

Self-determination of peoples in international law

SUMMARY

This paper describes the principle of self-determination of nations functioning in the international law since the moment of adopting the United Nations Charter. After a short reference to historic background, the sources of that principle and issues of its subjective and objective scope are presented. The author depicts the discussed matter on the basis of the analysis of sources, practice and doctrine. The question of exercising the right to self-determination as one of possible criteria of statehood is also analyzed. In the final part the author depicts a broadened analysis of international practice in the self-determination field, dividing various examples into several categories, which helps to draw general conclusions. The conclusion may be drawn up that despite the fact the self-determination of nations undoubtedly has the character of a universally binding principle of contemporary international law, its execution in practice relies mainly on political factors, and the actual impact of the legal status on the international practice is strictly limited.

KEYWORDS: self-determination of nations, international law, secession