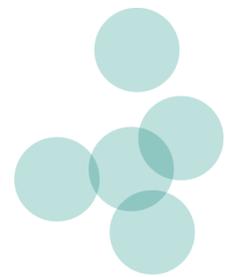


Concept Note

GDL Summit 2020: 10 to 13 May in Berlin



Global Diplomacy Lab

With the GDL reaching its five-year milestone, there is a need to reflect on what we have accomplished in the past years and to re-evaluate our objectives and agenda for the future. Given the GDL's member-driven structure, the 2020 Summit presents a great opportunity for members to contribute actively to the design of this Summit and to co-define the direction for the future of the GDL.

Today's world is experiencing impressive technological and scientific advancements that lead to an interconnected global society. International cooperation has expanded, enabling diplomacy to make major achievements such as the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Stronger global education enables citizens and civil-society organisations not only to understand global phenomena better than ever before, but also to influence them. At the same time, global leaders are taking decisions that lead to instability and reduced cooperation; climate change is causing increasing pressures; and global efforts to protect and promote democracy are dissipating, thus making space for illiberal counter-reactions.

The GDL has the aim to address such challenges by creating spaces for innovation, increased awareness, and new ways of action. Taking place five years after its establishment, the GDL Summit will provide a forum for members, partners and other participants to pool their knowledge, skills and vision. In this inspiring environment, we will jointly increase our level of understanding and pave the way for ground-breaking approaches to tackle existing and emerging global challenges.

In order to curate a space for substantive discussions, the Summit will have three themes aimed at enabling connection and co-creation regarding:

- a. Global Leadership: The Future of Diplomacy
- b. Partnerships for Sustainable Development (SDG 17)
- c. Security: Climate Crises, Migration, Gender and Social Inequalities, and Technology

The GDL Summit is also a key space for the GDL community. As such, we have three overarching objectives:

- to present the new and commonly developed GDL strategy to all members and to engage the community in discussion on further GDL activities
- to engage the GDL network in substantive discussions on the three themes mentioned above while applying advanced and unconventional policy instruments
- to re-connect, strengthen and celebrate the GDL and our objectives and agenda for the future, including ways that consolidate the community of GDL members

The GDL would not be what it is without the strong connections that are formed among its members, partners and Secretariat. The Summit will therefore propose formats where participants can learn about and from each other, provide mutual guidance, and share their skills and personal insights.

Global Leadership: The Future of Diplomacy

Given the rise of several political crises across various regions, what role will global leadership play? What is the future of diplomacy? GDL members will be asked to reflect on the characteristics that promote global leadership. To inform these questions, three sub-themes that play a critical role in leading effectively, namely empathy, failure and storytelling, will be incorporated into this part of the event.

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Empathy plays a crucial role in promoting and nurturing relationships. By recognising other people's points of view and endeavouring to see things through their eyes, we gain useful insights and greater understanding, thereby fostering improved joint action. Failure is often defined as temporary defeat. The reality is that failure is part of life and consequently plays a significant role in leadership. Learning about failure as intrinsic to assuming leadership will thus open up an impactful space for reflection on one's approach to tackling global challenges and abilities to mobilise and inspire action. Storytelling is the most natural form of communicating. When storytelling is incorporated into leadership, it has the power to augment inspiration and the drive for action.

The future of diplomacy depends on listening, communicating, learning from failure, and telling compelling and thought-provoking stories. This Summit will therefore examine the role of networks, such as the GDL, by bringing together actors from different sectors and testing new partnership formats and more conscious and responsive communication. Participants will also learn to reinforce their capacity for leadership at the local, national and global level.

Partnerships for Sustainable Development (SDG 17)

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 global SDGs were adopted by the UN Member States in 2015. If these ambitious, transformative goals are to be achieved within the next ten years, we will need to accelerate change at every level and in fundamental ways. Given the complex nature of the issues being addressed, such as poverty, peace, health, the climate and biodiversity, it is obvious that no one stakeholder can achieve any of these goals on its own. In order to retain a realistic chance of reaching the agreed objectives, organisations from all sectors, including government, business, civil society and academia, need to assume leadership and work together by forming multi-stakeholder partnerships, as SDG 17 foresees. As part of this theme, the GDL Summit will explore good examples, success factors and the limits of partnerships for sustainable development. Among other factors, it will examine how key actors and new partnership formats can support the implementation of the SDG. Moreover, participants will investigate how the GDL – itself a public-private partnership – can play a vital role in incentivising and strengthening existing and new partnerships.

Security Challenges: Climate Crises, Migration, Gender and Social Inequalities, and Technology

All efforts to achieve peace and sustainable development are in vain unless threats to stability and climate change are tackled successfully. Unfortunately, current efforts remain insufficient to change our course towards a global climate crisis that will impact essential resources in bio-diversities such as agricultural crops and drinking water, which in turn will exacerbate existing conflicts and generate new ones. In addition to traditional threats to security, persistent threats involving gender, migration, inequality and technology are proving equally challenging and making it more difficult to achieve the SDGs. As part of this theme, GDL members will reflect on how inter-sectoral formats, such as the GDL, can be instrumental in understanding and addressing new and emerging security threats in a better way and discuss the far-reaching ramifications of the above-mentioned challenges.