

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15133768>

## **SPECIFICS OF PREPARATION AND KEY STAGES OF INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS**

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International negotiations are a complex interaction process between stakeholders in international relations, including governments, international organizations, multinational corporations and other entities seeking to reach mutually beneficial agreements. Organizing international negotiations requires careful preparation, strategic development, agenda setting, and compliance with diplomatic etiquette. The main stages of negotiations include preparation, establishing contacts, developing positions, discussing and making decisions, and implementing agreements.

The specifics of international negotiations depend on many factors, including the political and economic situation, the cultural characteristics of the participants, their level of expertise, and the nature of the issues under consideration. One of the key aspects is communication between the parties, which language barriers, different negotiation approaches, and different legal systems can complicate. In this regard, it is important to use effective translation methods and to engage qualified international law experts.

The negotiation preparation stage involves analyzing the context, defining goals and priorities, developing an argumentative framework and selecting the best tactics. This stage requires gathering information about the parties' positions, assessing possible risks, and developing a strategy. A thorough understanding of partners' cultural characteristics plays a crucial role in avoiding misunderstandings and creating a productive atmosphere for cooperation.

At the stage of establishing contacts, delegations introduce themselves to one another, procedural issues are agreed upon, and an agenda is set. This process is crucial for building trust between parties. Informal interactions are also important because they can help create a constructive atmosphere and facilitate future negotiations.

Developing positions and discussing key issues requires clearly stating the interests of each party, presenting evidence and arguments, and seeking compromises. At this stage, various negotiation tactics are actively used, such as a gradual approach, balancing competing interests, manipulative techniques, and firm stances. The key is the ability to conduct a dialog, respond appropriately to opponents' comments, and find mutually beneficial solutions.

The decision-making process can be lengthy or expeditious depending on the level of conflict in the issues under discussion and the parties' flexibility. The successful conclusion of negotiations involves the signing of agreements, declarations, or memoranda of understanding containing specific provisions for further action. A legal review of the documents is a critical step in ensuring compliance with international law and the interests of all parties.

The final stage is the implementation of the agreements reached, which involves putting into practice the provisions of the agreement, monitoring their implementation and, if necessary, holding additional consultations between the parties. Failure to meet obligations can lead to the revision of agreements, sanctions, or even diplomatic conflicts.

Modern international negotiations often occur in a hybrid format that combines face-to-face meetings with digital communication tools. Virtual negotiations, while reducing costs and allowing for faster coordination, also pose certain challenges due to the lack of direct contact between participants and risks related to information security.

The geopolitical context has a significant impact on international negotiations. Tensions between states, economic sanctions, military conflicts, and international crises can complicate the achievement of compromise. In such cases, the mediation efforts of international organizations and informal diplomatic initiatives, such as track-two diplomacy—which brings together experts, public figures, and business representatives—become particularly important.

The success of the negotiation process largely depends on the qualifications of the participants, their ability to adapt, analytical expertise, and intercultural competence. Flexibility, strategic thinking, and effective communication are key factors in achieving positive results and building long-term partnerships.