

Diplomacy in Remnants of the Precursors

Diplomacy is an important component in any 4X strategy game and Remnants of the Precursors is no exception. The purpose of this document is to explain the diplomacy system in ROTP to hopefully enrich the gameplay experience for ROTP players.

The system is much richer and more detailed than in the original Master of Orion. In addition, most of the diplomatic system is deterministic, meaning that the AI will act in predictable ways that make sense for their particular personalities and situation. The lone exception is some intentional randomness tied to Erratic leaders.

Diplomacy in ROTP is not just opening up a dialog and talking to ambassadors to set up a treaty -- it subsumes every interaction between the player and the AI: military, spying and traditional diplomacy. To make the most of diplomacy, you first need to understand the actors involved so that you will better predict the consequences of your diplomatic actions.

Important Note: Since ROTP is in pre-release, it is possible that some of this information may change before the final release

The Actors

Apart from his race, every leader of an AI empire has two components that drive his decision-making: his personality and his objectives. The six different personalities are: Pacifist, Honorable, Ruthless, Aggressive, Xenophobic and Erratic. The six different objectives are: Militarist, Ecologist, Diplomat, Industrialist, Expansionist and Technologist.

Each alien race has tendencies towards specific personalities and objectives. For example, Psilons tend to be pacifists and Alkari are often Honorable. An advanced start option allows you to randomize these tendencies for each race if you wish.

The best way to describe the difference between personalities and objectives is that the former generally defines what leaders like and dislike, while the latter defines how they develop their empire.

Races

There are 10 distinct races in ROTP, meaning that the player can have up to 9 unique opponents. If the player chooses more than 9 opponents, "copies" of each race will be used for additional empires, including the race chosen up to the player. Currently, up to 5 copies of each race will be used for a maximum of 49 opponents.

Apart from their tendencies towards specific personalities, the primary effect of race on diplomacy are the base relationship levels between different races.

Alkari - usually honorable and militarist, the Alkari are a disciplined warrior race that will develop an immediate loathing of the Mrrshan (-30 relations). Gifted pilots, they receive initiative and defensive bonuses in ship combat. Research costs: propulsion 60%, force fields 125%.

Bulrathi - commonly aggressive and ecologist, the Bulrathi are a fearsome race that excels in ground combat. They begin with generally neutral relations to all races. Research costs: construction 80%, weapons 80%, computers 125%.

Darlok - often aggressive and diplomatic, the Darloks are refugees from an alternate universe who can become vaporous at will, enabling them to spy with great success. Their strange nature makes all other races somewhat uneasy. Research costs: computers 80%.

Human - usually honorable (60%) and diplomatic (50%), humans are a crafty race able to manipulate other races through persuasion. Their diplomatic requests are more likely to be accepted and they negotiate more profitable trade treaties. Research costs: force fields 60%, planetary 80%, propulsion 80%.

Klackon - usually xenophobic and industrialist, the Klackon is a hive mind controlling a race of sentient, insect-like aliens. They are generally neutral to other races and receive a significant bonus to production. Research costs: construction 60%, propulsion 125%.

Meklar - often erratic and industrialist, the Meklars are a trans-biological species that becomes almost completely cybernetic upon reaching adulthood. They can operate more factories per individual, which increases their over production. Research cost: computer 60%, planetary 125%.

Mrrshan - ruthless and militarist, the Mrrshan are a warrior race that values raiding. Excellent in ship combat, the Mrrshan have a deep loathing for the Alkari, and only slightly less so for the Sakkra. Research costs: weapons 60%, construction 125%.

Psilon - both pacifist and technologists, the cerebral Psilon prefer to avoid conflict in favor of study. Their innate advantages in research and only 80% research cost in all categories, result in an outstanding 45-50% effective discount in all research costs.

Sakkra - as an aggressive and expansionist race, the reptilian Sakkra often use their high growth rate to become a scourge upon the galaxy. They are natural enemies of the Mrrshan. Research costs: planetary 60%.

Silicoid - generally xenophobic and expansionist, the lithovoric Silicoids are able to thrive in any environment without special technology. Only their slow growth rate and research limits their ability to expand at will. Research costs: computer 80%, all others 125%.

Personalities

Pacifist - pacifists, as you would expect, are more willing to enter into non-aggression pacts and quicker to give into threats. While they will never start a war of opportunity, they will never forget genocide incidents. They will more quickly retreat from battle, or tire of war if you strike at their population centers. If you are lucky enough to find yourself neighboring a pacifist race, it is generally safe to turn your attention elsewhere.

Honorable - honorable leaders place great importance on the value of treaties. While some races will eventually forgive you for breaking a treaty, honorable races will see it as a permanent stain. If they are caught spying in your empire, they will generally back off if threatened. Allying with an honorable race can be a double-edged sword. While they will never betray you, they will expect you to assist them in their wars. In a battle against enemy forces, they are the least likely to retreat from the defense of allied planets.

Ruthless - ruthless leaders are the counterpoint to honorable races. They do what is necessary to achieve their goals, even if that means breaking oaths, dropping a few bioweapons, or exiting a battle to fight another day. To their credit, they will not hold it against you if you do the same. They are willing to see genocide as necessary evil and quickly move on. The best way to ingratiate yourself to a ruthless race is to never display weakness and to fight their enemies alongside them.

Aggressive - aggressive leaders are the opposite of pacifists. They do honor treaties and find bioweapons distasteful, but they abhor weakness and are less likely to retreat from a battle. They see genocide as a natural consequence of struggle and shrug their shoulders at it. As with ruthless leaders, the best way to get along with aggressive races is to fight alongside them, although perhaps without using bioweapons. It is possible to win with the support of aggressive neighbors; just never turn your back on them.

Xenophobic - xenophobic races prefer isolation. They are less interested in making treaties and have a great distrust for spies. Not their spies in your empire, of course, because they need to keep tabs on you. But if they find your spies in their empire, they will react more angrily. If you capture a system that belongs to a xenophobic race, their paranoia modifier is much greater. They have long memories for genocide, although perhaps not as long as pacifists.

Erratic - erratic leaders are unpredictable. They may make treaties and then declare war on you just because. With regards to tendencies, they are the most neutral race except for that tendency to randomly decide to wage war on you. For obvious reasons, the player empire is considered to be erratic by the AI.

Objectives

Militarist - militarists value the projection of strength and will build larger fleets than most other empires. Even pacifists can be militarists as their fleets can be seen as a deterrence against attacks. Militarists will become weary of war when their fleets are devastated by conflict

Ecologist - ecologists focus on perfecting their planets with terraforming. They view the use of bioweapons especially negatively and value planetology technologies in research and trade.

Diplomat - diplomats will doggedly use treaties to avoid conflict and achieve their goals. Breaking oaths is more frowned upon, but ultimately forgivable.

Industrialist - industrialists value their manufacturing capacity and will prioritize technologies towards that goal. Sabotage is a big no-no to an industrialist, and bombing their industrial base is the most effective way to push them out of war.

Expansionist - expansionist leaders prioritize propulsion technologies to expand their empire as quickly as possible. They are more likely to start a war of opportunity against a weaker empire. Capturing their systems is the quickest way to force them into peace.

Technologist - technologist leaders despise espionage and will make technology trades whenever possible. They prize artifact planets more than other races.

The Stage

The Stage on which the actors play is the current state of relations between each of the empires. There are two main components to this: treaties and diplomatic relations. The state of the treaty is generally (but not always) mutual between races and their relations influenced heavily by diplomatic incidents that occur between the empires

Treaties

No Treaty - this is the default state between empires when they meet. There is no state of war, but there is also no agreement for peaceful relations. A fleet orbiting another empire's colony is considered trespassing and a hostile act. Conflicts and skirmishes can and will occur over neutral territory. Sometimes these attacks will rise to the level of casus belli and trigger war, but many times they will not. After all, it's one thing to drop a few bombs, but another thing entirely to send troops to invade a colony.

War - war is formally declared between empires. Wars can be triggered from a variety of causes and generally begin with a silent preparation followed by a surprise attack. Wars will generally continue until one side has had enough, so it's wise to understand the personalities of your enemies if you want to bring them to the bargaining table as quickly as possible.

Types of wars:

War of Hate - triggered when diplomatic relations between two empires are so low that they must declare war. The people demand it!

Erratic War - Erratic leaders have a 1% chance per year of declaring war on someone. Anyone. Even an ally. They're not so erratic when it comes to peace.

Incident War - Incident wars are often triggered by a severe diplomatic incident, such as destroying a colony. They can also be triggered when one empire refuses to heed the warning for a previous incident (like spying) and repeats or is subsequently framed for the act again.

War of Opportunity - these wars are triggered when an empire looks especially weak, militarily, and represents an easy target. Allies and pacifists will never start these wars, but even a non-aggression pact will not protect you from a non-Honorable partner if you refuse to defend your systems. Players who neglect to maintain a defensive military in the hope of gaining a technological edge will often fall prey to these wars.

Diplomatic Assassination - the diplomatic assassination is a random event that can immediately trigger a war between any two empires, even allies. The lone upside is that there is a brief window of opportunity for the assassin's empire to ingratiate itself with the enemies of the diplomat's empire. Unlike other wars, the victim will immediately and openly declare war as a result of this event (even if the victim is the player).

Peace Treaty - a peace treaty represents a cease-fire to end a war and typically lasts 10 years. This is a long enough period so that most war crimes can be forgiven and a lasting peace can develop afterwards if both empires desire it. When a peace treaty expires, the empires revert to the "No Treaty" state.

Tradu Treaty - this is a form of economic treaty that, as it matures, warms diplomatic relations with increased economic benefits between the empires. This is often the first step taken in diplomacy and is separate from diplomatic treaties. Empires that have established no trade treaties will get a small bonus at catching enemy spies.

Non-Aggression Pact - when two empires are particularly friendly, they may sign a Non-Aggression Pact. These pacts require a trade treaty to first be in place. This treaty allows the fleets of the two empires to orbit in neutral systems without triggering conflict. Orbiting the other empire's colonies is still considered trespassing, however. Committing sabotage against a pact member will break the pact and trigger an oathbreaker penalty for the saboteur.

Alliance - alliances are considered the strongest bond between two empires and represent the logical step beyond a Non-Aggression Pact. They have both benefits and obligations. Any form of espionage or sabotage will break the alliance, so you can have confidence that your ally will

not do these things. As a result, 3rd-party empires cannot commit espionage against you and frame your ally.

Allied fleets can peacefully share systems and refuel, thus greatly expanding your ships' reach. In addition, scouting information is shared between allies. Finally, your allies will always vote for you in council meetings (unless they are a candidate themselves) but will expect you to vote for them as well.

The primary obligation of an alliance is that of mutual defense. You will be asked and expected to assist in any wars that your ally is engaged in. He will assist you as well. A continued unwillingness to meet this obligation will be recognized by your ally and could lead to a dissolution of the alliance.

Final War and Unity - "Final War" and "Unity" are special forms of "War" and "Alliance" that occur as a result of a Galactic Council victory by an empire. All empires that join the elected emperor share a "Unity" treaty and are at "Final War" with any rebelling empire.

Final War is basically a war with no possibility of peace. Unity is an alliance with no possibility of breaking. In addition, unity members will automatically share all technology.

Diplomatic Relations

The level of relations between two empires has two components: the base relations level between the races and the aggregate effect of the diplomatic incidents occurring between them. This value controls what sort of treaties empires will agree to sign, so maintaining high relations is a priority for players who want to use the diplomatic system to their advantage.

There is an internal value representing relations between empires that varies from -100 to 100. A value of 0 is the default, neutral value.

Race Relations - race relations basically boils down to these few maxims:

- Everyone thinks the Humans are sort of nice (+7)
- Everyone thinks the Darloks are kind of shifty (-7)
- The Mrrshan and Sakkra really dislike each other (-19)
- The Mrrshan and Alkari hate each other (-31)

There are a few other minor adjustments here and there, but those are the most important ones. In addition, if a game has large maps and is duplicating the races to fill out the map, the variants of each race will love each other (+31). This will often result in large, natural alliances between similar races on very large galaxies.

Diplomatic Incidents

Diplomatic incidents are the backbone of the ROTP diplomacy system. A quick review of the "Races" screen will show you the diplomatic incidents that a race is concerned about and how much effect each of those incidents has on relations. It is important to know that all incidents have a "duration" and will slowly degrade from their starting value towards zero during that duration. At zero, they are considered forgotten and removed from the list.

There are many different types of incidents, so understanding what they are and who cares about them is important to safely talking your way through a potentially hostile galaxy.

The possible incidents in ROTP, ranked from potentially most positive to potentially most negative:

+100: Kill Orion Guardian - wow, you really did it! Everyone decides that maybe they should start being nicer to you. Lasts 50 turns.

+50: Kill Space Monster - very nice. Everyone is appreciative. Lasts 30 turns.

+50: Assassination - This benefit is applied to each of the empires at war with the empire whose diplomat you assassinated. Lasts 10 turns.

+30 (max): Trade Income - based on the amount of income generated by a trade treaty as a proportion of your economy. Treaties generally do not start profitable so it takes a few turns for these to start showing up. Lasts 3 turns, meaning you can have 3 of these incidents active.

+25: Voted For - when you vote for an empire in the galactic council, this benefit applies. Only +5 when voting for allies. Lasts 10 turns.

+20: Signed Peace Treaty - Hope springs eternal! Lasts 10 turns.

+15 (max): Attacked Enemy - when you attack the enemy of the empire, this incident is registered and can have a value as high as +15, depending on the severity of the attack. Lasts 5 turns.

+15 (max): Technological Aid - giving away techs triggers this. Value is proportional to the economy of the recipient. Lasts 3 turns.

+10 (max): Financial Aid - giving away money triggers this. Value is proportional to the economy of the recipient. Lasts 3 turns.

+5: Exchanged Technology - when you trade technology with an empire. Lasts 3 turns.

+5: Signed Alliance - warm fuzzies all around! Honeymoon lasts 10 turns.

+5: Signed Non-Aggression Pact - warm fuzzies all around! Honeymoon lasts 10 turns.

+5: Signed Trade Treaty - Romulan Ale is finally legal! Buzz lasts 10 turns.

-5: Voted Abstain - when you abstain from a vote in the galactic council, this penalty applies to any candidates that are your allies. You are telling them that you'd rather vote for nobody than your ally. Not a good look. Lasts 10 turns.

-5: Break Trade Treaty - triggered by terminating a trade treaty. Lasts 10 turns.

-10 (max): Trespassing - you have a fleet orbiting a system where it is considered hostile. Severity magnified if at war or if the empire is xenophobic. Lasts 2 turns, so retreating the fleet will quickly erase this penalty.

-10 (max): Skirmish - there was a military battle between fleets. Severity tied to ship losses. Lasts 5 turns.

-10 (max): Military Buildup - the empire notices you are building up a really big and threatening fleet nearby. Be more subtle. Lasts 3 turns.

-10: Allied with Enemy - Adds a -10 penalty to relations for every one of your allies that the empire is at war with. Checked each turn.

-10: At War with Ally - Adds a -10 penalty to relations for every one of the empire's allies that you are at war with. Checked each turn..

-10: Evicted Spies Threat - triggered when you order an empire to remove all of their spies, as opposed to telling them to stop their spying activities (i.e. hide). Severity does not degrade over the duration and applies even if the threat is ignored. You are being treated as a xenophobe. Lasts 10 turns.

-10 (max): Aid Enemy - triggered by giving financial (-5 max) or technological aid (-10 max) to an enemy of the empire. Lasts 5 turns.

-15: Break Non-Aggression Pact - triggered by breaking a non-aggression pact. May trigger a separate oathbreaker penalty. Lasts 10 turns.

-20 (max): Sabotaged Factories - you blew up their factories. Are you trying to send a message? Last 20 turns for Industrialists, 10 for all others.

-20 (max): Attacked Ally - when you attack an ally of the empire, this incident can have a value as severe as -20, depending on the severity of the attack. Lasts 5 turns.

-20 (max): Spy Confession - triggered when your spies are caught and confess to espionage or sabotage. Severity is max -5 for hiding spies except in xenophobic empires which will force a

sabotage confession from them. First time offense generally results in a warning. Second offense triggers war. Lasts 10 turns.

-20: Espionage - triggered when your spies are caught in espionage or when you are framed. First time offense generally results in a warning. Second offense triggers war. Lasts 10 turns.

-25 (max): Incited Rebellion - your spies were caught inciting rebellion. Last 20 turns for Xenophobes, 10 for all others.

-25: Voted Against - when you vote against an empire in the galactic council, this penalty applies. Only -5 when voting against an enemy. Lasts 10 turns.

-30 First Contact - triggered upon first contact. You look funny. Lasts 10 turns.

-30: Break Alliance - triggered by breaking an alliance. May trigger a separate oathbreaker penalty. Lasts 10 turns.

-30 (max): Sabotaged Missile Bases - you blew up their missile bases. They have a good idea why you are doing that. Last 20 turns for Pacifists, 10 for all others.

-30 (max): Used Bioweapons - actual penalty is determined by leader personality, with no penalty from Ruthless leaders. There can only be one of these incidents affecting relations, and the duration is reset with subsequent uses. This is a long-memory event and lasts 50 turns.

-30 (max): Oathbreaker - you broke a treaty. Severity is determined by treaty type. Ruthless leaders don't care but, for others, this is otherwise a long-memory event. Duration is 25 turns for Erratic leaders, forever for Honorable leaders, and 50 turns for everyone else. Durations are doubled for Diplomatic personalities.

-40 (max): Invaded Colony - triggered when a colony is attacked by invading transports. Severity increased by the number of colonists killed. May trigger war. Lasts 10 turns.

-45 (max): Attacked Colony - triggered when a colony is attacked by an orbital fleet. Severity increased by the number of colonists killed. May trigger war. Lasts 10 turns.

-50 (max) Over-Expansion - your empire is getting too big. Slow down, Mario. It takes a long time to get to -50. Allies and Pact members are less bothered, but this drives xenophobes crazy. Checked each turn.

-50 (max): Captured Colony - triggered when a colony is attacked. Severity increased by the number of colonists killed. Triggers war. Lasts 10 turns.

-50 (max): Paranoia - the empire is convinced that you are out to exterminate them because, well, you are currently occupying worlds they originally colonized. Explain that. You can reduce this penalty by abandoning those worlds but you won't, will you? Checked each turn.

-50: Assassination - This penalty is applied to the empire whose diplomat you assassinated. Triggers immediate war. Lasts 20 turns.

-50: Genocide - This penalty is applied for all empires when you exterminate a race that they are aware of. The lone exception is Aggressive races which shrug it off (hey, sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do). Ruthless races get over it within 10 turns but, for other personalities, this is otherwise a long-memory event. Duration: Pacifists - forever, Xenophobes - 100 turns, Honorables - 50 turns, Erratics - 25 turns.

-70: Declare War - triggered by declaring war. May trigger a separate oathbreaker penalty. Lasts 10 turns.

-200: Final War - You dare rebel against the council?!? Then you have chosen death. This penalty does not degrade. Permanent.

I think that's everything.