



THE 13<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION  
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

**International Relations in the Contemporary World.  
Geopolitics and Diplomacy**

**The Changing Nature of Diplomacy: Rising Powers' Humanitarian  
Diplomacy Practices**

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**Abstract:** In this study, the ways of how the sample rising powers conduct their humanitarian diplomacy are analyzed since there is heterogeneity such in the other fields of foreign policy implementations. Rising powers' foreign policies and their soft power tools are a debatable issue in general. However, this study goes into much detail within the scope of humanitarian diplomacy and humanitarian aid as a part of it. The case study includes the sample countries which are Turkey, Brazil and China. The official reports, official foreign policies and their implementations are considered in the analysis. Turkey's perception on humanitarian issues is based on the idea of humanity and international responsibility with its historical and cultural history. Brazil's focus on humanitarian issues is mostly related to both its foreign policies and multilateralism tendencies. China has deep philosophical thoughts and some long-term goals. Even the policies of case countries seem in this way in principle and humanitarian issues are universally accepted issues, when the implementations are analyzed, there are some differences that inhibit us to reach a general conclusion and prove the heterogeneity in the practices. Thus, this study is an important contribution for such privatized diplomacy theme regarding the sample rising powers.

**Keywords:** humanitarian aid; foreign policy; emerging powers; responsibility; humanitarian report

## **1. Introduction**

The general definition of power is to ability to influence and effect the behaviours' of other to get what you want. The attitude and way of getting what you want defines whether it is soft power or hard power. The military and economic sanctions, inducements, threats, coercions are all part of hard power and their effects' can be seen in the short run. However, soft power is a kind of indirect way to effect the others' decisions. A nation's ability to persuade and attract to the others with its attractiveness of culture, political ideas and policies is called as soft powers. (Nye, 2004, p. 2) Rising powers in international relations are getting much more share in international politics than ever before. The way that they conduct their foreign policies is a debatable issue in international politics since the growing attention to soft power tools rather than the hard power tools.

Changing power relations and increasing number of the actors that are included in these relations have also changed the way implementing foreign policies in different ways. Diplomacy can be regarded as

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the most important way of implementing the foreign policies. On the one hand, the number of the actors included in the diplomacy increased and on the other hand, the increasing tools of power have changed the power structure. (Cooper, Heine & Thakur, 2013, p. 50) In the cases of conflict, chaos, war, natural disasters, diplomacy needs to be conducted. However, based on the scope of damage and efforts by the governments, states and organizations may not be able to solve the problems or tend not to give time or use resources for a political situation. (Egeland, 2013) And over time, diplomacy has started to be a privatized field that one can see many different kinds of diplomacies and one them is public diplomacy which means to influence the citizens of other countries' behaviours in a parallel way of their foreign policies by emphasizing the upsides and strenghts of the country. However, despite all the differences in power relations and interdependence relations, there is a common understanding that irrespective to any kind of differences, all needy people who are sick, suffering or starving should be helped in anyway. The UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are the leading international organizations of conducting humanitarian affairs. However, humanitarian affairs are not limited with only these organizations. The main term explained in this study is humanitarian diplomacy which means "a strategy for influencing the parties to armed conflicts and others - States, non-State actors and members of civil society. Its purpose is purely humanitarian and it is carried out through a network of sustained relationships - bilateral and multilateral, official and inform a strategy for influencing the parties to armed conflicts and others - States, non-State actors and members of civil society. Its purpose is purely humanitarian and it is carried out through a network of sustained relationships - bilateral and multilateral, official and informal" according to ICRC's definition. Regarding the content and scope of humanitarian diplomacy, it is a responsibility rather than a choice (IFRC). There are some basic principles of humanitarian diplomacy which are humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. These guiding principles are set out by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (International Review of the Red Cross). Rising powers in international politics have also the principle of non-intervention to the needy country. At this point, the general principles and the application of rising powers are in accord with each other. Hence, the humanitarian diplomacy samples are mostly conducted on natural disasters and needy situations rather than the conflicts context. In this hence, humanitarian aid is the most concrete step that one's humanitarian diplomacy. So, how do these sample three countries deliver their humanitarian aid is the main theme of this study. The focus is their practises of humanitarian aid. The reason why this study is so privatized is that humanitarian aid practises are addressed in the frame of its being a tool of humanitarian diplomacy and hence being a tool of rising powers' soft power initiatives. These three countries' humanitarian aid policies and practices will be explained and then in the conclusion part, the similarities and differences will be asserted.

## **2. Sample Countries**

As an important tool of soft power, humanitarian diplomacy is an instrument of rising powers' foreign policies as well as the traditional powers'. However, the way of their exercises on humanitarian diplomacy vary because of their differences as a rising power. They have their own characteristics and they are not under the same roof about some specific issues. The niche diplomacy scopes vary for each rising power, however it is possible to say that actions should be in harmony with foreign policy, overall capacity and role conceptions. (Öniş & Kutlay, 2015, p. 9) Even the basic logic of humanitarian diplomacy is based on the similar philosophies, the way of conducting it as not the same. In this complicated power relations, Africa is the region where it can be seen the clash of these relations or the most beneficial cooperation. In this study, the implementations of three of rising

powers which are Turkey, Brazil and China is analyzed. Because of their growing effect in especially in Africa and inside their regions and their similar stances in the world politics, these countries are chosen to analyze. Their rate on the global ranking of soft power are also very close to each other. (USC Center on Public Diplomacy, 2017) The motivations of conducting humanitarian diplomacy vary for each sample country and it is not possible to evaluate the motivations solely and exclusively. There may be other factors influencing the choices.

### **2.1. Turkey**

Development aid, especially humanitarian aid and humanitarian issues are formally a prominent part of Turkish foreign policy for years. The official authorities do not abstain from indicating this. In 2013, the Foreign Minister Mr. Davutoğlu declared that the humanitarian diplomacy is more than humanitarian aid, it is “human-oriented diplomacy”. (Baird, 2015, p. 1; Davutoğlu, 2013) As a country which feels responsibility for the needy people in all over the World, Turkey also gets advantages of positive reflections of this approach in international field. (Özkan, 2010, p. 538) The Turkish model of humanitarian diplomacy is based on finding a balance between conscience and interests and its multi-track face means its inclusion of official, business and civic channels. (Akpınar, 2013, p. 735) The official policy of Turkey in this field is to help the needy people wherever they are. Turkey gives humanitarian aid to conflict regions, however the purpose of the aid is rehabilitate the situation rather than intervening to the conflict. Turkey conducts humanitarian diplomacy practices with some official institutions and too many NGOs. The expense that Turkey has spent for Syrian refugees made Turkey second largest humanitarian aid donor in the world. In 2016 the 99 % of humanitarian assistance delivered by Turkey goes directly to refugees. (Development Initiatives, 2017, p. 44) By Turkey’s adopting Africa Plan in 1998, the diplomatic and trade relations between them have increased year by year (Özkan & Orakçı, Viewpoint: Turkey as a “political” actor in Africa – an assessment of Turkish involvement in Somalia, 2015, p. 344). The promoted relations came into practice with Somalia case and the Turkish government cared about the hunger and instability problems of Somalia. Turkey collected donations and closely cooperate with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Somalia case. (UN, 2011) Somalia initiative has started in 2011 and it was with the pure humanitarianism targets. And it was the most prominent evidence of Turkey’s engagement with the Africa (Özkan, Does “Rising Power” Mean “Rising Donor”? Turkey’s Development Aid in Africa, 2013). Turkey’s cooperation in the region is not limited with the UN. It is trying to engage with Al- Shaabab and NGO workers in the region. Because the most needy people are in Al-Shaabab controlled areas, assistance should reach safely and not be misused. (Murphy & Woods, 2014, p. 7) This case forces Turkey’s hand to cooperate with them even it may be dangerous for the humanitarian workers in the region. The top humanitarian assistance receivers are Syrian refugees, Palestine, Somalia, Iraq and Myanmar by the beginning of 2017. (TİKA, 2017) Non-governmental institutions together with the government institutions, INGOs and sometimes the local authorities are the part of Turkey’s humanitarian diplomacy in the Africa. Turkey’s aid given structure has evolved for years in a way of increasing mobility of NGOs, direct involvement of political and official figures and re-organization of aid institutions. The structure and coordination of institutions are enhancing with moving beyond its limits in both practice and procedure. It is possible to say about this transformation process that it mostly depends on three basis changes and policies which are: 1) political consolidation and stability, 2) multi-dimensional vision of foreign politics and pro-active foreign policy stand, 3) economic success. (Haşimi, 2014, pp. 129-133) TİKA (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) is the leading institution for the coordination of development assistances. However, respecting the humanitarian assistances, AFAD (the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority) is the most effective institution. Besides these two institutions, it is necessary to mention about the Turkish Red Crescent,

the Ministry of Health in this regard. Besides the field projects and given aid, Turkey hosted the first Humanitarian Summit in İstanbul in 2016 and this shows the power of Turkey in defining the principles and the ways of humanitarian aid practices. The humanitarian aid given to the Syrian refugees includes the cost of living expenses and health cost of the people who currently lives in Turkey.

## **2.2. Brazil**

Brazil sees humanitarian diplomacy and hence humanitarian aid as an opportunity for his rising power and influence in the continent. So, Brazil is more concentrated on the continent. More politics oriented approach of Brazil also has aim to be a global power in the future. The term global governance has key importance for Brazil's foreign policy that is mainly based on soft power tools. From business firms which have interests in mining industry to different kinds of diplomatic actors, Brazil has widened its sphere of influence. On the one hand Brazil is implementing their policies in line with the idea of multilateralism which is a kind of tradition in Brazil's foreign policy, on the other hand Brazil has deep ties with the "Third World". When these two main tradition comes together, Brazil's objective of actively engaging in international organizations, such as a permanent seat at the UNSC, might be harder to achieve. Besides, Brazil is a part of Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative as a non-Western country. (Gilley, 2015, p. 49) However, even it seems necessary to use all necessary measures including military intervention, Brazil show a reluctance in this way and can call for the ceasefire such as in Libya example in 2011. (Lindert & Troost, 2014, pp. 16-18) However, the capacity of Brazil's becoming global power is limited such in the region. Over time in line with Brazilian foreign policy concept, the non-indifference approach got more important. (Arantes, 2014, p. 42) General characteristics of Brazil humanitarian diplomacy finds itself in the trilateral cooperation. About ¾ of Brazilian aid goes with multilateral channels. Brazil also attaches high importance to humanitarian aid. When the Haiti earthquake was hit, Brazil has supplied humanitarian aid by international organizations mostly by the United Nations. At the UN donor conference after Haiti, Brazil was the only non-western donor who co-chaired to the conference. It was an opportunity for Brazil to show its leading role on the continent. (Binder, Meier & Steets, 2010, p. 11) As well as China, Brazil is also an active participatory to the ISDR. The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery-GFDRR under the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations- FAO and World Food Program are the multilateral organizations Brazil is cooperating. Except the emergency situations on humanitarian diplomacy, Brazil also supports the program aid especially in the agriculture and food fields such as "Zero Hunger Program". (Binder, Meier & Steets, 2010) Brazil sustains an activist foreign policy in Africa and especially combating for AIDS and malaria, he closely cooperate with the US. (Guilhon-Albuquerque, 2014, p. 118) In the institutional structure of Brazil's humanitarian aid lies the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the decision making body. And further, Brazil closely cooperates with FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and WFP. (World Food Programme) (Binder, Meier & Steets, 2010, p. 12)

## **2.3. China**

The way of China to cooperate in Africa is getting a reciprocal form unlike the traditional donors and by giving what Africa needs most, China is having both political allies and economic partners there. (Wild, 2015, p. 95) China's existence in the Africa has too many reasons such as trade and investments, infrastructure, mining etc. (Guilhon-Albuquerque, 2014) In the Chin and Frolic's study, it is indicated that China does not tend to be included in cooperation with other countries or multilateral organizations. (Chin & Frolic, 2007) Even if China has not much "real" tendency towards joint working, it sees cooperation as an important factor in the humanitarian issues. He also closely

cooperate with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction- ISDR and Association of Southeast Asian Nations- ASEAN). The approach of China to development aid is mostly based on the principle of non-interference. The humanitarian diplomacy approach is also based on this principle, hence China gives humanitarian aid mostly in intergovernmental way which means bilateral type in practice. However, in conjunction with the Wechuan Eartquake (2008) and tsunami in the Indian Ocean (2004), the idea of cooperating closer with the international organizations has gained more importance. Besides the idea of responsibility and the need to respond humanitarian emergencies, Chinese Confucian philosophy recommends that a person who has humanity and goodness in herself also cannot be irrespective to humanitarian values (Xiaodong, 2001). Even the idea lying behind the humanitarian aid practices of China seem reasonable, however there are some arguments regarding the embedded idea of China's looking out for its own economic interests. (Binder, Meier & Steets, 2010, p. 13) (Lengauer, 2011, pp. 52-53) With this idea, a question of debate has arisen regarding the initial motivation of China in humanitarian aid. However, in the case of emergency reliefs, it is almost not questioned. China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) is a non-profit organization and most relief aid activities are coordinated and implemented by this organization such as tsunami in South and Southeast Asia in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, the 2007 cyclone in Bangladesh, 2008 cycone Nargis in Myanmar. (D'Hooghe, 2015, p. 180) Apart from this, the characteristics of Chinese humanitarian diplomacy is a kind of different than the others in a way of its win-win approach. While supplying aid, their way of doing this is more diplomatic way, because engaging with the countries and founding diplomatic ties mean much more diplomacy rather than giving aid as a "gift". China's stand seems more likely not to give aid in this sense. The dilemma about the Chinese humanitarian aid is that, China has taken steps with the idea of responsibility to protect against to humanitarian intervention, when it comes to Africa, it still has the power of humanitarian intervention. Another explanatory idea about the real intention of humanitarian aid is that China mainly uses humanitarian intervention as a part of its diplomacy, hence humanitarian aid seems like a part of its economy. (Wild, 2015, pp. 95-97)

### **3. Conclusion**

Despite having the principle of non- interference, the rising powers, especially Brazil and China have no data on global humanitarian reports. The prominent problem is transparency. However, Turkey voluntarily reports its humanitarian assistance to OECD and the data for Turkey is much more accessible. (Development Initiatives, 2017, p. 45) Brazil usually contributes by being included in trilateral cooperation which is "*human- related*". Because it stresses human rights rather than the other "*humanitarian*" issues. Then, it is possible to say that the initial step is the relevance of the needy situation with "human rights". And Brazil bases this approach on responsibility to protect motto. (Itamaraty, 2015) However, the urgency of the needy situation is a valid motivation for Turkey to get contact with the needy people. Regardless of the distance and the other differences, Turkey is ready to give humanitarian aid to be included in the resolution processes. For China, an undeniable fact is that China has multi-faced motivations rather than solely humanitarian concerns.

Geographical proximity makes call all three countries' attentions to the region. Turkey, Brazil and China cannot be indifferent to the humanitarian problems of their own regions and this makes them such a leading regional power and hence, their power in international relations are increasing. Despite the universally urgent needy situation characteristics of humanitarian aid, if they have to choose a priority, some selection criteria become prominent. While the enhancement of the region the most prominent criteria for Brazil and China, Turkey also considers the historical, cultural and religious

ties. China prefers the countries and situations in which she can settle further diplomatic relations and take the advantage of win-win approach. Brazil is more politically driven approaches. However, all these approaches do not change the result that these countries help the people who are in needy situation wherever they are. All three countries consider the principle of non-interference and this is the most explicit characteristics of these countries' humanitarian aid practices.

Regarding the motivations, practices and formal policies of the countries', it is obvious that there is no homogeneity among these countries. As well as the heterogenetic, structure in the other fields, humanitarian diplomacy and hence humanitarian aid is the other diplomacy tool which proves the heterogeneity. Even all the claims are open to debate; the similarities and the differences are as mentioned above in the frame of the real aims and functions of humanitarian aid.

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