



The Foreign Policy of Counter Secession: Preventing the Recognition of Contested States

By James Ker-Lindsay

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How do states prevent the recognition of territories that have unilaterally declared independence? At a time when the issue of secession is becoming increasingly significant on the world stage, this is the first book to consider this crucial question. Analysing the efforts of the governments of Serbia, Georgia, and Cyprus to prevent the international recognition of Kosovo, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and northern Cyprus the work draws on in depth interviews with a number of leading policy makers to explain how each of the countries has designed, developed, and implemented its counter secession strategies. After explaining how the principle of the territorial integrity of states has tended to take precedence over the right of self-determination, it examines the range of ways countries facing a separatist threat can prevent recognition by other states and considers the increasingly important role played by international and regional organisations, especially the United Nations, in the recognition process. Additionally, it shows how forms of legitimisation or acknowledgement are also central elements of any counter-recognition process, and why steps to prevent secessionist entities from participating in major sporting and cultural bodies are given so much attention. Finally, it questions the effects of these counter recognition efforts on attempts to solve these territorial conflicts. Drawing on history, politics, and international law this book is the first and only comprehensive account of this increasingly important field of foreign policy.

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Editorial Review

Review

this is a novel work on an important topic with a wealth of empirical evidence. It is accessible to both novices and experts and addresses a wide breadth of the scholarly literatures. Bridget Coggins, Diplomacy & Statecraft Ker-Lindsay's book should be credited for both its conceptual novelty and the clarity of its analytical structure. Ker-Lindsay successfully synthesises the politics of counter-recognition into three elements: initial attempts to isolate seceding territories from international communities (isolation), careful review of risks involved in isolation tactics (risk review) and target setting to maximise the benefit from the diplomatic endgame (target setting). Tom Hashimoto, Europe Asia Studies

About the Author

James Ker-Lindsay's research focuses on issues relating to conflict, peace, and security in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. He is Eurobank EFG Senior Research Fellow on the Politics of South East Europe at the European Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science.

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