when attempting to mediate between Argentina and Britain during the Falklands War in 1982, but Kissinger’s style and energy often secured results, on occasions because he had worn down the resistance of the opposing sides. As Hamilton and Langhorne put it, ‘his mediation in the wake of the [1973] Yom Kippur War constituted a dazzling display of how modern technology could be harnessed to a diplomacy which was at once spectacular, secret and ministerial\textsuperscript{13}.

### 1.4 MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

Although Kissinger’s theory and practice of diplomacy were highly individualistic and born partly out of impatience with traditional bureaucratic diplomacy, another form of diplomacy has flourished in the post-war period. The multilateral approach has become increasingly common post-1945 but it had its roots in antiquity. In an attempt to stop the feuding and warfare, the principal powers in the Eastern Mediterranean, i.e. the important Greek states and Persia, ‘agreed to convene great international political congresses … to discuss a general settlement of outstanding issues’. This general peace, known as the King’s Peace, involved eight congresses between 392 and 367 BC and ‘not only established a territorial

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\textsuperscript{12} G. W Ball, \textit{Diplomacy for a Crowded World} (Bodley Head: London Publishers 1976).

\textsuperscript{13} Sir Ivor Roberts, “The Development of Modern Diplomacy” International Law Discussion Group, Transcript 23 October 2009. <www.chathamhouse.org.uk> accessed 1\textsuperscript{st} February, 2021
stalemate, with guarantees against an aggressor similar to those which later figured in the Covenant of the League of Nations ... they also agreed on certain general principles ... and on detailed practical rules of conduct for regulating international affairs’. In modern times, large-scale conferences took place infrequently in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Vienna and Berlin being major examples from the nineteenth century).

In the twentieth century, the Versailles conference set a precedent which has been followed ever more frequently since the Second World War despite the view of some sceptics who see such conferences as largely talking shops. (Paul Cambon believed that ‘a conference which includes more than four or five people ... can achieve nothing worthwhile’.) This view has its adherents but there can clearly be advantages to a multilateral conference in terms of efficiency and speed of decision-making. This does not necessarily apply to a standing multilateral conference like the UN or other international organizations which are not time-limited. But a conference will almost certainly be the best forum for decision-making and reaching agreements where it has a deadline, is subject-specific, and/or where technical details are involved and the national experts assembled in one place. Berridge points out that multilateral conferences, particularly major standing ones like the UN, provide an opportunity for principals to meet in the margins to discuss other issues including bilateral ones, a particularly valuable opportunity for those states which have no or very poor diplomatic relations. They can also ‘kick start a series of essentially bilateral negotiations that subsequently develop elsewhere. This was the extremely valuable function performed for the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks by the Geneva Conference of December 1973 and then by the Madrid Conference in October 1991.’ The proliferation of international and regional organizations so prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s (partly a function of the greatly increased number of independent states who saw in these organizations an opportunity for exerting influence) has greatly reduced. But multilateral diplomacy’s advantages will ensure that it survives despite the frequent echoes of its disadvantages that constitute its diplomatic albatross.

1.5 SUMMITRY AND MODERN DIPLOMACY (POST-MODERN BLUES)

Just few weeks go by without the meetings of heads of government. More often than ‘politician-diplomats’ wish to admit, domestic business has to give way to the pre-eminence of international affairs. It is only a domestic emergency that makes leaders cancel an international summit meeting. Until the 1970s most international deliberations were conducted and concluded by diplomats and their foreign ministers, without the need for heads of government or state to give acres de presence at any stage of the talks. Today, the reality is that most political leaders are highly visible and deeply involved in diplomacy and international politics.¹⁴ The practice of summity in the Western world greatly accelerated in the 1980s. More than ten years on, in the post-Cold War environment, there is a lot more traffic on the highway to the summit and multilateral summity has become widespread. Summity breeds summity. There may be many different reasons why politicians decide to go to the summit, and they are not always designed to meet the requirements of international negotiation. Some international organizations have deliberately introduced the summit to raise their public profile, as was the case with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and, in vain, with the little-known Council of Europe.

Wheeling out Prime Ministers and Presidents does not always have the desired effect and may even have a boomerang effect. These types of public relations exercises involve high stakes and one can for instance run the risk of highlighting differences among members on the role and importance of the organization, as was the case with the first post-Cold War summits of the OSCE. Alternatively, the high visibility of summits may underline the feebleness of international organizations, which is not unusual in the Global South. It is hard to note that what has been the positive result or, for that matter, what negative developments have been averted by the heads of governments’ meetings of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives). It is

¹⁴This section is an elaboration of Jan Melissen, Summary at a price A commentary on the study and practice of diplomacy, paper presented at the ‘summitry conference’, Department of International Relations, Boston University, 19-20 March 2002.
equally difficult to advance a solid reason for some African or Latin American summits, or at least a great number of such gatherings, apart from the fact that it is always ‘good to meet’.

Negotiation may in theory be the hard core of summitry, but in practice there may at times be little substance to the negotiations and some summits are predominantly informal encounters. Particularly at bilateral meetings between leaders who have developed a degree of personal acquaintance, the summit may be a useful device for a free-ranging exchange of views that is unconstrained by rigid agendas or bureaucratic routine. There is, for instance, quite a lot of deliberately informal bilateral summitry between the big three in Europe, where particularly Franco-German meetings serve to signal like-mindedness and a joint commitment to other EU members. Some multilateral summits also offer scope for friendly and relaxed get-togethers, bilateral networking and even leisure activities. It is hard to forget the image of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders at their Shanghai meeting in 2001, standing in line for the photo opportunity, wearing the traditional local garment. Informality, however, is the exception at the multilateral level, and most of the time is reserved for bilateral fringe meetings. On the majority of occasions, multilateral summits have a more formal character, with carefully orchestrated closing ceremonies and a considerable degree of pomp and circumstance. As far as such summits are concerned, it is tempting to conclude that, as one of the major rituals of international politics, they have ‘taken over the symbolic and ceremonial domain of diplomacy’. In any case, it can be argued that it is the ceremonial aspect rather than the substance of the negotiation or exchange of views that makes the multilateral summit ‘real’ to the general public.

The age of television has turned out to be a blessing for the summit. The perception of politics and diplomacy in the television age is increasingly defined by what is visible, and leaders are therefore reluctant to give up the trappings of summitry. At one point this development led the British newspaper *The Economist* to lament that normal politics ‘has come increasingly to depend on the person and the office of the Prime Minister - an office from which Mr. Blair is increasingly absent’. Indeed, if the number of summits taking place were an indicator of the popularity of dialogue at the highest level, summitry never had it so good. But this popularity has a price of its own. Most importantly, the burden of summitry falls on the leaders themselves, whose agenda is increasingly crowded with engagements abroad. Frequent foreign trips, engagements and the status that they bestow upon leaders may of course add electoral value, but the absence of the chief executive on the domestic political scene can entail an element of considerable political risk. Various political leaders, among them Richard Nixon and Margaret Thatcher have experienced the loss of critical political support during their absence from home. Summitry can be an energizing experience, away from the daily chores of the highest office, but it can also be a drain on the participants’ energy. The latter was plainly demonstrated at the Nice European Council in 2000, when lengthy and badly chaired meetings between overtired and irritable politicians resulted in shouting matches that did little to enhance their prestige at home. Particularly in the European Union, political leaders have expressed their disgust with all too frequent and long-drawn out multilateral meetings where many of the deliberations of Europe’s chief strategists are in fact about matters of minute detail. It is evident that some summitteers in Europe have begun to feel the strain of what could be called summit fatigue. The problem for leaders, particularly with multilateral summitry, is that the decision not to go may be hard to justify vis-a-vis their peers and their domestic constituency. It is impossible, as a matter of routine, to send a Foreign Minister to the summit. Neither does absence at the highest level tend to go unnoticed. The German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, for instance, was absent at the United Nations golden jubilee summit, but the following day he met his French counterpart for an informal meeting. The press reported both occasions. More often than not, opting out of summits is a mere theoretical option, one that poses problems of protocol, and one that is potentially hazardous for image-conscious politicians. Alternatively, not showing “up may be a powerful diplomatic signal, as has been demonstrated repeatedly at summits on Middle East issues. Secondly, the price of summit proliferation is high in terms of the burden that it imposes on scarce diplomatic resources. In the last ten to fifteen years many Foreign

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16 *The Economist*, 13 October 2001
Ministries have had to manage with increasingly limited resources and the recurring specter of budget-cutting exercises. The preparation and diplomatic follow-up of meetings at the highest level has become more or less perpetual for some international organizations. Serial summity - not just an episode with a beginning and an end, but an ongoing diplomatic effort - requires formidable backup from the Foreign Ministry, the Prime Minister’s office and, depending on the subject matter, also from sectoral government departments. Some developments inherent to summity are awkward for routine-based diplomatic services, such as for instance unforeseen agenda changes as a result of unexpected international developments. Summity is a flexible instrument of international dialogue, but what goes largely unnoticed is that such flexibility has to be facilitated by numerous diplomats and other experts, frequently in extremely compressed time periods. Multilateral summity is a particularly time-consuming business for those in supporting roles. Faced with the enlargement of the European Union from 15 to 25 members in 2004, it is not hard to guess how Dutch diplomats feel about being the first member state to manage the summits of an enlarged Union.

The price of summits in terms of economic costs has skyrocketed and has become a subject of much adverse reporting in leading international newspapers: public spending on diplomacy is hardly newsworthy, but this is different when isolated international events produce multimillion dollar bills ‘for the taxpayer. Exorbitant expenses are above all required for draconian security measures that nowadays go hand in hand with multilateral summity. Public concern about summits should also be seen against the background of a dynamic relationship between political leaders and the public. The electorates increasingly hold ‘diplomats-in-chief accountable for what they say, for what they do, and also for what they spend. Extraordinarily high expenses for meetings of international leaders do not turn politicians into good role models, and they are hard to justify when the general public is asked to tighten belts. There are few press reports about the big summits of the late 1990s and early twenty-first century - such as big UN global conferences, APEC, G8 and big EU meetings - that do not question the multimillion dollar bills for summit extravaganzas. Just one example was the G8 meeting in Genoa, which cost 19 million US dollars, including expensive security arrangements, plus 90 million dollars on improvements to the city. NATO’s Prague Summit in 2002 was another occasion where, particularly in the far from prosperous countries of Central Europe, the general public was appalled by - quite literally - the price of summity. It is possible to suggest that many contemporary summits offer little value for money.

2.0 TYPES OF SUMMITRY
1. Serial Summits
Examples of Serial Summit are;
1. US - EU Summit. This was inaugurated in 1990. It now meets annually in June.
2. US- Russia summit. This occurred yearly by the second hull’ of the 198Q’s following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 - Summits between the two became more frequent.
3. EU - Russia Summit, meets twice yearly.
4. Franco - German Summit started January 1963 and meets twice a year.
5. Asian Summit - members of the Association of South East Asia nations established in 1967 meets every 18 months.
6. SAARC Summit - South Asia Association for Regional Corporation 1965 meets yearly.
7. G8 Summit - Group of 8 countries i.e., Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, USA plus EU meets annually.
8. The AU - The Assembly of the Africa Union-once a year.
9. Arab League Summit - holds annually.
10. Summit of the Americas
11. A.S Organization of American States -3- 4years intervals.
The above-mentioned summits are the best suited for negotiation on every matter, depending on the length and frequency. Longer meeting allow matters to be treated in greater depth and time to return to
table after a deadlock. The Common Wealth Head of States meeting (CHOGM) which lasted up to 7 days is one of the best in this regard. The France-German serial summitry is regarded as one of the best because they meet so many times in the year. The serial meeting usually contributes to meaningful negotiations for the following reasons:

1. They educate leaders in international realities: they are forced to do their homework in order to avoid looking foolish among their peers and they cannot avoid learning from the mouths of their fellow leaders about their influence working with them.

2. The constancy at which they meet makes packaging agreements easier and new treaties are often born after.

3. Deadlines are set and complied with easily to complete an existing negotiation thereby sustaining diplomatic momentum.

4. Deadlocks could be cleared easily because of the presence of assembled negotiators.

Serial summits are best suited for information gathering and even on personalities. They are also good for clarifying intentions, since the summiteers look at each other while granting a request face to face.

2.1 Ad hoc Summits
The usefulness of ad hoc summits in negotiation is a function of its length, the longer the better. Hr Camp-David Summit September 1978 lasted for full 13 days and extremely tough negotiations took place between the American Isreali, and Arab leaders and important breakthrough were made i.e. the Camp David Records. These summits did not merely ratify an agreement made earlier; it was an exception rather than the rule.

Ad hoc summits are designed for the purpose rather than negotiation; they are better suited for ion of friendly relation than the serial summits. A good example of this relaxed is the one between President Clinton of US and Hafez-al-Assad of Syria in Geneva in - A multilateral summit with heavy symbolic emphasis and the general air of fostering increased economic and cultural ties between its participants was the two-day Ibero-American summit held in Mexico in July 1991. A multilateral ad hoc summit designed for a quite different purpose can also be exploited in order to promote friendly bilateral relations as when president Obama met the Russian President Dimitri Medvedev in the London Summit of G20 in 2009.

2.2. Funeral Summits
An important ad hoc summit is the funeral of a major political figure attended by high-level delegations from all over the world. It is a special case; however, it is useless for the diplomatic purpose but it generates a significant diplomatic momentum on a major issue. This is partly because of its theme, and partly because of short notices given for funerals of either past or present Head of States received by the countries sending delegates. Furthermore, funeral summits carry risks as existing diplomatic schedules are upset by the death of the Head of State, and decisions on attendance and the level of attendance sometime have to be made in the absence of knowledge of what other states will be doing and how the delegation will be received.

2.3. Working Funerals
This has fallen into a predictable pattern because of the shortness of notice available to the mourners, it has a compensating advantage. It provides Heads of States and governments with a good excuse to break existing schedules in order to have urgent discussions on current problems without arousing public expectations. Therefore, if attendance is likely to cause controversy there is little time for domestic opposition to mobilize, and begin to make trouble in their various countries.

A working funeral so called is of special significance if it is the funeral of an incumbent leader. This is because it is likely to be the first opportunity for foreign funeral of the bereaved government to confirm their relationship with new leadership and late man’s foreign rivals to have a change of heart. Funeral summit also provides a perfect cover for discreet consultation between foreign rivals seeking to resolve conflicts or trying to get out of an impasse. Funerals of this kind ordinarily call for political truce. Since there is no time to waste during funerals, they serve little in diplomacy.

It is important to note that funeral diplomacy serves the following functions;
3.0 IMPORTANCE OF SUMMITRY AND ITS ROLE IN MODERN DAY DIPLOMACY

The growing importance of summitry raises a number of questions as to the reasons for this development and its impact on governance. Why have summits become a central instrument of multilateralism worldwide? Obviously, the technological progress, particularly in the transportation and information sectors, an expanded international society as a result of decolonization, the rise of multilateralism, and the centralization of foreign policy decision-making at the highest level are certainly contributory factors. The principal reason, however, has to do with interdependence and the need to collectively manage problems of an increasingly supra-national nature. Globalization and interdependence meant that summitry must complement international organizations as the primary instrument of multilateralism.

The greatest impact of these summits is in the area of agenda setting, because summitry highlights important topics in international affairs, guides the work of international organizations, and provides direction for foreign policy-making. The more summitry is institutionalized the more likely it is to fulfill its objectives and produce concrete outcomes. Institutionalization can contribute to governance in various ways, particularly through socialization, agenda setting, coordination, legitimation, and other such functions. However, both scholars and practitioners agree that summits are much more successful with regard to the exchange of information than to the effective coordination of policies.

3.1 Advantages And Disadvantages Of Summitry

The under listed represent some of the identified advantages of summitry:

i. Summits contribute to governance, first, through dialogue and socialization. They do this by providing occasions for leaders to exchange views directly and to get to know each other. A personal understanding may help each leader to grasp more fully the domestic constraints faced by other leaders and to assess their intentions more accurately.

ii. Agenda setting and orientation: Summits offer a space for leaders to identify central issues, and set a course of action for national bureaucracies and international organizations. To this end, decision-makers may adopt programs of action and engage resources to deal with perceived problems.

iii. Summits can fulfill a function of negotiation and coordination. Summits may provide a political mechanism allowing leaders to discuss options, arrive at decisions, and mobilize regional and national bureaucracies to implement them. Indeed, summits have become an important institution of international relations because they provide a space where leaders can agree on ways to deal with the problems affecting a specific group of countries, adopt common positions, and decide on a collective course of action.

iv. Finally, summits serve a function of legitimation. They legitimize regional norms and practices, and are used by leaders to reinforce their status or to justify domestic policies. As the media frequently remind us, summits provide photo ops through which leaders can project an image of solidarity and community, particularly when regional cohesion is being challenged. In this sense, summits are a
v. potentially powerful diplomatic means of support for regional or domestic policies. Having discussed some of the advantages of summitry, we shall proceed to discuss some of its disadvantages. The dysfunctional aspects of summitry are evidenced in the saturation of presidential or prime ministerial agendas, the pressure on diplomatic and bureaucratic resources, and the potential neglect of the management of national affairs. Summits may also become dysfunctional when leaders do not share the same values or worldviews. The under listed are also some of the common causes of the problems or disadvantages associated with the summit process.

1. When Heads of Government use summits to advance national agendas to the detriment of collective good of the people.
2. When they lack preparation or expertise relating to the issues under discussion.
3. Finally, serial summits risk becoming dysfunctional if decisions are not acted upon and implementation fails.

4. More generally, summitry has significantly affected the role of ambassadors, who are circumvented more and more often as political leaders feel the need to intervene directly in global and regional matters. Concerning the usefulness of summitry, it seems clear that there is a direct relationship between the degree of institutionalization of summits and their utility.

3.2 Optimising The Process Of Summitry

i.Know the Other: This simple phrase serves everyone well in every negotiation and summitry a negotiation with high stakes needs to abide by it more. A good example of a flop in “Know the Other” can be seen in Kennedy and Khrushchev summit in Vienna. Kennedy was a new leader. He had been in power six months. He had a very rocky first few months, including the aborted Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, which had gone disastrously wrong. To add to his humiliation, the Russians had just put a man into space, Yuri Gagarin, so there was a sense that the Americans were not doing well in the Cold War. There was also a building crisis over Berlin, over the confrontation in Berlin. Kennedy wanted to meet his opposite number. He wanted to try and get a sense of this man; he wanted to try and have a rational conversation. The result was two days of feuding, arguing, ideological point-scoring, a real verbal punch-up that left Kennedy bruised and also puzzled, lie could not get through to Khrushchev. Khrushchev would not take him seriously.

The reasons were not farfetched, but one of them was that Kennedy did not begin to understand how Khrushchev would see him. If we think of most conversations and most differences of opinion that we have with somebody else, it is usually because we have not actually quite understood how he or she is going to see us and what we say. The critical thing in this example was that Khrushchev was 23 years older than Kennedy. Kennedy knew that Khrushchev was an older man, but he did not grasp the significance of this. Sadly, it was there, in the briefing books, if Kennedy had read them all, but of course diplomatic briefing books for summits are huge and leaders do not go through all of them. Buried in those, is a brief comment about Khrushchev’s family, including the fact that he had a son, Leonid, who was born in 1917. Leonid was a real pain as far as Nikita Khrushchev was concerned. He was a rebellious teenager. He kicked against the traces. He engaged in all sorts of sex and drunkenness. Khrushchev kicked him out of the house in 1938. Leonid ended up as a daredevil pilot in the Red Air Force during the Second World War and he was shot down around 1943. Khrushchev never spoke much more about it. But, essentially, I think, when he looked over the table at a man who was born in 1917, he saw his own...

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21 The Cold War of Berlin <www.ifklibrary.org> accessed 16 October, 2020

In June 1961, President John F. Kennedy traveled to Vienna, Austria, for a summit with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Not only was the summit unsuccessful in its goal of building trust, but it also increased tensions between the two superpowers—particularly in discussions regarding the divided city of Berlin.
son, or he saw that generation. It was almost impossible, for Nikita Khrushchev to take John F Kennedy seriously. If Kennedy had understood that, it might have affected the way he handled himself at the summit, because this personal element, understanding the other and how the other sees you, is fundamental in summitry, as it is in daily life.

ii. **Think politics, rather than to think policy:** Leaders go to the summit with the idea that they are going to persuade the other guy to adopt certain policies that this government wants. Then, the question is: what policies does he have, what policies do I have, can we make them work? What is really important is to understand that these heads of government are politicians, and they need to make themselves credible at home. In other words, understanding the political needs of another leader.

iii. **Beware of Nods and Winks:** Leaders often say things in the intimate, enthusiastic atmosphere of a summit that give the impression they are going to deliver more than they actually do or actually perhaps can do. In other words, don’t imply consent with a request; get a written and binding agreement.

d. **Beware of Stereotypes**

**e. Teamwork:** Successful summits have been about teamwork, in this way, between leaders and their advisors, and between the advisors themselves. Even interpreters cannot be left out of the equation.

iv. **The Long Game:** Leaders must be ready to keep steady and play it long. Most leaders want quick fixes. They want immediate returns from meetings at the summit. They need to go home and say "I have got this, this and this." Sometimes, the real successes, the real changes, take time to develop. Leaders need a larger sense of process beyond the normal short-termism of what they are thinking about. They need to be able to situate the meetings and encounters they are having now in a larger pattern of history and development.

### 3.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the prior multilateral summit of the post-war era was a place where heads of states met and deliberated about issues of state and public concern, while citizens are made to wait outside such meetings with great expectations of the outcome. The present and future Summitry is obviously a setting where diplomacy at the topmost echelon meets public concerns, where heads of government will have to show their commitments to the interest of their domestic constituencies as part a wider process of progression towards a more collaborative mode of diplomacy for many reasons, including the politics of prestige, democratic legitimacy and accountability, political leaders will remain pivotal in diplomacy —but it will no longer be so lonely at the top. In line with the earlier quoted words of Winston Churchill “it is better to meet at the summit than at the brink”, the value of summitry cannot be over emphasized, this is notably so despite issues of competence of heads of government, cost implication of the process and perceived unprofitability of the venture. The notion of full capacity to take decisions, the respect that will be associated to the office of the head of government in matters of great urgency and the goodwill that can accrue if leaders are able to connect and negotiate sensibly, speaks to the importance and need to encourage summitry by evaluating and constantly building up the process.

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