

Politicization and Securitization of Consular Affairs in International Relations

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Abstract: This study examines the development of consular affairs in international politics and analyzes recent trends in the politicization and securitization of consular issues within a political context. While consular affairs have traditionally focused on the protection of nationals abroad, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these functions have evolved into matters of political and security relevance. It also explores the impact of these changes on contemporary international relations and concludes with an assessment of their implications.

Keywords: Consular Affairs, Security, International Relations, International Co-operation

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Introduction

Consular affairs, traditionally viewed through the narrow lens of legal frameworks and institutional practices focused on protecting citizens abroad, are undergoing a profound transformation. This evolution, marked by increasing politicization and securitization, necessitates a reevaluation of their role within the complex tapestry of international relations. While the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR) provides a foundational legal framework, its limitations in addressing the contemporary geopolitical landscape become increasingly apparent. This article delves into the multifaceted nature of modern consular affairs, exploring their historical trajectory, the intricacies of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and the significant challenges posed by the escalating influence of political and security considerations.

The historical perception of consular functions primarily revolved around the provision of services and protection to nationals residing in foreign countries. This traditional understanding, while remaining partially relevant, no longer encapsulates the full spectrum of activities encompassed by consular affairs in the 21st century. This shift is driven by a confluence of factors, including the globalization of threats, the rise of transnational crime, and the increasing entanglement of national interests with international security concerns. Consequently, the once relatively straightforward legal and institutional parameters governing consular work are now frequently challenged and redefined by the exigencies of a rapidly changing geopolitical environment. The VCCR, despite its importance in establishing fundamental rights and obligations, struggles to fully address the complexities of modern-day challenges, leaving significant gaps in the legal and operational framework.

This article will examine the complexities of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in consular matters. Historically, consular cooperation has evolved through a series of bilateral agreements and evolving international norms, often driven by specific needs and shared concerns between nations. However, the emergence of global challenges, such as terrorism, human trafficking, and climate change, necessitates a more coordinated and multilateral approach. The Global Consular Forum, and similar initiatives, represent attempts to foster greater collaboration and information sharing among consular services worldwide. Yet, even

these multilateral efforts are constrained by the divergent interests and priorities of participating states, highlighting the inherent challenges in achieving consensus and effective coordination on a global scale. Case studies will illustrate both the successes and failures of these cooperative frameworks, showcasing the challenges of harmonizing national interests within international collaborative structures.

A crucial aspect of the evolving landscape of consular affairs lies in the growing influence of politicization and securitization. These concepts, while distinct, are increasingly intertwined, shaping the context within which consular activities are conducted. Politicization manifests in the instrumentalization of consular issues for political gain, often distorting the traditional focus on citizen protection. Securitization, on the other hand, reflects the framing of consular matters as threats to national security, leading to heightened surveillance, restrictions on consular access, and even the use of consular protection as a pretext for military intervention. This article will explore the theoretical underpinnings of both politicization and securitization within the field of international relations, examining their implications for the effectiveness and legitimacy of consular actions.

The intersection of consular affairs with broader geopolitical conflicts is vividly illustrated through historical and contemporary case studies. Examining instances such as the challenges faced by Korean nationals in Manchuria during the 1920s, the article showcases how consular issues can become entangled in larger geopolitical narratives. Furthermore, the use of consular protection as a justification for military intervention, as seen in instances such as Turkey's incursion into Syria and Russia's annexation of Crimea, highlights the alarming trend of exploiting consular concerns for strategic advantage. These examples demonstrate how the traditional focus on citizen protection can be subverted, transforming consular affairs into instruments of political maneuvering and military escalation. The analysis will critically assess how these actions compromise the principles of impartiality and neutrality traditionally associated with consular work and the potential erosion of international legal norms designed to protect consular staff and individuals under their protection.

In conclusion, this article argues that the future of consular affairs is inextricably linked to the ongoing processes of politicization and

securitization. While the core function of protecting nationals abroad remains vital, the increasing entanglement of consular issues with political and security agendas presents significant challenges to their effectiveness and legitimacy. A deeper understanding of these dynamics is crucial for safeguarding the principles of international law, fostering effective cooperation, and ensuring that consular services remain a valuable instrument for promoting peaceful relations and protecting the rights of individuals across borders. The article ultimately seeks to contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of consular affairs in the 21st century, providing insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars alike.

Definition of Consular Affairs and Establishment of International Frameworks

Definition of Consular Affairs and International Frameworks

Consular affairs encompass a wide range of activities undertaken by consular officials to protect and support nationals living or traveling abroad, facilitate trade and international relations, and safeguard the rights and interests of their home country (Ertan 2021; Francio & Martín 2024; McGuinness 2008). These activities include providing emergency assistance, issuing visas, maintaining civil registrations, and protecting the legal rights of citizens within foreign jurisdictions (Ullah 2024; Jayasinghe 2022; Shin 2019; Walsh et al. 2022). The underlying premise of consular affairs is closely linked to the extension of a state's domestic jurisdiction beyond its geographical borders in the interest of its nationals (Han et al. 2024; Laube 2019; Trauner & Manigrassi 2014).¹

The primary international framework governing consular affairs is the VCCR, adopted in 1963 and ratified by over 180 countries. It establishes standardized guidelines and practices to ensure the smooth conduct of consular activities, allowing consular officials to perform their duties effectively without interference from the host country. By delineating the rights and responsibilities of consular officials, the Convention plays a crucial role in facilitating the global functioning of consular activities.

Key Provisions and Limitations of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR)²

The key provisions of the VCCR comprise three main areas:

Consular Functions (Article 5). This provision enumerates essential consular functions such as issuing passports and travel documents, assisting nationals in distress, representing nationals before local authorities, and protecting their rights.

Consular Immunities and Privileges (Articles 31-42). This section grants consular officials certain legal immunities, including exemption from the local jurisdiction for acts performed in the course of their official duties, the inviolability of consular premises, and protection of consular archives and documents.

Communication and Protection (Article 36). One of the most crucial provisions of this article ensures the right of consular officers to communicate with and assist detained nationals. Ensuring consular access to communication and support has been pivotal in numerous cases involving criminal proceedings and the protection of human rights.

Although the VCCR provides a robust framework for consular activities, it faces several challenges in the modern geopolitical environment as follows:

State Sovereignty and Domestic Jurisdiction. Host countries may invoke sovereignty to restrict consular activities, particularly in sensitive cases related to national security or political opposition. Such restrictions can hinder consular access and the provision of the necessary support to nationals.

Politicization of Consular Issues. Consular disputes have been used as leverage in broader political conflicts, leading to the breakdown of diplomatic and consular relations. In such cases, consular access may be denied in retaliation for political grievances or conflict.

The Evolving Nature of International Law. Although the VCCR is comprehensive, it was drafted in the early 1960s and may not fully address contemporary issues such as cyber consular services, dual nationality, and the influence of non-state actors on consular protection. These new challenges call for the re-evaluation and expansion of existing legal frameworks to better meet modern demands.

The VCCR plays a vital role in shaping the global framework for consular affairs, which serves as the foundation of international

consular law and provides a crucial legal basis for protecting nationals and facilitating consular activities worldwide.³ However, as the global geopolitical environment evolves, the VCCR faces new challenges and complexities, including the regulation of digital consular services, enhanced protection for dual nationals, and more effective responses to non-state actors that affect citizens' safety and rights abroad. Strengthening and adapting this legal framework is essential to safeguarding the rights and interests of nationals in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic world (Maaïke and Jan).⁴

International Co-operation on Consular Affairs and the Global Consular Forum (GCF)

International co-operation in consular affairs has become a fundamental element of diplomatic practice and is essential for efficiently managing issues such as the protection of nationals abroad, visa issuance, trade facilitation, and legal assistance. This co-operation is often formalized through bilateral or multilateral treaties, agreements, and diplomatic protocols, allowing countries to work together to address the complex issues their nationals face abroad. The following section reviews the development of international consular co-operation, explores the various frameworks and agreements governing these activities, and provides examples of the effectiveness and challenges of such co-operation.

Development of International Co-operation on Consular Issues

The development of consular co-operation has been marked by several key events, each contributing to the establishment of a systematic and standardized approach to consular affairs. Adopted in 1963, the VCCR was a significant milestone in the formalization of CC, providing a comprehensive legal framework for the treatment of foreign nationals and conduct of consular activities and enabling consulates to perform their duties without undue interference from host countries. Widely ratified by countries across the globe, the VCCR forms the basis of international consular law and allows countries to carry out consular

functions effectively.

Another critical aspect of consular co-operation are bilateral consular agreements (i.e., agreements between countries), which are essential for facilitating specific consular functions such as visa issuance, citizen registration, legal representation, and emergency assistance. They are tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of the participating countries, providing a structured approach for managing issues related to the protection of nationals abroad. Numerous examples of bilateral consular agreements exist. In 1980, the United States and China signed the Consular Convention between the United States and China, which established mutual responsibilities for protecting nationals, processing visas, and providing legal representation. This agreement is particularly significant owing to the high level of travel and business interactions between the two countries. It systematically regulates consular relations and addresses the complex needs of the citizens of both countries. As of 2019, South Korea operates bilateral consular mechanisms in 13 countries, including Japan, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, and Indonesia. South Korea established consular agreements with the United States (1963), Russia (1992), and China (1998) and updated them in 2015 to include mandatory consular notifications and a 96-hour time limit for such notifications (Baek 2019).⁵

In the context of globalization, multilateral co-operation is crucial. International organizations (e.g., the UN) and regional entities (e.g., the EU) often facilitate multilateral consular co-operation. These organizations play a vital role in fostering consular co-operation, especially during crises, such as natural disasters, pandemics, or political instability, when co-ordination among countries is vital in order to provide support and implement evacuation.

The frameworks provided by these organizations ensure that countries can respond effectively to global issues affecting their nationals. For instance, the EU has established a system allowing EU citizens to receive consular assistance from any EU member state if their own country does not have a consulate in that location. This co-operative approach proved effective during the COVID-19 pandemic, when coordinated efforts facilitated the repatriation of EU citizens from affected countries. The EU's common consular support system exemplifies how regional co-operation can enhance citizen protection during global crises.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has also developed consular co-operation mechanisms to address issues such as labor migration and the protection of migrant workers. Countries with significant overseas worker populations (e.g., the Philippines and Indonesia) have worked closely with other ASEAN members to safeguard the rights of their nationals. This co-operation has been instrumental in resolving labor disputes, providing legal assistance, and ensuring the safety and welfare of migrant workers.

While formalized systems of co-operation exist, bilateral and multilateral consular co-operation allows all parties to effectively react to crisis situations such as international evacuations. During the 2011 Libyan civil war, many countries collaborated to evacuate their citizens from conflict zones. This joint effort included the provision of safe transportation routes, repatriation flights, and temporary shelters, underscoring the importance of international co-operation in managing large-scale evacuations and protecting citizens during emergencies (Han et al. 2024).⁶

Despite extensive developments in consular diplomacy and international co-operation, challenges persist, the primary issue being the potential conflict between the external aspects of diplomacy and internal concerns of protecting nationals. Furthermore, while the need for international co-operation is growing in an increasingly globalized world, the reality is that such co-operation often falls short of expectations (Maaiké 2010).⁷

The Global Consular Forum (GCF)

The Global Consular Forum (GCF), established to enhance global co-operation on consular issues, is a prominent example of international consular co-operation in the global age. Founded in the early 2000s as an informal network of consular officials responding to the increasing complexity of international travel, migration, and cross-border crises, its founding members include key countries (e.g., the United States, Canada, Australia, and several EU states) frequently involved in consular protection issues. Currently, 35 countries are participating in this forum.

The Global Consular Forum provides an international platform for

policy discussions, consular innovation, and improvement of consular services. Key topics include crisis management, the welfare of detained nationals, and the simplification of consular procedures. It brings together senior consular officials from various countries to discuss best practices, address new challenges, and explore ways to improve the protection of nationals abroad.

The Global Consular Forum holds regular meetings where participants share their experiences and develop strategies to enhance their consular operations. Since its inception, meetings have been held in various locations, with the first and second held in the United Kingdom (Winston House and Wilton Park) in 2013 and 2015, respectively, and the third in South Korea in 2016. The topics of discussion ranged from technological innovation to handling complex emergencies such as natural disasters and political upheavals. The GCF's core focus areas include (1) crisis management: strengthening co-ordination in response to international crises such as wars, natural disasters, and pandemics; (2) technological enhancement: promoting the use of technology in consular work, including biometric passports, online visa systems, and emergency communication tools;⁸ and (3) training and capacity building: developing training programs to enhance the capacity of consular staff to manage difficult situations.

However, similar to many international co-operative regimes, the GCF faces several limitations and challenges. The most significant issue is the forum's non-binding nature. Despite the participation of 33 countries at the South Korea meeting and subsequent increase to 35 members, the GCF's recommendations are not legally binding, limiting the forum's ability to promote global consular reforms. Another issue is the lack of universal participation. Not all countries are members of the GCF, which leads to gaps in global consular co-operation. This can be problematic in crisis situations requiring an international response. In addition, differences in national interests may arise. Consular policies based on the priorities of nation states often reflect these priorities, leading to inconsistent co-operation and conflicts of opinion on issues such as detainee treatment and immigration. Moreover, resource disparities among countries affect their ability to provide effective consular services as wealthier nations often possess more advanced systems and capabilities.

Despite these limitations, the GCF has played an important role in promoting international co-operation on consular issues and in providing a platform for dialogue and sharing best practices. The increasing complexity of global crises and changing needs were highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which placed considerable strain on consular networks, underscoring the need for more rapid response systems. As global travel and the complexity of crises continue to grow, GCF remains a crucial platform for addressing the challenges of consular services in an increasingly interconnected world.⁹

Politicization and Securitization of Consular Affairs in International Relations

Changes in International Politics: Expanding the Concept of Security

In the context of international relations, the concepts of politicization and securitization serve as critical frameworks for understanding how traditionally neutral or administrative activities become politically or strategically significant issues. Traditionally, security in international politics has been defined in military terms, primarily in terms of state survival. However, in this era of globalization, various new threats have emerged on the global stage. The discourse on non-traditional security now includes topics such as the environment, disease, terrorism, cybersecurity, nationalism, culture, immigration, diaspora communities, development co-operation, human security, human rights, and humanitarian intervention. These diverse issues have become increasingly intertwined with security concerns in the international community.¹⁰

According to Buzan et al., "security is about survival." From this perspective, an issue presents an "existential threat" to a designated referent object. Traditionally, this referent object has been the state, encompassing government, territory, and society.¹¹ However, nowadays, it is not limited to the state. The Copenhagen School emphasizes the distinction between the traditional, single-sector approach and the newer, multi-sectoral framework, with the latter encompassing a broader agenda that includes political, economic, societal, and environmental security. By expanding the concept of security beyond the military domain,

new reference objects can be identified. For example, political security may concern state sovereignty, economic security, national economy, societal security group identity, and environmental security, species, and habitats.¹² The protection and safety of nationals, a fundamental function of consular affairs, also fits within this expanded conceptual framework.

Politicization of Consular Issues

Politicization of consular affairs occurs when routine consular services are leveraged as tools in political disputes or diplomatic negotiations. Although consular functions primarily focus on protecting nationals and facilitating international travel, they can become entangled with broader political agendas or conflicts. Politicization refers to the process whereby non-political or routine functions, such as visa issuance or support for nationals abroad, are linked to political agendas, international disputes, or domestic policy considerations. When consular activities are influenced by broader political dynamics, they can be used as instruments for diplomatic maneuvering and conflict.

Examples of the politicization of consular affairs include the following:

Visa issuance as a political tool. Visa restrictions can be used to express dissatisfaction with another country's policies or actions. For instance, the United States and China have imposed visa restrictions on officials, journalists, and scholars as part of their broader political conflicts. Similar cases have been observed in other contexts.

Capsular support during diplomatic crises. During periods of heightened diplomatic tension, provision of consular support can become a politically sensitive issue. High-profile detention of foreign nationals (e.g., journalists or businesspeople) can escalate into major diplomatic conflicts, and their release often becomes a bargaining chip in political negotiations.

Refugee and asylum issues in the globalized era. When consulates handle cases involving refugees or asylum seekers, particularly when granting asylum to political dissidents, such actions can be interpreted as political statements, potentially straining diplomatic relations with the country of origin of the individuals involved.

Pandemic-related travel restrictions. During the COVID-19

pandemic, consular services became politicized as governments imposed travel bans and restrictions. Implementation of such measures, repatriation of nationals, and handling of diplomatic privileges reflect broader national strategies, making consular affairs a politically sensitive issue.

Diplomatic retaliation through consular services. Reductions in consular services or the closure of consulates can be used as tools for diplomatic retaliation. For example, during periods of diplomatic tension between the United States and Russia, both countries have reduced their consular services, complicating routine consular operations. Similar cases have been reported in the case of the United States and China.

The consequences of the politicization of consular affairs vary and are often negative. For the general public, politicization of consular services can lead to delays, travel disruptions, and limited access to assistance, directly affecting citizens. In diplomatic relations, the use of consular issues as political tools can exacerbate diplomatic conflict, making conflict resolution more challenging. Ultimately, politicization of consular issues can lead to a decline in trust in consular services. When consular services are perceived as biased or driven by political motives, public confidence in their fairness and effectiveness is undermined.

Securitization of Consular Affairs

By contrast, the securitization of consular affairs refers to the process by which specific aspects of consular activities are framed as national security issues. This often involves justifying actions based on the need to protect national interests, which can potentially lead to actions that fall outside of normal political procedures. Securitization in consular affairs can include limitations on transparency, secret negotiations, and prioritization of certain consular cases as security threats. Securitization of consular affairs implies that specific consular activities, such as protection of nationals, visa issuance, and diplomatic negotiations, are managed with reduced transparency or heightened secrecy. While such measures may be driven by concerns over national security, sensitive diplomatic negotiations, or political strategies, they also raise issues related to accountability, citizen rights, and the potential to abuse power.

Key aspects of the securitization of consular affairs include the

following:

National security concerns. Certain consular actions, such as negotiations for the release of detained nationals or handling sensitive asylum cases, often involve classified information. To prevent compromising national security or diplomatic efforts, these actions are often kept confidential. For example, a government may engage in secret negotiations to secure the release of nationals imprisoned abroad.

Visa issuance and denial. Decisions regarding visas for individuals deemed a security risk or politically sensitive are often made with minimal transparency. A lack of transparency can make it difficult for individuals to understand the reasons for denial or challenging decisions through legal means.

Diplomatic protection and prisoner exchange. Secret diplomatic negotiations may be necessary when securing the release of detained nationals or negotiating a prisoner exchange. These actions are often conducted in secrecy to minimize political backlash or ensure successful outcomes. The recent case of a spy exchange in August 2024 involving the United States, Russia, and four other countries is a prime example.

Asylum and refugee cases. When consulates handle asylum cases, particularly those involving high-profile political figures or dissidents, they can become highly sensitive. By discreetly managing such cases, governments can avoid diplomatic conflicts or retaliation from their country of origin. Governments may use secrecy in consular affairs to manage public opinion and navigate complex diplomatic situations. By controlling information, states can pursue political strategies without immediate public scrutiny or opposition.

In sum, the securitization of consular affairs poses several challenges. The secretive nature of securitized consular activities can make it difficult to hold governments accountable, potentially leading to abuses of power or decisions that are not in the public interest. For citizens, a lack of transparency in consular services can hinder their ability to access the required support or understand the decisions that affect them. This, in turn, can erode trust in both government and consular services. As secrecy increases in consular affairs, public confidence in the fairness and equity of these services may diminish, fueling suspicions about the motives underlying government actions.

Politicization and securitization of consular affairs indicate a shift

from the traditional role of citizen protection and service provision to states using mechanisms to achieve broader political and security objectives. As consular affairs become entangled with national security and political strategies, they have complex implications for international relations, citizen rights and diplomatic practices. Ensuring transparency and accountability in consular affairs while balancing national security and political considerations is essential to maintain the credibility and legitimacy of consular services on the global stage.

The Expansion of the Securitization of Consular Affairs: Military Intervention and Territorial Expansion

As consular affairs extend beyond the traditional roles of protecting nationals and responding to emergencies, politicization and securitization have been integrated into broader diplomatic, security, and political strategies. This chapter examines cases in which consular issues, traditionally centered on bilateral, multilateral, and regional co-operation, intersect with diplomacy, intelligence gathering, and international conflict. It also highlights instances in which consular issues have been used as a pretext for military intervention or territorial expansion.

Evolution from Traditional Consular Functions to Securitization

Historically, consular services have played key roles in ensuring the safety and protection of foreign nationals, responding to crises, and promoting international co-operation. However, recently, the scope of consular affairs has expanded.

Diplomatic and intelligence roles. Consulates are increasingly involved in diplomatic negotiations and intelligence gatherings, particularly in strategically important regions. This shift has blurred the line between consular functions and national security operations.

Complexity of diaspora and domestic issues. With increased global mobility, consular services are increasingly engaged in issues related to diaspora communities and foreign nationals within domestic borders. These activities affect both domestic and international relations. The roles of diplomacy and intelligence often overlap with those of

diasporic issues, complicating the nature of consular work.¹³

Instrumentalization in conflicts and political actions. Consular issues are sometimes invoked as justifications for military intervention or political action. Concerns have been raised regarding the misuse of consular protection as a pretext for achieving broader geopolitical objectives. Some countries have used consular issues as justification for military intervention or territorial expansion. These actions are often criticized as attempts to obscure broader strategic goals under the guise of protecting nationals or resolving consular disputes.

The use of consular issues to justify military intervention or resolve territorial disputes has persisted since the formation of the modern international order. Governments often claim that they need to protect their nationals abroad to justify their military actions; however, such justifications are frequently criticized as attempts to disguise broader geopolitical ambitions. Historically, there have been numerous cases in which consular issues have been used to justify military intervention. These cases are often contentious and reflect deeper geopolitical tensions. When consular issues are used as a pretext for military action, concerns are raised about the misuse of diplomatic protection as a tool for political or military gain. Although distinguishing between legitimate consular issues and those used as pretexts for aggression or expansion may be challenging, international oversight is necessary in such situations.

Case Studies of the Securitization of Consular Affairs in International Conflicts

The securitization of consular affairs in international conflicts can take various forms. The following cases illustrate how consular affairs has been used to initiate or justify international disputes.

Japanese intervention in Manchuria (1920s-1930s). In the 1920s and 1930s, Japan expanded its military presence in Manchuria under the pretext of protecting its nationals, particularly Korean settlers (Choi 2011)¹⁴ This intervention ultimately led to the establishment of the Manchukuo Puppet State in 1931. While Japan justified its military expansion by claiming the need to protect its national and economic interests in Manchuria, its actions violated Chinese sovereignty, demonstrating how consular protections can be exploited for territorial

gain. The intervention increased regional instability and escalated tensions that contributed to the invasion of Manchuria (1931) and the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937).

Turkey's military operations in Northern Syria (2016-present). Citing the need to protect the Turkmen community and defend its borders from Kurdish threats, Turkey has conducted multiple military operations in northern Syria, arguing that the protection of its nationals and ethnic kin, as well as the need to address security threats justify its military intervention. These actions have been criticized as violations of Syrian sovereignty, with Turkey's use of consular protection seen as a cover for broader geopolitical objectives. Turkey also considers the Kurds within its borders as Turkish nationals and views those in Iran, Iraq, and Syria as kin. Turkey's military presence has perpetuated conflict and instability in Northern Syria, complicating diplomatic efforts toward a peaceful resolution.

Russia's annexation of Crimea and invasion of the Ukraine (2014-present). Following political turmoil in the Ukraine, Russia claimed it was necessary to protect Russian-speaking citizens and ethnic Russians in Crimea as justification for annexing the territory.¹⁵ Russia's invocation of consular protection to legitimize its actions was widely condemned as an illegal annexation by the international community and has led to prolonged conflict in eastern Ukraine, illustrating how consular protection can be used as a pretext for military expansion. Consequently, sanctions were imposed against Russia and the nation severely restricted its relations with NATO and the West.¹⁶

This situation escalated to a full-scale war in eastern Ukraine from 2014 to 2022. Before its full-scale invasion in 2022, Russia supported separatist movements in the Donbas region under the guise of protecting the Russian-speaking population. Russia asserted that it had provided military and political support to protect its speakers, thereby undermining Ukraine's sovereignty.¹⁷ This intervention led to a protracted conflict that caused significant human and economic harm to the region. Diplomatic efforts, such as the Minsk Agreement, failed to achieve peace, highlighting the limitations of diplomatic channels in the face of entrenched geopolitical ambitions.

Consular diplomacy and international co-operation often have inherent limitations in conflicting situations. As demonstrated by

Japan's intervention in Manchuria and Russia's annexation of Crimea, consular diplomacy can be misused as a pretext for military and political intervention. Furthermore, when large diasporic communities are involved, consular disputes can escalate to the point of infringing on the sovereignty of the host country. Poorly managed consular disputes can transform diplomatic issues into military confrontations and exacerbate conflicts. Consulates lack the authority to intervene directly in political disputes and must rely on broader diplomatic efforts, which can be an inefficient approach in crises. The securitization of consular affairs, as it extends to diplomacy, intelligence, and international conflict, underscores the potential risks of using consular issues to justify aggressive actions. Consular diplomacy plays a crucial role in protecting nationals and managing international relations. However, when misused for military intervention or political gain, it poses a serious threat to global security and international law. Understanding these dynamics is essential to ensure the appropriate use of consular services and maintain the principles of diplomatic engagement.

Recommendations for International Co-operation in Consular Affairs

Consular affairs have traditionally focused on protecting and supporting nationals living or traveling abroad and hold a vital position in international relations. However, the growing complexity and importance of consular affairs in recent years, driven by globalization and escalating international conflicts, have significantly increased. This trend is particularly evident in the politicization and securitization of consular issues, which have impacted diplomatic practices and international law.

Politicization occurs when specific consular incidents are used as tools in diplomatic or political disputes. For example, a state may arrest or threaten the nationals of one country to pressure another state or leverage them as a political tool in the international arena, heightening tensions between countries and complicating the fulfillment of consular duties.

Conversely, securitization occurs when the protection of nationals abroad is perceived as an extension of national security. In crisis

situations, such as terrorist threats or large-scale natural disasters, the safety of nationals abroad becomes a matter of national security, and consular affairs are integrated into the security policy. However, securitization can alter the nature of consular affairs, blurring the line between humanitarian assistance and political and security considerations.

The shifts in consular affairs have significant implications for diplomatic practice and international law. When consular affairs are entangled with political and security agendas, existing international norms, such as diplomatic immunity and customary practices, may be challenged, complicating international co-operation. Additionally, when consular affairs are leveraged as political tools, their legitimacy and effectiveness can be questioned, potentially undermining trust in consular services within the international community.

In conclusion, while consular affairs remain crucial for protecting nationals abroad, the politicization and securitization of these issues present new challenges and limitations. Policymakers must adapt to these changes and seek new approaches to preserve the effectiveness and legitimacy of consular services. This requires adjusting the legal frameworks and diplomatic practices that govern consular affairs, as well as fostering co-operation among countries to ensure that consular services are not unduly influenced by political or security pressures.

Notes

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国际关系中的领事事务政治化与安全化

摘要：本研究探讨了领事事务在国际政治中的发展，并在政治背景下分析了领事问题政治化和安全化的最新趋势。虽然领事事务传统上侧重于保护本国国民在国外的权益，但本研究旨在全面理解这些职能如何演变为与政治和安全相关的问题。本研究还探讨了这些变化对当代国际关系的影响，并在结尾部分对其含义进行了评估。

关键词：领事事务、安全、国际关系、国际合作

영사업무의 정치 안보화와 국제관계

요약 : 본 논문은 국제 정치에서 영사 업무의 발전을 연구하고, 국제 정치적 맥락에서 최근 영사 문제가 정치화 및 안보화된 현상을 분석한다. 이는 전통적으로 해외에 있는 자국민 보호를 주된 목적으로 하던 영사 업무가 어떻게 정치적이고 안보와 관련된 문제로 발전했는지에 대한 포괄적인 이해를 제공하는 것을 목표로 한다. 또한, 이러한 변화가 현대 국제 관계에 미치는 영향을 탐구한다.

주제어 : 영사업무, 안보, 국제관계, 국제협력

国際関係における領事業務の政治問題化と安全保障化

概要：本研究では、国際政治における領事業務の発展を検証し、政治的文脈における領事事務の政治化および安全保障化の最近の動向を分析する。領事業務は伝統的に在外国民の保護に重点を置いてきたが、本研究では、これらの機能がどのように政治的・安全保障的妥当性の問題に発展してきたかに関し、包括的見解を提供することを目的とする。また、これらの変化が現代の国際関係に及ぼす影響を探り、その影響についての評価で締めくくる。

キーワード：領事業務、安全保障、国際関係、国際協力

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