

Nation is a large group of people united by a common language, ancestry, history, or culture. People often feel great loyalty to their nation and pride in their national characteristics. Such feelings of loyalty and pride are often referred to as nationalism. See NATIONALISM.

In international law, nation means a group of people exercising self-government within a defined territory with the recognition of other nations. Recognition is shown by other nations through the exchange of ambassadors. When a new nation is recognized by other nations, it acquires certain rights and duties. Its rights include the right to navigate freely on the high seas. Its duties include the obligation not to threaten or use military force against other nations. Sometimes in international law, a nation is called a country or state. For more information on nations as defined in international law, see COUNTRY; INTERNATIONAL LAW.

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