
Applied Diplomacy for Government Leaders: Negotiation, Missions and Multilateral Forums Course

22 – 26 February 2027
Geneva





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Ref: 127_14807 Date: 22 – 26 February 2027 Location: Geneva Fees: 5500 GBP

Programme Summary

Applied diplomacy for government leaders is a one-week training course for senior officials at advanced level, culminating in a negotiation and engagement plan for a live bilateral or multilateral file. Governments pursue trade, security and climate goals through crowded forums and bilateral channels, so results depend on officials who prepare positions and build coalitions with discipline. The approach moves from the legal basis of missions to negotiation, multilateral practice and diplomatic communication. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in applied diplomacy, negotiation and multilateral forums.

The Business Case

When international files are handled without a clear mandate, a tested position and a record of commitments, governments concede more than intended, lose allies in forums and repeat old disputes.

- Negotiation Outcomes: Improve as delegations enter talks with defined interests, fallback options and authorised concessions.
- Coalition Strength: Grows as officials map like-minded states early and draft language others can support.
- Mission Effectiveness: Rises as reporting, correspondence and economic engagement follow a shared standard.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations: Frames the functions, privileges and immunities of missions examined in Session 1.
- Vienna Convention on Consular Relations: Defines consular functions and the protection of nationals reviewed alongside mission work in Session 1.
- Principled Negotiation Harvard Negotiation Project: Separating people from the problem, focusing on interests and preparing a best alternative structure the negotiation drills in Session 2 and Session 3.
- Multilateral Practice of the United Nations System: Rules of procedure, consensus building and resolution drafting guide the forum simulation in Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Officials who lead or prepare their government's position in bilateral and regional talks.
- Heads of mission and deputy heads who manage a political, economic or consular portfolio abroad.
- Directors who represent their ministry or agency in international organisations and treaty bodies.
- Senior staff who negotiate cooperation agreements, memoranda of understanding and joint programmes.



The programme serves foreign affairs, trade and investment promotion, energy and climate negotiation, and security cooperation functions.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to justify a mission's actions and requests with reference to the diplomatic and consular legal framework.
2. Participants will be able to construct a negotiating mandate with interests, objectives, red lines and authorised concessions.
3. Participants will be able to evaluate a counterpart's interests and alternatives to choose an opening position and sequence.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise coalition partners and draft resolution or communique text that others can endorse.
5. Participants will be able to compose a note verbale, a diplomatic report and a talking-points brief to an accepted standard.
6. Participants will be able to design an economic and public diplomacy plan linked to a bilateral relationship.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Foundations of Applied Diplomacy

What legal and institutional framework governs how missions and envoys operate?

- Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Mission Functions
- Privileges, Immunities and the Receiving State's Expectations
- Consular Relations and Protection of Nationals Abroad
- Ministry-to-Mission Instruction and Reporting Lines
- Bilateral Relationship Mapping and Portfolio Review

Day 2: Diplomatic Negotiation Preparation

How is a government position built before talks begin?

- Interests, Positions and Best Alternative Analysis
- Negotiating Mandate and Red Line Definition
- Counterpart Profiling and Stakeholder Mapping in the Capital
- Inter-Ministerial Coordination of a Single National Position
- Concession Planning and Sequencing Tables

Day 3: Conducting Bilateral Negotiations

How are talks run, stalled talks recovered and commitments recorded?



- Opening Statements, Agenda Control and Framing
- Option Generation and Objective Criteria
- Deadlock Management, Back Channels and Mediation
- Cross-Cultural Communication at the Negotiating Table
- Memoranda of Understanding and Agreed Minutes

Day 4: Multilateral Forums and International Organisations

How does a delegation gain influence in a forum of many states?

- Rules of Procedure, Plenary and Committee Work
- Consensus Building and Like-Minded Group Coordination
- Resolution and Communique Drafting with Bracketed Text
- Note Verbale, Aide-Memoire and Diplomatic Reporting Formats
- Simulated Committee Session on a Draft Resolution

Day 5: Economic and Public Diplomacy in Practice

How are negotiation, forum and mission skills combined into a working plan?

- Economic Diplomacy for Trade and Investment Promotion
- Public Diplomacy, Digital Channels and Narrative Planning
- Talking-Points Brief for a Ministerial Engagement
- Peer Review of Negotiation Mandates from Session 2
- Negotiation and Engagement Plan Completion

Methodology

The programme relies on simulation. Participants take national and organisational roles in structured negotiations and a committee session, drafting real documents under time pressure. Each debrief compares outcomes with the mandate.

- Suggested activity: A two-party negotiation on a cooperation agreement with confidential instructions.
- Suggested activity: Drafting and amending a resolution in a simulated committee of several delegations.
- Suggested activity: Writing a note verbale and a cable reporting the outcome to the capital.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a negotiation and engagement plan for a file from their own portfolio. It contains the mandate, interest analysis, coalition map, draft text, concession sequence, and an economic and public diplomacy annex, ready to brief a minister or head of mission before the next round.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is applied diplomacy training suitable for officials new to international files?

No. It is designed for advanced practitioners and assumes you already work on international matters or represent your organisation abroad.

Which frameworks does this applied diplomacy and negotiation training rest on?

It rests on the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations, the principled negotiation method of the Harvard Negotiation Project, and the procedural practice of the United Nations system for multilateral forums.

How is the diplomacy negotiation and engagement plan used at work?

It briefs a minister, instructs a delegation or guides a mission on a live file before the next round.

How does applied diplomacy training differ from protocol and ceremonies training?

It addresses substance rather than ceremony: positions, negotiation, coalitions and diplomatic drafting, not precedence or official visits.