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‘CITY DIPLOMACY AND CLIMATE CHANGE’

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Abstract

This thesis explores diplomacy in the post-Westphalian era and the empowerment of subnational actors in diplomatic practice. It argues that cities, almost unnoticed, have become important actors in the world stage and have developed an impressive diplomatic apparatus. It reviews the six dimensions of city diplomacy proposed by van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) and suggests the incorporation of a seventh dimension, namely climate change. By presenting individual cities strategies and actorness in climate change policy, the development of cities' climate change agreements, international networking and lobbying, this thesis posits that not only cities are emerging as international actors in climate change, but that climate change has been used as a platform for the advancement of cities in the international arena.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Paradiplomacy, City Diplomacy, Climate Change

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Acronyms

AER	Assembly of European Regions
ANMC21	Asian Network of Major Cities 21
APLA	Association of Palestinian Local Authorities
C40	C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
CCP	Cities for Climate Protection
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
COP	Conference of the Parties
CoR	Committee of the Regions
EU	European Union
GLA	Greater London Authority
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives / Local Governments for Sustainability
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KEDKE	National Association of Local Authorities
LA	Los Angeles
MAP	Municipal Alliance for Peace
MAPEI	Moscow Agency for Export and Investment Support
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCG	Non Central Government
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
ULAI	Union of Local Authorities of Israel
UN	United Nations
UNACLA	UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation,
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-HABITAT	UN Human Settlements Programme
UNIFEM	UN Development Fund for Women

UNITAR	UN Training and Research Institute
US	United States (of America)
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

Introduction

In an era of globalization, cities are, again, the most prominent sites of the reconfiguration of the global order in which...sub-national entities gain control and influence over area once dominated by nation-states.

(Blank 2006)

International relations' theorists have been quite hesitant to incorporate cities into their research agendas. International law theorists have extended their range to include multinational corporations and civil society groupings but have largely omitted the localities. Diplomacy theorists have denied special attention to the city level, except for some references to the city-states of the antiquity.

This thesis posits that cities, almost unnoticed, have become important actors in the world stage. It argues that processes of globalization and devolution, facilitating structures and an active agency have all contributed to the emergence of cities as actors in the international realm. It further argues that cities, despite their ambivalent standing in international law and their dismissal as serious international actors, have developed an impressive diplomatic apparatus and have been engaging diplomatic activities worldwide.

Literature on city diplomacy is scarce; some important exceptions to the academic 'silence' regarding city diplomacy include Hobbs (1994), Fry et al. (1989) and the more recent van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007). The latter has in a great degree influenced the standpoint of this thesis.

This thesis explores the empowerment of substate actors in diplomatic practice, examines the six dimensions of city diplomacy proposed by van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) and argues for the incorporation of a seventh dimension, namely climate change.

Through an exploration of the cities diplomatic activities in climate change policy, individually or in networks, enabled or ignored by national, federal or supranational authorities, with the blessing or in opposition to central governments, this thesis argues that cities are deeply engaged and active in the international arena. Climate change is not only another dimension of the cities' diplomatic activities; it has increasingly been used as a platform for the quest of official recognition and representation in various institutional settings.

2. Diplomacy in flux: processes and actors

2.1. Diplomacy in a changing world

Modern diplomacy and diplomatic services as we know them grew out of the development of the nation state, during the second half of the 19th century. They were based on the premise of a stable sovereign state, with a somewhat generally agreed national identity, and their fundamental role was to act as a channel of communication between governments (Riordan 2003).

However, traditional diplomacy is facing new challenges and is bound to undergo serious transformations. Geopolitical changes coupled with a revolution in information and communication technologies (ICTs) are making traditional diplomacy somewhat obsolete. As Riordan points out, ‘The assumptions on which traditional diplomacy was based have been severely undermined...The way in which we handle international relations needs to change to reflect a new world’ (Riordan 2003).

Globalization has radically changed the environment in which international relations are conducted. Problems have become global, blurring the lines of what is being considered as international, national or local. Economy, finance, trade, organized crime and the environment are only some of the issues that now have to be dealt at the international level. ‘While some of these issues have always featured in international relations (terms of trade), this represents a major intrusion into the diplomatic world of domestic politics and political agendas’ (Riordan 2003).

Moreover, mass tourist travel has given the average citizen a greater knowledge of, and interest in foreign countries and thus foreign affairs. Combined with the information on international affairs now relayed in real time by the electronic media and the internet, domestic public opinion has firmly entered foreign-policy calculations (Riordan 2003). Whereas a few decades ago foreign policy and diplomacy were largely considered to be beyond the grasp of the mass public, this is no longer so; television and 24-hour news channels have brought the world to one’s living room, and citizens can see the effects of their leaders’ foreign policy decisions and how diplomats cope with them on the ground – even halfway across the world (Heine 2006).

Modern communications also allow governments direct access to information and contacts without the need to rely on diplomats and regional embassies (Barston 2006). 'What purpose is served by having diplomats stationed at great expense in distant lands, when deals and agreements could be struck over the phone or by teleconferencing and the text sent anywhere in the world in fractions of a second?' wonders Heine (2006). The speed of the electronic media often leaves embassies 'playing catching-up in trying to inform their governments' (Riordan 2003).

Even more profound are the social and political transformations which have accompanied the technological revolution. Although obituaries for the nation state may be premature, its changing nature, and the way in which it relates to the world, further undermine the assumptions of traditional diplomacy (Riordan 2003; see also Heine 2006).

Berridge (2005), in its renowned book 'Diplomacy. Theory and Practice' defines diplomacy as 'an essential political activity...Its chief purpose is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies without resort to force, propaganda, or law'. However, a more inclusive definition could better explain what diplomacy today entails. Melissen and Sharp (2006) provide an interesting and more encompassing definition of diplomacy as 'the institutions and processes by which states and others represent themselves and their interests to one another'.

An emerging conventional wisdom among scholars is that diplomacy can no longer be considered only in terms of relations between states, but must now take account of wider relationships and modes of dialogue. Traditional, state-centred 'bilateral' and 'multilateral' diplomatic concepts and practices need to be complemented with explicit awareness of a further layer of diplomatic interaction and relationships (Wiseman 2004).

Wiseman underlines that the diplomat of the future will need to operate at the bilateral level (the conduct of relations between two states, usually via resident missions); the multilateral level (diplomacy between three or more states, at permanent or ad hoc international conferences); and, increasingly, the 'polylateral' level (relations between states and other entities) (Wiseman 2004).

Many different concepts have been devised in scholarly research in order to capture shifts in the global dialogue and innovations in diplomatic practice. Some of these concepts include:

- o triangular diplomacy (statestate, state-firm, firm-firm relations) (Strange 1992)

- multilayered diplomacy (involving noncentral governments) (Hocking 1993)
- second track diplomacy or track II diplomacy (methods of diplomacy outside the formal governmental system, often initiated by nongovernmental actors and involving diplomats in their personal capacity) (McDonald and Bendahmane 1987)
- multi-track diplomacy (an extension of the second-track concept, which includes a wide range of societal groups engaged in peacemaking activities) (Diamond and McDonald 1996)
- niche diplomacy (the ability of small and middle powers to provide initiative and leadership in specific international areas) (Cooper 1997)
- preventive diplomacy (action designed to prevent existing disputes from escalating into military conflicts) (Lund 1996)
- virtual / digital /cyber/ net diplomacy (a process of direct global and transnational communication and bargaining between non-state groups and individuals made possible by new technologies, such as the internet) (Potter 2003; Dizard 2001)
- network diplomacy (non hierarchical diplomacy permeated by decentralized networks) (Metzl 2001; Heine 2006)
- public diplomacy (diplomacy targeted at another country's public) (Leonard 2002; Melissen 2005)

Each one of these concepts conveys a certain idea and reflects a general sense of the changing nature of diplomacy (Wiseman 2004).

2.2. The empowerment of sub-state actors in diplomatic practice

Today it has become somewhat of a platitude to say that 'nation states' are no longer the only actors on the international scene, let alone that they no longer maintain a monopoly on conducting a foreign policy and developing diplomatic activities (Crikemans 2010).

It is often asserted that modern diplomacy finds its origin in the Peace of Westphalia. However, the foundations of diplomacy, as such, were established before 1648, in times when states as they are now, did not exist yet and cities pioneered as foreign policy entities (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). Diplomacy, thus, existed

before the existence of states. In ancient Greece, for example, city states like Athens and Macedon were regularly sending and receiving embassies of an ad hoc character and appointed ambassadors to engage in negotiations on behalf of the city. Later, in Renaissance times, powerful Italian city-states like Venice and Milan were the first to establish permanent diplomatic missions abroad and to create an organized system of diplomacy (Nicolson cited in van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

After the Treaties of Westphalia, diplomacy became the domain of the newly established European states. The standardization of diplomacy after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the co-evolution of diplomacy and states in the time thereafter further intensified state-centredness in both the theory and practice of international relations in general and of diplomacy more specifically (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

In essence, presumptions of state-centredness in diplomacy are theoretically valid, for indeed the role of the state in the practice of diplomacy is still substantial (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). However, since the end of the Second World War, actors other than the state have entered the diplomatic stage. The web of actors generating diplomatic activities is widening and becoming more condensed, involving increasingly significant entities such as regional and international organizations, multinational corporations, special economic zones, local and city government, advocacy networks and influential individuals (Criekemans 2010; Wiseman 2004).

In the face of the first waves of globalization and the proliferation of actors in the international arena, players were generally categorized into two groups: state and non-state actors, reflecting the long-standing belief that only the first did really matter in a world of power-politics. Although there is now widespread recognition of the role that non-state actors play in international politics, this categorization is still somewhat misleading. Putting all non-state actors into one single group does not help analytically since it does not take into account the difference in the nature, the factors that influenced their emergence and the instruments and strategies employed by them (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007).

Subsequently, non-state actors could be divided into those with a non-territorial character, such as NGOs and multinational corporations and those with a territorial character, such as states in a federal system, regions and cities (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). Manojlovic and Thornheim (2007) justify this subdivision, arguing that non-territorial non-state actors do not use traditional diplomatic methods and

channels reserved by the states, whereas ‘the international activity of non-central authorities within states cannot readily be dismissed as significantly different from that of states’.

The reasons for the growing involvement of substate actors in the diplomatic process can be primarily found in the globalization processes of recent decades. It could be argued that states, upon globalization, have lost their monopoly and exclusive competence over social, economic and political activity in their territory. Due to the rise of various transnational or supranational regimes and the increased interconnectedness, there is no longer a clear distinction between the national and the international political sphere. International issues like global warming and climate change become national issues as drought threatens crops, while national issues, like defense, become international issues as nuclear weapons and terrorism threaten countries all around the world.

New opportunities have been created for the involvement and empowerment of regional and local government as the economic, cultural and political dimensions of globalization have worn down the central state’s responsibilities and functions. Increasing interdependence and especially the rise of international trade regimes has further eroded states’ ability and capacity to control national economies, prompting regions and large metropolitan areas to compete for the acquisition of shares in world markets by devising strategies to promote exports and attract foreign direct investments (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007).

Moreover, processes of decentralization and devolution have changed the division of responsibilities between the national and subnational actors (Taipale 2009). The subsequent innovations with regard to new information and communication technologies have only increased the opportunities of actors on the periphery to be informed on, and influence, decision-making at the centre. Van de Pluijm and Melissen (2007) point out that the diplomatic mode evolving from this is characterized by an apparent paradox: on the one hand, there is a growing internationalization and integration of world politics as national governments are no longer able to manage internationalized policy issues as climate change and transborder crime on their own; on the other hand, there is a stronger focus on devolutions and sub-state involvement, as internationalized policy issues become evident to a wide range of domestic constituencies and their representatives at the local level.

At the same time, subnational actors are not only actors of globalization, they have also been affected by it (Blank 2006). Regions, states and cities, small, medium and large, have, inevitably, turned more international as immigration across the globe has increased. At the same time, regions, states and cities are being influenced by monetary and fiscal policies of the World Bank and the IMF, are subjected to development and planning schemes heralded by global institutions, and experience an influx of foreign goods and global corporations and institutions (van de Pluijm and Melissen 2007; Blank 2006).

In the context of domestic structural factors and forces that give rise to sub-state entities in the realm of international relations, it should be noted that there exists an enormous variety among countries in terms of the constitutional/judicial, political and economic position of these actors (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007). Sub-state actors have different degrees of autonomy (a greater degree of autonomy allows for better development of international activity) and usually a greater level of self-government is also accompanied by the constitutional framework that enables regions to control and manage aspects of international affairs (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007).

Under this light it comes as no surprise that research on subnational diplomacy and the diplomatic activities of sub-state actors has primarily focused on regions (mostly those with legislative powers) and the component states of a federation (see Aldecoa and Keating 1999; Crikemans 2010; Lecours 2008). There are many terms in the scholarly literature - usually used interchangeably - dealing with the diplomatic activities of subnational entities including: subnational or substate diplomacy (Crikemans 2010), Non Central Government's (NCG's) diplomacy (Hocking 1993) and paradiplomacy (Aldecoa and Keating 1999).

2.3. Paradiplomacy

Academic research has made some important contributions into the study of subnational actors' diplomatic presence. Soldatos (1990) coined for the first time the term 'paradiplomacy', an abbreviation of 'parallel diplomacy', quite simply defined as 'the foreign policy of subnational governments'. The concept was later

disseminated in the scholarly literature via the research of Ivo Duchacek (see Duchacek et al. 1988) who stressed that the activities of sub-state entities on the international scene differ greatly in form, intensity and frequency, ranging from technical and economically driven actions to politically inspired interventions (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007).

Duchacek differentiates between three categories of regions' foreign policy actions, based on their geopolitical dimensions: cross-boundary; trans-regional paradiplomacy (institutionalized contacts between non-central governments which are not geographical neighbours); and global paradiplomacy (direct contacts between non-central governments of different countries, between a non-central government of another country, or between a non-central government and a private actor) (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007).

Over recent decades the paradiplomatic activities of regions, especially in federal countries such as Canada, Belgium, Germany, the US or Spain, or quasi-federal like Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and India, has become a political reality that is difficult to contain (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007; Lecours 2008). Manojlovic and Thornheim (2007) even argue that the paradiplomacy of regions is undergoing a process of normalization, stressing that 'regardless of discourse, constitutional framework and employed practices, paradiplomatic activity is to a great extent adopting equivalent forms' (see also Criekemans 2010; Cornago 2010).

Manojlovic and Thornheim (2007) also argue that a variety of states in different regional contexts are consequently adapting to these trends and establishing different legal and institutional mechanisms in order to recognize these developments (for an overview see Lecours 2008). This, in essence, means that the international activism of regions is gradually incorporated into the foreign policy and diplomatic mechanisms of central governments. Moreover, international organizations have also been developing means of including the activity of sub-state authorities within the framework of their programmes and decision-making processes (Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007; Lecours 2008).

Lecours (2008) proposes three layers of paradiplomacy: economic issues (sub-state actors aiming at developing an international presence for the purpose of attracting foreign investment, luring international companies to the region and targeting new markets for exports); cooperation (cultural, educational, technical, technological and other); and political (prominently featuring the international

expression of an identity distinct from the one projected by the central state, as in the case of Quebec, Flanders, Catalonia or the Basque Country).

On the diplomatic 'apparatus' of the regions in diplomatic practice Criekemans (2010) presents a diverse toolkit:

- a) political representation abroad,
- b) treaty-making power (for regions with legislative powers),
- c) other agreements of a certain formalized nature; (political) declarations of intent and/or cooperation agreements, transnational contracts and cultural agreements or partnerships,
- d) the development of own programmes of assistance and sharing of know-how; bilateral programmes, programmes on cross-boundary cooperation, or multilateral programmes,
- e) secondment,
- f) other forms of participation in multilateral frameworks and organizations,
- g) participation in other formal or informal networks,
- h) developing a public diplomacy, both domestic and international,
- i) subcontracting to associations, non-profit societies, or third parties,
- j) political statements either vis-à-vis the (policies of) the central government, or about 'current affairs' and
- k) ministerial visits.

It is thus evident, that subnational authorities have a quite wide range of means so as to make themselves 'visible' in the world arena and represent their interests abroad. Keating (2000) suggests that one of the most common forms of paradiplomacy takes the form of interregional cooperation and networking, through the various interregional associations and he mentions the Council of Local Authorities and Regions of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (under the aegis of the Council of Europe and the Assembly of European Regions). Keating (2000) also points out the role that the AER has played in formulating policies and demands for regional representation in the negotiations leading to the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties.

In this light, Manojlovic and Thornheim underline:

this process of standardization has facilitated the creation of dense networks of transregional communication among different subnational authorities, as well as the translation of a wide range of particular initiatives to

a variety of institutional interlocutors, both of which enhance the process of policy learning and diffusion across the world.

(Manojlovic and Thornheim 2007)

Some scholars are not fond of the term ‘paradiplomacy’ because it suggests an element of conflict between the national and subnational policy-level, and implicitly presumes ‘incompatible interests’ (Kriekemans 2010). Paradiplomacy creates an image of a central route of diplomacy on which national governments ‘ride’, and a separate, peripheral route of diplomacy on which substate actors ‘ride’ (Duchacek et al. 1988). Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) argue that such a conceptualization of paradiplomacy is unfortunate and rather inappropriate, given that subnational actors do not necessarily ‘ride’ along different diplomatic routes, but rather along the same route although in a different car.

As Kriekemans (2010) points out: ‘diplomacy should not be approached as a segmented process of different actors within a state, but rather as a system in which the different actors within a state are entangled, both inside and outside their national settings, to embrace a diversity of interests; a multi-layered diplomacy’. Contemporary diplomacy has, in other words, become ‘a web of interactions with a changing cast of various subnational players, which interact in different ways depending on the issues, their interests and capacity to operate in this so-called multilayered diplomatic environment’ (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

2.4. The rise of Cities as international actors

Modern diplomacy is not expressed and practiced by national governments alone, and in view of the need for dialogue, cooperation and coordination in order to achieve the objectives of peace, democracy and respect for human rights at all levels, closer cooperation between national governments and local and regional authorities is a natural and necessary route towards more effective procedures and strategies at multiple levels. Towns and cities play a significant role in international cooperation since they work together with other municipalities in international networks.

(CoR 2009)

Despite substantial academic attention for the emergence of new actors in international relations, namely NGO’s, multinational corporations and associations of states and the debate over the paradiplomatic activities of regions with legislative

powers, academic discussion has focused less on the increasing role of another actor in international relations, namely the city. This omission is remarkable given the increasing importance of cities around the world (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007; Acuto 2009; Calder and de Freytas 2009).

Since 2007, for the first time in human history, half of the human population is settled within metropolitan areas. In addition, on a global scale, over 100,000 people a day move to cities (www.london.gov.uk). This momentous exodus has resulted in a radical redesigning of most of the world's geography which is, inevitably, bound to change the geopolitical environment. Global cities- the denationalized platforms for global capital and the key sites for the coming together of a varied mix of people from all over the world- such as New York, London and Tokyo, may be the best examples of this phenomenon (see Sassen 1991).

In the scholarly debate, arguments have been raised that cities, being the nodal points of the global network economy, are set to take over from central and regional government as the key level of governance in the new millennium (Riordan 2003). Rosenau, for example says:

It seems clear ... that cities and microregions are likely to be major control mechanisms in the world politics of the twenty-first century. Even if the various expectations that they replace states as centers of power prove to be exaggerated, they seem destined to emerge as either partners or adversaries of states as their crucial role becomes more widely recognized and they thereby move from an objective to an intersubjective existence.

(Rosenau 1995)

But even the most moderate views cannot help but acknowledge that cities are enjoying a renewed importance as centres of economic development. Within the US a series of cities as diverse as New York, Chicago and Seattle have reinvented themselves and now enjoy greater importance than most states (Riordan 2003). Riordan (2003) also raises the example of the urban regeneration of Barcelona and points out that it was indeed Barcelona, with its series of socialist mayors, rather than the Catalan nationalist regional government, that has driven Cataluña's economic growth and success.

Urbanization—just like globalization—is a fundamental process that affects the present landscape of world affairs: although it does not represent a novel force in history, it defines the human experience in the 21st century as never before (Acuto

2009). It is therefore clear that cities now matter more in the world than ever, making cities one socio-political unit that is growing in power in the era of globalization (Savir cited in van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

Yet, the vast majority of contemporary political analysts are reticent about the presence of 'urban' narratives in their publications, at best considering the city as a target of top-down policies, or an implementer of governmental frameworks (Acuto 2009). As Acuto (2009) underlines, 'biased by a still too state-centric approach to global issues policymakers often forget the possibilities and the potential for effective governance that local governments have in the urban age'.

Reservations over the 'actorness' of cities in international relations also spring from the cities' ambiguous legal standing. Indeed, the sources of international law do not recognize cities as possessing legal person; local governments are treated as mere subdivisions of states and have neither legal standing nor independent presence in formal international institutions (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). As Blank points out:

the combination of international law's strong bias in favour of states as the entities deserving a full legal personality, and of modern nation-states' desire to maintain their monopoly in areas pertaining to security and foreign relations has resulted in a legal scheme that has deprived cities of any chance to operate as actors on the international plane.

(Blank 2006)

However, the cities' actorness on the world stage is testified, de facto, by developments in the new global order. Cities are increasingly becoming bearers of international rights, duties, and powers; they are becoming important objects of international and transnational regulation; they are enforcing international norms and standards; and they are forming global networks (Blank 2006).

As Blank (2006) documents, there is 'a profound shift in the way localities function legally in the international and national spheres'. Such shift is evident by the establishment of United Nation agencies centered around issues of local self-government and decentralization of powers (UN HABITAT); by the internalization of international norms into local legal systems and the enforcement of such norms; by the rise of numerous associations that represent local governments in global governance projects and by the prominence of administrative and judicial bodies that regulate the relations between localities and states (Blank 2006).

Through these developments, 'localities are increasingly becoming prominent actors in the new global configuration'; they 'have become, de facto, important actors in world politics, culture, and economics' (Blank 2006). Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) agree with Blank by stating that 'cities, almost unnoticed, have emerged as diplomatic actors, participating in almost every stage of international politics; either marginally or considerably, either formally or informally'.

As the study of municipal government, its practice and organization, is often dismissed as of secondary importance, literature on 'municipal diplomacy' has been very scarce (Saunier 2002). But contrary to all predictions, many cities now have deputy mayors in charge solely of international affairs – Paris and Sao Paulo being the prime examples (Taipale 2005), some have introduced international relations or foreign policy offices – Amsterdam, Atlanta, Beijing, Johannesburg, Moscow, Pretoria and Taganrog to mention only a few (Nijman 2009) - and some have even a foreign policy strategy like the city of Prague (www.praha.eu).

3. City diplomacy

Along with the empowerment of cities as international actors, their respective diplomatic activities have equally evolved. Over the past decades, local governments world-wide have gained experience in establishing international relations by developing foreign policies, cooperating with local governments abroad, setting up lobby networks to make their work visible in the international community, participating in international cooperation projects and exchanging experiences with their colleagues abroad (Sizoo 2007).

Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) define city diplomacy 'as the institutions and processes by which cities, or local governments in general, engage in relations with actors on an international political stage with the aim of representing themselves and their interests to one another'. And they argue that city diplomacy 'is a professional, pragmatic and upcoming diplomatic activity on the international political stage, which is changing and will continue to change current diplomatic processes (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

They note that 'although various cities still participate in international politics on an ad hoc basis, many have professional civil servants dedicating their time to establishing a coherent municipal foreign policy' (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). And perhaps to avoid any 'municipal paradiplomacy' national governments increasingly permit and even encourage local government involvement in foreign policy (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

Along with the increased international cooperation among cities worldwide, there is also an apparent growing influence of cities on decision-making in international organizations (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). As such, cities are, on the one hand, increasingly embedded in the structures of diplomacy, turning a growing number of people at the local level into city diplomats, while, on the other, city diplomacy becomes increasingly subjected to standards, preset policy goals and evaluations (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

There are very many activities and actions of an international dimension carried out by urban actors and they are very diverse in nature. Lefèvre and d'Albergo's list (2007) includes:

- Initiatives aimed at fostering and improving a city's competitiveness in the international marketplace,
- Bilateral intercity partnerships, such as sister cities and twinning schemes, originally developed as part of post-war reconciliation efforts but which subsequently took on a new functional and symbolic meaning,
- Promoting or taking part in multilateral partnerships, such as international networks and/or associations of cities,
- Lobbying at international or supranational levels of political decision making, primarily directed towards the EU, through individual activity, short-term joint action, or by more institutionalised cross-border collaboration by coalitions of cities. This activity can take place either to obtain different kinds of resources from the international arenas or to try to rearrange such arenas, in order to obtain a better ranking in the international pecking order,
- Participation in EU-funded programmes, often through partnerships with other cities both at home and abroad,
- Showing solidarity with the Global South, mostly in the field of decentralised cooperation with Third World countries and cities, and through other activities aimed at supporting transnational policies for sustainable development, human rights, and the fight against poverty,
- Activity involving 'diplomacy from below', aimed at the promotion of peace and the prevention of war.

Mayors, councilors or municipal civil servants engage in relations with other actors on the international political stage -on behalf of their city- through two-sided or multiple-sided interactions. Two-sided city diplomacy is a diplomatic process in which at least one of the two parties that are involved is a representative of a city (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). The goals at which this process is aimed, can concentrate on creating benefits primarily for one party (cities providing assistance to municipalities in developing countries or in cities lobbying the European Commission and European Parliament) or on creating benefits for both parties (negotiating the establishment of a multinational corporation's headquarters or a new international institution) (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). Multiple-sided city diplomacy is the diplomatic process in which more than two parties are involved, representing various cities (Associations of municipalities such as United Cities and Local Government –

UCLG- or Eurocities are often one party in such multiple-sided processes of city diplomacy) (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

Largely, the academic debate on city diplomacy has focused on its contribution to peace and security (see Sizoo 2007; Acuto 2010). The First World Conference on City Diplomacy, held in Hague on 11-13 June 2008, discussed the role of local authorities in conflict prevention, peace building and conflict reconstruction (www.citydiplomacy.org). This does not come really as a surprise bearing in mind the opinion of the Committee of the Regions, whereby city diplomacy is defined as:

a tool with which local authorities and their bodies can promote social cohesion, environmental sustainability, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, at global level, with the aim of creating a stable environment in which people can live together peacefully in a climate of democracy, progress and prosperity.

(CoR 2009)

However, this thesis considers this definition rather restricted and prefers to align with van der Pluijm and Melissen's (2007) conceptualization of city diplomacy as having various dimensions. Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) propose six dimensions of city diplomacy, namely security, development, economic, cultural, cooperative and representative. These dimensions will be discussed and analyzed below and a seventh distinct dimension will be proposed, providing sufficient evidence for its relevance and prominence.

3.1. Dimensions of City diplomacy

3.1.1. Security

Although states' diplomatic efforts have always focused on conflict resolution, conflict prevention, mediation and peace-building, new actors have arisen on the security front in recent years. NGOs, regional organizations, transnational corporations, civil society and religious groups now play an important role in resolving national and international conflicts (Stanley 2003).

In essence, the post-World War II twinning projects between cities in Western Europe and the US, Germany and Eastern Europe, and later cities in Latin America

and Africa, were all, in one way or another, aimed at conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction through city-to-city interaction (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

Cities for Peace was a prime example of cities' diplomatic activities in the field of conflict prevention. In 2003 Cities for Peace, an US organization, launched an array of efforts to prevent war between the US and Iraq. It urged city governments throughout the country to pass resolutions imploring President Bush to avoid the confrontation with Iraq. Despite not being able to prevent the war, this diplomatic campaign resulted in 70 US cities –representing over 13 million people- passing such a resolution (<http://citiesforprogress.org>).

Mayors for Peace, another city-led diplomatic initiative, aims to prevent future nuclear attacks by raising consciousness regarding nuclear weapons' abolition. On June 24, 1982, at the 2nd UN Special Session on Disarmament held at UN Headquarters in New York, the then Mayor Takeshi Araki of Hiroshima proposed a new Program to promote the solidarity of cities toward the total abolition of nuclear weapons. In March 1990, the Mayors Conference was officially registered as a UN NGO related to the Department of Public Information and in May 1991, it became a Category II NGO (currently called a NGO in "Special Consultative Status") registered with the Economic and Social Council. Today membership stands at 4,069 cities in 144 countries and regions (www.mayorsforpeace.org).

Another example is the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities working for the promotion of good local governance in post-genocide Rwanda and facilitating the creation of the Rwandese Association of Local Governments in 2003 (www.vng-international.nl).

The Municipal Alliance for Peace (MAP) was established in June 2005, following increasingly louder calls from both Palestinian and Israeli citizens for proactive steps to be taken towards a just and lasting peace in the region. Through joint initiatives of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and the Union of Local Authorities of Israel (ULAI), with support from international municipal authorities, MAP seeks to instigate joint Palestinian and Israeli projects at the municipal level (www.palestine-pmc.com).

British cities, united in Local Government Bureau UK, strived to support the capacity-building of new local authorities in Sierra Leone since 2004. Activities were

dealing with the war legacy and engaging the traumatized population in local policy-planning (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

The United Cities and Local Governments' (UCLG) special committee on 'City Diplomacy, Peace Building and Human Rights' has created a forum where local governments confronted with conflict and war can present their problems and where initiatives can be taken to support local governments in difficulty. Moreover, the Committee is working to obtain recognition from national governments and international governmental institutions of the role of local governments in conflict resolution, in order to increase the willingness of municipalities to become involved in projects and programmes aiming at peace building (www.cities-localgovernments.org).

3.1.2. Development

Local communities have always been central to development assistance. Especially, since the end of WW2, and the proliferation of twinning programmes around the world, cities 'have become dominant players in the field of local development assistance' (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan recognized the role of local governments in international development when he argued that development ultimately comes about in the streets of cities.

How can we expect to reach the MDGs (...) without making progress in areas such as education, hunger, health, water, sanitation and gender equality? Cities and local authorities have a critical role to play in all of these areas. Ultimately it is in the streets of our cities and towns that the value of what's decided here will be tested. It is there, in the daily lives of our citizens, in their safety and security, in their prosperity and sense of opportunity, that our progress will be most visible. While our Goals are global, they can most effectively be achieved through action at local level.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to local government leaders, September 2005

(<http://int.twinning.org>)

UCLG is leading the path towards the met of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) until 2015 through the Millennium Towns and Cities Campaign. In this campaign, hundreds of cities in the developed and developing world are united to

achieve the 8 UN-MDGs, namely: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce Child Mortality Rate; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. UCLG's Working Group on the MDGs, chaired by Gianni Alemanno, Mayor of Rome, aims to raise awareness among local governments of the MDGs and their relevance to actions at the local level, to promote the local government commitment to the Goals and to form relevant requests to governments and international institutions (www.cities-localgovernments.org).

Regarding humanitarian development assistance, long-lasting donor relationships exist between, for example, cities in the US and Lesotho, Cameroon and Benin, between cities in Australia and cities in East Timor and Sri Lanka and between cities in Canada and cities in Brazil (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). With regard to emergency development assistance, cities around the world increasingly become donors or money and assistance, in cooperation or even bypassing national governments' assistance efforts. Examples of city-led development assistance include the case of the 2003 earthquake around the city of Bam (Iran), the 2004 tsunami in SE Asia and the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.

A prominent example, in the wake of the 1999 'earthquake diplomacy' between Greece and Turkey, has been the involvement of local authorities. In the aftermath of the earthquake that hit the city of Izmit (Nicomedia), the municipality of Thessaloniki promptly reacted sending its own aid, while a few days later the five bigger municipalities of Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus, Patra, Herakleion) sent a joint convoy with aid. Moreover, the National Association of Local Authorities (KEDKE) offered 50,000,000 drachmas for the victims of the earthquake, and the Association of Local Authorities of Attica offered 30,000,000 drachmas to the Turkish ambassador in Athens. The Mayor of Athens went to Turkey to visit the earthquake site, met the Mayor of Istanbul and both stated that this was the time for a new understanding.

3.1.3. Economy

Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) identify two ways in which city diplomats pursue economic gains for their city: by attracting tourists, foreign companies, international organizations and international events; and by exporting their services and knowledge or entering into partnership agreements with other cities.

Tokyo, London and New York's reputation of being the financial and political capitals of the world is pursued by large offices dedicating to attracting even more capital, either through tourism or through the establishment of a multinational corporation's headquarters or a new international institution. Moreover, cities having a clear communal business interest enter into partnership agreements, in order to share best practices and exchange services. Good examples are the partnerships between various harbour cities in the world, such as Rotterdam and Shanghai, Antwerp and Durban, and Ningbo and Rouen (Van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

An interesting aspect of the cities' diplomatic game is the theory and practice of city branding – the notion of applying business marketing models to cities and promoting cities as a brand (see Karavatzis 2009). Campaigns like 'I AmSterdam', 'Washington, the American experience', 'Joburg, A World Class African City', 'Only in San Francisco', 'I'd rather be in Rochester' are all examples of efforts to position cities as a valuable brand in order to generate positive economic effects (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

A quite different example, also relating to attracting capital and economic gains, is the bidding for the Olympic Games. As van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) underline, 'the fact that the bidding is a truly diplomatic game with negotiating, lobbying and influencing makes it a very interesting case in explaining the economic dimension of city diplomacy'. The financial success of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics have brought about a growing interest by cities to host the Games; coupled with the increase in revenues from the sale of television broadcasting rights and the sponsorship by major international companies, cities are bidding for the Olympics in order to strengthen 'their global status in an era of growing inter-urban competition' (Shoval 2002).

Moscow is a prominent case study of a city that has been actively involved in the economic dimension of city diplomacy. It has established a special Department for

External Economic and International Relations, subordinate to the Mayor of Moscow, with a distinct economic outlook as shown by its key objectives:

- development of a strategy for Moscow's relations with foreign partners within international cooperation and submission of relevant proposals to the Mayor of Moscow;
- development of and participation in implementing a common policy in the area of foreign economic and international relations of Moscow, policy in the area of attracting foreign investment to Moscow's economy and protection thereof;
- cooperation of Moscow with international (including regional) organizations, including participation of Moscow in their activities as a member thereof, as well as coordination of participation of Moscow's executive authorities in international organizations;
- coordination of international cooperation of Moscow's executive authorities with foreign partners for Moscow to be able to implement a common policy in the area of foreign economic and international links, to exercise its international rights and perform its international obligations;
- coordination of activities by executive authorities in attracting foreign investment to city programs and projects, working out measures to enhance the appeal of city programs for foreign investors and creating an investment project database.

Cooperating closely with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow's Department for External Economic and International Relations, has developed links with more than 150 cities and regions and maintains economic cooperation with 198 countries. Cooperation has been developing fast with Berlin, Vienna, Athens, Prague, Geneva, Düsseldorf, Sofia, Krakow and Genoa. In the Asian and Middle East regions, the focus has been on relations with Beijing, Hanoi, Jakarta, Tel-Aviv and Rabat, while in Latin America cooperation with Quito, Havana, La-Pas and Bogota has been emphasized. New partnerships have been established with Caracas, the capital of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, while it has resumed cooperation with Bucharest. Moscow urges foreign investors to take advantage of 'Moscow Investment Gate' specialized portal of international investment cooperation, 'Foreign Trade Information' portal and 'Moscow Agency for Export and Investment Support' (MAPEI) (www.moskvaimir.mos.ru; <http://government.moscow.ru>).

3.1.4. Culture

Culture is indisputably important in the diplomacy of states and equally important it is for city diplomacy. Allowing young people from cities with different cultures to interact with one another through sports, music or dancing and organizing cultural visits for their peer officials, discussing issues of common concern, are only some examples of the scope of cultural dimension of city diplomacy.

UCLG's Working Group on Culture states that culture lies at the heart of urban strategies, both based on its intrinsic vocation of the promotion of human rights, shaping the knowledge society and improving quality of life for everyone, but also on account of its role in the creation of employment, urban regeneration and social inclusion (Van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). The main objective of the UCLG Committee on Culture, chaired by Jordí Martí, Councillor for Culture, City of Barcelona, is to promote the role of culture as a central dimension of local policies through the dissemination and implementation of the 'Agenda 21 for culture' (www.cities-localgovernments.org).

The 'Agenda 21 for culture: a tool for cultural development in cities', developed by UCLG, was agreed upon by cities and local governments from all over the world to enshrine their commitment to human rights, cultural diversity, sustainability, participatory democracy and creating conditions for peace. It was approved by the 4th Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion of Porto Alegre, held in Barcelona on 8 May 2004 as part of the first Universal Forum of Cultures and it is the first document with a worldwide mission that advocates establishing the groundwork of an undertaking by cities and local governments for cultural development. A growing number of cities and local governments the world over have adhered to the 'Agenda 21 for culture' in their local councils. The process has raised the interest of international organisations, national governments and civil society (www.cities-localgovernments.org).

An interesting example of the cultural element in city diplomacy is reported by van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) and is in fact related to sexual orientation. The city of Amsterdam was diplomatically involved in the difficulties surrounding the organization of the 2006 gay parade in one of its partner cities, the Latvian city of Riga. With Riga's city government opposing the organization of the first gay parade,

Amsterdam's officials, in their role of city diplomats, tried to persuade opponents and actively took part in the parade in Riga. In the meantime, Amsterdam police have been involved in training their counterparts in Riga in crowd control for events like a gay parade. More recently, though, the focus within the partnership between the two cities has been on ethnic minorities and culture, given that both Amsterdam and Riga have large ethnic populations in their cities; representatives of both cities believe that they can learn from each other's policies relating to these different cultures.

3.1.5. Networks

Van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) argue that although international cooperation is usually not a diplomatic aim itself but more a means to achieve higher goals, in the case of city diplomacy, becoming organized on a regional, continental and global level 'is indeed a diplomatic goal in its own right'.

City-twinning, the oldest manifestation of city diplomacy, is so common that it is almost becoming 'old-fashioned'. In 1991 Zelinsky reported that more than 11,000 pairs of sister cities have entered into twinning agreements; in France there were 3,753 inter-municipal linkages, Germany had 3,229 and the US had 1,859 (Zelinsky 1991). Although twinning has been pursued for cultural, educational and generally idealistic ends, cities are increasingly turning to pragmatic forms of inter-municipal cooperation, such as the sharing of technology and information (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

Indeed, the city of Johannesburg, in its Municipal International Relations Policy, adopted in 2001, states that a number of cities are being researched for the purpose of selecting a few for twinning, acknowledging that it cannot sustain more than eight twinning agreements. These twinings have to be based on specific principles and criteria, such as to share knowledge and expertise in local governance generally, but also particularly in agreed functional areas, such as city planning, water and sanitation, executive management training and financial management (www.joburg.org.za).

Recently, cities' diplomatic efforts are geared towards international cooperation. Examples of such city networks are numerous:

- * Mega-Cities Project: 22 of the world's largest metropolitan areas participate in order to share innovative solutions to common problems through the exchange of ideas and technological innovation. Innovation transfers include: Curitiba's 'Surface Metro' to New York, Bangkok's Magic Eyes Anti-littering program to Rio de Janeiro and Los Angeles and Sao Paulo's Alert II (air pollution reduction program) to New York City (www.megacitiesproject.org)
- * M4 meetings: Mayors of the four largest European cities - Berlin, Moscow, London and Paris - come together to discuss the big challenges facing their cities. M4 meetings date back to 2004, when during the 'Cities Diplomacy' international forum, the Mayors of the four cities agreed on meeting annually in one of the capitals to share expertise in tackling the most important issues for their cities' development.
- * Eurocities: Network of more than 140 large cities in over 30 European countries. It influences and works with the EU institutions to respond to common issues that impact on the life of its citizens. Its aim is shape the opinions of stakeholders in Brussels to ultimately shift legislation in a way that helps city governments address the EU's strategic challenges at the local level. Also, part of its work is aimed at reinforcing the role and place that local government should have in a multi-level governance structure (www.eurocities.eu).
- * Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR): It was founded in Geneva in 1951 by a group of European mayors, later opening its ranks to the regions. Its members include over 50 national associations of towns, municipalities and regions from 38 countries. Together these associations represent some 100,000 local and regional authorities. CEMR endeavours to shape the future of Europe by enhancing the local and regional contribution, to influence European law and policy, to exchange experience at local and regional level and to cooperate with partners in other parts of the world (www.ccre.org).
- * Merco-Cities Network: Comprising of 213 cities in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Mercosur). Founded in 1995, it seeks to stimulate the participation of municipalities in the process of regional integration, to promote the creation of an institutional scope for the cities inside Mercosur and to facilitate the exchange and horizontal cooperation between cities of the region (www.mercociudades.org).

- * AMMC21: The Asian Network of Major Cities 21 is an international network of Asian capital and major cities, namely Bangkok, Delhi, Hanoi, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Metropolitan Manila, Seoul, Singapore, Taipei, Tokyo and Yangon, established as a new framework of cooperation for further development of the Asian region. Its objectives are: to ‘strengthen Asian identity and enhance the importance of Asia in the international community’; to ‘enable fellow major Asian cities to mutually share their knowledge and experience of common problems...to make it possible for the positive outcomes of these projects to be fed back to regions, citizens, companies...which will in turn contribute to social and economic development in Asia’ (www.anmc21.org).
- * United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG): Headquartered in Barcelona, UCLG is dealing with issues ranging from gender equality and social inclusion to decentralization, urban mobility, urban strategic planning. The organisation’s stated mission is to be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community. Present in 136 of the 191 UN member states in seven world regions, with 1000 cities across 95 countries and 112 local government associations being direct members, UCLG boasts to represent over half of the world’s total population (www.cities-localgovernments.org).

3.1.6. Representation

The representative dimension of city diplomacy may come closer to what people have in mind when thinking of city diplomacy, as it encompasses all those activities aimed at representing the city at international organizations (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). The aim of city diplomacy in its representative dimension is to participate in and influence decision-making at the supranational level, as is the case of cities’ representation at the EU and at the Council of Europe (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

In the EU, cities are part of the decision-making process through the Committee of the Regions (CoR), whose 344 members represent the cities of their respective

country/region. Given the significant influence of EU policies on the political, economic, social and cultural environment of cities, the CoR is frequently consulted by the European Commission and Council and independently adopts resolutions on topical political issues (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). In the case of the Council of Europe, cities have their own decision-making body as well: the Chamber of Local Authorities within the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. The activities of 'city diplomats' in the Chamber are wide-ranging, but primarily aim at protecting human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Europe (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

UCLG's pursuit to gain official status at the UN in order to promote and protect the interests of cities worldwide in all of the issues that the UN deals with, provides with a fascinating case: if such a status becomes reality, it will be formal recognition of the growing influence of cities in diplomacy and international politics (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007). In 2004, the Cardoso panel on UN-Civil Society Relations, proposed by Kofi Annan made a number of pertinent proposals: the UN General Assembly should debate a resolution 'affirming and respecting local autonomy as a universal principle'; it also proposed greater involvement by local authorities in UN processes (Nijman 2009). It suggested that the Elected Representative Liaison Unit should liaise with local authorities and their new world association (UCLG) and disseminate lessons of good practice, considering the UCLG 'an important conduit for representing people at the local level in the system of global governance' and proposed that: 'the United Nations should regard UCLG as an advisory body on governance matters' (Cardoso Report 2004). UCLG already participates in the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA) on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Along with UN-HABITAT, UCLG also works with UNDP, UNIFEM, UNITAR, UNESCO and OCHA.

Outside official political structures cities are increasingly trying to make themselves heard through lobbying. The example of UCLG's lobbying the UN, mentioned above, as well as the other networks' lobbying activities, demonstrate the cities' attempts to influence regional and supranational organizations. In the EU, cities try to influence decision-making either individually, like the city of London, or as a group, like the G4 (Grote 4) (comprising of the four main cities in the Netherlands: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007;

www.grotevier.nl). Indeed, both London and the G4 have established EU representation offices in Brussels in order to promote their interests (www.cityoflondon.gov.uk; www.grotevier.nl).

Overall, cities may have formal and informal influence; their powers come neither naturally nor they are automatically accepted by states. City diplomacy may evolve with the blessing of its respective central state/government, or as a reaction to inaction; as a dissident act of cities looking to have a say in decision-making shaping their future. Ground may be shifting towards inclusion of cities, but international organizations and supranational institutions such as the EU, the UN and the Council of Europe are still primarily the domain of states that are reluctant to share their power (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007).

4. City diplomacy and Climate change

4.1. Introducing a seventh dimension

Even though this thesis largely agrees with van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) and their conceptualization of city diplomacy, it proposes a seventh dimension of city diplomacy added to the six discussed above: Climate Change and the Environment. And although van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) mention the environment in the economic dimension of city diplomacy, this thesis argues that climate change has evolved a major theme of city diplomacy and should thus be devoted special attention.

Betsill and Bulkerey (2006) rightly argue that the threat of global climate change is considered as one of the most significant scientific and political challenges of our time. Given its global nature, answers to this challenge have been sought through multilateral agreements; through some form of international negotiation between nation-states. Although, global environmental governance has long been looked through the prism of the neo-realist paradigm, which still remains somewhat relevant, developments suggest that global climate change governance has been permeated by various other actors.

As Gemmill and Bamidele-Izu (2002) point out, ‘increasing global economic integration has reduced the power of national governments while granting other economic and political actors access to the world stage’. These new actors play a significant role changing or at least challenging the traditional balance of powers in global environmental governance. In this context, global civil society and environmental NGO’s have gained momentum and are now considered as serious actors in the formation and development of climate change international initiatives and agreements.

The continued preoccupation of scholars, policy makers and media alike with the development of an effective international regime for climate change and its main actors, has left developments in the subnational level pass by literally unnoticed. Tons of ink have been used in newspapers and academic papers explaining the withdrawal of the US in ratifying the Kyoto protocol. But little attention has been paid to what policies and responses have been established during this prolonged quest for an

international agreement. Indeed, inertia in the global level has been coupled with resurgence at the subnational and the local level.

Arguably, at first glance, global climate change would appear to constitute the quintessential policy problem involving a top-down strategy imposed by an international regime upon national governments (Rabe 2007). But it is widely held that nation-states will be unable to meet their international commitments for addressing climate change ‘without more explicit engagement with subnational action’ (Betsill and Bulkeley 2006; see also Corfee-Morlot et al. 2009). Betsill and Bulkeley (2006), thus, argue that local governments ‘have not just responded to predefined policy goals set within national and international arenas, but are also taking initiatives in their own right’.

The need to address environmental problems at the local level has been a key principle of green political thought. The renowned Brundtland Report, as back as 1987, included a specific chapter, titled ‘the urban challenge’, which noted that cities should be put central in the pursuit of sustainable development (WCED 1987). Corfee-Morlot et al (2009) posit that ‘the fate of the Earth’s climate and the vulnerability of human society to climate change are intrinsically linked to the way the cities develop over the coming decades and century’.

Andonova et al. (2007) argue that cities have evolved as very important actors in transnational climate change governance. This thesis argues that cities, understanding their central role in climate change governance, are not only responding by formulating mitigation and adaptation policies but also act as diplomatic actors in the global realm, trying to influence the ‘outcome’ of international negotiations (such as the text of an agreement), as well as the ‘process’ of negotiations (such as the agenda) (see Corell and Betsill 2008).

Cities, autonomously, in groups or through networks and organizations, with the blessing, the indifference or in opposition to their respective central states, are not only trying to influence decision-making but are actually actively representing themselves, making themselves heard and trying to have a say in the shaping of an international agreement. And whilst they do not have a formal status, neither they are considered official interlocutors in international negotiations, they are in fact increasingly gaining momentum. By raising awareness in communities worldwide, by lobbying national governments and by trying to influence international negotiations, cities are emerging as diplomatic actors in their own right.

4.2. Cities and climate change

4.2.1. Claiming leadership and affirming actorness

Climate change has served as platform for individual cities to make themselves visible in the world arena. Not only are they emerging as actors in climate change, they are also claiming leadership and recognition in the international realm. London and Los Angeles are two prominent case studies.

4.2.1.1. London

London's impetus to address climate change came directly from the former Mayor Ken Livingstone and his office. Livingstone, during his first term (2000-2004), developed an Energy Strategy for London, placing climate change centre stage (Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008). In order to pursue this goal London developed an approach to climate change explicitly based on partnerships, such as the London Climate Change Partnership and agencies, such as the London Climate Change Agency, which provided with additional resources and expertise. On the basis of various drivers and motivations – the commitment of critical individuals, positive public opinion and business/interest groups' consensus- London was able to develop a comprehensive approach to climate change (Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008).

Despite the potential importance of an international climate change policy in providing a framework for action, it was the failings of the global communities to address climate change that were providing a more direct impetus for action (Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008). As one interviewee put it, 'there's no point in waiting for a national government, no point in waiting for Europe, no point in waiting for international agreements; obviously they are important in the long term, (but) all that's been far too slow...you know we'll all be dead by the time anything's arrived' (anonymous interviewee cited in Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008). This inaction empowered London to actively deal with climate change.

By the time of the 2004 election, climate change 'was the biggest issue of the second Mayoral term, it was the thing that became a personal priority for the Mayor'

(anonymous interviewee cited in Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008). Climate change was not only used as a platform for the elections, but also to claim leadership in both the city, national and international levels. London's strategy aimed at providing leadership on the issue of climate change: political leadership, business leadership and most importantly international leadership (see Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008).

London's role was primarily one of enabling – establishing a network through which advice, knowledge and finance could flow. As Bulkeley and Schroeder (2008) recount, London's political leadership established the C20 network of 'global' cities and brought together key cities for a summit on responses to climate change to coincide with the 2005 G8 meeting; based at the GLA, this network was renamed as C40 as it expanded, holding a number of summits and workshops for members (www.c40cities.org). 'Political capital has also been made of the ways in which London is setting an example to other "global" cities on climate change, and in particular of how other cities are seeking to learn from London's approach' Bulkeley and Schroeder (2008) underline.

London's response to climate change has been predicated on the creation of an alternative, 'global' response to climate change, and one in which it would be positioned as a leading actor (Bulkeley and Schroeder 2008). Through the development of C40, its central position in M4 meetings, and participation in almost all existing networks involving local authorities in climate change, London's aspirations for leadership went international. In essence, London is not only focusing on climate change as a field for its city diplomacy action; it is also its involvement in climate change that has helped London to claim a leadership role and further affirm its actorness on the diplomatic scene.

4.2.1.2. Los Angeles

Schroeder and Bulkeley (2008) underline four aspects that turned climate change into a priority issue for the city: a) Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and his staff recognized the interconnectedness of all the environmental problems that the city faced; b) it was realized that climate change was not just a global or future problem but a local and high-risk one for LA; c) the Mayor had ambitions to run for the office

of Governor of California and developing a profile as a leader on climate change would give him an advantage; and d) the Mayor was contacted by City of London to become part of their C20 network.

It was indeed the political leadership of Antonio Villaraigosa that facilitated a comprehensive approach to climate change and its central placement in the political agenda. Los Angeles, then, drew on business and civil society leadership to further support its strategies and plans, before it could claim national and international leadership. As Schroeder and Bulkeley (2008) underline, national and international leadership has been a key element in LA's strategy'.

National leadership in climate change has been central to LA in the absence of central climate change policy. In 2007, the City of Los Angeles released its climate action plan 'Green LA: An Action Plan to Lead the Nation in Fighting Global Warming', setting forth a goal of reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions to 35% below 1990 levels by the year 2030 - one of the most aggressive goals of any big city in the US (www.ci.la.ca.us). Central Government's inertia facilitated the emergence of Los Angeles as an actor in climate change; and climate change was then used as a platform to reinstate and advocate for a central role of cities in any climate change policy.

Along with its national leadership's aspirations, LA focused on its emergence as a 'global' player. The C40 network, which emerged from the earlier C20 network, was announced in LA in August 2006 by the Clinton Foundation, the mayors of Los Angeles, San Francisco and London, Prime Minister Blair and President Clinton (Schroeder and Bulkeley 2008). Hosting that event, the eminence of the persons participating and the publicity it attracted further legitimized its role in international climate change leadership. Central government's inaction and the city's progressive and focused involvement in climate change made it possible for the city of Los Angeles to raise its international profile and to emerge as a serious actor in climate change policy.

4.2.2. EU – US: Cities’ Climate Change Agreements

4.2.2.1. EU: The Covenant of Mayors

‘To set an example to our citizens and to other cities- and by giving an example, we can then give leadership’.

Alan Coleman, Cork City Councillor, Ireland (www.eumayors.eu)

Under an EU initiative 1921 local authorities have already signed The Covenant of Mayors: a formal commitment by the signatory city councils to go beyond the EU objectives in terms of CO₂ reduction (more than 20% by 2020), through the implementation of sustainable energy action plans with concrete measures. The Covenant of Mayors has a strong international dimension since it is not limited to the EU. In addition to non-EU capitals such as Buenos Aires and Oslo, already signed up to the covenant, there are a range of other signatories from countries like Armenia, Bosnia – Herzegovina, New Zealand, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine. Signatories represent cities varying in size, from small villages like Suflí – Spain (population of 288), to major metropolitan areas such as London and Paris (www.eumayors.eu).

The Covenant of Mayors is more than just isolated actions at local level. Via events and thematic workshops by its supporting structures, it provides an opportunity for local administrations to meet and discuss common problems arising from the very real effects of climate change; it enables the development of partnerships between cities facing similar challenges; and it provides visibility for local actions that can be promoted and replicated across Europe and beyond for the benefit of all (www.eumayors.eu).

This ambitious agreement of cities trying to overcome and bypass national commitments in CO₂ reduction is indicative of the power that local governments have in reaching consensus regarding climate change. As Andris Piebalgs, former Commissioner for Energy noted ‘cities are less subject to ideological confrontation and more to finding practical co-operative solutions – nearly all the cities that had signed up to the Covenant by the beginning of 2009 did so by unanimous decision of the councils involved’ (www.ape.ud.it) .

The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, praised the Covenant of Mayors saying: ‘I would very much like to see local and regional

authorities extend innovative partnerships like the Covenant of Mayors to other policy areas. This would help Europe to translate its ambitions into reality, while taking account of the immense diversity our continent enjoys, and the differing situations on the ground. This, for me, is subsidiarity in action' (www.eumayors.eu).

4.2.2.2. US: The US Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection

Agreement

'Mayors have single-handedly taken action on climate protection efforts and in many cases, creatively launched local energy efficiency programs to help reduce our carbon footprint in American cities'.

Tom Cochran, CEO & Executive Director, US Conference of Mayors

(www.usmayors.org)

Under the leadership of the US Conference of Mayors, the official nonpartisan organization of US cities – with 1206 city – members, the US Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement was developed. Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels was the founder of this movement, with signatory cities vowing to reduce carbon emissions below 1990 levels by 2012. So far 1044 Mayors from 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have signed the Agreement, representing a total population of nearly 88 million citizens (www.usmayors.org).

Under the Agreement (www.usmayors.org), participating cities commit to take following three actions:

- Strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their own communities, through actions ranging from anti-sprawl land-use policies to urban forest restoration projects and public information campaigns;
- Urge their state governments, and the federal government, to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the greenhouse gas emission reduction target suggested for the United States in the Kyoto Protocol - 7% reduction from 1990 levels by 2012;
- Urge the US Congress to pass the bipartisan greenhouse gas reduction legislation, which would establish a national emission trading system

In 2007, in recognition of an increasingly urgent need to provide mayors with guidance and assistance, Douglas H. Palmer, Mayor of Trenton and President of The US Conference of Mayors and Conference Executive Director Tom Cochran officially launched The US Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Center. This Center ‘takes us a giant step beyond advocacy of a stronger federal role in reducing emissions. It acknowledges that while mayors recognize the need for a federal partner in this effort, they cannot and will not wait to act until Washington is ready to move on this problem’ (www.usmayors.org).

In essence, US federal inaction has empowered cities to act as city diplomats, to network, gain power and try to influence central-state decision making. The agreement calls for its signatories to ‘urge’, to lobby state governments, the federal government and the US Congress to take concrete action regarding climate change. Climate change, in this case, has provided cities a platform to coalesce, get involved, and ‘diplomatically’ represent themselves in order to forward their interests.

4.2.2.3. EU and US Cities’ Climate Change Agreements: Some Interesting Insights

The EU has imposed constraints on subnational authorities (implementation of EU legislation and policies) but also new opportunities and new channels of influence (Kassim 2005). These new opportunities have given rise to new strategies and many cities now search actively for direct access to EU institutions in Brussels; they may even use ‘the detour via Brussels’ to change the situation in Berlin, Dublin or Helsinki (Kern 2010). Many cities no longer view European integration as a restriction, but as a new opportunity because institutionalized forms of networking enable cities to actively pursue multi-level strategies (Kern 2010). The new opportunity structure draws cities to Brussels: setting up offices in Brussels, cooperating with each other to strengthen their influence and solicit EU funding and establishing transnational networks (see Kassim 2005; Ewen and Hebbert 2007)

Cities which become active in Brussels share an entrepreneurial spirit and the desire to shape policy at European level (Kassim 2005). Kern (2010) suggest that this development could be regarded as an expression of paradiplomacy; cities representing

their interests independently of their respective national governments. This thesis is though hesitant to adopt such a view since it is unclear whether national governments object or not to the ‘diplomatic representation’ of cities in Brussels. Terminology aside, local authorities have become active in climate change, joining networks and adopting agreements such as the Covenant of Mayors, show an eagerness to learn from other countries and influence supranational policy developments. Cities are increasingly considered as agents of change in climate change policy and city diplomacy in climate change is gaining momentum.

The Dunkerque 2010 Call on Climate Action (www.dunkerque2010.org) provides us with the results of city diplomacy and the quest of cities recognition as equal partners in climate change: The European Council of 29-30 October 2009 endorsed the Council Conclusions of the Environmental Council of 21 October 2009 on the EU position for the Copenhagen Climate Conference highlighting the role which local authorities will play in implementing mitigation and adaptation actions and calling for recognition of that role in the Copenhagen Agreement. The European Parliament in its resolutions of 25 November 2009 asked for greater recognition of the role of local and regional governments in climate action. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in its recommendation of 18 March 2010 asked its member states to:

allow local and regional authorities direct access to the diplomatic process relating to the climate, and therefore to include them in the national delegations that throughout the year 2010 will be taking part in negotiations on a climate change agreement, and to involve them in the pre-negotiation phase as key partners in the activities to be carried out.

(www.dunkerque2010.org)

The US case also provides us with some interesting points. US cities inspired and empowered ‘by the policy vacuum resulting from the absence of international obligations and national programs’ (Setzer 2009) become active in climate change policy. Even though municipal initiatives in the US in the area of climate change were established considerably later than their European counterparts, pioneering cities have caught up fast and have developed similar approaches (Alber and Kern 2009).

The US Conference of Mayors’ Climate Protection Agreement, mentioned earlier, was launched on the day that the Kyoto Protocol came into force without the US as a party. Urban Leadership on climate change in the US, however, began well

before the federal government withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol; many US cities and counties have played a crucial role in international coalitions of localities attempting to make progress on emissions, with Portland, Oregon, being at the forefront (Osofsky and Levit 2008). Cities, along or 'in opposition' to their respective states and federal government have become actors in climate change policy and are demanding recognition as respected partners in the quest for sustainability.

Like their European counterparts, American cities have started to lobby for climate protection legislation in their state capitals, in Washington D.C. and even at the international level (Alber and Kern 2009). Through the development of transnational networks dedicated to climate change, cities often by-pass their federal, national and supranational governments and institutions to address the international community and make themselves heard and advocate for an international role.

4.2.3. Networking, Lobbying and Claiming an International Role

4.2.3.1. The C40

In October 2005, representatives of 18 leading world cities met in London to discuss joining forces to tackle global warming and climate change. The representatives saw the need for action and cooperation on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pledged to work together towards achieving that goal. The cities promised a number of action points, including most notably the creation of procurement policies and alliances to accelerate the uptake of climate-friendly technologies and influence the market place (www.c40cities.org).

The C40 has gone a long way from its initial rhetoric, demonstrating the ability of global cities such as London to catalyze international action (Acuto 2009). In August 2006, for instance, the former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone announced a partnership between the Clinton Climate Initiative and the C40, further strengthening the initiative. This new partnership pledged to reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency in large cities across the world (<http://clintonpresidentialcenter.com>). Moreover, the C40 has undertaken a series of issue-centred programmes including a Ports Climate Conference and a Sustainable

Airports Initiative, as well as a three-year capacity building programme for mega-cities of the global South kick-started in February 2009 along with the World Bank (Acuto 2009).

In 2009 it also worked with the city of Copenhagen to organise the Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors that took place alongside the UN Climate Change Conference. Representatives from 80 cities, including 55 Mayors, gathered together at the summit. The C40 underlined that while climate change demands global action, cities demonstrated that they are not waiting for others to act; that cities are on the frontline of taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainability (www.climatesummitformayors.dk). In the closing up of the Summit, the C40 issued a communiqué, declaring its stance and putting pressure on national governments for action.

4.2.3.1.1. The Copenhagen Climate Communiqué

The mayors gathered in Copenhagen urged the national leaders to embrace the unique chance and seal an ambitious and empowering deal. With the communiqué, the mayors asked the national leaders to recognize that the future of our globe will be won or lost in the cities:

As city leaders, we have joined together with a common purpose – to lead the way with the most ambitious policies, strategies, concrete initiatives and investments that will engage and benefit our citizens while creating a better future for our planet...Cities act...Cities move on. Over the years we have undertaken climate strategies that were often more ambitious than national action. We intend to continue doing so...We are prepared to collaborate, innovate and try even harder. Our message to national governments is simple: agree on ambitious targets and start reducing now....
(www.kk.dk)

4.2.3.2. ICLEI

ICLEI was founded in 1990 as the 'International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives'. The Council was established when more than 200 local governments from 43 countries convened at the inaugural conference, the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future, at the United Nations in New York (www.iclei.org).

In 2003, ICLEI's Members voted to revise the organization's mission, charter and name to better reflect the current challenges local governments are facing. The 'International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' became 'ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability' with a broader mandate to address sustainability issues (www.iclei.org).

Nearly 1200 cities, towns, counties, and their associations worldwide comprise ICLEI's growing membership. ICLEI works with these and hundreds of other local governments through international performance-based, results-oriented campaigns and programs. ICLEI provides technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. ICLEI has become the focal point for local government and municipality authorities constituency at the UNFCCC Secretariat. Through this opportunity, hundreds of mayors and local government representatives are taking part in Municipal Summits parallel to official COP events and interventions are delivered at high level segments. In 2009, ICLEI became the first local government network that has been accredited as an observer organization to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (www.iclei.org).

4.2.3.2.1. The Cities for Climate Protection Campaign

The 1st Municipal Leadership Summit held at the UN Headquarters in New York in 1993 yielded the establishment of Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign. In the past 17 years, CCP has been recognized as the instrumental tool to initiate local mitigation and adaptation actions in both developed and developing countries, and

provided key inputs in global climate advocacy efforts of cities and local governments (www.iclei.org). CCP has been widely prominent in the academic debate, often with positive connotations. Betsill (2001) notes that at the national level officials in CCP communities can force their respective national governments to rethink their domestic and international policies on climate change by shaping public opinion and lobbying; globally, CCP communities can operate in order to alter the prevailing discourse and raise awareness about the role of cities in a new global climate regime in the post-2012 period.

4.2.3.2.2. World Mayors Council on Climate Change

‘We are a global alliance of committed local leaders who want to actively address the greatest threat to our planet – climate change. The Council is more than the sum of its parts: by speaking with one voice we influence global climate governance’.

Bärbel Dieckmann Former Mayor of Bonn, Germany (www.iclei.org)

ICLEI, together with the then Mayor of City of Kyoto initiated the World Mayors Council on Climate Change in 2005. The World Mayors Council on Climate Change is an alliance of committed local government leaders advocating an enhanced recognition and involvement of Mayors in multilateral efforts addressing climate change and related issues of global sustainability (www.iclei.org).

The key purposes of the Council are:

- to politically promote policies addressing climate change and its impact on other areas at the local level;
- to foster the international cooperation of municipal leaders on achieving relevant climate targets,
- to help make the multilateral mechanisms for global climate protection effective and, through advocacy, influence negotiations on future global climate protection regimes (www.iclei.org).

4.2.3.3. Networks coalesce: Cities like declarations too¹

Since COP 13 (Bali) in 2007, we are witnessing the coalition of local government networks. ICLEI, UCLG, Metropolis, World Mayors Council on Climate Change, and C40 have united their forces and are advocating for a better recognition and empowerment of cities and local governments in the new global climate regime in the post-2012 period. Together they develop global agreements, such as the World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement, developing specific goals for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and affirming their commitment to leadership, advocacy and action (www.globalclimateagreement.org).

Moreover, they are lobbying national governments and international organizations and issue resolutions and declarations. These, although not legally binding, can be effective in stimulating debate, heighten public awareness and shift public opinion in favour of international regulations (Taipale 2009).

In May 2010 municipal leaders from around the world gathered in Bonn, Germany to launch the Mayors Adaptation Forum; the first annual platform of the World Mayors Council on Climate Change. The Forum ran in conjunction with Resilient Cities 2010: 1st World Congress on Cities and Adaptation to Climate Change, organized by ICLEI, the City of Bonn and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change (www.iclei.org). The Bonn Declaration declared to the global climate community 10 Action Points ranging from the strengthening of the budgets and capacities of local governments and direct access to financing mechanisms and technical resources, to participation of cities in global climate negotiations (www.iclei.org).

¹ Adapted from Taipale 2005

5. Conclusion

‘Cities and Climate change’ was the topic of the 5th Urban Research Symposium, organized by the World Bank in 2009. ‘Cities and Climate Change’ is the theme of the forthcoming 2011 UN-HABITAT’s Global Report on Human Settlements. Cities and climate change have been quite prominent in the recent academic debate. However, hardly any of the contributions have tried to examine the city’s diplomatic engagement in climate change policy.

This exploration of cities’ diplomatic engagement in climate change policy has only been selective and thus indicative. Cities across the globe act either unilaterally or in networks, with the blessing, the ignorance or in opposition to their respective national governments. The rationale behind each city’s decision to seek an international role in climate change varies from altruistic considerations to a pursuit for international leadership.

This thesis has not sought to investigate in depth the reasons behind the development of cities as actors in climate change policy, nor their ability to be effective in delivering on their promises. This could be a topic for further study. This thesis has only argued that cities’ involvement in climate change urges for the inclusion of one more dimension in the city diplomacy’s dimensions proposed by van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007).

Reviewing the changes in the processes of diplomacy and the empowerment of subnational actors in diplomatic practice, this thesis argued that cities, almost unnoticed have developed an impressive diplomatic apparatus. Indeed cities increasingly interact with one another, commit to security and development issues, engage in cultural exchanges, network for the advancement of their own agendas, lobby central governments and international institutions and claim a say in international negotiations.

This thesis analysed the six dimensions of city diplomacy proposed by van der Pluijm and Melissen (2007) but argued for the introduction of a seventh one, namely climate change. By presenting individual cities strategies and actorness in climate change policy, the development of cities’ agreements in the EU and the US and cities’ international networking and lobbying, this thesis posits that not only cities are

emerging as international actors in climate change, but that climate change has been used as a platform for the advancement of cities in the international arena.

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