CONCEPT

Diplomatic Practice and Negotiation: Missions, Correspondence and Official Visits

15 – 19 February 2027
Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel



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Ref: 293_12172 **Date:** 15 – 19 February 2027 **Location:** Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel **Fees:** 23500 SAR

Introduction:

Diplomatic practice is often learned by imitation: notes verbales copied from old files, démarches delivered without a written record and delegations sent to talks without a clear mandate. The result is thin reporting, lost negotiating ground and avoidable friction with counterparts. This Core Concept course gives international relations and government-affairs staff the working methods of diplomatic practice, from mission functions under the Vienna Conventions to correspondence, negotiation, official visits and crisis handling. Through role-play, each participant builds a Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio for a live bilateral or multilateral file.

Course Objectives:

- Explain the functions, classes and staffing of a diplomatic mission as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations states them, and separate consular from diplomatic work
- Draft notes verbales, démarche talking points, aide-mémoires, briefing papers and reporting cables in their accepted form
- Prepare a negotiating mandate and planning sheet for bilateral talks and for multilateral conference texts
- Plan official visits and manage delegations, applying precedence among heads of mission and state ceremonial at overview level
- Advance economic and public diplomacy aims and handle crisis, persona non grata and inviolability cases within recognised practice
- Assemble a Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio for a real bilateral or multilateral file

Target Audience:

- International relations and foreign-affairs officers responsible for bilateral and multilateral files
- Government-affairs staff responsible for representing an organisation before ministries, embassies and international bodies
- Visit and delegation coordinators responsible for incoming and outgoing official missions
- Liaison and policy staff responsible for preparing briefing papers and positions for senior officials
- Trade and investment promotion staff responsible for commercial advocacy with foreign counterparts

Course Outline:

Day 1: Diplomacy Foundations and the Diplomatic Mission

- Diplomacy Defined: Bilateral, Multilateral and Track One Channels
- Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations Article 3: Functions of a Mission
- Heads of Mission Classes Under Article 14 and Mission Staff Structure
- Vienna Convention on Consular Relations: Consular Posts Versus Diplomatic Missions
- Diplomatic Practice Self-Assessment for International Relations Units

Day 2: Diplomatic Correspondence and Reporting Instruments

- Note Verbale Structure: Third-Person Form, Opening Compliments and Complimentary Close
- Démarche Preparation: Talking Points, In-Person Delivery and Record of Response
- Aide-Mémoire and Non-Paper: Choosing an Unattributed Text
- Briefing Paper Template for Ministers and Senior Officials
- Reporting Cable Format: Summary, Analysis, Comment and Recommended Action

Day 3: Diplomatic Negotiation and Official Visits

- Mandate and Instructions Brief Before Bilateral Talks
- Negotiation Planning Sheet: Positions, Red Lines and Fallback Language
- Multilateral Conference Tactics: Like-Minded Groups, Chair's Text and Consensus Building
- Joint Statement and Communiqué Drafting with Bracketed Text
- Official Visit Concept Note and Delegation Management Plan

Day 4: Precedence, Specialised Diplomacy and Problem Cases

- Precedence by Date of Taking Up Functions Under Article 16 and State Ceremonial at Overview
- Economic and Public Diplomacy: Commercial Advocacy Plan and Message Map
- Crisis Diplomacy at Overview: Consular Emergencies and Escalation Channels
- Persona Non Grata Under Article 9 and Inviolability of Premises Under Article 22
- Ethics of Representation: Confidential Information, Conflicts of Interest and Gift Registers

Day 5: Role-Play and the Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio

- Démarche Delivery Role-Play with Counterpart Ministry Officials
- Bilateral Negotiation Role-Play on a Draft Memorandum of Understanding
- Working Group Role-Play on a Bracketed Communiqué Text
- Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio Drafting: Note Verbale, Briefing Paper and Visit Plan
- Peer Review and Defence of the Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio

Skills You Will Gain:

- Diplomatic Drafting
- Cable Reporting
- Negotiating Mandate Preparation
- Multilateral Consensus Building
- Delegation Management
- Diplomatic Precedence
- Economic Advocacy
- Crisis Coordination Between States

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio for a live file, containing a note verbale, briefing paper, negotiation brief and visit plan
- Write correspondence that a counterpart ministry recognises as correctly formed at first reading
- Rehearse a démarche and a bilateral negotiation against peers playing the other side
- Compare practice with ministry, agency and corporate government-affairs colleagues from several countries

Conclusion:

Effective representation rests on knowing what a mission may do, writing in forms counterparts accept, negotiating from a clear mandate and running visits that serve the relationship. This course moves from the channels of diplomacy and the Vienna Conventions, through notes verbales, démarches and reporting cables, to negotiation, multilateral texts and delegation management, then to precedence, economic and public diplomacy, crisis cases and ethics. The final day rehearses a démarche and a negotiation, and each participant leaves with a Diplomatic Engagement Portfolio ready for their next bilateral or multilateral file.