

-- Is it achieving acceptance by a significant number of states, especially those which view recognition broadly as we do?

In case of doubt in the matter of recognition, one must go back to the basic principle -- that entering into relations with a government is a question of national interest and not an act of approbation or a sign of particular friendship.

To illustrate in modern terms the disadvantages of breaking relations in order to show disapproval of policies or actions, we have the various situations that have occurred since the six-day war of 1967 in the Middle East. A number of the Middle Eastern states broke relations with Britain, France and the United States. Nonetheless, these states recognized the need for some form of continuing direct contact. The old practice of another state being designated to look after the interests of those with which relations had been broken was adapted to fill the need for essentially uninterrupted relations on a broad range of subjects. The original practice involved the mission taking over the interests of a state whose mission had departed, in an occasional presentation of a note or other communication. Very often, no officials of the departed state remained. This situation was found to be inadequate and a so-called "interests section" was established, under the flag of the protecting state.

It was often housed in the former premises of the departed state, but with a new flag and new plaque on the door. These interests sections were, in several cases, very large, and headed by a senior official, even of ambassadorial rank. In fact, one had a full-blown diplomatic mission under another name. There were, however, numerous disadvantages. The head of the so-called interests section had no normal right of access to officials and was hampered in a number of ways in the performance of his job.

Short of breaking relations, in a situation where there is no particularly warm regard between states, there are a number of other actions that can be taken to indicate this. Ambassadors may be withdrawn and a less senior official appointed chargé d'affaires. The mission can lie low in its social contacts with the regime; it can be represented at official ceremonies and events by a very junior officer. Many signs and symbols can be