

Opnunarávarp Jóns Atla Benediktssonar rektors Háskóla Íslands á ráðstefnunni

Trade and Diplomacy in the 21st century

Hátíðarsal Háskóla Íslands

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Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs, Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson, Ambassadors, Diplomats, Dear Guests.

On behalf of the University of Iceland's Institute of International Affairs and the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I warmly welcome you to the University of Iceland and to this seminar where the important subjects, trade and diplomacy will be discussed. The seminar is held in collaboration with the Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise and the Icelandic Chamber of Commerce.

Global governance and its institutions are both constantly changing and evolving and this has a strong impact on the development of diplomacy, i.e., on its seen purpose, how it should be conducted and even what should count as diplomacy and who are seen as actors of diplomacy.

Given the great importance of effective diplomacy **when it comes to** the development of powerful cooperation between countries and regions on **the global level** as well as its importance **when it comes to** achieving productive economic and trade relations at **bilateral and multilateral levels**, we at the University of Iceland are very excited to be hosting this seminar and contributing to the discussion on this crucial subject, which is so important that we constantly re-evaluate it with quality research and cooperation between academics and practitioners.

To start the seminar, it is my pleasure to welcome to the podium Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs, Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson, who will be discussing a foreign service for the future and its main challenges.