

# Global Diplomatic Forum

## Trustees Annual Return and Financial Statement

### For the Financial Year Ending

### 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2024

Company Registration Number - 07566163

Charity Registration Number - 1149226

## 1. The Global Diplomatic Forum 's Mission and Strategic Plan

### Mission:

We facilitate the global exchange of ideas and knowledge, building bridges for understanding and cooperation.

We support and enhance the important efforts of the diplomatic community by providing objective insights, analysis and reports, as well as hosting high-profile events and summits.

Our values are rooted in respect for different opinions and ideas; we advocate tolerance and reject any form of discrimination. We aspire to provide an exemplary model of respect for different nationalities, gender, faith and race.

Specifically, our activities aim to have an impact by:

- Expanding access to knowledge and expertise in areas related to diplomacy
- Increasing the understanding and use of diplomatic routes in conflict resolution
- Creating partnership opportunities for stakeholders in different fields: Trade, Culture, Education and Environment
- Enhancing understanding and interaction between societies
- Promoting the principles of Smart Diplomacy

### Objectives:

#### a. Connected

- Encourage the sharing of research outputs and exchange of insights and analysis on different aspects of global affairs
- Facilitate high-level meetings of experts to debate ideas, exchange knowledge and network

#### b. Inclusive

- Expand access to knowledge of international affairs
- Engage youth in dialogue around key global affairs issues
- Widen engagement in global affairs issues (such as armed conflicts and human security) to previously excluded or underprivileged individuals, groups and organisations

#### c. Entrepreneurial/Innovative

- Promote innovation in diplomatic practices
- Provide fresh analysis of the perspectives and positions of actors in international affairs
- Find new ways of facilitating an in-depth understanding of global affairs, both among diplomats and the general public

**Desired Impact:**

- Improve diplomatic practices to match developments of this century
- Expanding access to knowledge and expertise in areas related to diplomacy
- Increasing understanding and appreciation of diplomatic routes in conflict resolution
- Creating partnership opportunities for stakeholders in different fields Enhancing appreciation of understanding and interaction between societies

**Audience:**

The contributors and participants of each of the programmes are carefully selected to ensure we have maximum representation from different actors and stakeholders. The matching of topics and the expertise of the contributors as well as the balance of perspectives is crucial in our designing of the different activities. Although each programme has a specific audience for which we intend to impact and achieve the programme objectives through, the main segments of our audience are:

- Governments officials
- Main international organisations
- Key international think tanks
- International Media
- Internationally renowned academics
- Leading global experts
- Students of all levels

## 2. Trustees Letter

The Global Diplomatic Forum (GDF) aims to widen access to different expertise and knowledge in the fields of diplomacy and international affairs. We facilitate the global exchange of ideas and knowledge, building bridges for understanding and cooperation Through different platforms.

We continue to support and enhance the important efforts of the diplomatic community by providing sharing ideas and providing platforms for extracting innovative ideas for a more adept diplomacy. The Global Agenda remains and excellent publication that identifies the top 10 challenges of the year and assesses their impact and how they will develop during the coming years.

We launched the concept of Smart Diplomacy in the Journal of International Affairs of George Town University i. Smart Diplomacy Illustrates the work of the Global Diplomatic Forum in formulating innovative practices for the work of diplomacy. Furthermore, the concept developed by the Global Diplomatic Forum is a result of tens of discussions that took place in platforms organised by us. Through this, we aim to identify the best practices and share them with the wider diplomatic community in the world.

As an organisation with educational object, our educational channel is our academy, events and publications. With the expertise, reputation and network, we have developed, we will be looking to expand our educational impact through training programmes and practical courses. Next year, we are excited to build on the success of our online courses by introducing new and innovative programs tailored to meet the evolving needs of our global audience. We aim to significantly enhance the quality and accessibility of our offerings, with a particular focus on expanding into new subject areas and developing courses in multiple languages.

Additionally, we are committed to strengthening our collaboration with universities and academic institutions worldwide to create a richer learning environment and broaden our reach. These initiatives reflect our dedication to providing cutting-edge, inclusive, and impactful education for professionals in international affairs and beyond.

We are pleased that we were able to welcome more members to our advisory board who can support the GDF through their expertise and network. We will continue to extend the list of our advisory board members to add more expertise and geographic representation. This will hopefully impact the GDF positively in developing new income streams to be able to deliver its mission. Financially, this year presented a good recovery with the aim to reach our pre-covid levels. We believe that the organisation have set the grounds for recovery and to continue its path of growing year on year. The limited financial resources are still the main limitation in expanding our community that benefits from our network.

We are grateful to all supporters that provided in-kind support to our different programmes including the R different institutions that hosted our different programmes. We are proud that we were able also to promote diplomacy to secondary schools benefit from scholarships to attend the youth diplomacy programme this summer. We will continue to promote diplomacy as a field if education and career amongst the youth given the lack of understanding and role models among the youngsters in the field.

### Trustees

Shaista El Ghazi



Noama Saleem

Farah Riaz

04<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### 3. Foreword by the Director

Since covid, we set up an alternative business model based on online platforms; We launched our online membership platform as a hub for diplomacy and organising weekly online webinars for members and providing resources for members. This was significant progress from the first 10 years of operation in which our operations were physical. There is also a huge opportunity for this model in terms of reach and access to expertise. We organised less events attended by over a thousand delegates from over 120 countries. Also members could watch the webinar on their own time at the platform. We still need to improve the activities of the online platform to make it more interactive and engaging. Programmes Includes meet the author, US Diplomacy Month, UK Diplomacy Month, Asian Century month, Middle East Month, Ambassador of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Post Covid World, Youth and Diplomacy.

In addition, we launched the GDF Diplomatic Academy in which we deliver practical courses on different aspects of diplomacy to diplomats and aspiring diplomats. We use Learning Lab as an online platform to which students sign in and access the courses content and lectures. We have had some world-leading experts delivering our courses such Corneliu Bjola from Oxford University and Simon Anholt. We have now over 20 Online courses so far

This has set the ground for further programmes for the coming year. The next year- we will introduce more courses and also introduce packages for individuals and institutions to tale. We will also introduce multilingual access model. The online model allows us to support a wide range of diplomats and aspiring diplomats with a limited cost. We were able to offer a greater number of scholarships to learners from all over the world to access our course and membership.

Financially, the organisation has increased its income and operated in surplce for the first time since Covid. We had to build grounds for a solid new business model which required some financial investment and we will certainly get the fruits with healthy continuous growth from next year

Next year, we will continue our partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The partnership was substantiated in our Youth Diplomacy Programme in which we offered 10 scholarships to students from the borough to participate the programme during summer 2024. The programme aims to provide role models for youngsters in this field, and emphasises that the basis of international relations is to create prosperity opportunities and resolve conflicts in peaceful means, as opposed to the narrative that pushes for hatred and violence We will also be launching new online courses and through it to explore opportunities to support diplomats and students from all over the world

Younes El Ghazi

Director



04<sup>th</sup> January 2024

#### 4. Programmes and initiatives run this year :

- 1- Smart Diplomacy: This concept has been introduced by the global diplomatic Forum focusing on how diplomacy will evolve in the 21st century. It focuses on three pillars: role of women, digital capabilities and multi-stakeholder diplomacy. The Smart Diplomacy forum takes place every year as a half day event. We are looking into developing smart diplomacy index
- 2- Global Agenda: This is an annual report stating the 10 top challenges for global affairs. We have organised workshop for corporate partners and members. We are in the process of publish the Global Agenda 2016-2017 stating the main challenges to in this period.
- 3- Diplomatic Digest: This is our digital platform to publish articles and insights on the different programmes
- 4- Youth and Foreign Policy: This programme aims to promote diplomacy at the grassroot level. We have worked with the Millennium Primary school to involve their pupils in different forum and meetings with senior diplomats.
- 5- Young Diplomats Forum: it's a week-long programme for Young and aspiring diplomats. The programme includes workshops on diplomacy and on issues related to the host country. It is organised twice a year; once in London and once in an international location.
- 6- Women in Foreign Policy: the programme addresses the role of Women in international Affairs.
- 7- Career in International Affairs Forum: The forum presents the different career paths for students desiring to pursue a career in international. Institutions come and present the required knowledge and skills and different career option in each type of institutions (international agencies, Diplomatic Services, Think Tanks etc)
- 8- London Diplomatic Summit: London Diplomatic Summit is high profile annual meeting to address global issues in more innovative way that is inclusive and results oriented.
- 9- GDF Academy: These are a series of practical online courses provided by the Global Diplomatic Forum. The training engages world leading experts who will share their experience, coupled with an interactive Q&A. The Courses follow latest trends for diplomatic education and aims to train the next generation of diplomatic leaders to succeed in a 21st Century diplomatic environment.
- 10- Diplomacy in Middle East Forum: The Forum addresses issues related to conflicts and cooperation in the middle east such as the middle east peace process, post-ISIS Middle East and integration In the Middle East and North Africa Region
- 11- EU Foreign Policy: The role of the EU as a Global Diplomatic Power
- 12- UK Foreign Policy: The priorities and changing role of UK foreign Policy
- 13- US Foreign Policy: The US global engagement
- 14- Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict: What educational and training measures to prevent sexual violence in conflict zones
- 15- Youth Diplomacy Programme: This is a week long programme for 15-18 years old to introduce them to diplomacy and diplomatic work. The programme aims also to engage the views of youth in Global Affairs

## 5. Governance and Management of the Global Diplomatic Forum

The Global Diplomatic Forum is a charitable company limited by guarantee, the governing document being the charity's Articles of Association. The charity's objectives as set out in the Articles are to:

1. The advancement of education and training for the public benefit in particular in diplomacy;
2. the promotion of research on diplomacy (publishing the useful results of such research for the public benefit); and
3. the promotion of conflict resolution and/or reconciliation for the public benefit in particular by undertaking the following activities: ·researching the conflict resolution discourses in past conflicts and their possible application to current conflicts; ·researching the causes of the conflicts and identifying possible scenarios for solutions; ·organising conferences and seminars to identify the causes of conflicts and the different possible resolutions; ·organising platforms for parties involved in a conflict to discuss recommendations and possible solutions; and drawing lessons from the current conflicts to prevent similar conflicts in the future. the company will remain impartial in pursuing the objects of the charity

The Global Diplomatic Forum is governed by its Board of Trustees, which meets twice a year and is responsible for setting strategic direction and the governance of Global Diplomatic Forum. The Board of Trustees has delegated the oversight of the organisation the day-to-day management of the organisation to the Chief Executive. The chief Executive is supported by an advisory board that advise the chief executive on different programmes of the GDF.

### Advisory Board

1. Alisa Lockwood
2. Dr. Hans-Jacob Schindler,
3. Vibeke Brask Thomsen
4. Quintin Oliver
5. Dr Dionysia Theodora Avgerinopoulou
6. Johan Obdola
7. Chief Roxanne Lindley
8. David Abrahams
9. Richard Griffiths
10. Diegor Reyerros
11. Rainatou Sow
12. Dr Corneliu Bjola
13. Dr Alanoud Al-Sharekh
14. Dr. Nicholas Ozor
15. Virginie Jacobberger-Lavoué

The Trustees and the Chief Executive have set a financial Sustainability policy. The policy supports the charity in meeting its legal and other statutory obligations, such as Charity Acts, Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs and common law. It also ensures that the trustees have proper financial control of the organisation. It also ensures that the charity meets the contractual obligations and requirements of the funders.

The Chief Executive is responsible for that all the financial dealings of the GDF are in line with The financial sustainability policy.

## **Small Company Provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies Regime under the Companies Act 2006.

## **Public Benefit**

The Global Diplomatic Forum exists and operates for the public benefit through its private and public advocacy and other activities. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011.

## **Fundraising**

The Global Diplomatic Forum does not carry out direct fundraising with the public. It does not use the services of any third-party organisation to help in its fundraising activities and no complaints were received about its fundraising activities during the financial year. However, if a complaint were to be received, it would be handled by a senior member of staff or Trustee

## **Statement of the Trustee's Responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant information of which the company's independent examiner is unaware; and
- the Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant information and to establish that the company's independent examiner is aware of that information

## **Risk Management**

Key risks to which The GDF is exposed are identified, recorded in a risk register and reviewed annually by Chief Executive, Advisory Board and the Trustees. Each risk is assessed according to its likelihood and potential impact together with actions or controls that have been, or may be, taken or put in place in order to mitigate the risk.

The principal risk to the charity is the potential inability to deliver its strategic plan and therefore its charitable mission. The main risks considered by the Board during the year, along with mitigating actions, were :



| Risks   | Mitigation   |
|---|--|
| Limited financial resources may affect sustainability of some programmes  | Focus on programmes that we can deliver best impact. Stop programmes in which there is limited value we can bring. Make a review of all the programmes in the coming 6 months. Explore different new income streams minimise the risk. Nominate advisory board members with fundraising expertise and set a fundraising committee within the board |
| Loss of strategic direction, working outside of our charitable objectives, strategic plan, or the occurrence of non-charitable activities leading to adverse reputational or regulatory issues  | Set check list to assess each programme, activity, and initiative and their ensuring their matching of our charitable object, our reputation and regulatory obligations  |
| Over- reliance on voluntary work and in-kind Support  | We have to set non-financial initiatives to sustain all supporters and also volunteers in delivering our work. We have to also develop programmes in which we can attract new supporter that we can compensate their services through honorarium. Training programmes will be one of these programmes  |
| Concentration of income generating activities leading to significant financial risk to the charity's ability to fulfil its mission, strategic and operational plans. The online courses become dominant activity during Covid 19 Pandemic | Brainstorm with the advisory board potential income streams that we can explore and ways of minimising financial risks.  |
| As an entrepreneurial Charity, the risk of failure in generating new interesting and attractive initiative may affect the reputation of the charity   | maintain nominations of new advisory board members and new volunteers and partners to work on continuous development of new ideas and concepts and improving the current ones to keep the value of the charity in developing innovative programme . New members will be nominated for the advisory board march 2022                                |

## 6. Financial Review

### Profit and Loss Statement

| Income Items                       | £                  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Diplomatic Courses and Youth Forum |                    |
| Membership and Career Forum        |                    |
| Bank and other income              |                    |
|                                    |                    |
|                                    |                    |
| <b>Total Income</b>                | <b>£159871.7</b>   |
|                                    |                    |
| Expenses Items                     | £                  |
| Courses Expenses                   |                    |
| Administrative Expenses            |                    |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>              | <b>-£151557.45</b> |
|                                    |                    |
| <b>Surplus (Loss)</b>              | <b>8314.25</b>     |

### Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

|  | Notes | 2023          | 2024          |
|--|-------|---------------|---------------|
|  |       | £             | £             |
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>  |       | 6,800         | 9,000         |
| <b>Current Assets</b>  |       | 7,800         | 10,000        |
| <b>Prepayments and accrued income</b>                          |       | 1,000         | 3,200         |
| <b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>          |       | (5,000)       | (5,000)       |
| <b>Net current assets (liabilities)</b>                        |       | <u>3,800</u>  | <u>3,800</u>  |
| <b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>                   |       | <u>10,600</u> | <u>10,600</u> |
| <b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b> |       | (7,500)       | (7,500)       |
| <b>Provisions for liabilities</b>                              |       | (250)         | (250)         |
| <b>Accruals and deferred income</b>                            |       | (450)         | (450)         |
| <b>Total net assets (liabilities)</b>                          |       | <u>2,400</u>  | <u>400</u>    |
| <b>Reserves</b>  |       | <u>2,400</u>  | <u>400</u>    |

## **7. Accounting Policies**

### **Accrual Accounting**

The reports are prepared based on accrual accounting with income expenditure are recorded when a transaction take place rather than when the payment is made

#### **Income**

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity is entitled to receipt, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the funds will be received. Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil performance related conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period. Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

#### **Expenditure**

All expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis, and is classified according to the activity to which it relates. Expenditure includes VAT, which cannot be recovered, as part of the expenditure to which it

relates. Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income. Expenditure on charitable activities includes all direct and indirect costs of delivering the charitable activities. Support costs are allocated in proportion to the costs of activities undertaken directly, and include the cost of staff, plus allocated overheads, whose primary functions are: financial management, human resources, information technology, office management and general management.

#### **Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and depreciated over their useful economic lives. Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computers, software and equipment: 3 to 5 years
- Leasehold improvements and furniture: 5 to 10 years taking account of the remaining period of the lease.

#### **Debtors**

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

#### **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months at the balance sheet date. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short-term deposits.

#### **Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material

## 8. Independent Examination

We appointed Professor Abdel-ilah Bennis as an independent examiner to review the accounts of the charity during this financial year. Professor Bennis is the CEO Regents Global Solutions and he is responsible for the financial management and financial reporting of the company. He was also head of department at Westminster University in which he was in charge of budgeting. He has over 35 years' experience in which he was in senior positions in charge managing budgets and reviewing financial reports, that requires knowledge of accounting , such as maintaining financial records and internal controls. Professor Bennis is aware and understands the Statement of Recommended Practices (SORP) for charity accounts. He has accounting and numerical skills to carry out a competent examination

Professor Bennis has no relationship with the trustees, the charity and its management that can influence his work as an independent examiner. There are no matters and no potential matters that would reasonably give rise to a perception of his independence that would affect his ability to carry out the examination in a wholly objective manner.

Professor Bennis was provided with the accounts (Profit and loss statement and the balance Sheet of the charity) , register of the financial transactions, and bank statement of the financial year of the charity. The management of charity was instructed to provide any information, documents or clarifications requested by Professor Bennis to assist his examination.

Professor Bennis Independent Examination Report is attached to this document.



**CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's  
report on the accounts**

**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Global Diplomatic Forum

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

13 April 2024

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1149226

**Set out on pages**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended **13/04/2024**.

**Responsibilities and basis of  
report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

**Signed:****Date:**05<sup>th</sup> January 2025**Name:**

Professor Abdel-Ilah Bennis

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body (if  
any):**

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|  |
|--|

**Address:**

16 Milford House, Queen Anne Street London W1G 9HN

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**Section B**

**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32,  
Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here brief details of any  
items that the examiner  
wishes to disclose.**