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**Article (Accepted version)
(Refereed)**

Original citation:

Jackson-Preece, Jennifer (2019) Reararticulating the friend–enemy distinction within states: the HCNM’s ‘new diplomacy’ of desecuritization. [Hague Journal of Diplomacy](#), 14 (1). ISSN 1871-1901 (In Press)

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Available in LSE Research Online: April 2018

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Rearticulating the Friend–Enemy Distinction within States: The HCNM’s ‘New Diplomacy’ of Desecuritization

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Summary

This article’s premise is that the practice of representatives of international organizations has something important to tell us about what it means to ‘do desecuritization’. The analysis provides a qualitative process-tracing of diplomacy by the OSCE’s High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). It finds that ‘new diplomats’ can ‘do desecuritization’ differently. By rearticulating norms, as well as negotiating interests, the HCNM is able to escape the constraints imposed by security grammar and begin to transform the friend–enemy distinction within states. ‘New diplomats’ like the HCNM are capable of initiating such fundamental changes within states because their non-state platforms and institutional cultures transcend traditional international dichotomies of ‘us’ and ‘them’. These findings add nuance to our understanding of desecuritization as practice and suggest a novel methodological approach for studying desecuritization empirically.

Keywords

OSCE, High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), norm entrepreneur, desecuritization, national minorities, conflict prevention.

Introduction

(De)securitization has emerged as an important theoretical framework in which to think about the questions that diplomats have traditionally handled: how to preserve peace in the threat of conflict; and, even more fundamentally, how to replace enmity with friendship. The premise of this article is that the practice of ‘new diplomacy’ by representatives of international organizations (IOs) has something important to tell us about what it means to ‘do desecuritization’:

IOs — particularly the officials who comprise their staffs or bureaucracies — have a capacity for independent action that is not readily captured by existing theories of international relations.¹

More specifically, such actors offer a rich empirical context in which to analyse how

¹ Andrew Cortell and Susan Peterson, ‘Synthesizing Rationalist and Constructivist Approaches to IOs: Lessons from the WTO and WHO’, paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Honolulu, Hawaii (2005), p. 2.

different forms of (de)securitization may combine, and with what effects. The resulting analysis adds nuance to our understanding of desecuritization as practice, and it offers a novel methodological approach for studying desecuritization empirically.

The article consists of two parts. The first section outlines a framing of (de)securitization as a sector-specific normative practice dependent on the interpretative capacities of representatives of international organizations. This framing of (de)securitization involves an 'interpretivist process-tracing approach'² that draws fresh insight from the international relations literature on norm entrepreneurs. The second section, following Anne Orford,³ is a 'style of descriptive analysis'⁴ that looks at the practice of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)'s High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) to 'make visible' novel forms of desecuritization.

By 'making visible' the practices of the HCNM, this methodology shows that different sectors of diplomacy 'do desecuritization' differently. Whereas 'classical' diplomats based in foreign ministries 'do desecuritization' as 'stabilization',⁵ 'new diplomats' also 'do desecuritization' as 'rearticulation'. 'New diplomats' can initiate 'fundamental transformations of the public sphere including a move out of the friend-enemy distinction',⁶ because of their unique non-state platforms and institutional cultures. As a result, 'new diplomats' are able to escape the classic 'security problematique'.

Diplomats 'Do (De)Securitization'

Diplomacy is a 'speech act'; 'The focus of diplomacy was and is communication'⁷ Whether we are considering the 'classical diplomacy' of foreign office officials or the 'new diplomacy' of international organizations such as the OSCE, the practice of diplomacy remains inherently discursive: 'diplomacy is basically an intersubjective interaction'.⁸ In essence, diplomats are 'conscious producers and interpreters of signs'.⁹ Political processes like diplomacy and security are 'a collective attempt at finding or creating meaning in the social, in making the right policy'.¹⁰

There are obvious parallels between diplomacy and (de)securitization. Diplomacy is 'a timeless, existential phenomenon'¹¹ between friendship and enmity. Similarly, the friend-enemy distinction and the (im)possibility of mediation between these differences are 'central to the meta-choices' that underpin (de)securitization.¹² (De)securitizing moves (in which an actor discursively presents something as (not) an existential threat) are thus distinct from successful (de)securitization — the latter will only exist if and when the target audience accepts the (de)securitizing move.¹³

² Stefano Guzzini, 'Securitization as a Causal Mechanism', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 42, no. 4–5 (2011), p. 340.

³ Anne Orford, 'In Praise of Description', *Leiden Journal of International Law*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2012), pp. 609–625.

⁴ Clive Barnett, 'On the Milieu of Security: Situating the Emergence of New Spaces of Public Action', *Dialogues in Human Geography*, vol. 5, no. 3 (2015), p. 338.

⁵ Iver Neumann, 'After Securitization: Diplomats as De-Securitizers', *Baltic Journal of Political Science*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2012), pp. 7–21.

⁶ Lene Hansen, 'Reconstructing Desecuritization: The Normative–Political in the Copenhagen School and Directions for How to Apply It', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 38, no. 3 (2012), p. 543.

⁷ Juergen Kleiner, 'The Inertia of Diplomacy', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 19, no. 2, (2008), p. 321.

⁸ Kleiner, 'The Inertia of Diplomacy', p. 322.

⁹ Christer Jönsson and Martin Hall, *Essence of Diplomacy* (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 83.

¹⁰ Ole Wæver, 'Politics of Movement: A Contribution to Political Theory on and in Peace Movements', in K. Kodoma and U. Vesa (eds), *Towards a Comparative Analysis of Peace Movements* (Palgrave: London 1990), pp. 21–22.

¹¹ Jönsson and Hall, *Essence of Diplomacy*, p. 3.

¹² Hansen, 'Reconstructing Desecuritization', p. 528.

¹³ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 25.

This semiotic similarity between diplomacy and (de)securitization was previously noted by Iver Neumann.¹⁴ Neumann points out that ‘diplomacy is by definition a discourse that is analytically distinct from violent practices’, even though it is often ‘to be found in tandem with such violent practices’.¹⁵ The diplomat is thus positioned in a space *between normal and emergency politics*. The practice of the diplomat is to secure peace, the urgency of which is underscored by the ever-present possibility of conflict.

Diplomacy requires at least a minimal relaxation of the friend–enemy distinction, sufficient to enable a common political discourse to develop. The diplomat:

[...] seeks always to reason or persuade rather than to bully or threaten. He tries to show that the objective for which he is seeking is consistent with the other parties’ interests, as well as with his own. He prefers to speak of ‘rights’ rather than ‘demands’, and to show that these rights flow from rules or principles which both states hold in common.¹⁶

And this produces a dilemma: a common political discourse is a precondition for diplomacy, and it is diplomacy that makes it possible for such a common political discourse to develop. While this ‘diplomacy dilemma’ is most apparent in ‘stuck security dilemmas’ like that of the Cold War,¹⁷ the ontological problem is implicit in all ‘classic’ diplomacy scenarios by virtue of the space *in between normal and emergency politics* where it is practised. Some theorists suggest a similar ‘ontological contradiction’ between *being* and *becoming* desecuritized, ‘such that one cannot, in principle, ever define a conflict as inherently solved’.¹⁸

Yet, in practice, diplomacy and desecuritization *do* occur and conflicts *do* end. And it is by incorporating a *practical* understanding of (de)securitization — as done by ‘new diplomats’ — that this article contributes to its more nuanced understanding:

This concern stems from an impatience with what could, perhaps unkindly, be called ‘armchair analysis’; by which I mean text-based analyses of global politics that are not complemented by different kinds of contextual data from the field, data that may illuminate how foreign policy and global politics are experienced as lived practices.¹⁹

(De)securitization is conceptualized as operating at different levels of analysis. As a result, within securitization studies there is a distinction between ‘ontological analysis’ that is directed at ‘what is possible and might become’ and ‘empirical analysis’ that ‘identifies the trajectory of a given instance or case of desecuritization’.²⁰ Lene Hansen postulates four ideal types of desecuritization, each of which may be approached from these different starting points:

Change through stabilization is when an issue is cast in terms other than security, but where the larger conflict still looms; *replacement* is when an issue is removed from the securitized, while another securitization takes its place; *rearticulation* is when an issue is moved from the securitized to the politicized due to a resolution of the threats and dangers that underpinned the original securitization; and *silencing* is when desecuritization takes the form of a depoliticization, which marginalizes

¹⁴ Neumann, ‘After Securitization’.

¹⁵ Neumann, ‘After Securitization’, p. 10.

¹⁶ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), p. 172.

¹⁷ Stefano Guzzini, ‘A Dual History of Securitization’, DISS Working Paper no. 2 (2015), p. 6.

¹⁸ Hansen, ‘Reconstructing Desecuritization’, p. 543.

¹⁹ Iver Neumann, ‘Returning Practice to the Linguistic Turn: The Case of Diplomacy’, *Millennium*, vol. 31, no. 3 (2002), p. 628.

²⁰ Hansen, ‘Reconstructing Desecuritization’, p. 539.

potentially insecure subjects.²¹

A practice-based approach to diplomacy has already yielded fruitful insights into the empirics of desecuritization and its synergies with 'classic diplomacy'. By a careful analysis of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iver Neumann was able in 2012 to identify what he termed 'diplommatization' as an exemplar of one of the four ideal types of desecuritization — namely, stabilization.²² Stabilization has 'a conservative, system-stabilizing character'²³ and it thus approximates well to the 'classic diplomacy' long associated with ministries of foreign affairs. Yet 'it turned out that the subject matter — desecuritization — changed the face of diplomacy by changing the way it had to be conducted: less state-to-state, more networked'.²⁴

If desecuritization 'changes the face' of 'classic diplomacy', then it seems likely that it would also 'change the face' of 'new diplomacy'. 'New diplomacy' is by definition already 'less state-to-state and more networked'²⁵ than 'classic diplomacy'. Could it be that 'new diplomats' are moving beyond stabilization to embrace other forms of desecuritization? Such a finding would help to explain why 'new diplomacy' 'makes traditional diplomats and many governments very uncomfortable'.²⁶

The practice of the HCNM is a particularly interesting case to consider in this respect, because it appears to have gone beyond its original stabilizing mandate. HCNM diplomacy now includes policy recommendations in areas such as education that are not traditionally associated with security. Arguably, this expanded practice is intended to bring about a more fundamental resolution of the security dilemma: the rearticulation of the friend–enemy distinction. Why did this change in mandate occur, and how did it change the process of diplomacy practised by the HCNM? More fundamentally, does this change in practice suggest changes to the way in which we think about 'doing (de)securitization'?

Process-Tracing the HCNM's Practice of Desecuritization

In order to analyse how the HCNM 'does desecuritization', this article returns to the basic questions identified by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde: 'who can "do" desecuritization successfully, on what issues, under what conditions, and with what effects?'²⁷ To answer these questions, the article adopts a broadly 'interpretivist process-tracing approach'²⁸ that draws fresh insight from the international relations literature on norm entrepreneurs. This involves 'assembling new archives that might make visible the transformations articulated in the doctrines, practices and rationalizations'²⁹ of the HCNM:

In principle, successful desecuritization, just like its opposite securitization, must be contingent upon social and contextual conditions. Similarly, we can assume that some actors may be better positioned to make successful discursive interventions of this kind, and that some issues may be easier to desecuritize than others. After thus subdividing the social, external speech-act conditions into actor authority and

²¹ Hansen, 'Reconstructing Desecuritization', p. 529.

²² Neumann, 'After Securitization', pp. 7–8.

²³ Neumann, 'After Securitization', p. 6.

²⁴ Neumann, 'After Securitization', p. 18.

²⁵ Neumann, 'After Securitization', p. 18.

²⁶ William R. Moomaw, 'New Diplomacy', Discussion Paper, Center for International Environment and Resource Policy, The Fletcher School, Tufts University (2012), available online at https://sites.tufts.edu/cierp/files/2018/02/New_Diplomacy-2012.pdf (accessed 2 March 2017).

²⁷ Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 27.

²⁸ Guzzini, 'Securitization as a Causal Mechanism', p. 340.

²⁹ Orford, 'In Praise of Description', p. 621.

threat [or non-threat] related, we can sum up the facilitating conditions as follows: (1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security [or desecurity]; (2) the social conditions regarding the position of authority for the securitizing [or desecuritizing] actor — that is, the relationship between speaker and audience and thereby the likelihood of the audience accepting the claims made in a securitizing [or desecuritizing] attempt; and (3) features of the alleged threats [or non-threats] that either facilitate or impede desecuritization.³⁰

These assumptions would seem to suggest that it is the ability to influence the target audience that is the key to the practice of (de)securitization. This conclusion resonates with Matti Jutila's insistence that 'researchers should focus more on the part "accepted by the relevant target audience"'.³¹ The crucial point here is that desecuritization is not decided by the desecuritizing actor, but by the target audience. Security thus 'ultimately rests neither with the objects nor with the subjects but *among* [italics in the original] the subjects'.³² This is why non-state 'new diplomats' direct so much of their activity towards acquiring moral legitimacy. Moreover,

The public domain, through vastly expanding modes of access to information and capabilities to communicate — and therefore organize into a network — grants this legitimacy based on what is widely desirable.³³

The securitization model as developed by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde does not address the complexity of practices that 'new diplomacy' can entail, however, and so offers limited guidance on how to trace this process. The norm entrepreneur model developed by Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink provides a much fuller depiction of a process of norm influence. Thus, by extrapolating from Finnemore and Sikkink, we may gain further insight into the conditions and characteristics that we need to make visible.

According to Finnemore and Sikkink, norm influence may be understood as a three-stage process: (1) norm emergence, characterized by persuasion; (2) norm cascade, characterized by socialization; and (3) norm internalization, characterized by habituation.³⁴ If we apply this model to diplomacy as practised by the HCNM, a more detailed and nuanced diplomatic process emerges. In the first stage, the HCNM attempts to convince a critical mass of governmental leaders that no ethnic threat exists based on a normative reframing of the public narrative to facilitate the integration of diversity. In the second stage, a dynamic of imitation is present, in which HCNM attempts to mobilize the wider population of a state to share in that reframed public narrative of respect for the integration of diversity. The exact motivation for 'cascade' in the second stage may vary across cases, but we can assume, following Finnemore and Sikkink, that social pressure for conformity, combined with an individual desire for self-esteem and acceptance, are likely to facilitate this process of wider social acceptance of diversity. Internalization occurs at the far end of cascade, when the integration of diversity becomes a habitualized part of the public narrative of daily life '*amongst* the subjects'.

Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that in order to be effective, norm entrepreneurs require an organizational platform from and through which they are able to mobilize support for their norms.³⁵ This suggestion resonates with Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde's

³⁰ Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 33.

³¹ Matti Jutila, 'Desecuritizing Minority Rights: Against Determinism', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 2 (2006), pp. 167–185, at p. 174.

³² Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 31.

³³ John Robert Kelley, 'The New Diplomacy: Evolution of a Revolution', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2010), p. 293.

³⁴ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', *International Organization*, vol. 52, no. 4 (1998), pp. 895–898.

³⁵ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 899.

claim that 'the existential threat has to be argued and [...] gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize emergency measures'.³⁶ The platform from which an actor operates will greatly influence the resources and leverage that diplomatic actors are able to utilize in their attempts at persuasion and mobilization.³⁷ For example, international organizations may exercise comparative moral advantage that facilitates persuasion and mobilization through discursive claims to integrity, truth and empathy. For this reason, 'new diplomacy' 'possesses an advantage in its agility, relies on grassroots mobilization, and highlights the relevance of policy entrepreneurs'.³⁸

The HCNM operates from within an international organization — the OSCE — that has an explicit security agenda. This may, at least in part, explain why the original 1992 mandate reflects a diplomacy of negotiation and compromise aimed at stabilization, rather than a more transformative rearticulation of the security problematique. The organizational platform afforded by the OSCE gives the HCNM access to both international and domestic security leaders whose support is crucial for persuasion and mobilization 'amongst the subjects'. In this regard, the HCNM resembles 'official diplomats'. At the same time, however, the HCNM possesses only limited financial and human resources and no direct powers of enforcement, and so in this respect is more akin to the 'new diplomats'. As HCNM Knut Vollebæk explained:

I can conduct on-site visits and engage in preventive diplomacy, in theory even without the consent of the state concerned. However, I cannot function properly without the political support of the participating States. In practice, therefore, I carry out my tasks in close consultation with them. Only with their backing can I make a meaningful contribution.³⁹

As a result, each HCNM must compensate for these 'official' institutional limitations by drawing upon personal resources — most notably integrity, diplomatic experience and professional networks — in order to succeed at persuasion and mobilization.

Crucially, the successive HCNMs do not work alone, but in close collaboration with a staff of advisors. The organizational culture that these officials co-create forms a distinct worldview in which innovative practices may take root and grow. As Andrew Cortell and Susan Petersen have pointed out, staff in international organizations may construct their own identity 'not simply as the agent of states, but also as a member of an international community delegated the responsibility of overseeing the community's values'.⁴⁰ Making visible these institutional cultures, and how they have evolved over time, is thus a key component of process-tracing 'new diplomacy'.

Usually, for norm transformation to reach the second stage and begin to 'cascade' through the target audience, it must become institutionalized in specific rules or administrative bodies.⁴¹ The HCNM possesses a considerable advantage with respect to institutionalization when compared to the 'new diplomats' in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), because any general recommendation or guideline that the HCNM office produces will have this outcome. This effect explains why each successive HCNM has undertaken to produce general thematic recommendations and guidelines. Through these general guidelines, the HCNM is able to institutionalize policy recommendations.

Finnemore and Sikkink, however, caution that institutionalization is not a necessary condition for progression to the second stage. They also acknowledge the possibility

³⁶ Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 25.

³⁷ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 900.

³⁸ Kelley, 'The New Diplomacy', p. 294.

³⁹ OSCE HCNM Knut Vollebæk, 'Fifteen Years of Conflict Prevention by the HCNM', *OSCE Yearbook* (Baden-Baden: Nomos: 2008), p. 330.

⁴⁰ Cortell and Peterson, 'Synthesizing Rationalist and Constructivist Approaches to IOs', p. 5.

⁴¹ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 900.

that, in some cases, institutionalization may follow rather than precede 'cascade'.⁴² To the extent that norm influence and desecuritizing diplomacy are similar discursive processes, we should keep this caveat in mind when assessing the HCNM's achievements.

Finnemore and Sikkink contend that until a 'tipping point' is reached, transformation only occurs with support from 'significant domestic movements'.⁴³ But once this 'tipping point' has been reached, a different dynamic begins. More states adopt the new norm rapidly, even without domestic pressure for change. However, this contention is less relevant and potentially inappropriate when applied to desecuritizing diplomacy as practised by the HCNM. Because desecuritizing diplomacy involves a reconstruction of the prevailing public narrative away from the friend-enemy distinction, both remain contingent upon significant support 'among the subjects'.

Ultimately, the target audience (that is, the subjects) in the HCNM's diplomacy is domestic. International praise or censure may facilitate domestic change (although we can also imagine scenarios where the reverse is more likely to be the case), but it is not itself sufficient to guarantee successful influence 'among the (domestic) subjects'. 'People inside the "us" are in most cases better positioned to start new ontological narratives'.⁴⁴ This intrinsic discursive limitation may explain the variable results achieved by the HCNM and international minority rights conditionality more generally.

An authentic public narrative must be seen to have a popular authorship and corresponding ownership. For this reason, undoing the friend-enemy distinction is likely to require normative changes that create new political processes 'among the subjects':

[...] frequent interactions among people [...] would ultimately create predictability, stability and habits of trust. As trust becomes habitual, it would become internalized, and internalized trust would, in turn, change affect. [...] Changed affect meant changed identity and changed norms as empathy and identification with others shifted.⁴⁵

This characterization suggests that the process of desecuritizing diplomacy as practised by the HCNM is likely to be gradual, incremental and uncertain. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that rearticulating may occur, but with varying results. Rearticulation may fail to gain any acceptance from the target domestic audience. Alternatively, rearticulation may succeed in changing the prevailing friend-enemy narrative. At this extreme end of 'cascade', the integration of diversity should be widely accepted so that it achieves a 'taken for granted' quality.⁴⁶ In other words, subjects would perceive the narrative of integration as 'real'. Accordingly, their actions would reflect and reinforce this integrated social 'reality'. For this reason, ironically, HCNM 'success' may be harder to discern than HCNM 'failure'; whereas conflict stands out as exceptional, normalcy is by definition unremarkable.

Yet these two success/fail scenarios are not the only possible outcomes of desecuritizing diplomacy. There is likely to be a much larger *in between* category of cases that exhibit an altogether more contingent quality of *becoming* — that is, a particular diversity conflict may be stabilized, while the underlying friend-enemy construct remains, but is gradually blurring in the public imaginary. In situations of *becoming*, rearticulation 'among the subjects' of a state would be partial but still incomplete. Researchers are likely to see ethnic politics in states where the HCNM has been diplomatically active *becoming* rearticulated only with the benefit of hindsight.

⁴² Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 900.

⁴³ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 900.

⁴⁴ Jutila, 'Desecuritizing Minority Rights', p. 181.

⁴⁵ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 905.

⁴⁶ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 904.

Accordingly, our *modus operandi* should be to look for qualitative changes in the character of minority/majority debates across a broad spectrum of more or less integration and respect for diversity.

Moving the HCNM Mandate from Stabilization to Rearticulation

The mandate agreed at Helsinki in 1992 authorizes the HCNM to:

[...] provide 'early warning' and, as appropriate, 'early action' at the earliest possible stage in regard to tensions involving national minority issues which have not yet developed beyond an early warning stage, but, in the judgement of the High Commissioner, have the potential to develop into a conflict within the CSCE [Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe] area, affecting peace, stability or relations between participating States.⁴⁷

The clear implication of the mandate is that the HCNM is intended to preserve and protect the territorial status quo from any war, mass migration, secession or irredentism that might otherwise follow on from ethnic conflict. The HCNM may collect and receive information, visit states, discuss relevant issues with the parties concerned and, where appropriate, promote dialogue, confidence and cooperation between them.⁴⁸ If the HCNM concludes that there is a *prima facie* risk of potential conflict, (s)he may issue an early warning to the OSCE Permanent Council⁴⁹ and may recommend that (s)he be authorized to enter into further contact and closer consultations with the parties concerned with a view to possible solutions.⁵⁰ In short, the original 1992 mandate would seem to be a very good example of diplomacy as it is classically understood: negotiation within the existing rules of international law to promote stabilization. However, if we look beyond the text of the original mandate to consider the ways in which the HCNM has evolved over the past twenty years, a more complex and dynamic approach to diplomacy as rearticulation becomes apparent.

When the first HCNM Max van der Stoep assumed this role on 1 January 1993, there were only a few standard-setting documents relevant to minorities that could be used as a basis for norm influence and persuasion, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (ICESR) and the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). The ICCPR, ICESR and ECHR are, in the main, human rights texts. As a result, these normative frameworks did not provide much guidance to ethnic-conflict dilemmas beyond the general requirement to 'respect the rights of persons belonging to minorities'. Yet it was specific policy guidance that the newly securitized nationalisms in the post-communist states arguably required. The HCNM thus became a norm entrepreneur 'not by design but out of necessity'.⁵¹

Five distinct but mutually reinforcing strategies were almost immediately apparent in HCNM diplomacy from the outset: (1) the translation of existing normative standards into pragmatic policy proposals; (2) the elevation of existing norms to a more binding status; (3) the articulation of new norms; (4) the dissemination of norms; and (5) the

⁴⁷ Conference [now Organization] for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Helsinki Document* (1992), chapter II, paragraph 3, available online at <http://www.osce.org/mc/39530?download=true> (accessed 6 March 2017).

⁴⁸ *Helsinki Document*, chapter II, paras 11–12.

⁴⁹ *Helsinki Document*, chapter II, para. 13.

⁵⁰ *Helsinki Document*, chapter II, para. 16.

⁵¹ Ari Bloed, comments to the author, at 'HCNM 20 Years On', European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) conference, Flensburg (6 July 2012).

mobilization of support for norms.⁵² Taken together, these strategies show us a practice of desecuritization in which a single actor (the HCNM) combines stabilization (translation and elevation) with rearticulation (norm articulation, diffusion and mobilization).

The first two strategies — translation and elevation — are closest to the classic diplomacy envisioned in 1992. Both strategies take place in the context of visits to states of concern, according to paragraphs 23 and 24 of the mandate. During his country visits, the HCNM aims to identify the root causes of a conflict and to establish a dialogue between the parties concerned with a view to creating an atmosphere of understanding between them that is sufficient for a negotiated solution to the dispute. This is a traditional mediation role, albeit with a somewhat greater normative dimension than 'classic diplomacy' envisions, bringing it closer to a revised 'public diplomacy' ideal.

The country-specific correspondence made public by van der Stoel provides evidence of norm translation and elevation as key components of mediation. Although researchers do not have access to the correspondence of subsequent HCNMs Rolf Ekeus, Knut Vollebæk, Astrid Thors or Lamberto Zannier, it is reasonable to assume a degree of discursive continuity within the office of the HCNM owing to the institutional culture created by van der Stoel and his staff. The discursive strategies evident in van der Stoel's letters, to the extent that they are the origins of an ongoing evaluative and reflective process internal to the office of the HCNM, may thus be taken as generally indicative of HCNM diplomatic practices.

In the first quarter of 1993, van der Stoel visited Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. This Baltic trip took place in the context of increasing international concern regarding draft citizenship legislation that threatened to exclude large segments of the Russian minority permanently. These country visits were among the first conducted by an HCNM. The discursive engagement begun here established a pattern for the future. As predicted by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, the discursive frames employed by van der Stoel 'are about the future, about alternative futures — always hypothetical — and about counterfactuals'.⁵³

In a letter dated 6 April 1993 to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, van der Stoel makes clear that 'such a policy would scarcely be compatible with the spirit, if not the letter, of various international obligations'.⁵⁴ Citing article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, van der Stoel recommends 'that Estonia proceed to reduce the number of stateless persons permanently residing on its territory'.⁵⁵ Van der Stoel then goes on to identify a number of policy provisions that Estonia should implement to achieve this inclusive objective. For example, 'taking into account article 3, paragraph 6, of the Estonian Citizenship Act, Article 24, paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and article 7, paragraph 2, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child', van der Stoel advises that 'children born in Estonia who would otherwise become stateless should be granted Estonian citizenship'.⁵⁶

This manner of discursive engagement is constant across the communications from van der Stoel's eight-year tenure as HCNM. In his various letters, speeches and other communiqués, van der Stoel embeds his mediation efforts within existing international standards, while at the same time elaborating policy measures that are consistent with

⁵² Steven Ratner, 'Does International Law Matter in Preventing Ethnic Conflict?', *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*, vol. 32 (spring 2000), pp. 591–698.

⁵³ Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 32.

⁵⁴ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations', no. 206/93/L/Rev, available online at <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/30608?download=true> (accessed 6 March 2017).

⁵⁵ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations'.

⁵⁶ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations'.

them. Van der Stoel's correspondence is replete with the language of minority/majority coexistence. Again, returning to the circumstances pertaining in Estonia in early 1993, van der Stoel points out that 'the policy I advocate does not only require an effort on the part of the Estonian Government, but equally a contribution on the part of the non-Estonian population'.⁵⁷

At the same time, however, there is a noticeable undercurrent of 'danger' associated with non-compliance that is itself a form of propaganda. Van der Stoel frames non-compliance in a vocabulary of fear to dramatize both the importance of his advice and the risks incumbent upon those states that choose to ignore it. According to van der Stoel, to continue along the path of exclusive citizenship involves 'a considerable risk of increasing tensions with the non-Estonian population', a 'strongly negative effect on relations between Estonia and the Russian Federation', and 'could lead to the destabilization of the country as a whole'.⁵⁸ In marked contrast to this invoked doomsday scenario, van der Stoel is quick to point out that his 'policy would greatly reduce the danger of destabilization'.⁵⁹

The second two strategies — articulation and dissemination of norms in the form of general recommendations or guidelines — were not anticipated in 1992 but emerged subsequently in response to perceived gaps in existing international standards. The general recommendations and guidelines articulate 'best practice' in a particular thematic area, drawing upon a combination of existing international standards and the HCNM's personal experience. The general recommendations and guidelines are typically drafted by independent experts at the request of the HCNM, according to the formula 'experts draw up, Commissioner endorses'.⁶⁰

During the tenure of first HCNM Max van der Stoel, three general recommendations were issued: the (Hague) *Recommendations regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities* (1996); the (Oslo) *Recommendations regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities* (1998); and the (Lund) *Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life* (1999). These general recommendations were not intended to merely restate the status quo; instead, van der Stoel's declared goal was 'to be bold and creative while remaining within the parameters of international human rights law'.⁶¹ This goal suggests that van der Stoel understood himself to be engaged in norm entrepreneurship and regarded this activity as a necessary and legitimate part of his mandate.

His successors have continued to act in this norm entrepreneurial capacity, reinforcing the office's culture of rearticulation and, in so doing, progressively extending its mandate. Ekeus issued *Guidelines on the Use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media* (2003), as well as *Recommendations on Policing Multi-Ethnic Societies* (2006). Vollebæk initiated the (Bolzano/Bozen) *Recommendations on National Minorities and Interstate Relations* (2008) and the (Ljubljana) *Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies* (2012). Most recently, Zannier released the (Graz) *Recommendations on Access to Justice and National Minorities* (2017), begun under Thors.

⁵⁷ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations'

⁵⁸ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations'.

⁵⁹ OSCE HCNM, 'Correspondence between HCNM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with Recommendations in Inter-Ethnic Relations'.

⁶⁰ Krzysztof Drzewicki, 'The Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life — Five Years After and More Years Ahead', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 12, no. 2/3 (2005), pp. 121–123.

⁶¹ Guillaume Siemienski and John Packer, 'Integration Through Education: The Origin and Development of the Hague Recommendations', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1997), pp. 187–198.

In 2014, after more than twenty years of diplomacy, HCNM Thors acknowledged 'This was and remains a unique mandate'.⁶² What makes it unique is that the office of the HCNM 'has relentlessly promoted the concept of "integration with respect for diversity"'. According to Thors:

[...] the concept is based on a twofold approach: first, all members of a society, whether majority or minority, should be able to maintain their own identity. [...] Second, we recognize that simply acknowledging and protecting diversity may not be sufficient to maintain peace. [...] We can achieve this by promoting or building a shared sense of belonging to a common State and by having shared institutions that allow for the expression and negotiation of this diversity.⁶³

That rearticulation is consistent with both the securitization and norm entrepreneur models, each of which envisions norm change as a gradual process. Thus, for example:

[...] desecuritization is the optimal long-range option, since it means not to have issues phrased as 'threats against which we have counter-measures' but to move them out of this threat-defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere.⁶⁴

Such transformations are usually slow, because norm change (that is, rearticulation) is not something that can be achieved through negotiation and compromise alone; instead, it also requires a change in the public narrative and its underlying values and beliefs. It is via an incremental process of persuasion 'through which agent action becomes social structure, ideas become norms, and the subjective becomes the intersubjective'⁶⁵ that transformation of the friend–enemy distinction occurs.

The final strategy — the mobilization of support for norms — is arguably the necessary enabling condition for successful implementation of all HCNM diplomatic strategies; this caveat applies to any discursive model of transformation, including both stabilization and rearticulation via diplomacy. Creating open-access networks of dialogue among states, NGOs and the public is conducive to profound discursive processes that can help the definition and framing of the parameters of the problem and the designation and implementation of responding policies.⁶⁶

Mobilization is very much in keeping with Martin Wight's idea of the use of 'propaganda'⁶⁷ and thus also strongly suggestive of a rearticulation. It is emblematic of 'new diplomats' who 'delve into transnational advocacy networks using their information and beliefs to motivate political action and to use leverage to gain the support of more powerful institutions'.⁶⁸ Mobilization will be discussed more fully in the subsequent two sections.

Rearticulating the Friend–Enemy Distinction via Education

The first HCNM assumed office at the start of 1993, so researchers now have roughly twenty years of accumulated diplomacy to make visible in their analyses. During this time, the HCNM has been active in many former communist states, including Albania,

⁶² Address by OSCE HCNM Astrid Thors, 'Conflict Prevention: Is Education the Answer?', The Hague (1 October 2014), available online at <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/125250?download=true> (accessed 6 March 2017).

⁶³ Thors, 'Conflict Prevention'.

⁶⁴ Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, p. 29.

⁶⁵ Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', p. 914.

⁶⁶ Filippou Proedrou and Christos Frangonikolopoulos, 'Refocusing Public Diplomacy: The Need for Strategic Discursive Public Diplomacy', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2012), p. 741.

⁶⁷ Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Penguin, 1979), p. 89.

⁶⁸ Kelley, 'The New Diplomacy', p. 293.

Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. In all these states — as documented by Minority Rights Group, the various opinions of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for National Minorities and a wide variety of other sources, not least the office of the HCNM itself — minority/majority issues continue to be framed in the language of existential threat. Evidence of a continued friend–enemy distinction between majorities and minorities abounds. Crucially, however, ethnic conflict has been less than was anticipated when the HCNM was created in 1992; instead, violence has been sporadic and mostly limited to a few cases (for example, in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, Macedonia and Ukraine), such that most former communist states are, at least, stable. Accordingly, commentators generally agree that the HCNM's stabilization efforts are mostly successful.⁶⁹

The critical question thus becomes: is there evidence of rearticulation towards the integration of diversity? The difficulty that confronts researchers looking to make this 'visible' is that such examples are, by definition, hard to see by virtue of their very ordinariness. Yet it is precisely these unremarkable examples not classically associated with either security or diplomacy — what Jef Huysmans⁷⁰ and Matti Jutila⁷¹ call the 'everyday' — that may reveal specific issues where rearticulation by the HCNM is succeeding in changing the friend–enemy perceptions of the target audience. Accordingly, this discussion will focus on 'everyday' practices of minority language education. Language education has been selected both because it is an 'ordinary' public policy and because there is a history of HCNM practice in this policy area.

The promotion of official language(s) through the educational curriculum has long been central to the creation of national narratives. The right of minorities to establish separate schools is a classic stabilization response to securitization that dates back to the interwar system of minority guarantees. In contrast, rearticulating the friend–enemy distinction suggests an integrative paradigm of education. In the words of HCNM Ekeus, 'This implies not only multicultural education in terms of content, but also inter-cultural education in terms of approach and process'.⁷² An educational curriculum that rearticulates enemies as friends would arguably facilitate the retention and acquisition of both minority and majority languages for all students, alongside the inclusion of diverse histories and cultures. According to HCNM Vollebæk:

Integrated education is not only about putting children of various ethnic groups in one classroom. It is about democratic school governance. It is about interesting and inclusive textbooks. It is about creating joint activities. Equally important is the depolarization of curriculum and textbook development.⁷³

⁶⁹ See, inter alia, Bruce Cronin, 'Creating Stability in the New Europe: The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Socialization of Risky States', *Security Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2002), pp. 132–163; David Galbreath and Joanne McEvoy, 'European Organizations and Minority Rights in Europe: On Transforming the Securitization Dynamic', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 43, no. 3 (2012), pp. 267–284; and Emily Pia and Thomas Diez, 'Human Rights Discourses and Conflict: Moving towards Desecuritization', in Raffaele Marchetti and Nathalie Tocci (eds), *Civil Society, Conflicts and the Politicization of Human Rights* (Tokyo and New York, NY: UNU Press, 2011), pp. 204–219.

⁷⁰ Jef Huysmans, 'The Question of the Limit: Desecuritization and the Aesthetics of Horror in Political Realism', *Millennium — Journal of International Studies*, vol. 27, no. 3 (1998), p. 580.

⁷¹ Kleiner, 'The Inertia of Diplomacy', p. 321.

⁷² Jutila, 'Desecuritizing Minority Rights', pp. 167–185.

⁷³ Address by OSCE HCNM Rolf Ekeus, 'Education as a Means of Integration in Multi-Ethnic Societies', Bishkek (3 November 2003), available online at <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/13465?download=true> (accessed 7 March 2017).

⁷³ Address by OSCE HCNM Knut Vollebæk, 'Integration versus Separation: Education in Multi-Ethnic Societies', Sarajevo (18 March 2009), available online at <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/36583> (accessed 7 March 2017).

We see evidence of education as a means to rearticulate the friend–enemy distinction in the *Hague Recommendations* (1996), which were drafted under the direction of van der Stoel. Subsequent HCNMs have continued to advance this rearticulating paradigm of education. Educational programmes initiated by HCNM Ekeus emphasized that:

[...] education in a multi-ethnic context should be concerned with the teaching of different languages, but it should also involve teaching the history and culture of the diversity of ethnic communities within the State, not just that of the national majority.⁷⁴

HCNM Vollebæk continued this focus on integrated education as an:

[...] education system that does not assimilate or separate pupils, but rather tries to reconcile the two goals [...] of societal cohesion and individual identity, by providing a space for children to meet and learn how to understand and respect different cultures, languages and traditions.⁷⁵

The HCNMs' diplomatic efforts at desecuritizing national education frameworks are mostly to be found in South-Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.⁷⁶ The HCNMs' goal in pursuing these projects is arguably twofold: to ensure that opportunities exist for instruction in minority languages; while also guaranteeing proficiency in the official state (majority) language. In all cases, the HCNM has sought to balance requirements geared to the preservation of distinct minority languages with the promotion of minimum levels of majority language fluency that are necessary for full social, economic and political participation by minorities.⁷⁷ Accordingly, such programmes should be regarded as examples of multilingual/multicultural integrative education, rather than minority language education. The ultimate objective of such projects is arguably the creation of a plural public narrative where prior friend–enemy distinctions no longer exist.

The controversy in Macedonia concerning tertiary education in the Albanian language is a good example of such rearticulation in practice. In 1994, Albanian academics from the former Albanian-language faculty at Pristina University in Kosovo announced the creation of a 'University of Tetovo' in Macedonia's largest Albanian-majority city. The Albanian minority claimed that this Albanian university was necessary both to compensate for lower admission rates of Albanians to the University of Skopje and to provide a complete Albanian-language education for the Albanian community. The Macedonian government refused to fund the university or to recognize its diplomas.

Through his public and private communications, HCNM van der Stoel translated the general language provisions of the ICCPR, the ICESCR and the Framework Convention into immediate policy guidance relevant to the desecuritization of higher education in Macedonia.⁷⁸ Van der Stoel's communiqués show that he made clear these normative undertakings gave minorities the right to establish education institutions in their own language, but equally that this right did not extend to an automatic requirement for public funding or recognition.⁷⁹ These initial managing moves created a space for

⁷⁴ Ekeus, 'Education as a Means of Integration in Multi-Ethnic Societies'.

⁷⁵ Vollebæk, 'Integration versus Separation'.

⁷⁶ Charlotte Altenhoener, 'Promoting Effective Participation of National Minorities in Economic, Social and Political Life through Project Activities', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 16, no. 4 (2009), p. 589.

⁷⁷ Altenhoener, 'Promoting Effective Participation of National Minorities in Economic, Social and Political Life through Project Activities', p. 589.

⁷⁸ Ratner, 'Does International Law Matter in Preventing Ethnic Conflict?', p. 627.

⁷⁹ John Packer, 'The Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Former Yugoslavia', *Cambridge Review on International Affairs*, vol. 12 (1999), pp. 173–174.

compromise, which enabled the parties involved to shift 'from clashes regarding rights to consideration of practical possibilities'.⁸⁰

At this point, HCNM van der Stoel initiated a series of programmes designed to rearticulate the friend–enemy distinction. In 1997, van der Stoel introduced a 'transition year programme' to improve ethnic Albanian admissions to the Macedonian state universities at Skopje and Bitola. Saturday classes in Macedonian were offered, taught by integrated teams of Albanian and Macedonian instructors. A handbook was also produced for teaching the Macedonian language to non-Macedonian students. According to HCNM Ekeus, by 2003, 80 per cent of the 1,200 students enrolled in the 'transition year programme' passed the university entrance exams.⁸¹ Van der Stoel also sought to elevate what might be construed as 'soft law provisions' of the Framework Convention by arguing that the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia permitted private educational institutions that were not funded by the state. From here, van der Stoel effectively mobilized international support for the 2001 creation of a South-East European University (SEEU) in Tetovo, backed by external funding.

The SEEU was not created as an exclusively Albanian institution, but 'was planned to be open to all as a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual university'.⁸² The long-range rearticulating goal was 'to encourage students to learn to communicate effectively in both local languages of the region as well as in English and/or other international languages'.⁸³ In 2004, a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) concluded that the SEEU had 'exceeded its stated aims of contributing significantly to the solution of the problem of higher education in the Albanian language [...] and of providing a multicultural approach to education'.⁸⁴ Mainly because of pressure from the international community and following the success of the SEEU, the University of Tetovo was officially recognized by the government of Macedonia in 2004. Most recently, the 2005–2015 National Educational Development Programme for Macedonia has placed particular emphasis on multicultural and intercultural education.⁸⁵

HCNM diplomatic rearticulation of educational practices in Macedonia and elsewhere continues. Quite clearly, 'Patience is required to see the effects of education reform'.⁸⁶ To date, the friend–enemy dichotomy underscoring minority/majority identities persists throughout the OSCE region, albeit in various stages of attenuation. Rearticulating conflict into peace through the education system requires a combination of short- and long-term engagement. Some issues require immediate intervention, such as access to education, but to achieve an education system that provides education for all children, irrespective of their ethnicity, and that allows for interaction between ethnic groups is a long-term desecuritizing commitment.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ Ratner, 'Does International Law Matter in Preventing Ethnic Conflict?', p. 628.

⁸¹ OSCE HCNM Rolf Ekeus, 'The Education Solution: Fostering Harmony in Diversity', *OSCE Magazine* (December 2004), p. 22.

⁸² Denis Dafflon, 'Managing Ethnic Diversity in Javakheti: Two European Models of Multilingual Tertiary Education', ECMI Working Papers no. 25 (2006), p. 11.

⁸³ Dafflon, 'Managing Ethnic Diversity in Javakheti', p. 11.

⁸⁴ OECD, *Improving Access and Opportunity: Higher Education in Transition in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (2004), p. 9, available online at <http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/32109399.PDF> (accessed 7 March 2017).

⁸⁵ Civic Initiatives and King Baudouin Foundation, *Guide to Minorities and Education: Education for Minorities is Not Separate from Broader Educational Reform in South-East Europe. Minority Rights in Practice in South-Eastern Europe Series* (2007), p. 54, available online at <http://www.kbs-frb.be/publicdesecuritization.aspx?id=294964&langtype=1033> (accessed 7 March 2017).

⁸⁶ Thors, 'Conflict Prevention'.

⁸⁷ Thors, 'Conflict Prevention'.

Conclusion

By using a 'qualitative process-tracing approach' to 'make visible what is visible' about the HCNM's diplomacy, this article shows that 'new diplomats' 'do desecuritization' differently. Specifically, there is scope for representatives of international organizations to combine forms of stabilization and rearticulation in their desecuritizing practices. This blended practice is emblematic of the current 'evolution of the revolution in diplomatic affairs'⁸⁸ and provides a telling example of how 'traditional' and 'new' diplomatic methods may be joined for the common good. In the case of the HCNM, 'doing desecuritization' differently reveals a progressive evolution in the 1992 mandate from a 'classical' to a 'new' form of diplomacy that is made possible by the office's unique culture of rearticulation. The shared commitment of successive HCNMs and their staff of advisors to recast the friend–enemy distinction underpinning minority/majority (de)securitization has given rise to an expanding body of practice in policy areas that are not ordinarily associated with security.

By rearticulating norms, as well as negotiating interests, the HCNM is able to escape the securitization 'problematique' that 'locks people into talking in terms of security'.⁸⁹ 'New diplomats' can initiate 'fundamental transformations of the public sphere, including a move out of the friend–enemy distinction'⁹⁰ within states, because their non-state platforms and institutional cultures transcend traditional international dichotomies of 'us' and 'them'.

Admittedly, we never see a sudden or radical moment of transformation in the activities of the HCNM where the enemy 'shreds its identity' overnight. What is visible in the HCNM's norm rearticulations regarding education is an incremental process of integration, in which 'friend' and 'enemy' are gradually becoming reconstituted into something altogether different — a new kind of 'normal' where differences are present and welcomed. As HCNM Thors argues, 'This is evolution, not revolution. And to achieve this, we need leaders with a vision that embraces the world's complexity and does not simplify it'.⁹¹ Because 'new diplomats', like the HCNM, are 'mobilized by moral legitimacy supplied by a collective, stateless will to somehow reorient the ethical foundations of states, and to change state behaviour',⁹² they may be uniquely equipped to perform such rearticulations.

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⁸⁸ Kelley, 'The New Diplomacy', p. 294.

⁸⁹ Huysmans, 'The Question of the Limit', p. 573.

⁹⁰ Hansen, 'Reconstructing Desecuritization', p. 543.

⁹¹ Huysmans, 'The Question of the Limit', p. 573.

⁹² Proedrou and Frangonikolopoulos, 'Refocusing Public Diplomacy', p. 300.