



4.9 Challenges to Sovereignty

Objective and Essential Learning

4.9 Explain how political, economic, cultural, and technological changes challenge state sovereignty.

- Devolution occurs when states fragment into autonomous regions; subnational political-territorial units, such as those within Spain, Belgium, Canada, and Nigeria; or when states disintegrate as happened in Eritrea, South Sudan, East Timor, and states that were part of the former Soviet Union.
- Advances in communication technology have facilitated devolution, supranationalism, and democratization.
- Global efforts to address transnational and environmental challenges and to create economies of scale, trade agreements, and military alliances help to further supranationalism.
- Supranational organizations - including the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), European Union (EU), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Arctic Council, and African Union - can challenge state sovereignty by limiting the economic or political actions of member states. But can also decrease conflict and promote cooperation between member states.



Challenges to State Sovereignty

1. **Devolution** - States must concede (share) some power to autonomous regions or subnational political units to avoid conflict.
 - a. Examples:
 - i. Spain: Catalonia - different language, has financial burden of supporting Spain (semi-autonomous)
 - ii. Belgium: Flanders & Wallonia - different dialects, religion, ethnic groups
 - iii. Canada: Quebec (speak mainly French) & Nunavut (indigenous peoples) - Semi-autonomous groups in Canada
 - iv. Nigeria: Two different ethnic groups (Muslim vs. Christian differences) - large scale conflict

Challenges to State Sovereignty

- a. Destabilization of the state through disagreement, disunity, and a desire for more autonomy.
- b. When a state cannot resolve issues these devolutionary forces may result in disintegration of a state.
 - i. Examples: Eritrea, South Sudan, East Timor, Soviet Union



<https://youtu.be/LkWldwFdTPo>



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Challenges to State Sovereignty



2. Advancements in Communication Technology

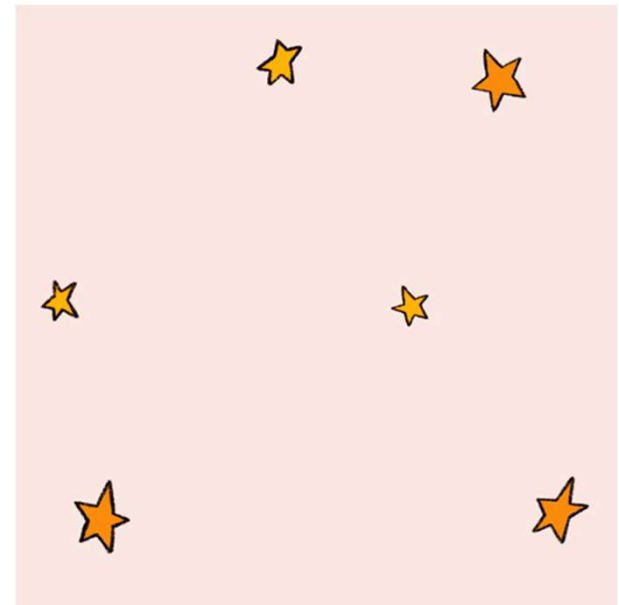


- a. Time-space compression: The relative distance between places has been shrinking due to modern advancements in transportation and communication technology.
- b. Constant connections result in:
 - i. Information & news stories are broadcasted throughout the world.
 - ii. Access to information, knowledge and services.
 - iii. Instant communication with large groups
 - iv. Propaganda and misinformation
- c. Increases devolutionary pressures and challenges state sovereignty, leads to social movements.

Challenges to State Sovereignty

1. Supranational Organizations

- a. An alliance of three or more states that work together in pursuit of common goals.
 - i. Economic, Social/Cultural, Political, Military or Environmental
- b. Typically regional in scale, but there are some globalized -> United Nations

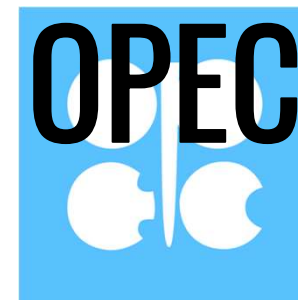


Supranational Organizations



North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Association of Southeast Asian Nations



Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

<https://youtu.be/tlmYtJiUK00>

