

General vocabulary

fragile weak or uncertain, and likely to become worse under pressure

terrorist someone who uses violence such as bombing or shooting to obtain political demands

material relating to your money, possessions and living conditions, rather than the needs of your mind or soul

corruption dishonest, illegal or immoral behaviour, especially from someone with power

radicalize make people accept new and often extreme ideas, especially ideas about complete social and political change

pursue continue doing an activity or trying to achieve something over a long period of time

interests the things that bring advantages to someone or something

tactically related to smaller scale actions that you do to achieve what you want, especially as part of a game or large plan

Subject vocabulary

multinational operating in more than one country

democratic a system of government in which the population chooses those who govern them, through free and fair elections

ideology opinions or beliefs, often linked to a particular political system or culture

intergovernmental between or involving governments of different countries

intergovernmental organizations organizations composed primarily of sovereign states (referred to as member states)

military alliance a relationship or cooperation between states that are committed to using their armed forces in supporting similar military objectives

Synonyms

conform obey

coercion force

1.1 Key concept: Power

Key idea:

Power is the ability to influence other groups in global politics and achieve outcomes.

What is power?

There is no single agreed definition of power (see page vi for 'power' explanation). But at its simplest, power is about achieving desired goals and influencing others. All groups and individuals in global politics have different amounts and types of power, and feel the effects of their power, or lack of power. States can be divided into powerful, less powerful and **fragile** states. States may be powerful in different ways, for example economically but not militarily. International organizations, such as the United Nations and the European Union, have power. **Multinational** companies (MNCs) – some wealthier than states – non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and **terrorist** groups all use power to achieve their desired goals.

Power can be used to achieve **material** gains. For example, a state may want to use its power to agree a trade deal or defeat a terrorist group. It may also be used to persuade others to **conform** to a political or economic idea. For example, a state may use its power to persuade other states to choose a **democratic**, capitalist model of government or to fight **corruption**. A terrorist group might use its power to **radicalize** others to support an extremist **ideology**.

Power is not fixed. States can become more powerful, whilst others see their power decline. Non-state groups can be powerful and cause problems for established state powers. Through **intergovernmental organizations** (IGOs), smaller states can cooperate with other states to become more powerful than they would be alone. For example, members of a **military alliance** such as NATO may respond collectively to security threats by launching military action. The kind of response that actors in global politics choose to use can enable others to draw conclusions about their power. Similarly, political and economic unions, such as the European Union, may establish a single currency zone that aims to maximize their economic power.

Power gives groups involved in world politics the ability to **pursue** their **interests**, whatever these interests may be at any given time.

Articulation sentences:

There is no agreed definition of power. However there are economic, military, political and other forms of power, and it can be used to achieve a state or group's interests.

Types of power

Hard, soft and smart

Tactically, states and other groups in global politics can choose to force or persuade others to do what they would like. Joseph Nye, a Harvard professor of international relations, describes these tactics as **hard power** and **soft power**.

With hard power, a state or group tries to achieve its aims through **coercion**. State A will force State B to do what it wants. State B will be aware that it is being forced to do what State A wants and will usually be less powerful than State A.

With soft power, a state or group tries to achieve its aims through persuasion or influence. State A will persuade State B to do what it wants, with or without State B being aware that this is what State A wants. Nye describes this as 'the power to get others to want what you want'. States and groups that use soft power can use culture, foreign policy (if ethical and exemplary) and political values (for example democracy, rule of law, tolerance, justice) to persuade other states (see page vi for 'justice' explanation). An unpopular or unethical foreign policy (such as the 2003 invasion of Iraq or the 2014 annexation of Crimea) or a lack of political freedom at home (such as in China) may all reduce a state's soft power.

Nye also identifies a strategy that balances hard and soft power, **smart power**, where both force and persuasion are used together to achieve the desired outcome. For example, in 2015 the United States and its partners in the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, plus Germany) used soft power and hard power when dealing with Iran. They used a combination of economic **sanctions**, the threat of possible military action (hard power) and a diplomatic process to secure a deal with Iran to reduce its nuclear weapons programme.

These types of power can be thought of as a **spectrum** of options, ranging from very forceful actions (such as military force); to a mix of soft power diplomacy and hard power sanctions (smart power); to **sophisticated** soft power communications campaigns designed to persuade and attract. All of the forms of power – military, economic, structural, relational – that are described in this section can be used as tactics in this spectrum.



Figure 1.1 Hard to soft power scale

Hard power	Smart power	Soft power
<p>Military action taken against Islamic State in Syria and Iraq by US and others in 2014. Soft or smart power options were not possible with Islamic State, which was not prepared to negotiate.</p> <p>Military force against Saddam Hussein in 2003 by the US coalition. Critics of the invasion have said that UN weapons inspectors should have been given more time and that a smart power approach was possible (combining inspections with the threat of military force).</p>	<p>The nuclear deal signed between Iran and P5+1 in July 2015. The P5+1 used a combination of tactics: diplomatic negotiations, economic sanctions and an unstated but possible threat of military force. <i>Foreign Affairs</i> magazine praised this as a 'textbook example of successfully conceived and implemented foreign policy'.</p> <p>Violent protest groups such as Hezbollah not only use hard power against their adversaries, but also build and run schools, establish and maintain health care facilities, and participate in democratic coalition politics in the Lebanese parliament.</p>	<p>Development aid plays a huge part in powerful states trying to achieve their outcomes through persuasion. The United States state aid agency (USAID) gives most aid to countries where development matters for US security interests. In 2015, Afghanistan and Pakistan received the most US aid (see page vii for 'development' explanation).</p> <p>China has pledged up to \$1.4 trillion in infrastructure investment in Africa. In return, China has favourable access to natural resources from African states.</p>

Subject vocabulary

hard power achieving aims through force

soft power achieving aims through persuasion or influence

smart power achieving aims through force, persuasion and influence

sanctions official orders or laws stopping trade or communication with another state, as a way of forcing its leaders to make political changes

General vocabulary

persuasion making someone decide to do something, especially by giving them reasons why they should do it, or asking them many times to do it

ethical relating to principles of what is right and wrong

exemplary excellent and providing a good example for people to follow

rule of law a situation in which everyone in a country is expected to obey the laws, including the government, powerful people and military leaders

annexation taking control of a country or area next to your own, especially by using force

spectrum a complete range of opinions, people or situations going from one extreme to its opposite

aid help, such as money or food, given by an organization or government to a country or to people who are in a difficult situation

negotiation official discussions between the representatives of opposing groups who are trying to reach an agreement, especially in business or politics

infrastructure the basic systems and structures that a state or organization needs in order to work properly, for example roads, railways or banks

Synonyms

sophisticated ... advanced, developed

investment money

General vocabulary

Ebola a virus that causes bleeding from many parts of the body and usually causes death

illegitimate not allowed or acceptable according to rules or agreements

credibility the quality of deserving to be believed and trusted

comply do what you have to do or are asked to do

Synonyms

reluctant unwilling

troops soldiers

embedded believed strongly

ultimate best

Hard power

Military force was used against the Gaddafi regime in Libya in 2011, with a NATO air campaign authorized by the UN Security Council to protect civilians. However, the Obama administration was initially **reluctant** to use military force, focusing instead on withdrawing **troops** from Iraq and Afghanistan. During Obama's presidency, there was reluctance to deploy soldiers to new conflicts.

Smart power

President Obama's speech in Cairo in 2009 pledged to reset relations with the Muslim world in the Middle East. However, this public message was combined with a continuation of military force in Iraq and Afghanistan. The US administration attempted to achieve a decisive outcome before withdrawing US troops in 2011 and 2014.

Soft power

Natural disasters ranging from the South Asian tsunami in 2005; the Haiti earthquake in 2009; and the West African **Ebola** outbreak in 2014–15 have seen huge donations from states and even the deployment of troops to help.

Sporting events such as the London and Sochi Olympic Games in 2012 and 2014 can be used to boost a state's global image.

Articulation sentences:

Hard power relies on force, whereas soft power involves the use of persuasion. Smart power is the combination of both of these tactics.

Challenges of soft power

Supporters of soft power argue that governments that have liberal values and practices may provide an attractive example to some people in states and societies that may lack democratic institutions. They may be attracted to democratic politics, economic systems based on freedom and choice, support for human rights, and other generally accepted standards and right for individuals (see page vi for 'human rights' explanation).

However, consistency and patience is needed. Soft power can take years to create, but may be lost in an instant or in a single image. For example, photographs of US soldiers mistreating prisoners in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2003 became synonymous with a military campaign that many people considered **illegitimate** and illegal. Trust and **credibility** are essential if states and groups want to use soft power in order to persuade.

Soft power is also hard to use because cultures and values are **embedded** in society, and are therefore outside a government's control. States may also want to communicate different messages to different audiences through soft power; what persuades in Paris may not persuade in Damascus.

Articulation sentence:

Soft power is fragile – it can easily be destroyed – and it is often embedded in society and not within a government's control.

Military power

Military power is essential when using hard power. Military resources (land, air or sea) are the **ultimate** means to force another group or state to **comply** or to change their behaviour. The most powerful states are often thought to be those with the largest armies, the most advanced weapons (including nuclear weapons), and the technology and willingness to use their military power against one or more targets.

It is possible to compare and measure the military resources available to states. We can look at the number of soldiers, the amount spent on defence, or the amount spent as a percentage of a state's **GDP**. As of 2015, *The Economist* estimated each of these as follows.

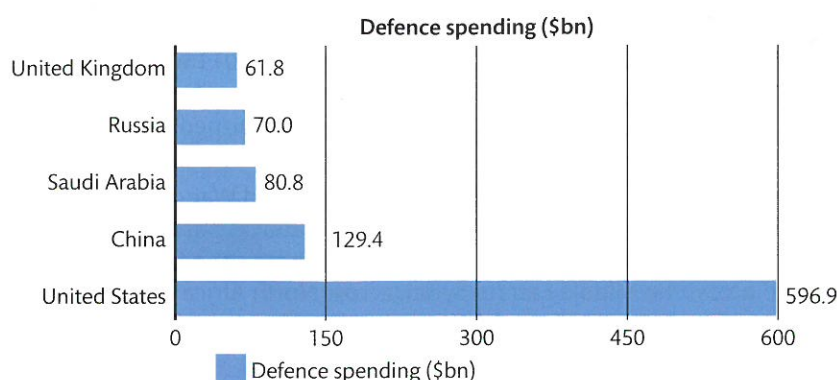


Figure 1.2 States' defence spending in \$billion graph

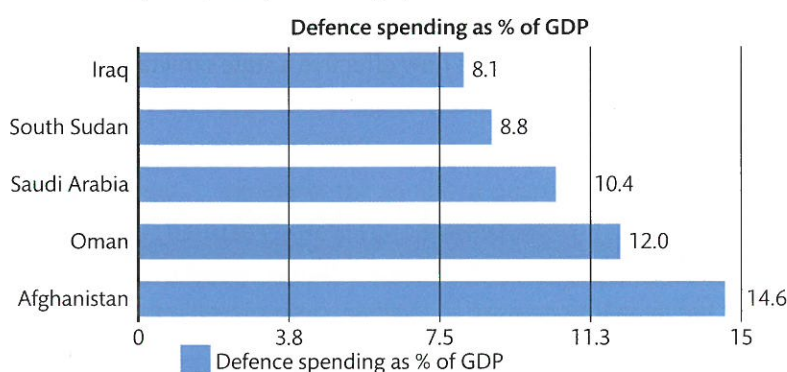


Figure 1.3 States' defence spending as % of GDP graph

States	Armed forces (by 1,000)
1. China	2,333
2. United States	1,433
3. India	1,346
4. North Korea	1,190
5. Russia	771

These data allow analysts to make different conclusions about military power. Poor but **unstable** states such as Afghanistan, South Sudan and Iraq have to spend a high proportion of their GDP on defence. They remain focused on their domestic instability and do not show any military power ambitions beyond reducing internal threats. States with large populations, such as China, the United States and India, unsurprisingly, have large numbers of troops (larger than the populations of some states). Wealthy countries and those keen to play a global role in security spend the most on defence, with four of the UN Security Council members (US, China, Russia and the UK) having the largest defence **budgets** in the world.

But it is dangerous to draw **firm** conclusions about military power from statistics about resources alone. What matters is whether military resources are actually used and whether they are successful when they are used. Success should be measured by whether the stated objectives of the use of military power are, in reality, achieved.

General vocabulary

GDP Gross Domestic Product: the total value of all goods and services produced in a country, in one year, except for income received from abroad

budgets the money that is available to an organization or person

Synonyms

unstable insecure

firm fixed

General vocabulary

counter do something in order to prevent something bad from happening or to reduce its bad effects

insurgency an attempt by a group of people to take control of their government using force and violence

civil war a war in which opposing groups of people from the same country fight each other in order to gain political control

humanitarian concerned with improving bad living conditions and preventing human suffering

aftermath the period of time after something such as a war, storm or accident when people are still dealing with the results

militant groups non-state armed groups that are willing to use strong or violent action in order to achieve political or social change

relief money, food, clothes and so on given to people who are poor or hungry

Synonyms

sophisticated .. advanced, developed

doctrine belief

sought tried

CHALLENGE YOURSELF



Thinking and Research skills

Research Russia's military intervention in Ukraine in 2014. What was Russia aiming to achieve? Were they successful? Using this example, and any others you feel are relevant, write an answer to the question 'Is military power declining in importance?'

Is the War on Terror a successful use of military power?

- The United States has impressive military resources but failed to achieve a decisive victory in Afghanistan and Iraq. These campaigns cost at least \$1.6 trillion and lasted 13 years in Afghanistan and 8 years in Iraq.
- In 2013, the United States and its allies resumed military action in Iraq to counter a new threat from Islamic State. During the 2003–2011 war in Iraq, the United States' superior military technology was severely tested by insurgency tactics and the use of far less sophisticated technology by armed opposition groups, such as roadside bombs.
- Campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan were part of a so-called War on Terror, launched in 2001. Since then, the number of terrorist attacks has increased and dangerous insurgencies have spread. From Afghanistan and Iraq they have spread across the Middle East (to Syria), across North Africa (to Libya and Tunisia) and to South Asia. Pakistan has seen the most dramatic rise in terrorist-related violence since 2001.

Articulation sentences:

Military power is often measured by the size of a state's military or its military spending. It is also useful to assess how effective a state's military is in the conflicts that it engages in.

Is military power declining in importance?

Military power less useful and significant

Military power has been unsuccessful in many major conflicts since 2001 (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya). It does not work against contemporary non-state actors or armed opposition groups.

Inter-state war is decreasing, military conflict between states is nearly non-existent (see page vii for 'conflict' explanation). Conventional armies deployed against states are outdated.

Increasing public and political reluctance for Western troops to be deployed, making it difficult to find support and legitimacy for military action.

Military power still useful and significant

Military power is still important to check the advance of non-state groups such as Islamic State who threaten state sovereignty (see page vi for 'sovereignty' explanation).

Intra-state war is increasing. The world faces complex threats from civil war and insurgencies which pose a global security threat. Inter-state war has not disappeared completely. Conflict between Russia and Ukraine (2014) demonstrates a continuing threat.

Military force is still useful to protect civilians (Libya, 2011) under the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect.

Military power and soft power

Military power is not just used to force other groups into action. It is frequently used for humanitarian objectives and to prevent human suffering in the aftermath of natural disasters. For example:

- In 2014, the United States, France and the United Kingdom sent troops to Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone to help tackle the Ebola crisis.
- Troops were sent to Haiti in 2009 to help deal with the earthquake, and to South Asia in 2005 to help deal with the tsunami.

Militant groups often respond to humanitarian disasters, too. For example, after the Pakistan floods of 2011, the Pakistani Taliban sought to increase their soft power by launching their own relief operations.



Articulation sentence:

Military power is used less against other states than previously in history, and is now primarily used against non-state actors or intra-state threats.

Economic power

As with military power, there are several ways to measure a state's economic power. These can also be used to measure its development, as is explained further in Unit 3: Development (page 48).

Method	Explanation
Gross Domestic Product	Measures merely the size of domestic output, for example in billions of dollars. Some analysts expect China to overtake the United States on this measure in the next decade.
Gross Domestic Product per person	Measures the size of the economy as a proportion of the total population. By this measure , analysts expect China to take much longer to overtake the United States. They see this as evidence that the benefits of economic growth are not spread as widely amongst the population as in the United States.
Economic growth percentage	Measures the annual or quarterly percentage by which a state's economy has grown (or decreased).

It is possible for states to seek only economic power. Japan and Germany have large economies. However, since the end of the Second World War they have chosen to pursue economic power only and to not seek to increase their military power. They have small armed forces, which they use rarely, and only as a part of international **coalitions**.

But it is unlikely that a state will be a significant military power if it is not also a significant economic power. All the members of the UN Security Council are large economic powers, especially the United States and China. Economically weaker countries, such as those in Figure 1.3 (page 5), have to spend a higher proportion of their GDP in order to attempt to build effective militaries.

States can use economic power as a form of hard power. States frequently impose sanctions on other states to force them to change their behaviour. For example, tough sanctions were placed on the Iranian economy by the United States and European Union in order to force Iran to negotiate a deal to reduce its nuclear weapons programme. In 2012, Iran's currency collapsed. *The Economist* estimated that GDP fell by 5.8 per cent that year, **inflation** rose to 50 per cent, incomes fell by 40 per cent and 50 per cent in the **private sector** and **public sector** respectively, and oil exports decreased by 50 per cent.

It is also possible for states to develop an economic relationship that balances out each state's economic strengths and weaknesses. China depends on natural resources from Africa to fuel its large population and territory. In return, African countries receive much needed investment in infrastructure from China's rich foreign exchange **reserves**, earned from its large export market.



Articulation sentences:

Economic power can be measured in different ways. It can be used as a method of hard power – in the form of sanctions – and is needed if states wish to be strong military powers.

General vocabulary

overtake develop or increase more quickly than someone or something else and become more successful, more important or more advanced than them

coalitions groups of states who join together to achieve a particular purpose, usually a political one

inflation a continuing increase in prices, or the rate at which prices increase

dependent needing someone or something in order to exist, be successful or be healthy

reserves supply of something kept to be used if it is needed

Synonyms

measure way of judging

Subject vocabulary

private sector the industries and services in a country that are owned and run by private companies, and not by the government

public sector the industries and services in a country that are owned and run by the government

Subject vocabulary

ideological relating to political principles and structures for ordering government and society

Synonyms

driven strongly influenced

polls surveys

diverse different

General vocabulary

struggle a long hard fight

authoritarian strictly forcing people to obey a set of rules or laws, without consultation or scope for democratic challenge by the population

regime a government, especially one that was not elected fairly or that you disapprove of for some other reason

uprisings attempts by a group of people to change the government or laws in an area or state

agenda the ideas that a political party thinks are important and the things that party aims to achieve

strategic done as part of a plan

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

ATL Communication, Thinking, Social skills

With a partner, discuss an example of a famous brand from your country and an example of a brand that has come from abroad. What do you think the influence of these brands has been? Do you believe either brand has had an effect on your culture or the way it is perceived by the rest of the world?

Structural power

Structural power is when states influence the political ideas, structure and frameworks of global politics itself. For example, some states may wish to push others towards a more democratic, capitalist, free market economic model. The **ideological struggle** between capitalist and communist models of economic development is the most powerful example of this in recent history. The dominance of the capitalist model was largely achieved through a mix of hard power and the attractiveness of its economic success.

More recently, Western powers have tried to remove **authoritarian regimes** and build up democratic models of government. In Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, this was attempted through the use of hard military power and regime change, with mixed results. The Arab **Uprisings**, which began in 2011, were **driven** by large popular demonstrations and the hope of a more democratic Middle East and North Africa. In general, the uprisings have failed to achieve this.

Articulation sentence:

Structural power is the means by which states affect global politics, usually by promoting a model of politics that they favour, such as democracy or capitalism.

Relational power

Relational power is when a state has a relationship with another state and uses this relationship to influence the other state to change its behaviour. A state may use military, economic, hard, soft, smart power or a combination of all of these to achieve its aims. To be successful, the state will need to have an effective strategy. It must know the other state's strengths and weaknesses and know both what would be a convincing threat and what would be an attractive reward.

Nye identifies three types of relational power:

- Threats and rewards – that are likely to encourage the state to reach the desired goal.
- Controlling the **agenda** – limiting the choices of the other state in order to reach the desired goals.
- Establishing preferences – getting the other state to want the same goals as your state.

Articulation sentence:

One state can use its influence to change the behaviour of another state, using hard, soft and smart power; this is called relational power.

Social and cultural power

Globalization has made it possible for some countries to export their cultural resources across the world (see page vii for 'globalization' explanation). Global brands such as *The Simpsons*, Facebook, the BBC, Real Madrid, Apple and Samsung have become almost universally known and popular. It is difficult to know whether this brand popularity has any soft power benefit for the countries from which the brand originates. For example, opinion polls in Pakistan show that the BBC World Service is popular. However, this does not necessarily mean that the United Kingdom is also perceived positively. Therefore, cultural power connects **diverse** populations around the world at a more human, rather than state **strategic**, level.

Cyber power

The cyber revolution has created an entirely new way for political groups to try to influence others. The internet has **empowered** new groups both at a state and individual level. These include organizations, such as Wikileaks, which **leaked** large volumes of secret United States government diplomatic information. Nation states now invest in cyber security and have accused each other of launching cyber attacks on others. Private individuals have also been empowered and have launched cyber attacks against governments and multinational corporations. Others have launched legitimate campaigns challenging state power, such as those seen through powerful blogs during the Arab Uprisings in 2011. With key infrastructure such as banking, water, transport and telecommunications dependent on cyber security, a new battleground has opened up.

Articulation sentences:

The relatively new social, cultural and cyber powers have varying effectiveness. Cultural power may do little for nation states, whereas cyber power has empowered many groups, states and individuals.

Economic power	Structural power	Relational power	Social, cultural and cyber power
Sought by Japan and Germany since the end of the Second World War; necessary for military power	Impact on the global political framework is achieved – usually by promoting a preferred political model e.g. democracy	One state influencing the behaviour of another state	Social and cultural power connects populations but impacts less than cyber power e.g. Wikileaks

Measuring power

Taking all of these types of power into account, a judgement can be made about how powerful or weak a state is. We can also establish whether a state's power is increasing or declining.

Measuring power as resources

Power can be measured by calculating the size of, for example, armies, economies and populations. Critics of this way of measuring power say that this is not helpful because it does not take into account what states actually *do* with these resources. States may be reluctant or unable to use their power resources, even if these resources are considerable. States may misuse their power resources and make strategic mistakes. States may face opponents who seem less powerful, but still have the **capacity** to **frustrate**, resist or even defeat their power.

Measuring power as behavioural outcomes

Measuring the practical effect that states have when they use their power resources is another way of assessing power. This involves a judgement about whether, for example, **air strikes** or economic sanctions have achieved the desired effect and whether they have changed the behaviour of the other state in the way that was intended.

Distribution of power

Power can also be understood by looking at world politics as a whole. Is the world **order unipolar**, with one state clearly more powerful than all of the others and able to achieve its objectives without resistance? Is power spread around equally between lots of powerful states and non-state groups in a **multipolar** system where many states compete with each other? Is there a **bipolar** system, in which two rival but equally powerful states are in conflict with each other, perhaps making both reluctant to challenge the other?

General vocabulary

empowered giving someone more control over their own life or situation

leaked deliberately gave secret information to a media company such as a newspaper

frustrate prevent someone's plans, efforts or attempts from succeeding

order the political, social or economic situation at a particular time

Synonyms

capacity ability

Subject vocabulary

air strikes attacks in which military aircraft drop bombs

unipolar when one state is more powerful than all the others

multipolar when many states are powerful and compete with each other

bipolar when two states are equally powerful, and the main competition is between these two powers and not others



Figure 1.4a Unipolar world order



Figure 1.4b Bipolar system

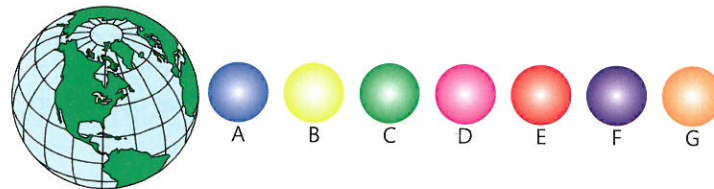


Figure 1.4c Multipolar system

Synonyms

indicator sign

orderly peaceful, well-behaved

locked stuck

Subject vocabulary

realists those who view global politics as being dominated by states and in which states are the most important actors in global politics, usually defending and prioritizing their own national interest above any other factors

competition seeking advantage over another actor or beginning a process where one actor wishes to achieve victory over the other

offensive realism when states attempt to expand their power

defensive realism when states attempt to defend themselves against external threats

Liberals those who view global politics as benefiting from states and other actors working together, following international law, respecting human rights and having a broader range of core interests than their own core interests

General vocabulary

anarchic lacking any rules or order, or not following rules of society

status quo the state of a situation as it is

The distribution of power in global politics at any given time is an **indicator** of global stability. An imbalance of power amongst groups can often mean that war or conflict is more likely. This is because states or other groups may feel that they have enough power to use force to achieve their aims, or that an adversary is becoming too powerful and thus needs to have their capabilities and influence reduced. It is possible to achieve a relative balance of power. For example, during the Cold War, the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union prevented both countries from beginning full-scale military hostilities against each other. However, the period was extremely volatile: both states increased their military (especially nuclear weapons) resources and the possibility of conflict remained very real. A balance of power amongst states and other global groups contributes to the establishment of an **orderly** international society.

See Unit 4: Peace and conflict (pages 64–82) for an explanation of how the distribution of power affects peace and stability in the global world order (see page vii for 'peace' explanation).

Articulation sentences:

Power can be measured by assessing the size of a state's resources, or by measuring how effective a state is in achieving its objectives. Distribution of power between world states can also be used to measure global stability.

Theories of power

Realism

Realists explain power politics largely in terms of states' hard power capabilities. They see states as **locked** in **competition** with each other. Each state wants to protect its national security (both military and economic) against threats from other states in an **anarchic** world order. According to realism, states either pursue **offensive realism**, where they aim to *expand* their global power; or **defensive realism**, where they aim merely to *defend* themselves against external threats and maintain the **status quo**. A key theorist of realism as it relates to power is John Mearsheimer. His 2001 book, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, proposed that states compete with each other to gain power at the expense of others and to make sure that they do not lose power.

Liberalism

Liberals, in contrast, believe that soft power, co-operation and a rules based international order are the most effective and safest way of using power in global

politics. Examples of soft power include leading by example, **consensus** building and the establishment of opportunities for cooperation. Liberals see states as more powerful when they work together, for example through cooperation in international organizations. They believe that states should use power by conforming to a world order governed by **international law** and respecting human rights. They see power as distributed amongst a wide range of groups and processes, from international organizations (such as the United Nations) to international trade and communications.

The table below summarizes some of the different theoretical approaches to power.

Theoretical approach	Perspectives on power
Realism	Military power, economic sanctions and incentives.
Liberalism	International institutions, international law, human rights and global trade.

Articulation sentence:

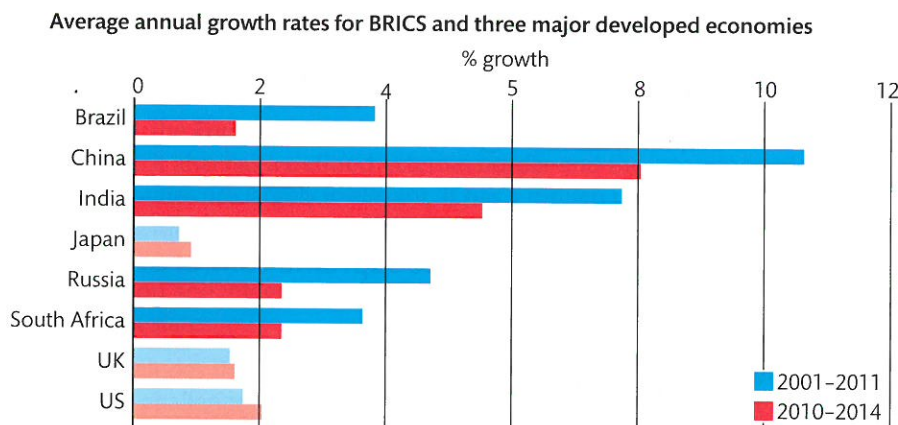
Realists believe states use hard power to gain and maintain power for their own ends, whereas liberals believe that soft power, combined with international cooperation, is the best method of operating in world politics.

Power transition

Power is not a fixed **concept**. States can become more powerful. For example, a successful economic strategy may deliver a **sustained** period of economic growth, or a state may achieve military success. This increases a state's power and credibility, and also other states' fear that it may use military force again. States can also become less powerful. For example, an economic crisis or an unsuccessful conflict may damage a state's credibility and the perceived **competence** of its armed forces.

Rising powers

Much attention has been given to the economic rise of China and the so-called BRIC countries, comprising Brazil, Russia, India and China. All of these countries achieved remarkable economic growth between 2001 and 2011. In 2008, there was a global financial crisis, and growth for these countries slowed dramatically between 2010 and 2014 (see graph below). The type of power enjoyed by the BRIC economies remains predominantly economic and has been **vulnerable** to economic slowdown. The Russian economy, in particular, suffered a severe **recession** and suffered further when economic sanctions were imposed on it in 2014 after the Ukraine crisis.



Source: Calculated from IMF World Economic Outlook Database October 2014

Figure 1.5 Growth rate of BRICS graph (including South Africa, which joined in 2010)

General vocabulary

consensus an opinion that everyone in a group agrees with or accepts

recession a period of sustained negative economic growth, when there is less trade and business activity in a country than usual

Subject vocabulary

international law the set of rules generally regarded and accepted as binding in relations between states and between nations. It serves as a framework for the practice of stable and organized international relations

Synonyms

concept idea

sustained continued

competence ... skill

vulnerable easily harmed

Synonyms

intervention .. involvement

enduring long-lasting

Subject vocabulary

diffused spread amongst a number of different global political actors

General vocabulary

supreme having the highest position of power, importance or influence

Declining powers

Many ask whether the United States is a world superpower in decline. The global financial crisis of 2008 exposed weaknesses in the US economy and started a long economic recession. Military failure in Iraq and Afghanistan made the Obama administration reluctant to use its military power in future conflicts. The United States did not want to use military force against the Syrian Assad regime in 2013. This was despite the fact that it had previously said that any use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime would be considered a 'red line', meaning that force would be used against the government.

Regarding the United Nations Security Council, many question whether the United Kingdom and France are still powerful enough to deserve permanent member status. There have been debates in the United Kingdom about military **intervention** in Syria against Islamic State (in 2015) and whether to upgrade the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system. These debates are as much about the willingness and ability to project the UK's power and influence on the global stage as they are about the merits of the individual decisions themselves.

Power diffusion

A key power change in global politics has been the increasing power of terrorist non-state groups. Violent groups such as Islamic State, Boko Haram, al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda have gained considerable power. They have been able to launch deadly terrorist attacks against New York and Washington on 11 September 2001. They have been able to gain control of large amounts of territory from sovereign states in Nigeria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. They have recruited foreign fighters using online networks. Most of these groups have shown no interest in negotiation with other actors. Consequently, for states whose security is put at risk, hard power solutions are the only option to counter the security threat posed by these groups.

To some extent, globalization has put greater power in the hands of the individual. The Arab Uprisings of 2011 spread so quickly because protesters were able to see on blogs and global television networks, such as al-Jazeera, what was happening in other parts of the Middle East and North Africa. They were inspired to join the uprisings. However, despite these popular uprisings, the power of nation-state governments has proven to be more **enduring**. Governments have been able to resist popular pressure (for example, in Syria) and take measures to stop further rebellion (as seen in the return to military rule in Egypt).

Articulation sentence:

Power is a fluid concept, with some nations gaining it, some losing it and others having their power **diffused** by the rise of militant non-state groups.

1.2 Key concept: Sovereignty

Key idea:

States are sovereign when they exercise **supreme** control over what happens inside their borders.

What is sovereignty?

Sovereignty is defined as a state's ability to rule itself. States are sovereign when they have full control and authority over what happens inside their borders. Sovereignty is an essential principle in global politics. States should respect the

sovereignty of other states, as well as maintain and defend their own sovereignty. International organizations, such as the United Nations, base their rules on respect for state sovereignty.

Sovereignty can be thought of as internal and external.

Internal sovereignty is about states governing themselves independently. States have full responsibility for, and power over, what happens within their borders. For example, they can decide and **enforce** their own laws, collect taxes, and spend the money raised on their own priorities and needs. States can decide their own trade policies, perhaps by placing **tariffs** on imports or deciding to join regional free trade areas with no tariff barriers.

External sovereignty is about how states **interact** externally with other states and international organizations. States generally respect each other's borders and do not **intervene** or **interfere** in what goes on within the borders of those states. States may make representations on other states' internal actions by way of established intergovernmental bodies, such as the United Nations.

“Articulation sentence:

A state with sovereignty has complete control over its own government and it has external sovereignty when it allows other states control over what happens within their borders.

State sovereignty and legitimacy

A state's sovereignty is dependent on other states recognizing the state as a state. The idea of sovereignty comes from classical Rome and medieval Europe. The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 can be seen as the point when the ideas of statehood were formally established. The principle of sovereignty has been supported through putting ideas such as diplomacy and non-intervention into practice.

Groups such as Islamic State may call themselves a state, but if no other states or international organizations **recognize** them, they cannot be considered a sovereign state. International legitimacy is essential in order for a state to be considered an independent sovereign country. That said, organizations that are not sovereign states can display many of the features **outlined** in the 1933 Montevideo Convention. The convention outlined the following aspects of a state and is still a useful guide to the features of sovereign nation states. Sovereign states should have:

- a permanent population;
- a defined territory and borders;
- effective government;
- the capacity and legitimacy to enter into relations with other states (see page vi for 'legitimacy' explanation).

For example, the European Union has a single currency, a flag, a parliament and a central bank. It also has a **defined** external border and the internal borders between its member states are largely irrelevant. It has a foreign policy and is increasingly entering into relations with other states through its High Representative for Foreign Affairs. The EU is not an independent single nation state, but has such deep levels of cooperation and integration that it does have many of the identifying features of independent states.

This table includes the key features and indicators of sovereign states. It also includes the challenges of identifying sovereignty. In some states that are still sovereign independent states, some of these features may be **contested** or in doubt.

Subject vocabulary

internal sovereignty the ability of a state to exert legitimate control over its population and manage its affairs independently

tariffs taxes on goods coming into or going out of a country

external sovereignty when states are recognized as independent and sovereign by other states, and are not interfered with; also their external border is respected

Synonyms

enforce make people obey

interact work together

intervene get involved

outlined described

defined clear

General vocabulary

interfere deliberately get involved in a situation where you are not wanted or needed

recognize officially accept that an organization, a government or document has legal or official authority

contested where there is lack of agreement on what a concept or idea means

Equally, some non-state groups that are not sovereign states may share some of the features and functions of nation states, challenging states' sovereignty.

General vocabulary

fleeing leaving somewhere very quickly, in order to escape from danger

refugees people who have been forced to leave their country, especially during a war, or for political or religious reasons

in dispute if something is in dispute, people disagree about it

caliphate a single Islamic state, uniting many countries with Muslim populations into one much larger state unified by political and religious association with Islam

oil fields areas where there is oil under the land or under the bottom of the sea

summits important meetings between the leaders of several governments

Synonyms

pseudo having the appearance of, but not, being real

Subject vocabulary

bilateral involving two groups or nations

multilateral involving several different countries or groups

Feature	Indicator	Problems of identifying
Permanent population	Identifying whether people live in a permanent place, or whether the population is less fixed, such as refugees .	Refugees. A sovereign state may suffer an insurgency, such as in Iraq and Syria, leading to refugees fleeing the country. In this sense, the population is no longer permanent, but it is still a sovereign state.
Defined territory	Identifying territorial borders through maps; decisions of the International Court of Justice and international law which agree state borders, or say when these borders are in dispute .	Many borders are disputed between nation states. For example, between Israel and the Palestinian Territories or in the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan. Non-state groups are increasingly taking control of territory from nation states. In 2014, Islamic State declared that it had established a caliphate across both Syria and Iraq. The border between the two countries became increasingly irrelevant even if, in international law, the border still exists.
Effective government	Identifying whether a government exists and whether it has full authority and control over the state's territory.	Fragile states, such as Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, do not have effective governments that have authority across the whole of the country. However, they are still recognized sovereign states. The European Union is often criticized for acting like a state, with the power to create laws and force member states to comply, even though it is not a sovereign state. In 2015, Islamic State was called a pseudo-state by some analysts. They added that it had an effective – if illegitimate – form of government, able to collect revenue, manage oil fields and control territory.
Capacity to enter relations with other states	Tracking diplomatic relations between states through international summits , membership of international organizations, or bilateral and multilateral partnerships.	Regions (such as Kosovo and the Palestinian Territories) that are trying to gain independence are often given a form of membership of international organizations, known as observer status. The European Union has its own High Representative for Foreign Affairs and its own overseas aid budget, which allows it to have an increasingly significant and independent voice on the world stage.



Articulation sentence:

The Montevideo Convention is used to determine whether a nation is a sovereign state, however there are many challenges to this method because some non-state groups conform to some features of statehood.

Gaining recognized statehood

In modern global politics, the United Nations is the key international body which agrees the legitimacy of state borders and makes **rulings** on borders that are contested. Being recognized as a full member state of the United Nations is the ultimate confirmation of independent statehood. Since the United Nations was founded in 1947, the number of nation states has grown from 52 to 193 states. Most recently, South Sudan gained independence in 2011 and became a full member of the UN.

At an international level, where borders or sovereignty are disputed, the **resolutions** of the UN Security Council and the decisions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are important statements of international law. However, rulings from both institutions are still sometimes ignored or questioned by states.

At a national level, states and regions seeking independence often hold a **referendum**, in which the population votes directly on whether it should become independent. This is seen as the most legitimate way for new states to be recognized. In a referendum in 2014, Scotland voted against becoming an independent state, separate from the United Kingdom.

In the table are further examples of claims of, and disputes over, sovereignty.

Example	Disputes over/ justifications for sovereignty
Kosovo	In 2008, Kosovo declared its independence from the Republic of Serbia. There was not a referendum to ask the Kosovan population directly whether they wanted Kosovo to be an independent state. The United States and other Western states supported Kosovo's desire for independence. The ICJ stated that Kosovo's declaration of independence 'did not violate international law', but the UN has not declared Kosovo a full independent member state of the UN.
Crimea/ Ukraine	In 2014, the Russian Federation annexed the region of Crimea in Ukraine. A referendum was held, but the UN declared the referendum illegitimate, due to the presence of Russian troops. Russia justified its actions using the example of Kosovo's claims for independence. The UN Security Council attempted to pass a resolution declaring the referendum illegitimate, but Russia vetoed this.
South China Sea	China wants to expand its territorial waters in the South China Sea. China has said that it does not recognize the authority of the ICJ and will not comply with its decisions. In response, the United States Navy has sent warships to carry out regular 'freedom of navigation ' patrols through waters that China claims as its own, but that the United States considers to be international waters .
Kashmir (India and Pakistan)	The so-called Line of Control between India and Pakistan in the contested region of Kashmir is a UN-agreed temporary border. It is designed to keep Pakistani and Indian troops apart. Both India and Pakistan claim sovereignty over the region. The Line of Control was agreed in 1972 and is monitored by UN peacekeepers. This is the UN's longest peacekeeping operation anywhere in the world.

Synonyms

rulings decisions

General vocabulary

resolutions formal decisions or statements agreed on by a group of people, especially after a vote

vetoed refused to allow something to happen, by having the right to special powers which allow an actor to legitimately stop what other actors want

navigation when someone sails a ship along a river or other area of water

patrols moving military forces through an area at regular times to check that there is no trouble or danger

Subject vocabulary

referendum when people vote in order to make a decision about a particular subject, rather than voting for an individual or political party

international waters waters surrounding the globe that are not part of the territorial sea or a state's internal waters

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

ATL

Research skills

Look at international news websites to find out about South Sudan gaining independence. What process did they use in order to gain independence? What role did the UN play in that process?

General vocabulary

occupied enter a place in a large group and keep control of it, especially by military force

settlements groups of houses and buildings where people live

prosperity when states are economically successful, generating income and managing their affairs in a way that allows individuals, businesses and the government to generate wealth

pooling sacrificing sovereignty by sharing power with other actors in global politics, most often other nation states, for example by sharing a currency (e.g. the Euro)

unilaterally done by only one of the states or groups involved in a situation

bailing out doing something to help someone out of trouble, especially financial problems

last resort the only solution after trying everything else to solve a problem

Synonyms

binding to be obeyed

Example

Israel and Palestinian Territories

Disputes over/ justifications for sovereignty

UN Security Council Resolution 242 was passed in 1967. It requires Israel to withdraw to the borders that existed before the 1967 Six Day War, when Israel **occupied** the West Bank, Golan Heights and Gaza Strip. UN Security Council resolutions are **binding** in international law, yet Israel has not withdrawn to the pre-1967 borders. Furthermore, it has built a security wall around, and **settlements** within, territory that is beyond the pre-1967 borders as agreed by the UN Security Council. Israel says that the pre-1967 borders are no longer relevant and that the security wall is needed to protect the state of Israel from terrorist attacks from Palestine.

Articulation sentences:

It is possible to gain independent statehood, usually by holding a referendum, and to become recognized by the UN. However, there are many contested states and borders around the world.

Is state sovereignty being eroded?

A common argument in global politics is that state sovereignty is being weakened by political, economic and cultural globalization. Some argue that other aspects of global politics, such as international organizations, international trade, multinational corporations and global terrorist networks, are challenging state sovereignty.

These arguments generally reflect either a liberal or a realist view of the world. For realists, states are still the most important actor in global politics, able to act independently and protect their borders. For liberals, states still exist but cooperate with each other on both economic and political matters. Liberals believe that states maximize their security and **prosperity** by **pooling**, rather than defending, their sovereignty.

Claim: State sovereignty becoming less significant

Borders are decreasing in significance. Border checks between states are disappearing, particularly in the European Union (due to the Schengen Agreement). States are affected by issues that cross borders, for example climate change, global terrorism and migration.

Economic globalization is reducing the economic importance of states. Many states are reducing barriers to trade and are joining trade agreements (e.g. Trans-Pacific Partnership, European Union). There is increasing freedom of movement for people and goods. Multinational corporations also have a lot of power (some are wealthier than small states), and can force states to change their economic policies in return for investment.

Counterclaim: State sovereignty still significant

Borders still define independent states. States still decide their own economic and political policies, within their borders. Some still maintain border checks. Others still act independently or **unilaterally**. National identity still matters, and remains a unique identifying and unifying force.

Economic policy (e.g. import and export tax, trade partnerships) is still decided by nation states. Multinational corporations are undoubtedly powerful, but resolving major economic crises requires action by nation states. For example, the financial crisis of 2008 was resolved by nation states and international organizations (G20, G8, International Monetary Fund). **Bailing out** failing multinational banks was funded by nation states as 'lenders of last resort'.

Claim: State sovereignty becoming less significant

Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are becoming more **numerous** and more powerful. One of the most powerful organizations, the European Union, has **supranational** powers and can make laws and enforce them on its member states. Other IGOs recognize that states face shared challenges and try to resolve these through **collective** action.

International conventions such as the Responsibility to Protect no longer regard state sovereignty as **absolute**. Instead it is conditional on states behaving responsibly. For example, external intervention by states acting unilaterally or through IGOs has been used against Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), Pakistan (the operation to capture or kill Osama bin Laden, 2011), Libya (2011) and Ukraine (2014).

Non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, are frequently challenging state sovereignty and attempting to define new borders. For example, large parts of Syria and Iraq came under the control of Islamic State (2015) and in Nigeria, Boko Haram took over parts of the country (2015).

Counterclaim: State sovereignty still significant

States choose to join IGOs and are the key contributors to IGOs. There is no world **governing body** with the power to act above the nation-state level. Many IGOs allow states the right to veto and protect core national interests. Most IGOs are intergovernmental, where decisions are reached by consensus of the member states.

States can still abuse human rights or break international law **with impunity**. Decisions about external intervention are taken very carefully, and are dependent on international agreement. Intervention was possible in Libya (2011). However, when the Syrian government used chemical weapons (2013), there was no intervention. The majority of borders are respected by nation states. **Violations** by other nation states have decreased and are very rare.

While it is true that non-state actors are challenging state sovereignty in a number of states, this is not widespread, there remains broad international consensus about what makes a state legitimate in international law. Attempts by militant groups to seize territory are widely seen as illegitimate and often military action is launched to reassert sovereignty.

Articulation sentences:

Realists argue that despite globalization eroding state sovereignty, states are still the most powerful factors in international politics. However, liberals believe that the rise of intergovernmental organizations is becoming as important, and sometimes more important, than the role of states in the global order.

Theories of sovereignty

Realists

Realists are prepared both to defend sovereignty as an absolute, inviolable principle and to breach the sovereignty of other states if their own national interest requires it. In the first case, realists believe that state sovereignty should be protected and that the most significant actors in global politics are defined by states within sovereign state boundaries. For example, a regime in one part of the world may be run by a **ruthless dictatorship** that **breaches** the human rights of its citizens. However, the realist principle of sovereignty limits the use of force by other states to bring this dictatorship under control. This would most likely be the case if there were no national interest at stake for the realist state when considering whether or not to

Synonyms

numerous many

absolute unlimited

General vocabulary

governing body an official organization that is responsible for making the rules for an organization, and for making sure that people follow the rules

collective shared or made by every member of a group or society

with impunity with no risk of being punished

violations actions that break a law, agreement or principle

ruthless so determined to get what you want that you do not care if you have to hurt other people in order to do it

dictatorship a country that is ruled by one person who has complete power

breaches an action that breaks a law, rule or agreement

Subject vocabulary

supranational where decisions can be taken above nation state level, usually by an organization that has the power to force nation states to conform to laws or policies

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Thinking, Research and Self-management skills



Research the country where you live. Using the headings 'borders', 'economy', 'IGOs', 'intervention' and 'non-state groups', write a report on the sovereignty of your state. Decide whether you believe your state has maintained its sovereignty over the past 20 years or whether it is being eroded.

Subject vocabulary

genocide the deliberate murder of a whole group or race of people

democracy a system of government in which the population elects a government and representatives to hold the government to account

intervene. For example, the United States was reluctant to intervene in Rwanda in 1994 despite clear evidence that a **genocide** was taking place. On the contrary, in 2003 the United States felt it was in its national interest to launch military action against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein without international approval through the United Nations.

Liberals

Liberals argue that sovereignty is an important but not exclusive principle in international political relations. Other states can be punished (for example, by the UN) if they commit crimes within their borders. For example, NATO's military intervention in Libya in 2011 was based on UN Security Council Resolution of 1973. The intervention was based in part on the principle of Responsibility to Protect (known as R2P). The Libyan government was failing in its obligation to protect civilian citizens from mass violence during the civil war in Libya (see page vii for 'violence' explanation).

Theoretical viewpoint	Perspective on sovereignty
Realism	Sees sovereignty as an essential feature of global politics. States are the only legitimate bodies in global politics. The interests and right of states to act independently and defend their core interests is prioritized over most other principles and ideas.
Liberalism	Sees sovereignty as one of several principles in world politics. It is important, but not always at the expense of other groups or ideas. Sovereignty is not absolute and can be pooled (with states acting together to resolve shared challenges) and challenged (when other states fail to exercise their sovereignty responsibly).

General vocabulary

mass involving a very large number of people

elected chosen for an official position by voting

delegate when the central government in a state gives the power of decision-making to regional or local governments

chamber one of the parts of a parliament

electorate all the people in a country who have the right to vote

Synonyms

intimidation .. threat

accountability responsibility

Articulation sentence:

Liberals believe that state sovereignty is not exclusive and therefore believe in the necessity of intervention in states abusing their powers, whereas realists would argue the opposite.

How states organize themselves

States manage their internal sovereignty in different ways. **Democracy** is the most common model of state government. This means that state governments are **elected** by a free and fair process. Every member of the adult population is able to vote freely for the government or representative that they choose, without **intimidation**, interference and with every vote counting equally. Some democratic state governments **delegate** power to regions, which themselves have democratic elections, bringing decision-making closer to the people affected by those decisions. Some states run the whole country from a very powerful central government, usually in the state's capital city.

There is no single model of a democratic state. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses, each distributes power and ensures **accountability** within the state in different ways. For example, one **chamber** of the United Kingdom's Parliament, the House of Lords, is unelected. In other systems, such as the United States, the cost of running an election campaign is extremely expensive. This means that only those who can raise enough money for advertizing and campaigning stand for election. In other states, there may be a lack of political choice and very few political parties for the **electorate** to vote for.

In states that are not democracies, the governments generally need to use authoritarian means to control their territory. This means that the government is not elected or accountable to the population, and the people have no means of influencing or removing the government.

Federal states

In federal states, there is a government, usually in the capital city, which has central power over some policy, such as foreign policy. Beyond this, there are governments at sub-national level which have the power to make and enforce the law. For example, the United States is a federal system of government. Individual states have the power to decide and enforce their own, different laws. Some states have chosen to have the **death penalty**, whereas others do not.

Unitary states

In unitary states, the central government has greater control and authority over what happens within its territory. Most decisions and laws are decided by a national **legislature** such as a national elected parliament or assembly. In the United Kingdom, Scotland has its own parliament and can make its own laws in certain areas. These powers are delegated by the legislature and might, in theory, be restored back to the national parliament if necessary.

Fragile states

Fragile states may be democratic or undemocratic, but the defining feature is that the state's internal sovereignty and power is weak. The government may be non-existent, illegitimate or just too weak to have authority over its territory. For example, the civil war and insurgency in Somalia meant that the central government had no power over large parts of the country. The war prevented elections from being held and there was an almost total collapse of the government's power to keep law and order or provide **public services**, such as healthcare and education.

Authoritarian states

In states where there is no democracy, the government is not elected and governs with authority that cannot be challenged, **held to account** or influenced by the population. Leaders remain in power for as long as they wish, or until they are removed by means such as a **military coup**, foreign intervention (such as the removal of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003) or popular uprising (such as the removal of Egypt's President Mubarak in 2011). In these states, human rights abuses are likely to be widespread and the rule of law is not respected.

Monarchy

Many states in Europe, Asia and the Middle East are governed by a **hereditary monarchy** or a royal family, which is unelected but has gained its authority through generations of rule by the family. Monarchies differ greatly. Some have little more than a symbolic role (such as in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway), while others have greater political control (such as the powerful ruling royal family in Saudi Arabia). Some monarchies have actively tried to reduce their power and to give more power to elected civilian governments, such as Morocco and the United Arab Emirates in response to the Arab Uprisings in 2011.

Theocracy

Meaning literally 'rule or government by religion', **theocracy** is where power is held by religious groups, rather than non-religious political parties. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ruled by its Islamic Supreme Leader, who has the power to decide which non-religious candidates stand for election to the state's president. In Saudi Arabia, the ruling Shura Council has the power to make and enforce Saudi Arabia's Sharia or Islamic law, alongside the country's ruling monarchy.

Articulation sentence:

States can be organized in a number of different ways, ranging from democracy to autocracy and with a variety of government structures, such as federal and unitary.

General vocabulary

federal a federal country or system of government consists a group of states which control their own affairs, but which are also controlled by a single national government which makes decisions on foreign affairs and defence

death penalty legal punishment by death

public services services, such as transport or healthcare, that government provides

held to account when a government or person in a position of power is required to explain their actions, legal or illegal, and check that they are doing their job effectively

military coup a sudden and violent attempt by the army to take control of the government

hereditary passed from an old to a younger person in the same family, usually through the law of inheritance in genes

monarchy the system in which a country is ruled by a king or queen

Subject vocabulary

unitary relating to or existing as a single unit

legislature an institution that has the power to make or change laws

theocracy a social system or state controlled by religious leaders

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Thinking, Communication and Social skills

What model of state government does your country use? In groups discuss whether you think this model is effective. What are the advantages and disadvantages of it?

General vocabulary

asylum protection given to someone by a government because they have escaped from fighting or political trouble in their own country

1.3 Key concept: Interdependence

Key idea:

Interdependence is when groups in global politics rely on each other, have shared interests or have an impact on each other.

What is interdependence?

Interdependence is a key feature of a globalized world in which all groups in global politics are increasingly reliant on each other and influenced by each other (see page vi for 'interdependence' explanation).

This can be seen in a number of different ways.

- Economic interdependence. States are linked together economically because they trade with each other and the success or failure of their economies are linked. A recession in one state is likely to have an impact on that state's ability to trade with another. This can lead to the recession spreading from one state to others, as seen in the global financial crisis of 2008.
- Political interdependence. States' political decisions are likely to have an impact on other states. For example, the civil war in Syria has had a wide political impact across the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. A high number of Syrian refugees are seeking asylum in Europe and the regional reach of Islamic State's terrorist activities is growing in North Africa and mainland Europe (as seen in the terrorist attacks in Paris of 2015). Political instability in fragile states such as Somalia has an impact on neighbouring states, both politically and economically.
- There are a number of challenges that many states have in common, and that cannot be solved by one state on its own. For example, climate change affects all states – rich and poor – and can only be resolved through collective action, through international summits such as the Kyoto (1997), Copenhagen (2009) and the Paris climate change talks (2015).

Articulation sentence:

States are becoming more interdependent – economically and politically, among other ways – due to the globalization of world issues.

Intergovernmental organizations

As the world has become more globalized and states have become more interdependent, so there has been a growth in intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). These allow states to act together. States join intergovernmental organizations for a number of reasons.

- Powerful states can join IGOs in order to force or persuade other states to adopt policies or agreements that meet their national interests.
- Less powerful states can join IGOs to group together with other states. This gives them more influence than they would have if they acted alone.
- States use IGOs so that they can work together to resolve issues where acting alone is insufficient, where they need the positive actions of other states as well as their own.
- States use IGOs to increase or protect their economic or military power. They can do this through membership of a common currency (for example, the euro),

by contributing to an economic IGO (such as the International Monetary Fund) or by joining a security decision-making alliance (such as NATO and the UN Security Council).

- States also join IGOs within regions. Regional IGOs have more united power and influence on the world stage than states in the region that act alone. Examples include the African Union, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Articulation sentence:

Intergovernmental organizations provide member states with a number of benefits, such as economic strength and more influence in global politics.

Key international organizations (IGOs)

The United Nations

The United Nations (UN) is the leading international organization that is truly 'international' in nature. It has 193 member states, representing most of the world's sovereign states. Its policies are wide-ranging. Founded in 1945, it has many objectives and many different agencies, which it uses to achieve its four main objectives.

Objectives	Agencies and activities of the UN
Promoting and protecting global peace and security	<p>UN Security Council – passes Resolutions and authorizes peacekeeping and other military action to protect global security, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. Some Resolutions authorize military action led by other international organizations, such as NATO. UN peacekeepers are sent across the world. In 2015, there were 16 UN peacekeeping operations, mostly in Africa and the Middle East.</p> <p>International Court of Justice – makes rulings in international law when states disagree over sovereignty.</p>
Protecting and promoting human rights	<p>UN Human Rights Council – consists of a selection of UN member states, working in rotation, to investigate and make other member states accountable for protecting human rights.</p> <p>UN High Commissioner for Human Rights – a UN agency that operates independently from member states. It scrutinizes member states' human rights' records.</p>
Advancing world human and economic development	<p>Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – until 2015, agreed international action to promote human development across the poorest regions of the world. These were replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, which continued the work of the MDGs and developed them further to focus more on sustainable development (see page vii for 'sustainability' explanation).</p> <p>Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) – made up of 54 member states, serving one-year terms, ECOSOC coordinates UN action on economic, social and environmental issues. It also oversees the work of the MDGs and SDGs.</p> <p>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – works on UN-agreed development priorities across the world, funded by UN member states.</p>

General vocabulary

alliance an arrangement in which two or more countries or groups agree to work together to try to change or achieve something

agencies organizations or departments, especially within a government, that do a specific job

in rotation the practice of regularly changing the person or country who does a particular job

records the facts about how successful someone or something has been in the past

Subject vocabulary

sustainable development the concept that the development needs of today's population should not result in activity that puts at risk the development needs of future generations, for example, through damage to the environment

Synonyms

scrutinizes examines carefully

Objectives	Agencies and activities of the UN
Tackling shared challenges such as climate change	The United Nations has led many important international summits on climate change. For example, the Kyoto Protocol (1997) was ratified by 59 UN member states who committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Subsequent UN summits include the less successful Copenhagen Accord (signed at the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference) and the Paris Agreement (2015), which sets a path towards a legally binding global agreement on reducing climate change.

Articulation sentence:

The United Nations is the most significant IGO, with objectives ranging from peacekeeping, to human rights protection, to economic development and climate change reduction.

Economic IGOs

Other intergovernmental organizations focus on one area, for example economic issues. The existence of economic IGOs reflects the economic interdependence of global politics and the need to:

- spread economic development and trade across the world, agreeing rules between states;
- help states when they are in financial difficulty (for example by giving loans), to avoid their economic situation getting worse and harming the world economy;
- help states with 'technical' assistance, for example advising states on how to develop their economies.

There are three main economic IGOs.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) decides and enforces the rules of international trade, and resolves trade disputes between states through negotiation. The WTO is made up of member states and is therefore an intergovernmental organization. There has to be agreement amongst all members before policy is officially adopted; everything and everyone must be in agreement. The WTO has been criticized for failing to make progress in helping developing countries to join global markets through its Doha Development Agenda. The negotiations for this began in 2001 and, as of 2015, remain in **stalemate**.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) works to improve global cooperation on financial stability and to promote economic growth and reduce poverty across the world. Since the 1980s, the IMF has been known for forcing states to implement economic reforms in return for loans. The IMF continues to offer both financial assistance (loans) and technical advice to help states' economic development.

The World Bank focuses on states' economic development and on reducing poverty. It does this through analysing and publishing data on global economic development, and by funding development projects in less economically developed states.

Articulation sentence:

There are a number of economic IGOs whose purpose is to prevent poverty, manage international trade regulations and promote global economic development.

General vocabulary

stalemate a situation in which it seems impossible to settle an argument or disagreement, and neither side can get an advantage

Collective security

States join IGOs to improve their security. Joining together in a formal **collective** security alliance means that smaller states are protected by larger states, with all states pledging that an attack on one state would be treated as an attack on all member states. States agree to pool their military resources and protect each other. Acting collectively brings greater security than if states acted alone.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949 by the United States and its western European allies in response to the Cold War threat from the Soviet Union. It is the most significant example of a formal security alliance. After the 11 September 2001 attacks, NATO used Article 5 and declared that the attacks on the United States, led by al-Qaeda, were an attack on all its member states. Subsequently, NATO led the military operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban government and al-Qaeda. NATO has expanded its membership to include many former Soviet states in Eastern Europe. Prior to the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, Ukraine had been in discussions about potential membership of NATO. In 2015, President Putin identified NATO as a key threat to the Russian Federation's national security.



Articulation sentence:

An IGO such as NATO exists to provide states with collective security – all member states offer one another military protection in the event of an attack.

Hybrid IGOs

As well as the United Nations, some regional IGOs have a number of different functions, ranging from economic matters (for example, shared currency or free trade agreements) to political cooperation (for example, on organized crime, climate change or migration). These are called hybrid IGOs.

The European Union (EU)

The European Union is a complex regional hybrid IGO that has a very wide range of responsibilities and supporting institutions. It has supranational powers. It was founded after the Second World War to unite former enemies, principally France and Germany. The idea was that member states would become politically and economically unified, and would become so interdependent that any future conflict would be not merely unlikely, but impossible.

Membership has grown throughout the EU's history. Most recently, a large number of former Soviet states in Eastern Europe have joined, taking the EU's membership to 28 member states. It remains an economic and political union. In 1999, the EU launched a single European currency, the euro, encouraging further integration. Not all member states use the euro, but all participate in the EU's free trade area, which allows for free movement of people, goods and services across the EU.

The EU is perhaps the world's most advanced and integrated international organization. It is sometimes criticized for acting like a nation state and for challenging state sovereignty, with the power to force member states to comply with EU law. It is made up of several key institutions, including:

- European Commission – acts as the European Union's executive, with the power to propose new EU laws. This part of the EU is unusual because it has the power to set the agenda of the European Union independently of the member states and to defend the core interests of the Union in its own right.
- European Parliament – the European Union is frequently criticized for having a 'democratic deficit' because its Parliament has weaker powers than the national parliaments of sovereign states.

Synonyms

collective shared

deficit shortage

General vocabulary

executive the part of a government that makes decisions and laws

CHALLENGE YOURSELF



Thinking, Research and Self-management skills

Research the African Union and the European Union. What are the strengths of each IGO? What are the differences between how they operate? Find out a bit about the proposed Central Asian Union. If this union was formed, what do you recommend their activities should be?

Subject vocabulary

African Union a regional IGO of which most African states are members, focusing primarily on security and economic prosperity

pandemics diseases that affect people over a very large area or the whole world

General vocabulary

biased unfairly preferring one person or group over another

governance the act of making all the decisions about taxes, laws and public services

gridlock a situation in which nothing can happen, usually because people disagree strongly

- European Court of Justice – has the power to force member states to comply with EU law.
- European Central Bank – the ECB has the power to set monetary policy for the member states of the EU that are in the Eurozone and have adopted the EU's single currency. Eurozone members do not have their own, independent monetary policies. Member states in the Eurozone are also required to manage their national budgets carefully and not get into debt, which could put the economic security and prosperity of the wider Eurozone at risk.

African Union (AU)

The **African Union** was founded in 2002, but there had previously been African regional organizations dating back to 1962. The African Union is made up of every African nation state, except Morocco, and mainly deals with security, and political and economic development. Since 2007, the AU has become more involved in peacekeeping missions in Africa, notably in Somalia, and has had considerable success. It also allows African countries to speak with one voice on the international stage. For example, in 2013, the AU threatened to withdraw from the International Criminal Court. It complained that the ICC was biased against African leaders.

Articulation sentence:

Hybrid IGOs, such as the European Union and the African Union, have military, political and economic power, providing member states with a range of benefits.

Global governance

Global governance is the way states organize themselves, make agreements and tackle shared challenges above national level, usually through international organizations with clear rules. From a liberal perspective, global governance is a key priority. It allows states to react to – and solve – problems that they have in common and that, if left unresolved, would impact on more than one state.

The growth of IGOs in recent decades might suggest that the liberal ideal of global governance is progressing well. However, international organizations are frequently limited in what they are able to agree. Often IGOs or international summits cannot agree a joint agenda for action. Realism takes over, with states protecting their national interests. Indeed, some states use their membership of IGOs precisely in order to protect their national interests. This can be seen when permanent members of the UN Security Council use their veto.

The reasons why effective global governance is difficult in modern global politics have been identified by Hale, Held and Young (2013) as:

Reason	Explanation
Multipolarity and institutional gridlock	<p>Today's multipolar world has an effect on key global governance institutions. For example, the UN Security Council is more divided than it has been for many decades. Russia and China are becoming more and more powerful and are increasingly willing to use their veto power.</p> <p>The Doha Development Round at the WTO has been blocked by states' increasing defence of their core economic interests.</p>
Harder problems and lack of consensus	The key challenges for modern global politics require action from more than one nation state. Global terrorism, climate change, fragile states and their impact on entire regions, cyber security and global pandemics require multi-state action and global consensus on what the solutions are.

Articulation sentence:

The effectiveness of global governance is being challenged by states' increasing prioritization of their own interests above that of global issues, such as climate change.

Cooperation

Treaties

States do not just cooperate with each other through IGOs. A more flexible way of cooperating with other states is through bilateral and multilateral **treaties**.

- These are agreed between as many or as few states as desired.
- They may be agreed by states that group together on a particular issue, rather than by region.
- If in treaty form, they represent formal international law.
- Some treaties are used to establish, or change the rules of, international organizations.

States have to complete two stages to be fully covered by, and obliged to comply with, treaties. First, states must sign treaties. Second, most democratic states must ratify treaties that they have signed, through their national legislatures or parliaments. Some hold national referendums to give greater legitimacy to the signing of treaties.

Examples of treaties

Treaty	Objectives	Signatories	Successes and challenges
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (ratified 1970; extended indefinitely 1995)	Aimed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Recognized the US, UK, France, China and Russia as nuclear weapons states. Nuclear disarmament.	190 signatories, except India, Israel, North Korea, South Sudan and Pakistan. All except South Sudan have successfully acquired nuclear weapons capability.	Little progress on disarmament. States wishing to opt out and develop nuclear weapons have done so.
Treaty of Lisbon (2007)	Amended the European Union constitution . Created new powers for the European Parliament. Created a long-term President of the European Council and a High Representative for Foreign Affairs.	All EU member states. Some member states chose to hold a referendum (France, Netherlands) as part of the ratification process.	Negotiations over the Lisbon Treaty began in 2001. Significant amendments were needed after voters in France and the Netherlands voted against the Treaty in referendums.
Minsk Protocol (2014)	Agreed a ceasefire in Eastern Ukraine with a monitoring mission from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a programme of ongoing peace talks.	Ukraine, Russian Federation and two unrecognized state groups representing rebel groups in Eastern Ukraine.	The ceasefire has been broken several times since the Protocol was signed, meaning a new peace agreement was needed just months later.

Articulation sentence:

States can cooperate with one another by signing international treaties, however some have been more successful than others.

General vocabulary

treaties formal written agreements between two or more countries or governments

opt out not join a system or accept an agreement

nuclear disarmament the process of getting rid of nuclear weapons

constitution a set of basic laws and principles that a country or organization is governed by

Subject vocabulary

ratified when an individual state's decision to sign an international treaty or convention has been legally approved

Synonyms

amendments . changes

General vocabulary

mutual the same for two or more people

Subject vocabulary

manifesto a written statement by a political party, saying what they believe in and what they intend to do if elected

Strategic alliances

States frequently cooperate more informally, without the need for treaties or international organizations. Choosing reliable and profitable allies and working together on matters of security, trade or development is important if states want to achieve their goals and protect their interests.

Prominent alliances include the so-called 'Special Relationship' between the United States and the United Kingdom. This peaked after the attacks of 11 September 2001 in the US, and the subsequent military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, when the relationship between President George W Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair became closer, and both states were involved in military action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Powerful states may decide to form new alliances with less powerful states for **mutual** benefit. For example, China has increased ties with many African states in recent years. China has invested heavily in infrastructure in return for favourable access to the natural resources which China itself lacks. Equally, powerful states may seek closer relations with emerging powers. For example, the United States and China are building economic ties with India and Brazil, both rising economic powers.

Articulation sentence:

Some states choose to form informal strategic alliances with others for mutual gain, such as China's investment in Africa in exchange for deals on Africa's natural resources.

1.4 Key concept: Legitimacy

Key idea:

Legitimacy refers to groups or actions that are considered to be acceptable, usually by conforming to agreed laws or democratic principles.

Sources of legitimacy

If groups or actions in global politics are to be considered legitimate, they must be traced back to an agreed source of legitimacy.

Democracy

At a national level, democracy brings legitimacy to governments that wish to exercise control over a particular region. Leaders are democratically elected by popular vote and serve for limited periods. For example, the United States Constitution limits Presidents of the United States to two four-year terms of office. Many states have different ways of electing their leaders. Many do not specify a maximum term for Presidents or Prime Ministers. These rules are legitimately agreed, usually in a constitution.

Political parties seeking elected office must present their proposals for government in a **manifesto**. In the first instance, an elected legislature of representatives checks that they delivered what the manifesto promised. Beyond this, the electorate can choose to reward the government with re-election or choose another at the next election.

In global politics, democracies are **enhanced** by:

- the ability of the electorate to participate in elections freely and without intimidation;
- the electorate being able to choose from a wide range of political parties and alternative governments;
- the extent of **checks and balances** on the government. For example, an independent **judiciary** and an effective legislature.

Balance of power

At a national level, states are often organized so that power is balanced amongst three key branches of government.

Branch	Purpose
Executive	The elected government, which produces policy ideas and implements them.
Legislature	Scrutinizes the proposals of the elected government, votes on whether these proposals should become law and holds the executive to account.
Judiciary	Ensures that the laws proposed by the executive, and agreed by the legislature, are upheld fairly according to the rule of law. The judiciary also ensures that the executive complies with the law and does not exceed its powers.

Constitutions

Many democratic states have a constitution. This clearly sets out and limits the powers of the state, and particularly the branches of government within the state (the executive, judiciary and legislature). Powers that are set out in a constitution are said to be 'fundamental' or 'entrenched', meaning that they are fixed and cannot be changed without going through a lengthy process.

Many states that are rebuilding after conflict go through a process of agreeing a new constitution. The constitution frequently agrees the human rights that citizens of the state will be entitled to. This is central to ensuring that every citizen has an equal **stake** in society and that the powers of the government are clearly described.

However, some democratic and legitimate states do not have constitutions. The United Kingdom has no written constitution. Instead, its constitutional conventions have been established over time and are contained within many different individual laws.

The rule of law

The rule of law is a key source of legitimacy. This is particularly important for a fair system of justice and human rights. The key principles are that the law is always applied equally to all citizens; that neither citizens nor the government are **above the law**; and that every citizen has the right to a fair and legitimate trial.

International law

Sovereignty can be confirmed and legitimized in several ways in international law, including through judgements of the International Court of Justice and the UN Security Council.

Synonyms

- enhanced** improved
upheld supported
exceed go beyond
stake interest

General vocabulary

checks and balances ways of making sure that someone or something is under control and doing what it should

above the law allowed to not obey the law

Subject vocabulary

judiciary the branch of government that interprets the law and makes judgements on whether individuals and the government are acting lawfully

Subject vocabulary

customary international law

international law that has become accepted as law through general practice rather than by states agreeing through treaties. All states must abide by this law regardless of whether or not they have agreed to it

Synonyms

clash argue

General vocabulary

austerity when a government has a deliberate policy of trying to reduce the amount of money it spends

Beyond this, breaches of **customary international law** such as the Geneva Conventions would be seen as illegitimate actions, and may result in intervention from other states or groups.

Legitimacy is a key concept relating to peace and conflict. Military action gets its legitimacy from UN Security Council Resolutions that authorize the use of force. For example, UN Security Council Resolution 1973 authorized 'all necessary measures' to protect civilians in Libya in 2011, meaning NATO's military action was widely seen as legitimate. In contrast, the lack of a UN Security Council Resolution directly authorizing the use of force in Iraq in 2003 prompted questions about the legality and legitimacy of the US-led military action.

The following act as other important sources of legitimacy at an international level on matters of international security.

- If a state requests the help of others to defend itself against a threat.
- If a state feels that its national security would be at risk if it did not act, it can invoke Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which preserves the right of states to individual or collective self-defence. This was used by the United Kingdom as justification for air strikes against Islamic State militants in Syria in 2015.

Articulation sentences:

States and their actions may be considered legitimate in a variety of ways. A state is legitimate if its government is democratically elected, and its actions are legitimate if it adheres to international law.

Legitimacy of non-state groups

NGOs

Non-governmental organizations frequently offer an independent perspective on the legitimacy of government actions. For example, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International put pressure on governments to improve their codification and protection of human rights laws. NGOs themselves gain legitimacy through both their actions – being seen to be fair and transparent – and through the recognition and status that some IGOs give them, such as the United Nations and the European Union.

IGOs

International organizations gain legitimacy from the treaties and agreements on which they are founded, such as the Treaty of Rome (European Union) and the United Nations Charter (United Nations). IGOs usually have clear procedures and rules stating what their powers and areas of interest are. Some very powerful IGOs, such as the European Union and its European Central Bank, can **clash** with nation states. In these cases, deciding which side has the greater legitimacy – the elected government of a state or the IGO – can only be done by examining whether the IGO is acting within its powers and whether the state has complied fully with the rules and procedures of the IGO. This tension was seen during the Eurozone crisis. The IMF and the European Central Bank imposed **austerity** measures on a Eurozone member state, Greece, even though the Greek people had elected an anti-austerity government.

Violent extremist groups

A frequent debate in global politics is whether violent extremist and terrorist groups are fighting a legitimate cause. Often this is summarized as whether 'one person's terrorist is another person's **freedom fighter**'. There is no internationally agreed definition of what terrorism is. Attempts, including by the UN, to agree one have not yet been successful.

There have been many peace negotiations where states have decided not to begin negotiations with groups considered to be acting illegitimately. Confidence-building measures, such as a commitment to non-violence and to peaceful dispute resolution, may give violent extremist groups legitimacy to take part in negotiations (see page vii for 'non-violence' explanation).

Other violent extremist groups may try to justify their violent actions by saying that they have no other option than violent struggle. Where civil and political rights are denied to opposition groups there is a risk that they may **resort to** violence or **civil disobedience**.

Frequently, states and international organizations make public declarations about the illegitimacy and illegality of violent extremist groups. For example, Hamas, the main Islamist movement in Palestine, has been referred to as a terrorist group by the United States, the European Union and many other states. Changing the way they are referred to, in contrast, gives groups greater legitimacy.

Articulation sentence:

NGOs and extremist groups often gain legitimacy through the recognition of states or IGOs, whereas an IGO is usually legitimized by a treaty or formal international agreement.

General vocabulary

freedom fighter someone who fights in a war against an unfair or dishonest government or army

resort to do something bad, extreme or difficult because you cannot think of any other way to deal with a problem

civil disobedience a form of political protest in which large numbers of people refuse to obey a law