

Unity and Diversity: Canada as a role model?

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There is no explicit legal justification for unilateral secession in Canada. But the Supreme Court of Canada went on to establish that the underlying principles of Canadian federalism mean that if Quebec citizens were to support secession on the basis of a clear question, and with a clear majority vote (neither of which is specified clearly), then there would be a *constitutional* obligation on the part of the other federal partners to negotiate a new relationship. In effect, the Supreme Court ruled that Canada is divisible – and thus it became one of the few countries in the world in which a constitutional right to secession has been recognized, a right however that depends on the exercise of many competing principles: democracy, constitutionalism, the rule of law and ... good will.