

Strategic and Geopolitical Issues in the Contemporary World

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Edited by

Martin Riegl and Jakub Landovský

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P U B L I S H I N G

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Edited by Martin Riegl and Jakub Landovský

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INTRODUCTION: GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOSTRATEGIC THREATS OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD¹

MARTIN RIEGL²

The world is experiencing a watershed phase in the second decade of the 21st century, marked by redefining traditional geopolitical patterns and principles. It is obvious that the Cold War-end euphoria, outlined in Francis Fukuyama's concept of the end of history, was premature and that the geopolitics of the 21st century will not be defined by a clash of 21st century civilizations. The world has found itself in a transitional phase of one geopolitical stage, defined by the central position of Europe's rimland. *The map of Europe defined the 21st century: From Flanders Fields to Omaha Beach to the Berlin Wall to the burned villages of Kosovo; from the Long European War, lasting from 1914 to 1989, to its bloody aftershocks, Europe was the centre of world history.*³

The present period exposes various geopolitical and geostrategic challenges, which prove more difficult to tackle than those of the past decades. They take the form of political confrontation, internal and internationally-political armed conflicts, conflict over raw-material resources in civil war torn countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America (particularly in Venezuela), the Middle East (especially in Saudi Arabia), but also in newly explored strategic regions like the Arctic, and conflict over access to drinking water (blue gold, the oil of the 21st century); the world's fast-expanding population is facing cyclical

¹ The text is an outcome of Project Prvok no. 17 – Vědy o společnosti, politice a médiích ve výzvách doby [Studying Societal, Political and Media Challenges in the Contemporary World], Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies.

² Mgr. Martin Riegl, Ph.D. works at the Department of Political Science, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague. E-mail: riegl@fsv.cuni.cz.

³ Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power*, XI.

fluctuations of food prices as the result of climate changes, economic conflicts, the rise of religious fundamentalism, and also fragmentation of the political map of the world. The last-mentioned aspect brings along not only the rise of several new states as the product of unilateral secession without the consent of central governments—an unthinkable phenomenon between World War II and the end of the Cold War, violating territorial integrity as the fundamental principle of the international community—but also a redefinition of one of the key characteristics of a sovereign state, namely international recognition. Kosovo, South Ossetia and South Sudan are showcase examples of this turn. All these issues are historical consequences of ethnically driven internal conflicts ensuing from the exclusive policy of a majority community on linguistic or religious minorities. In a broader context, these are the results of delineating spheres of influence of both traditional and new geopolitical powers.

Shape of the 21st Century

The 21st century will continue to be defined by rivalries between national (super) powers, and not by the supremacy of collective universitas, replacing sovereign states. A multipolar world will be dominated by a struggle between a rapidly-weakening United States on one hand, and an ever more confident China—aspiring to regain the status of the world's strongest economy, which it lost in the 18th century—together with Russia, Brazil, India, Canada or the EU.

The geopolitical shift of power from the Euro-Atlantic to the Asian and Asia-Pacific (particularly from the USA to China) region is obviously going on and has been analyzed by geopolitical analysts like J. S. Nye, Z. Brzezinski and R. D. Kaplan. J. S. Nye identifies five major global challenges (including possible reactions) as an answer to the most pessimistic projections of American decline and the inevitable rise of China's economic and geopolitical dominance, which is reflected in global media.

1. The intersection of terrorism with nuclear materials: This requires policies for countering terrorism, creating stability in the Middle East, giving attention to failed states and so on.

2. Political Islam: More open trade, economic growth, education, development of civil society institutions, and gradual increases in political participation may help strengthen the mainstream over time.

3. The rise of a hostile hegemon as Asia gradually regains the share of world economy: This requires a policy that welcomes China as a

responsible stakeholder but hedges against possible hostility by maintaining close relations with Japan, India, and other countries in Asia that welcome an American presence.

4. Economic depression: A strategic response to this challenge will require policies that gradually reduce American dependence on oil.

5. Ecologic breakdowns such as pandemics and negative climate change: This challenge will require greater cooperation through international institutions.⁴

Z. Brzezinski seeks to respond to four major dilemmas.

1) What are the implications of the changing distribution of global power from the West to the East, 2) Why is America's global appeal waning, what are the symptoms of America's domestic and international decline, and what geopolitical reorientation is necessary to revitalize America's world role?, 3) What would be the likely geopolitical consequences if America declined from its globally preeminent position, who would be the almost-immediate geopolitical victims of such a decline, what effects would it have on the global-scale problems of the 21st century, and could China assume America's central role in world affairs by 2025?, 4) Looking beyond 2025, how should a resurgent America define its long-term geopolitical goals, and how could America, with its traditional European allies, seek to engage Turkey and Russia in order to construct an even larger and more vigorous West?⁵

Brzezinski has offered a strategic vision of the Larger West, stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and the cooperating East. The larger West will include rapidly developing Turkey and Russia. Both of these states will be integrated in Euro-Atlantic institutional design, which will be stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok in the Far East (from a geographical perspective it could be perceived as the reflection of North-South dichotomy, which definitely evokes I. Wallerstein's theory). The ultimate goal of the larger and vital West in close cooperation with Europe must be accompanied with the strategy of the stable and cooperative East. The success of this strategy lies in successfully moderating Chinese geopolitical concerns, which are the following:

1) To reduce dangers inherent in China's potential geographical encirclement, due to: the US security links with Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines, the vulnerability to interdiction of China's maritime access

⁴ Nye, *Future of Power*, 232-3.

⁵ Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*, 2.

into the Indian Ocean through the Strait of Malacca and thence to the Middle East, Africa, Europe..., 2) To establish for itself a favoured position in an emerging East Asian community and likewise in the already existing ASEAN, 3) To consolidate Pakistan as a counterweight to India, 4) To gain a significant edge over Russia in economic influence in Central Asia and Mongolia, thereby satisfying in part China's needs for natural resources also in areas closer to China than Africa or Latin America, To resolve in China's favour remaining unsettled legacy of civil war – Taiwan, 6) To establish for itself a favoured economic, and indirectly political presence in a number of Middle Eastern, African, and Latin American countries.⁶

Analysis of American decline from the position of sole superpower and the related geopolitical and economic power shift from the West to Euro-Asian powers, elaborated by Z. Brzezinski, J. S. Nye or R. D. Kaplan, is not totally new idea. G. R. Crone had already in 1969 noticed that the geopolitical centre was moving from the European rimland to the Asia-Pacific Realm and predicted the Pacific Ocean (not the Indian Ocean as predicted by R. D. Kaplan) would be a zone of confrontation between the USSR, USA and China.⁷ But all the above mentioned authors agree that the nation-state will remain the key constitutive institution of the world order of the 21st century.

Similarly as in the past, the might of individual powers will continue to be defined by their military and economic strength, size of territory or population, size of and access to resources, and human potential. Nevertheless, the world will be witness to certain modifications: military strength will be defined not only by the size of territory and population, but also, and mainly, by technological advance, and after the oil boom has reached its peak, it will be blue gold from which the great power status of Russia and Canada and continuing marginalization of Africa will derive; the size of population will be superseded by *human capital*—something which will continue to slow down, over a long term, the development of the world's most ambitious and populous country, India.

However, the geopolitical battle of powers will be fought in a political-geographic space differing from the last century. Europe has ceased to be the focus of geopolitical and geostrategic consideration of key actors. R. D. Kaplan predicts that the battle will shift from the European rimland to the east:

⁶ Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*, 173.

⁷ Crone, *Background to Political Geography*, 27.

It is my contention that the Greater Indian Ocean, stretching eastward from the Horn of Africa past the Arabian Peninsula, the Iranian plateau, and the Indian Subcontinent, all the way to the Indonesian archipelago and beyond, may comprise a map as iconic to the new century as Europe was to the last one... we can locate the tense dialogue between Western and Islamic civilizations, the ganglia of global energy routes, and the quiet, seemingly inexorable rise of India and China over land and sea.⁸

This region will become the centre of global competition and tension. The region, dubbed “Monsoon Asia” by the great historian C. R. Boxer, “will demographically and strategically be a hub of the twenty-first century world.” Of key importance will be the north-western part of the Indian Ocean rimland, roughly analogous to the south-western part of the central zone of global instability. This is a broader concept than what Zbigniew Brzezinski calls the “Eurasian Balkans – an area that the U.S. must seek to manipulate and ultimately control should it continue to be a superpower”. Crucial from the strategic angle is control of the European rim of the region, extending from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and the south-eastern frontier running from the *Horn of Africa* across the Arabian Peninsula to Pakistan and India. This corresponds with the U.S. AFRICOM and ENTCOM strategies. The great powers’ interest in this area is reflected by various internal policy processes and their broader geopolitical implications taking place in the region. Chief among them is the unfreezing and fragmentation of the political map, into which project the interests of individual great powers. The dismantling of the political map (most recently manifested by Kosovo, Georgia, Indonesia and Sudan) manifests itself not only by the fragmentation of various states but also by an overlapping sovereignty typical of the pre-Westphalia period – collapsed states, unrecognized states, black holes, warlords and states within state within the borders of collapsed or internationally unrecognized states.

Actual transfer of the world’s economic, political or military centre of gravity to this region, intersected by the main routes of world trade, will necessitate action on collapsing states, such as Yemen, and the elimination of illegal phenomena such as piracy and non-state actors, who have taken over collapsed states such as Somalia and pose a threat to regional stability as well as to the main world trade routes. Otherwise effective control of choke points (Strait of Malacca and Suez Canal) cannot be established and the hub of the twenty-first century world will not be set.

⁸ Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power*, XI.

New Containment?

Another connecting feature of all the above mentioned geopolitical analyses is their belief that a power shift between nation-states will reflect economic development within the global political space. The Carnegie Endowment predicts that the GDP of China will overtake that of the United States by 2035. Measured by GDP per capita, the level of GDP in the USA will still exceed its Euro-Asian rivals, particularly India; China will not even approach the USA by 2030. The USA will increase its GDP to 59,592 USD compared to the Chinese level at 14,696 USD, so China will still dramatically lack behind Japan (50, 965 USD), the EU (40, 901 USD), and even Russia (20,039 USD).⁹

R.Skidelsky (emeritus Professor of Political Economy at Warwick University) goes even further and estimates that China is already the world's second largest economy, and will be the largest in 2017. He further argues that the existence of a single superpower is highly abnormal, and was brought about only by the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The normal situation is one of coexistence, sometimes peaceful sometimes warlike, between several great powers.¹⁰ Similarly such exaggerated statements concerning Chinese economic influence, e.g. in Sub-Saharan Africa, may be easily found in recent debates or even analytical works.

Increased interest in US-Chinese competition in the Sub-Saharan region has its roots in the fact that this region has already become the shatter-belt after the period of marginalization during the Cold War. The only significant change is the fact that political-military competition between the USA and the USSR has been replaced by competition for natural resources. Surprisingly the continent with thirty-four out of forty nine of the least developed countries is under price pressure. The capital city of Angola is experiencing an oil boom and was rated the most expensive city for expats two years in a row. The capital city of Chad was placed on third position.

The first island chain – composed of the Kuril Islands, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, the Philippines, Borneo, the Malay Peninsula, and the Kamchatka Peninsula – plays a crucial role in the Chinese naval doctrine, which aims to force out the U.S. military bases from the region. The first and second island chains pose, according to J. S. Nye, a crucial contemporary strategic obstacle to the expansion and projection of

⁹ Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*, 57; Trenin, *China, Russia, and the United States – A Shifting Geopolitical Balance*.

¹⁰ Skidelsky, “Why China Won’t Rule”.

Chinese military, political, and economic powers in open oceans. American strategic advantage, which is increasingly becoming the main focus of the U.S. defense strategy, comes from the fact that the first and second island chains are composed of territories under the sovereign jurisdiction of states which remain or are increasingly hostile to China. Z. Brzezinski argues that these states (so called linchpin states), thanks to their geographical position, comprise the basic pillar of the US strategy in the region. However, the perception of the rising economic power of China must be understood from the perspective of Chinese officials, because: "Chinese have a strategy of asymmetric power projection, whereby they seek to compete primarily economically and politically, rather than militarily, with the US."¹¹

Z. Brzezinski holds his long-term conviction (in compliance with Mackinder's and Spykman's theories of Heartland and Rimland) of the key geopolitical importance of the Euro-Asian Balkans for the whole Eurasia. Alongside this he is evidently aware of the fact that the China itself is not an integral part of the Russian-dominated Heartland, but is seeking an independent geopolitical realm between the sphere of influence of continental Euro-Asia and the US-dominated Maritime Realm. It can be reasonably expected that China will refuse to be included in Maritime Realms dominated by the USA, with the support of the European Union, and to Western universalistic norms. China will more likely strive to emancipate itself from the Continental realms dominated by Russia and to become an independent geopolitical realm dominating the East Asia region with the ultimate goal to gain political, economic, and military hegemony within the Pacific and Indian Ocean area, in other words in the centre of global powers as anticipated by G. R. Chrone or R. D. Kaplan. All these statements are confirmed in U.S. defense strategy released on January 2012, which can be described as the major change since the Cold War era. Rising tension may be expected in the concerned regions as Japan, Taiwan, India, Thailand or Vietnam will fear rising Chinese influence. The concept of the larger West seems to be an interesting but, for many scholars and analysts, utopian idea – a strategy of geopolitical competition and balance of power in the future.

¹¹ Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa*, 177.

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PART I

POWER SHIFTS IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY: COMPETITION OR COOPERATION IN STRATEGIC REGIONS?

GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION¹

MARTIN RIEGL²

Introduction

International recognition is at present not only an oft-discussed definition characteristic of a state but at the same time it has been emerging with growing intensity as an important geopolitical instrument of pursuing the foreign policy interests of global and regional powers. Experts in international law, international relations and political sciences will not agree on the merit and significance of international recognition, i.e. whether international recognition alone is the core defining characteristic of a sovereign state. While the dispute between the proponents of declaratory and constitutive theories of international recognition remains unresolved within the framework of the theory of international law and international relations, my paper offers the argument that due to changes of regulatory rules of recognition and the introduction of a non-competitive international environment, the development of political space after 1945 seems to bear a constitutive character.

My text proceeds from a multidisciplinary and diachronic approach and, based upon an empirical analysis of the 1945-2011 political space, I delineate all unilateral attempts at secession without the consent of the original sovereign, which have led to de facto independence (i.e. to the emergence of a political-geographic entity capable of questioning the authority of a central government, within the jurisdiction of which that entity's territory formally fell). I proceed from an historical perspective, where it is possible to define three different historically political situations,

¹ The text is an outcome of Project Prvrouk no. 17 – Vědy o společnosti, politice a médiích ve výzvách doby [Studying Societal, Political and Media Challenges in the Contemporary World], Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies.

² Mgr. Martin Riegl, Ph.D. works at the Department of Political Science, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague. E-mail: riegl@fsv.cuni.cz.

which lead to the unilateral declaration of the entity and play a crucial role for its international recognition. They are the following types of secession:

- 1) in compliance with the right to self-determination (entities which declared independence during the decolonization process),
- 2) in conflict with the right to self-determination (entities forming on a dependent territory which did not undergo the decolonization process and whose emergence was in conflict with the principle of a nation's right to self-determination),
- 3) outside the context of decolonization (a fairly large group of entities emerging after formal decolonization of dependent territories and the establishment of internationally recognized sovereign states, on whose territories there were post-independence attempts to unilaterally declare independence for parts of such territories).

Subsequently I will analyse the level of international recognition received by various entities and test the changing importance of international recognition in five case studies covering different periods and reflecting different geopolitical circumstances – specifically Guinea-Bissau, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Rhodesia, Kosovo and Northern Cyprus. All these are model cases of unilateral secession without the consent of a central government. An analysis of impacts of international recognition on the status of these political-geographic entities will be used to verify the significance of international recognition on state-forming processes in political space.

I will point out at the same time the necessity of case-by-case analysis, as it is not possible to generally assume that all that matters are the historical period and the geopolitical circumstances, which determine the outcome of an effort to gain independence. This paper is based on the following hypotheses: 1) international recognition is part of the core definition characteristic of a state, 2) international recognition is a key instrument of the state's legitimacy after 1946, 3) historical geopolitical circumstances are not unchangeable but are internally structured and display the aspect of political philosophy of secession (Guinea-Bissau vs. East Bangladesh, Kosovo vs. Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), and 4) the manner of origin and geopolitical status of an entity plays an important role in international recognition. My text proceeds from the definition of internationally unrecognized entities seeking to gain a sovereign-state status but lacking significant international recognition. Such entities must at the same time demonstrate a certain level of internal

effectiveness (usually heterogeneous in time and space), which would enable them to control population and territory within the framework of jurisdiction they claim. Delineation of the period during which an entity must meet given characteristics (effectively control internal affairs) is a methodologically onerous task. P. Kolstø suggests a two-year period but justification of his argument in a methodological way would be quite a controversial assignment. I consider precise delineation of the time period of *de facto* independent existence as a superfluous definitional characteristic and believe it could create methodological mishaps. Therefore I am inclined to believe that the duration of *de facto* independent existence should be considered for the various entities. Some entities continue to meet such characteristics for a period of more than 10 years, but others will cease to exist within a few months of declaring independence (usually after military intervention by the central government).

Definition of International Recognition

International recognition³ is one of the most important yet controversial characteristics of a sovereign state. As fittingly expressed by R. H. Jackson and C. Rosberg in their analysis of the concept of *juridical statehood*, a political system can display empirical prerequisites of state, but it is not a state without the legal attributes of territory and independence.⁴ In this context, S.D. Krasner speaks about sovereignty under international law, without which effective territory control is actually insufficient.⁵ Jackson and Rosberg documented the key role of international recognition on the empirical examples of South African Bantustans (esp. Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda), which meet the empirical prerequisites of statehood but, as they were not recognized by any other state except for the Republic of South Africa, they cannot be considered states.⁶

The importance of international recognition is corroborated also by the as yet unresolved dispute between the adherents of constitutive and

³ In this paper I use both the term international recognition and the term external sovereignty – the latter meaning the state has been internationally recognized by a significant part of the international community and thus becomes a fully-fledged member of that community, with all rights and duties.

⁴ Jackson and Rosberg, “Why Africa’s Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood.”, 13.

⁵ Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*.

⁶ Jackson and Rosberg, “Why Africa’s Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood.”, 13-4.

declarative theories of state recognition.⁷ Leading proponent of political geography M.I. Glassner's definition of sovereign state emphasizes the relationship between geographic and political criteria of statehood. Chief among them, according to Glassner, are

1) sovereignty⁸ and 2) recognition. For a political unit to be accepted as a state, it must be recognized by a significant part of the international community, i.e. existing states. However, experts in international law disagree on whether such recognition is declaratory or constitutive.⁹

One might logically ask about the exact meaning of the condition that requires that a political unit must be recognized by a significant part of members of the international community. How large should that part be and how should it be structured – does it need to include regional and global powers? Neither Glassner nor other authors give us a clear answer to these questions. M.I. Glassner himself points out the quandary:

Disagreement also rules over the question, what part of the members of the international community club must recognize the state and does that number really tell the tale, or is there need for a positive stance of most powers? We are not that much interested in such details, but one should not forget that recognition is important, perhaps even decisive, for the sake of correct use of the term state.¹⁰

A different angle on the significance of international recognition is offered by J. Malenovský, who speaks about three constitutive (objective) elements of state and one subjective element. The objective elements are territory, population, and the public power asserted over the given territory.

These elements bear an objective character, i.e. they are the result of a historical process. A state exists if it displays all three elements. Other states limit themselves under international law to stating if the elements indeed exist (principle of effectiveness under international law). And yet, history is marked with undying efforts to weaken the solely objective character of state as the subject of international law and to apply also the subjective element, i.e. to make the sovereignty of a new state conditional

⁷ More in Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law*, 19–28.

⁸ Thus, a leading international-law authority on the issue of state, R. Crawford replaces the term sovereignty with the term independence of the state.

⁹ Glassner and De Blij, *Systematic Political Geography*, 39.

¹⁰ Glassner and De Blij, *Systematic Political Geography*, 39.

on its recognition by other states – in other words, to actually co-opt such as state within the international community.¹¹

The issue gained prominence in the wake of Kosovo's declaration of independence and a successful referendum on independence for southern Sudan. How does a state get recognized or adorned with external sovereignty, classified by G. Sørensen within a second level of sovereignty as one of its regulative rules?

The constitutive theory of recognition stems from the assumption that a state or new government does not legally exist until recognized by other states. The declaratory theory of recognition presumes that a state can prove its existence by objective tests, i.e. through effective governance of its territory and population, regardless of the views of other states. Recognition is perceived as a purely political act, which declares the intention to establish formal diplomatic contacts. In rare instances a state may receive recognition without meeting all objective requirements (thus, the Palestine Liberation Organization was recognized by some states in the late 1980s as the provisional government of a future Palestinian state.¹²

The declaratory theory of the state ensues from the definition of state in accordance with the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, which places emphasis on the effectiveness of the state. Small wonder that especially such internationally unrecognized entities as Somaliland, Transnistria, South Osetia and others resolutely defend their sovereign status claims from the positions of the declaratory theory of state.

J. Crawford noted that the “great international recognition debate” has complicated and obfuscated the issue, while at the same time attempts were made to synthesize the constitutive and declaratory theories of international recognition.¹³ The essence of international recognition is for a state to receive external sovereignty (and thus also the capacity to actively participate in the activities of the international community) and to become subject to the regulatory rules of sovereignty (i.e. other states respect its territorial integrity and the principle of non-intervention). In association with the recognition of a state one cannot leave unmentioned the problem of recognizing its government as the political representative of that state and the “enforcer” of internal and external sovereignty. It may actually happen that a “state” has two “governments”. One will, in an ideal

¹¹ Malenovský, *Mezinárodní právo veřejné: obecná část*, 90.

¹² Plechanová, *Úvod do mezinárodních vztahů: výběr textů*, 72.

¹³ Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law*, 26–7.

case, effectively control territory and population (internally it will be fully independent), but it will not achieve international recognition or enjoy external sovereignty (not being able to represent the state externally). The second government (in an ideal case, again) will not be able to control internal affairs of the state (will lack internal sovereignty) but will enjoy full international recognition and all rights to represent the state abroad (will have external sovereignty).

An example worthy of mention in this context is the exiled government of Democratic Kampuchea, which could be described as the product of a very complex internal development on Cambodian soil after the country gained independence. The country's de facto occupation by Vietnam did away with Democratic Kampuchea and installed a People's Republic of Cambodia. However, the latter only achieved limited international recognition, mainly from the states of the Soviet Bloc. And yet, Democratic Kampuchea never quite ceased to exist. "June 1982 saw the formation of an exiled coalition government, led by Prince Sihanouk".¹⁴ With the support of its allies – USA, China and other Western nations – Democratic Kampuchea's coalition government-in-exile formed in 1982 (with Norodom Sihanouk at the head and anti-Vietnamese in character) and retained its UN seat and continued to be recognized by most states.

Nevertheless, the recognition of states in practical terms differs according to the state's political interests, and the rules of recognition change in time. In setting conditions of recognition of a sovereign state, R. H. Jackson builds upon the approach of G. Schwarzenberg and E. D. Brown (*A Manual of International Law*). Jackson claims existing states require an entity, before recognizing it is a sovereign state, to possess a stable government capable of controlling its territory and population.¹⁵ Jackson's list of conditions for recognition of a new state is rather a virtual reality (or perhaps an acceptable humbug) which does not tally with the past practice of en masse recognition of states, which did not reflect a single basic empirical characteristic of effective government in the effort to incorporate formerly dependent territories in the community of states.

Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau declared independence on 26 September 1973, or, according to some sources, on 24 September, although the start of the

¹⁴ Liščák and Fojtík, *Státy a území světa*, 376.

¹⁵ Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, 53.

colonial war can be traced back to 1961, when the PAIGC guerillas launched armed attacks on colonial institutions, and by 1968 they had gradually gained control of most of the territory.

By the end of 1973 it was recognized by forty states including the USSR, India and the People's Republic of China. By 31 May 1974 (five weeks after toppling the previous Portuguese government) it was recognized by eighty-four states.¹⁶

Thence, prior to its independence being recognized by Portugal, this entity won almost universal international recognition. Portugal awarded de jure recognition to Guinea-Bissau as late as 10 September 1974; on the same day, Guinea-Bissau was internationally recognized by the United States of America. Even though the former sovereign refused to accept decolonization, Guinea-Bissau was admitted into the United Nations, though the UN Security Council recommendation of 12 August 1974 did not come to fruition until 17 September 2010.¹⁷

Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic

The right of this entity to independence was confirmed by the International Court of Justice, which rejected Morocco's claim to territorial sovereignty over Western Sahara.¹⁸ On 27 February 1976, the Polisario Front¹⁹ declared a Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on the territory of Western Sahara. Although the United States did not formally recognize the Moroccan annexation, it rendered active support to the Moroccan rejection of Sahrawi independence as that entity strongly supported the leftist-leaning Polisario Front. Moroccan officials identify Western Sahara as a southern province or Moroccan Sahara and dismiss the SADR as an illegal entity. On the other hand, leading international organizations such as the United Nations and the OAU never recognized Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. The African Union (formerly OAU) supports SADR's demand for independence. The organization's position stems from Article 3 of the Charter of Organization for African Unity, which demands Africa's liberation from all forms of colonialism. The Organization for African Unity officially admitted SADR as a

¹⁶ Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law*, 385–6.

¹⁷ S/RES/356 (1974), A/RES/29/3205.

¹⁸ Springerová, "Západní Sahara – příběh neukončené dekolonizace", 42.

¹⁹ "The Polisario Front was established on 10 May 1973. Its founder was Luali Mustafa Sayed." (www.wsahara.net/history.htm)

member in 1984, provoking instant reaction of Morocco, which left the OAU in 1985 in protest. The SADR as a sovereign entity is an illusion rather than reality. Morocco keeps control of economically important regions and SADR controls only insignificant desert areas. Both parties to the conflict seek international support for their demands. Morocco is backed by the Arab League, whose members recognize the annexation of Western Sahara. International recognition stands out as an important piece of the puzzle. The SADR enjoys international recognition by most members of the African Union. Nearly 80 states have recognized the SADR as a sovereign state. However, many of them have withdrawn or frozen their recognition. Most of them are developing African and Asian countries and states of the Americas. In Europe, SADR was once recognized by Albania and Yugoslavia, which, however, currently do not recognize that entity. Serbia and Montenegro withdrew their recognition on 8 October 2004. Generally speaking, SADR has the support mainly of the weak developing countries, the Republic of South Africa being the only regional power to express support. The significance both parties attach to international recognition is expressed by their activities in the region. Chad withdrew recognition of the SADR on 17 March 2006, having previously declared it on 4 June 1980. Of much greater significance is the recognition of SADR by the Republic of South Africa of 15 September 2004.

Rhodesia

A model example of the significance of international recognition is Rhodesia, which unilaterally declared independence from Great Britain in 1965. Although Rhodesia's declaration of independence highlighted the case of a very effective entity with a strong institutional structure, inability to win international recognition determined its demise. The rejection of legitimacy of Rhodesia's declaration duly projected into UN General Assembly Resolution 2621 of 1970, which condemned the perpetuation of colonialism and labelled it a crime against the UN Charter and General Assembly Resolution 1514. Resolution 2621 also called for imposing an arms embargo on the RSA, Rhodesia (described here as an illegal racist regime) and Portugal.²⁰ It marked a radical change in the attitude of European powers, with the right of nations to self-determination becoming a right of colonized subjects to sovereignty.²¹ Against the background of

²⁰ A/RES/25/2621.

²¹ Sørensen, *Stát a mezinárodní vztahy*, 124–5.

newly accepted standards of anti-colonialism, self-determination, and negative sovereignty, Rhodesian leaders proved unable to obtain international legitimacy (Rhodesia went completely unrecognized within the international community), which would corroborate that country's actual independence. Sanctions imposed on the export of key Rhodesian commodities including fuels, together with guerilla attacks from neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique, gradually led to the collapse of a viable, effective entity.

Kosovo

Unilateral secession without the central government's consent has created, after 1945, only Bangladesh and Eritrea, and now the process unfolds in Kosovo. However, Kosovo is a more complex case, as it has not yet won convincing and significant international recognition and has not been admitted to the United Nations. Since its unilateral declaration of independence on 17 February 2008, Kosovo has been recognized, as of February 2011, by 76 states, i.e. 39 percent of the United Nations. Overall, Kosovo has been recognized by 22 members of the European Union (but not by states apprehensive of secessionist and irredentist tendencies on their territories). The central government of former sovereign Serbia continues to refuse to recognize Kosovo as a sovereign state and has the support, in this respect, of mainly Russia and China, which are also wary of separatist tendencies on their territory and who primarily pursue their broader geopolitical interests.

TRNC

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is a showcase example of the impact of international recognition – the entity is recognized only by Turkey as the sole guarantor of its existence. “According to some sources, Bangladesh has also recognized the TRNC”.²² Northern Cyprus has been *de facto* independent since the Turkish invasion in 1974. The breaking point was an attempted coup by Greek Cypriot officers, supported by Greece's military regime. These attempts invited a resolute Turkish reaction, leading to a military invasion of the island. “TRNC was officially proclaimed in 1983 on 37% of Cypriot territory, but apart from Turkey, whose 35,000-strong military contingent guarantees its existence, it has

²² Baar, *Národy na prahu 21. století: emancipace nebo separatismus?*, 234.

never received international recognition”.²³ The UN Security Council reacted to TRNC’s declaration of independence on 15 November 1983 by adopting Resolution 541 of 18 November of the same year and Resolution 550 of 11 May 1984. Resolution 541 says that

...the declaration by the Turkish Cypriot authorities issued on 15 November 1983, which purports to create an independent state in northern Cyprus [...] is incompatible with the 1960 treaty concerning the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. The attempt to create a ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus’ is invalid and will contribute to a worsening of the situation in Cyprus.

Since the Cyprus Turks left the resolution more or less unanswered and concentrated instead on strengthening their “republic”, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 550. Among other things it expresses

...grave concern about the further secessionist acts in the occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus which are in violation of Resolution 541 (1983), namely the purported ‘exchange of Ambassadors’ between Turkey and the legally invalid TRNC and the contemplated holding of a ‘Constitutional referendum’ and ‘elections’, as well as [about] other actions or threats of action aimed at further consolidating the purported independent state and the division of Cyprus.²⁴

However, the UN Security Council resolutions did not prevent the consolidation of TRNC and actual partitioning of the island.

Internationally Unrecognized Entities after 1945: Table of Internationally Unrecognized States

An analysis of the 1946-2011 political space will produce the following account of unilateral attempts at effective secession. A certain time must elapse from a declaration of independence to a broad international recognition, during which a new entity receives formal recognition and is co-opted by the international community (endorsement of UN admission). In this period it is not possible to refer to internationally unrecognized entities unless the process of achieving international recognition is put in doubt.

²³ Siegl, “Kyperský problém a rozšiřování Evropské unie”, 11.

²⁴ S/RES550/1983.

Table 1-1: List of Quasi-States in 1946-2009

	Origin/ existence	Unrecognized existence between 1946–2010	Factors limiting sovereign state status
Abkhazia, Republic of	3.7.1992	1992–	Recognized by Russian Federation, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Nauru. Actually a puppet entity of Russian Federation.
Algeria, Democratic People's Republic	19.9.1958 (5.6.1962)	1958–1962	Unrecognized quasi-state resulting from a colonial war with metropolitan state, absence of international recognition—French recognition 1962. Algerian independence recognized by 29 states in 1961.
Anjouan, State of	3.8.1997	1997–2002 2007–2008	No international recognition, limited internal sovereignty.
Bangladesh, People's Republic of	26.3.1971	1971–1974	On 4 Feb 1972 Bangladesh is recognized de jure by 28 states and de facto by another five. Pakistan postponed recognition to 22 Feb 1974.
Biafra, Republic of	30.5.1967	1967–1970	Biafra recognized by five states.
Bophuthatswana	6.12.1977	1977–1994	No international recognition, actually no internal sovereignty (de facto under RSA control).
Cabinda, Republic	1.8.1975	1975–11. 11. 1975	No international recognition (de facto under RSA control).
Cambodia, Kingdom of	(1949) 19.11.1953	1978–1991	Vietnam's quasi-protectorate without broad international recognition.
Chechen Republic of Ichkeria	9.10.1991	1991–1999	No international recognition. 16 years after USSR collapse, this small territory housed three types of para-states including <i>almost-state</i> , <i>black spot</i> and <i>state within state</i> .

China People's Republic of	1.1.1912	1946–1971	No significant international recognition till 1971.
China, Republic of (Taiwan)	7.10.1949	1971–	Sovereign state until 1971. State with limited international recognition since 1971. Officially claims control of mainland China. Currently recognized by 23 sovereign states, military guarantees by the USA.
Ciskei	1981	1981–1994	No international recognition (de facto under RSA control).
Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia	18.11.1991	1992–1996	No international recognition.
Democratic Kampuchea	22.6.1982	1982–1991	Exiled government of Democratic Kampuchea (Democratic Kampuchea's coalition government formed in 1982) retained UN seat with the support of allies – USA, China and other Western states and continued to be recognized by most states.
East Mongolian Republic	15.1.1946– 1.5.1947	1946–1947	No international recognition.
East Timor, Democratic Republic of	28.11. 1975– 17.7.1976, 20.5. 2002	1975–1976	Internationally unrecognized quasi-state (according to some sources recognized by Albania, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique, St. Thomas and Principe Islands) – unrecognized strong institutions eliminated by military intervention by Indonesian central government.
East Turkestan, Republic of	12.11. 1944– 17. 12.1949	1946–1949	No international recognition.
Eritrea, State	27.5.1993	1961–1993	No international recognition.

Federal Republic of Germany	23.5.1949	1949–1972	Quasi-state with limited international recognition until signing a treaty on principles of relations between FRG and GDR.
Gagauzia		1991-1994	No international recognition.
German Democratic Republic	7.10.1949	1949–1955	De facto quasi-protectorate of USSR with limited international recognition. GDR's foreign-policy position radically changed after signing a treaty on principles of relations. In 1972 GDR exchanged diplomats with 20 states (including Iran, Sweden, Switzerland and Austria). In January 1973 GDR established diplomatic relations with another 13 states (including Italy, Netherlands and Finland). With 123 governments around the world recognizing GDR by 1978, the country's crucial phase of foreign policy was successfully implemented. GDR could also join international organizations.
Guinea-Bissau, Republic	26.9.1973	1973–1974	By late 1973 recognized by 40 states including USSR, China and India; on 31.5.1974 recognized by 84 states; UN Security Council on 12.8.1974 recognizes admission to UN; widely recognized prior to Portugal recognition.
Hyderabad	1724–1950	1947–1950	No international recognition.