

Sovereignty

"Whoever has the power of the sword bears rule." – (Jean Bodin)

Defining Sovereignty

- **Classical Approach**

- *Supreme & exclusive authority within its borders free from any external influence.*

(Bull Hedley; The Anarchical Society)

- It emphasizes on state as the primary actor in international relations as established in the peace of Westphalia (1648)

Defining Sovereignty

- **As External Sovereignty**

- *'State's independence on the global stage'*

(Krasner, Stephen D. 1999. **Sovereignty:**

An Illusion of Decline?')

- Highlights a state's independence on the global stage. It encompasses the right to engage in diplomacy, treaties, and its own foreign policy, free from external coercion.

Sovereignty: Tracing the Roots

- **Historical Context**

The concept of sovereignty has its roots in ancient civilizations like Greece and Rome, where ideas of self-governance and supreme authority emerged. However, the modern understanding of sovereignty is primarily attributed to the **Peace of Westphalia** (1648), which formally ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe. This treaty established the principle of **Westphalian sovereignty**, which recognized independent states as the primary actors in international relations, each with exclusive authority within its territorial borders and freedom from external interference.



Evolution of Sovereignty

Absolute Sovereignty

- **Ultimate source of power:** Resides entirely with the ruler or a small, specific group (e.g., monarchy, dictatorship)
- **Government legitimacy:** Not dependent on the consent of the people, derived from divine right, tradition, or force
- **Government power:** Unlimited and not subject to the will of the people
- **Examples: Authoritarian Regimes**(China, N. Korea, Russia) & **Constitutional Monarchies** (UK, Japan, Spain)

Evolution of Sovereignty

Popular Sovereignty

- **Ultimate source of power:** People (citizens)
- **Government legitimacy:** Derived from the consent of the governed
- **Government power:** Limited and subject to the will of the people
- **Examples: Elections:** Regularly held elections (India, United States, South Africa)**Constitutions:** Constitutions that guarantee fundamental rights and freedoms (e.g., Brazil, Germany, Japan).**Civil Society Participation:** Active and vibrant civil society promoting transparency, and holding governments accountable to the people (South Korea, Poland, Hungary).

Sovereignty & Pakistan



Constitution of 1973(Preamble)

"Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Almighty Allah alone, and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust; And whereas it is the will of the people of Pakistan to establish an order;"

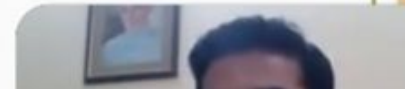
- **Ultimate Sovereignty with God:** It acknowledges the ultimate authority resides with God.
- **Delegated Authority to the People:** However, God has delegated some of this authority to the people of Pakistan.
- **State as Instrument:** The state serves as the instrument through which the people exercise their delegated authority.
- **Limited Exercise:** This authority is not absolute but exercised "within the limits prescribed by Him." (refers to Islamic principles).

UN & Sovereignty

Balancing International Cooperation & Sovereignty

The United Nations takes a nuanced stance on sovereignty, acknowledging its importance while also recognizing the need for international cooperation and collective action on global challenges. Here's a breakdown of the UN's position.

- **Article 2(1):** The UN Charter states that "the Organization is based on the principle of the **sovereign equality of all its Members.**" This principle emphasizes the equal rights and legal status of all member states, regardless of their size or power.
- **Article 2(4):** The Charter also prohibits the **threat or use of force in international relations**, upholding the territorial integrity and political independence of states. This provision reaffirms the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, a key component of sovereignty.



Challenges To Sovereignty

1. Globalization: Economic interdependence blurs traditional lines. While states retain sovereignty, international trade agreements and the influence of multinational corporations necessitate cooperation and compromise, impacting a nation's internal policies ([McGrew, Anthony. 2009. 'The Globalization of Politics].)

- **Trade Agreements:** The **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**, and its successor, the **United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)**, limit the ability of member countries to set certain economic policies like tariffs and subsidies, impacting internal control over their economies.
- **Multinational Corporations (MNCs):** Companies like Apple and Amazon hold massive economic power, sometimes exceeding the GDP of smaller nations expand more This can create situations where MNCs have more leverage to influence a state's policies or even challenge regulations deemed unfavourable.

Challenges To Sovereignty

3. International Organizations: Organizations like the UN, WTO, FATF or IMF hold influence. While promoting cooperation and global progress, they can sometimes impose obligations on states, raising concerns about compromised sovereignty ([Weiss, Thomas G. 2014. International Law and World Order]).

International Monetary Fund:

- **Loan Conditionalities:** The IMF often attaches conditions to its loans, such as implementing specific economic reforms (e.g., spending cuts, privatization) or adopting certain financial policies. This can be seen as an infringement on a state's internal sovereignty, as they are required to implement policies they might not have chosen themselves in exchange for financial assistance.
- **Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs):** These programs, historically promoted by the IMF, aimed to address economic imbalances in developing countries by implementing reforms like currency devaluation and trade liberalization. However, critics argue that these programs often prioritized the needs of international creditors over the well-being of citizens, impacting domestic economic policies and social welfare.



Leave

Challenges To Sovereignty

4. **Non-State Actors:** Powerful terrorist organizations, multinational corporations, or even large NGOs can operate

- **The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS):** This terrorist organization carved out a "caliphate" across parts of Syria and Iraq, challenging the sovereignty of both nations within their own territories and posing a global security threat.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** While many NGOs play a positive role, some are accused of having undue influence on national policies, potentially undermining the ability of states to govern autonomously.