

5. International law and obligations should be respected, especially adherence to the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris.

These factors help to make informed decisions on each case. The last thirty years, which have been the decades of the emergence of new states, have produced an impressive body of precedent and practice. But they do not remove the problems. Larger countries have a greater weight in the recognition equation simply because they are large; no matter what happens with Russia (or whether it meets CSCE principles if it becomes independent and sovereign), the West will have to find a way to "recognize" its existence in a way which makes a practical relationship possible. Smaller states are more vulnerable, as the Pakistani experience over Bangladesh illustrates. The view that each situation is sui generis is largely true, but also singularly unhelpful to charting a course for the future.

V. The Deficiencies of Recognition:

Recognition holds a symbolic appeal. It is linked to the concepts of sovereignty and independence, and the accreditation of embassies and a diplomatic community are part of the baggage of independent statehood. But the practice of recognition has been greatly over-emphasized:

- it conveys the concept of independence at a time when inter-dependence has become the dominant paradigm of international relations (is Moldova more independent because it is "recognized" as a sovereign state?);
- it ignores the practical realities of contact and association which most states have with other states, irrespective of their doctrines of recognition (we will deal with Ukraine pragmatically, irrespective of how we treat the recognition issue);
- it has become a political barrier to constructive international dialogue (eg., recognition of Israel by Arab states);
- it deals inadequately with the situations of states which might be independent in theory but which have in effect delegated important aspects of their political, economic and military sovereignty to some form of supra-national association or even confederation (can we recognize both a confederal Yugoslav authority and also six sovereign republics? If we can, does recognition or sovereignty have any real meaning?) and