

Research Article

The Role of UN and Major Powers in Recognition of Kosovo

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ABSTRACT: The recognition of states is a legal issue associated with international law, at present, it has become a political issue in the world. According to the international law, there are traditional and modern criteria to be considered when giving recognition to states. An entity has to be considered as a State in the international system if those criteria are satisfied. In contrary, major powers in the international system together with the United Nations play a significant role in giving recognition to states. The objective of this study is to find out the reasons for the United Nations and Major Powers' reluctance to bestow recognition to the entity discussed in this study. The Major Power focused in this paper is Russia. This research is a qualitative research based on secondary data. The data analysis procedure is done through the case study method. The case that is used in this study is Kosovo which is not fully recognized as an independent state in the international system, especially by the United Nations and Russia. In analyzing the case, the international law provisions in giving recognition to states, the United Nations role in giving recognition to states and the Major Powers' role in giving recognition to the entity is discussed. While getting in to this conclusion it was evident that Kosovo did not fully satisfy the international law provisions regarding the statehood criteria while Russia, China and Serbia strongly opposed granting recognition to Kosovo. According to the findings, all these entities are reluctant to bestow recognition to Kosovo due to power politics. Likewise this paper will pay attention mainly to the issue in Kosovo and the reasons for non-recognition of Kosovo.

Key words: Recognition of States, International Law, United Nations, Major Powers, Statehood

Introduction

“State is a complete association of free men, joined together for the enjoyment of rights and for their common interest.” — Hugo Grotius A system can be identified as a set of assemblage of things connected, associated or interdependent so as to form a complex unity. Thus international system can be identified as something very similar. The international system consists of states, non state actors, international organizations and people. The interaction of all these actors in the international system is international relations. Radicals, liberals, realists have put forward many definitions on the international system. According to the realists the contemporary international system is a multipolar or balance of power system where there are many influential actors in the international system.

The expected standard definition to state can be stated as below,

“An entity which possesses a permanent population, a defined territory, an effective government and capacity to enter into relations with other states can be identified as a state.”¹

-Article 1- Montevideo Convention 1933-

States are the most important and the major actor in the international system. If not for states, there will not be any international relations. States have the capacity to enter into political and diplomatic relations with other states. State is more than a government. Governments change according to the people's will, but states remain facing challenges. The

concept of statehood is very subjective. Different people hold different ideas about as to what is a state. While some states give recognition to states, other states are reluctant to give recognition due to many political reasons. International recognition is immensely important to survive in the world.

Therefore, states strive to achieve recognition among the international community since states find that it's best to interact with others in the international system than being isolated. State recognition is broadly perceived to be a political issue with legal consequences. Though giving recognition to states should be made solely based on international law and legal perspective, in the contemporary international system it has become more political and policy based.

In order for a state to be functional there should be at least some kind of recognition from other states in the world. Thus states give practice to customs, interstate negotiations and produce treaties.²

Recognition of states can be done expressly or impliedly.³ By now this recognition of states has become a very disputable topic in the international law. This is because giving recognition to states does not solely depend on international law. It is always connected with the foreign policy objectives of other states in the world. This means even though a state is given de jure recognition or recognition by law, some states in the international arena will not be willing to carry on relations with that state. This includes not having political, economic and most importantly diplomatic relations with that particular

¹The Avalon project-Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy-Convention On Rights And Duties Of States. from Yale Law School: Available at: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam03.asp#art1.

²Scott, Shirley. 2012. *International Law in World Politics*. 2nd Ed. New Delhi: Viva Books.

³Ibid.

state. This emphasizes that the way states handle their foreign policies can influence another state's recognition in the international system. Thus, this can be identified as de facto recognition which means recognizing a state factually. Therefore it is important for a state to achieve both de facto and de jure recognition in the international arena. In addition to that the most important two theories in giving recognition to states are the constitutive and declaratory theories⁴ which play a major role in granting international recognition.

In giving recognition to states the United Nations as the world's main political body and many other major powers in the international system such as the United States and Russia have a higher say. It is evident that in some scenarios even when a state has fulfilled all the necessary criteria in the Montevideo Convention 1933 or the international law, yet the major powers and UN are reluctant to give recognition to those states. The recognition by UN is very important since adapting the UN charter or being accepted by the UN confirms the international acceptance of a certain state as a sovereign state. In this instance UN Security Council has the power to either accept a state or not.

Likewise Kosovo is not accepted as an independent state from Serbia even though Kosovo declared itself as an independent state in 2008, yet Serbia and Russia⁵ are reluctant to give Kosovo its freedom.

Literature Review

Role of the UN in Giving Recognition (membership) to States

Article 4 of the United Nations charter defines the UN membership criteria for a state. If those five criteria are satisfied an entity will be regarded as a member of the UN, accepting that entity as a State in the international system. The five requirements are,

- 1) That entity has to be, A state
- 2) Has to be peace loving
- 3) Has to accept the obligations of the Charter
- 4) Has to have the ability to carry out the Charter obligations
- 5) Has to have the strength to Article 4 of the United Nations

D.P. O'Connell emphasizes United Nations practice in giving recognition to states. He identified that though there is territory and population, there is no minimum requirement for either of them. He believes that the ability to enter in to treaties is not a part of statehood. In considering independence as a criterion for statehood, O'Connell points out that while the state is not subordinate to any other entity, it is progressively more subordinate to international organizations.

Schwarzenberger (1957) also drew attention to United Nations practice as an indication of the as to what makes a state. He puts forward the idea that the ability to stand by itself' is a prerequisite to statehood. Independence, along with population, territory, and governmental capacity, both internally and externally, would be widely referred in definitions of statehood from the 1970s on.

⁴Worster, William. 2010. *Sovereignty: two Competing Theories of State Recognition*. Exploring Geopolitics, Geoconomics and Geostrategy: Available at: http://www.exploringgeopolitics.org/publication/worster_william_sovereignty_constitutive_declaratory_statehood_recognition_legal_view_international_law_court_justice_montevideo_genocide_convention.

⁵Wilde, Ralph. 2008. *Kosovo: International Law and recognition*. Chatham House. Chatham House

The UN recognition or the UN membership does not seem to affect a state's ability to rise as an independent entity. This is shown through the Taiwan case where Taiwan is not a member of the UN, yet it is considered as a state in the world. The same applied to Vatican. Until recent years Vatican was not given the UN membership, yet Vatican functioned as a state in the international system. Therefore according to many scholars the UN membership is not the main criteria for statehood.⁶

An attempt by Taiwan to obtain membership of the UN in 2006 was vigorously blocked by China who is a permanent member of the Security Council because China denies Taiwan's statehood. China insists that Taiwan is a part of the Peoples' Republic of China. Yet there are exceptions in the UN with regard to secession where the secessionist group has been recognized as a unit entitled to self-determination for purposes of decolonization. At this occasion the UN recognizes an entity as independent without the consent of the parent State in a colonial context, where the administering State had forcefully prevented the entity from exercising its right to self-determination.

Role of Major Powers in Giving Recognition to States

The strongest members of the international community make their decisions about new statehood with reference to their own interests and goals. The Major Powers apply substantial influence over other States by virtue of their material power and authority when it comes to recognition. The major powers' decisions serve both as focal points for less powerful States and also those decisions establish global precedents. Whenever they agree to grant or withhold recognition, their position often determines a proto-State's fate. Sometimes this means elevating actors without effective sovereignty and subjugating others that more convincingly do. As mentioned before, the Major Powers are the set of States with the greatest material capabilities relative to most others in the system. Because of these extensive capabilities they are also presumed to have the most power or potential to get others to do what they would not do otherwise. The Major Powers' recognition decisions therefore influence other States' recognition decisions whose interests are not as extensive or global. Additionally, because unilateral recognition is often risky and potentially costly, especially for small or weak States, most will be hesitant to recognize without Major Power support. In another way, Major Power recognition also serves as a focal point around which other States can coordinate their recognition.

The United States is arguably the foremost great power in the world today. United States' preferences and values, especially democracy, religious freedom, and free markets, greatly shape the contemporary international system. Economically developed countries are thus more likely to support the United States position, which typically favors the status quo than countries with lower gross domestic product per capita.

The United States play a major role in state recognition together with the USSR in the international arena. They can influence other states' decisions, since they have the veto power in the UN Security Council. The USA influence in recognizing states can be shown through non-recognition of the People's Republic of China until and until 1978 the US did not vitiate China's domestic authority.

⁶Harris, David. 2004. *Cases and Materials on International Law*. 6th ed. London: Sweet and Maxwell.

Methodology

The study is based on qualitative research which is aimed at gathering in-depth understanding towards the discussed phenomenon. A number of secondary sources such as books, journals, articles and news reports were used. In addition to this, UN Resolutions, material sources of international law such as treaties, conventions, and court rulings have proven to be invaluable for this study. The data analysis procedure is done in the case study method. Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies and institutions which are studied holistically by one or many methods. The case study method used in this study is the descriptive case study method which is used to get an in depth analysis of the particular case.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The Role of the United Nations in giving Recognition (Membership) to States

Role of the United Nations in Kosovo In 1989, Kosovo, a province of Yugoslavia with Albanians, was stripped of its autonomy by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. In response, the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) attacked Serb targets, which led to a violent crackdown by the Serbian army and the persecution of Kosovo Albanians, killing more than 1,500 and forcing 400,000 more from their homes.⁷ Due to the humanitarian consequences and regional impacts of the escalating crisis, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1244. The resolution expressed concerns over the excessive use of force by the Serbian military against Kosovo Albanians and called for a ceasefire by both parties.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution (1999), Resolution No: 1244

Resolution 1244 (1999) was adopted by the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in June 1999. In this resolution, the Security Council was determined to resolve the severe humanitarian situation which it had identified in Kosovo and to put an end to the armed conflict in Kosovo. This authorized the United Nations Secretary-General to establish an international civil presence in Kosovo in order to provide an interim administration for Kosovo. This was expected to provide intermediary administration while establishing and overseeing the development of temporary democratic self governing institutions.⁸

Paragraph 3 of the Resolution demanded that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to put an immediate and verifiable end to violence and repression in Kosovo and withdraw all military, police and paramilitary forces immediately from Kosovo.⁹

According to paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Security Council decided on the operation in Kosovo, under the supervision of the United Nations with international civil and security presences.¹⁰

Paragraph 15 of the resolution demanded that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian

⁷ United Nations. 2000. *UNMIK United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmik/background.shtml>.

⁸ United Nations. 1999. *RESOLUTION 1244 (1999)*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N99/172/89/PDF/N9917289.pdf>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

groups should immediately end all offensive actions and comply with the requirements for demilitarization.¹¹ Immediately preceding the adoption of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), various implementing steps were taken through a series of measures which were mentioned in the Military Technical Agreement 1999. It provided for the deployment of KFOR permitting them to operate without difficulty within Kosovo and with the authority to take all necessary action to establish and maintain a secure environment for all citizens of Kosovo.

Thus it is evident that United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was the savior of Kosovo as UNMIK assists Kosovo in every issue they face.

The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established in June 1999 emphasizing the end of NATO intervention in Kosovo caused massive human rights violations by Serbian authorities and end the clashes between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the Yugoslav forces and the huge deportations of Kosovo Albanians by the Yugoslav forces.¹² Therefore the Security Council, by its resolution 1244 of 1999, authorized member states to establish a security presence to prevent hostilities, demilitarize the KLA and facilitate the return of refugees. It also asked the Secretary-General to establish an international civil presence in Kosovo. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was then established in order to provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people could enjoy substantial autonomy and self-government. After the UNMIK establishment, Yugoslav forces withdrew; NATO suspended its bombings, and a 50,000-strong NATO led multinational Kosovo Force (KFOR) arrived to provide security.¹³

UNMIK task was unprecedented in complexity and scope. The Security Council vested UNMIK with authority over the territory and people of Kosovo, including all legislative and executive powers and administration of the judiciary. The Mission was asked to perform basic civilian administrative functions, promote the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo, facilitate a political process to determine Kosovo's future status, coordinate humanitarian and disaster relief of all international agencies, support the reconstruction of key infrastructure, maintain civil law and order, promote human rights and assure the safe and uninterrupted return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in Kosovo.

But in February 2008, the Assembly of Kosovo unanimously declared Kosovo's independence from Serbia and established the Republic of Kosovo. This declaration was formally legalized by the International Court of Justice in July 2010. The Republic of Kosovo is now recognized by 101 states, including the United States. Prior to this formal declaration in 2008, much of the UN's authority had been transferred to Kosovo's government and

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Kiss, Zoltan. 2000. *Kosovo: the end of the beginning or the beginning of the end*. Masters. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School.

¹³ Vidmar, Jure. 2009. *International Legal Responses to Kosovo's Declaration of Independence*. Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law, Vol. 42:779

European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).

In August 2008 the UN mission transferred its authority to the government of Kosovo and to the EULEX. The transfer has allowed the Kosovo government to assume responsibility over its country and its citizens, while the UN mission continues to provide support and guidance to the Kosovo government and EULEX.

The Mission's mandate includes¹⁴,

- 1) Demilitarizing armed groups
 - 2) Providing security for all communities in Kosovo
 - 3) Monitoring the border
 - 4) Facilitating democratic institutions
 - 5) Facilitating parliamentary and municipal elections
 - 6) Building government capacity
- Which seem to be already fulfilled in Kosovo.

Although Serbian and Albanian relations within Kosovo are tense, the government has made an effort to engage with the country's minority populations. Currently, northern Serbs are guaranteed 10 representatives in the Assembly of Kosovo, while ten more seats are allocated for other minority ethnic groups.

UNMIK is now in its final chapter as the UN continues to slim down its presence in Kosovo. NATO and Ukraine have also reported a troop withdrawal from the peacekeeping mission in August 2014. In December 2010, Kosovo authorities conducted democratic elections without UNMIK involvement, after the constitutional court ruled the first election as unconstitutional due to reports of voting irregularities. Kosovo elected deputy general director of Kosovo police, Atifete Jahjaga on April 7, 2011.¹⁵ With the inauguration of the Brussel Agreement, Serbia signed an agreement on April 19, 2013 between Belgrade and Pristina that assented to Kosovo's territorial integrity. The first Kosovo municipal elections were held in November 2013 paving the way for the North's inclusion into the country. Another round of elections happened during the spring of 2014, which led to the creation of a new coalition government in Belgrade headed by Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić.¹⁶ These major strides forward have helped create political unity among the Albanian and the Serbian municipalities making Kosovo and Serbian relationship smooth to some extent.

Russia and Kosovo Relations

Russia believes that granting Kosovo independence against Serbia's will, without an actual guarantee of rights of the ethnic Serb community in Kosovo is irrational. According to Russians, any detachment of territory from Serbia without its explicit consent would set a dangerous precedent against international law.¹⁷ Moscow asserts that a unilateral

¹⁴ United Nations. 2000. *UNMIK United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmik/background.shtml>.

¹⁵ UN Peace Keeping. 2014. *The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.betterworldcampaign.org/un-peacekeeping/missions/kosovo.html?referrer=https://www.google.lk/>.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Antonenko, Oksana. 2007. *Russia and the Deadlock over Kosovo* Oksana Antonenko July 2007 Russia/NIS. 1st ed. Paris: The Institutfrançais des relations internationales.

declaration of independence or UN resolutions including a challenge to Serbia would be immediately vetoed by Russia as it can be considered a clear violation of the UN Charter.

Furthermore, Moscow claims that any attempt to grant Kosovo independent status before it complies with the standards outlined in Security Council Resolution 1244 could encourage further ethnic cleansing against Serbs in Kosovo. Finally, Russia warns that any decision on Kosovo would set a precedent which could encourage separatism in other parts of the world, as this unilateral declaration is not fully compatible with international law. Russia is also against the granting of internationally supervised sovereignty to Kosovo.¹⁸

Richard Holbrooke,¹⁹ a key Democratic foreign-policy adviser, claims that, Kosovo is shaping up as the biggest international test of Russia's relationship with the West. Russian President, Vladimir Putin, in turn, has accused the West for attempting to ignore international law in claiming that the resolution of Kosovo's status is unique and would not set a precedent or a binding effect. At the G8 Summit Putin emphasized that any attempt to resolve the Kosovo issue without Serbia's consent will contradict legal and moral norms.²⁰

Russia's determination to oppose what seems to be a Western agreement on the independence of Kosovo could be seen as Russia, ready to challenge and oppose Western projects especially if they touch upon sensitive issues such as sovereignty, military intervention or Russian domestic politics. Moscow's position on Kosovo is based on a complex set of domestic, regional and global interests and concerns which dominate the thinking of Russia's modern political elite.

Russian Foreign Policy towards Kosovo

The Russian position over Kosovo hasn't changed at all, even after agreements with Serbia have been reached. This shows that Russian policy towards Kosovo is not only to support Serbia but to exploit Serbia for its own political power ambitions in international relations. The Russian position seeks to continue blocking any decision in the United Nations Security Council, and not only to block Kosovo as entity but to demonstrate its veto power against the other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.²¹

Regarding European Union's mediation between Kosovo and Serbia, Kosovo is in a much better position in negotiating and being represented in regional programs. This shows that the EU in Serbia is working well and that Serbia has no choice but to move towards the EU. Serbia has reward as well as punishments from this agreement. In the constructive relationship between Serbia and the EU, Kosovo plays a very important role, as Serbia cannot join the EU without resolving the issue of Kosovo.

Russia seeks to play the role of regulator of international affairs. Kosovo plays a very important role in shaping Russian foreign policy, as it was the first international intervention carried out without authorization from the United Nations.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Holbrooke, Richard. 2007, "Russia's Test in Kosovo", Washington Post. Available at: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/12/AR2007031200972.html.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Hoxha, Abit. 2012. *Russia's Foreign Policy in Kosovo*. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2012/05/12/russias-foreign-policy-in-kosovo/>.

Russia is much concerned about the Serbs living in Kosovo. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that they will continue to help to secure the legitimate rights and interests of the Serbs living in Kosovo²². By doing this, Russia shows how it uses Serbia for its own advantage, to adjust its power while guaranteeing Kosovo Serbs their complete protection of rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad.²³

Russian foreign minister whilst meeting with the Kosovo Serbs, and did not meet anyone from the Kosovo Government. This also shows how Russia's policy in Kosovo has developed and how states use ethnic minorities to exert influence in the international system. It is ironical for the reason that if Russia was really interested in settling issues between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, he would at least have met with both sides.

At present, Kosovo and Serbia agree on many things such as the Integrated Border Management and regional representation of Kosovo, Russia doesn't agree with them.²⁴ From the Russian point of view, no human right or any other legal right is more important than the concept of 'sovereignty and territorial integrity' of Serbia as prescribed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

In the United Nations Security Council meetings Russia holds very strong positions against Kosovo. With such an attitude, Russia opposes not only Kosovo but also the United States, the United Kingdom and other European Union states which support Kosovo independence. Kosovo is only represented in the United Nations by the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) and can only speak through them.²⁵

Russia is against all progress that has happened in Kosovo, Russia has tried to stop the Kosovo Foreign Minister from speaking in the United Nations media corner. When the Foreign Minister of Kosovo was addressing the media, Russian representative to the UN told him that he has no power to talk in the United Nations without UNMIK person. This incident shows that Russia is bluntly opposing Kosovo's diplomatic representation on the international stage. This is not mainly because of Kosovo but because of the United States support to Kosovo.

Russian foreign policy regarding this matter can be seen as part of the traditional international relations approach of deterrence. Ultimately, Serbia's stand on Kosovo will change in an advancing way and this will have an impact on Russia's policy towards Kosovo. However, Russia will still maintain a strict rejection of Kosovo's independence and Russia will try its best to stop Kosovo from accessing the international system.

Thus the case of Kosovo can be assessed with regard to the statehood criteria, the UN involvement, the US involvement and Russian involvement to Kosovo's statehood.

Conclusion

According to the traditional statehood criteria mentioned in the Montevideo Convention 1933, Kosovo has a permanent population, defined territory and the capacity to enter in to

²² The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2011. Briefing by Russian MFA Spokesman Alexander Lukashovich. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://archive.mid.ru/>.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Hoxha, Abit. 2012. Russia's Foreign Policy in Kosovo. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2012/05/12/russias-foreign-policy-in-kosovo/>.

²⁵ Ibid

relations with other states. Yet the problem arises whether Kosovo has an independent government which can conduct independent elections and government alone without the UN support, as UNMIK assists Kosovo with administration issues. Due to this reason though all the other criteria of the Montevideo Convention are satisfied, the criteria of having an effective government criteria is not satisfied. Therefore, accepting Kosovo as a state with regard to the traditional statehood criteria, according to the Montevideo Convention is challenging. If the UNMIK is dissolved and Kosovo is allowed to continue its own administration, then the traditional statehood criteria will be satisfied with regard to Kosovo. According to the international law, for an entity to secede from its mother state, that parent state has to give her consent for that secession. In the case of Kosovo, Serbia is the parent state of Kosovo and Serbia has never given its consent for Kosovo's declaration of independence. Therefore, Kosovo's declaration of independence can be identified as violating the international law which makes it difficult to recognize Kosovo as an independent state.

As mentioned before, Kosovo is a de facto state which can achieve the de jure status. If the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is taken away from Kosovo and if the UN lets Kosovo to carry on its own administration, Kosovo can be identified as an independent state which has an effective government which functions independently. Furthermore, if Serbia and Kosovo enter into negotiations and Serbia grants their consent to Kosovo's secession there will be no any issue at all because then Kosovo will be an independent entity without any influence from the UN.

As far as the United Nations stand is concerned, the UN has not been able to grant the statehood or most importantly the UN membership to Kosovo as Russia together with China strongly opposed to the idea of Kosovo recognition. Even when an application for statehood is submitted, that application will not be accepted unless all the five permanent members of the Security Council veto in favor of that application. Since Russia is strongly against an independent Kosovo, there is nothing the UN can actually do. Yet, the UNMIK supports Kosovo with administration providing judicial and executive advice and support. This emphasizes the fact that though Russia is against the statehood of Kosovo, Russia is supporting the UN Resolution 1244 to provide Kosovo with the administration assistance.

Out of the major powers, Russia is the only major power who is strongly against the idea of giving full recognition to Kosovo. Russia insists that without Serbia's consent no decision should be taken as Serbia is the parent state of Kosovo. Moreover, Russia insists that the Kosovo issue will set a legal precedent with long term consequences for Eurasia and other entities in the world who wish to be independent from their parent state. Russia believed that if recognition or statehood is given to Kosovo, other states with similar circumstances will try to claim their statehood based on Kosovo. Therefore, Russia believes that in order to avoid further chaos, retaining from given recognition to Kosovo is the wisest thing to do. European countries such as Spain, Romania, Slovakia and Cyprus also have expressly rejected the idea of giving recognition to Kosovo so as Russia, Serbia and China. Each of these countries has a specific, well defined area dominated by a specific ethnic minority group. In these countries, these ethnic groups have demanded autonomy, secession or integration with a neighboring country. The Spanish have Basque separatists. Romania and Slovakia each contain large numbers of Hungarians concentrated in certain

areas. The Chinese are concerned about potential separatist movements in Muslim Xinjiang and also they fear about possible Taiwanese independence. Russians are concerned about independence movements in Chechnya. Therefore, every country facing this fear psychosis believes that if Kosovo is separated from Serbia, a precedent for secession will be created which will be disadvantageous to them. The European Union and The United States are keen to grant Kosovo the recognition but Russia and Serbia are strongly against the idea. These differences lead to divisions between Russia and the West. Russia has objected to Kosovo's independence on diplomatic and legal grounds. Even in the UN, Russia ardently rejects even Kosovo's efforts in trying to express their ideas. Russia is not interested in having meetings with Kosovo and opposed Kosovo being independent. Russia wants itself to be seen as a great and dominant power in the international system that can influence other states. Serbia is a Russian ally and therefore while pretending to help Serbia Russia is trying to convince the West, that Russia is more powerful in the international arena than the West.

It can be observed that Russia is against the statehood of Kosovo due to the fear that it will create a legal precedent that will allow other entities also to become independent states breaking away from their parent states. Secondly Russia is against Kosovo statehood as Russia considers itself as a supervisory body in the international arena showing its power to Ukraine and Western countries. To show its growing power, Russia uses the Serbian and Kosovo issue pretending that they are keen on Serbian interests while actually Russia is trying to ensure its global posture.

Major Powers due to their personal benefits try to restrict entities from rising as states in the international system. Thus it is visible that statehood is an issue of power politics in the contemporary international system. This is discriminatory on behalf of that particular entity which claims for statehood. Therefore, Major Powers should not be let to decide the statehood of entities in the international system.

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