FOUR Political Globalization

➤ SYNOPSIS

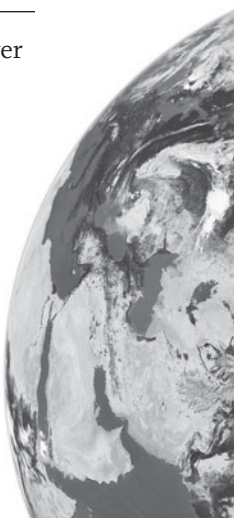
This chapter builds on the previous material regarding economic globalization by looking at the political sphere, beginning first with the League of Nations and then its successor, the United Nations. Ideological currents, such as the rise of human rights, also constrain global politics. One key trend since the 1980s has been democratization, which has made rapid progress in Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. Political globalization has also been fostered by transnational alliances and multinational corporations, which constrain the power of nation-states. Similarly, states sometimes surrender power willingly to military alliances and regional associations, which may expand and change from their original formulation. While nation-states remain key actors, their actions are constrained; globalization cannot be discussed without including the political realm. The chapter concludes with a comparative look at political globalization in the polar regions, which are vital for environmental and economic interests, as well as indigenous peoples in the North.

➤ SCAFFOLDING

As you read through this chapter, think about how you would answer each of the questions below.

What did you already know about the League of Nations and the United Nations and the issues that surround them?

How do the institutions and trends described in this chapter relate to those discussed in the economic globalization chapter?



What other institutions or examples of political globalization might this chapter have discussed?

Why are the polar regions often ignored, and in what way are they significant in global affairs?

➤ CORE CONCEPTS

Because political globalization is as powerful a force as economic globalization, the two movements must be discussed together.

Despite the rise of China, an authoritarian state, democratization is arguably the most powerful trend associated with political globalization in the early twenty-first century.

Although the nation-state remains the most powerful actor in most situations, the rise of new institutions and beliefs challenges its influence. In some cases, new political organizations—such as the European Union—are even assuming aspects of sovereignty.

When people think of globalization, many of them associate it with the economic trends that are integrating the world's economies. If they think of political institutions, they likely focus on those discussed in the last chapter, which have their roots in Bretton Woods. But that only captures one aspect of the international forces that are reshaping the global order. Dramatic changes are also taking place in the realm of politics. Some political organizations have emerged that hold great power. After World War II, the founding of both the United Nations and the International Court of Justice meant that even leaders of nation-states had to fear facing justice if they committed war crimes or genocide. Other new political actors appeared that were both influential and complex, particularly when they entered into alliances with other groups to achieve their goals. For example, new transnational organizations (such as Greenpeace, Oxfam, and Amnesty International) established alliances with grassroots organizations (indigenous-rights groups or local environmental movements) to block initiatives from organizations such as the World Bank. Such coalitions have defeated powerful nation-states, including the United States. At the same time, military alliances—such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—have continued not only to be relevant but also to evolve into organizations with broader identities and mandates, such

as nation building and peacekeeping. Although the nation-state remains the fundamental unit in international affairs, other political actors have constrained its power. What is unusual now is not only the rising number of these challengers but also the fact that in some cases—most notably the European Union—organizations are beginning to change how we think about the nation-state's centrality to international studies. For this reason, no discussion of globalization can remain confined to the realm of economics alone.

The Legacy of World War I

The roots of political globalization, like those of economic globalization, lay in a terrible conflict. In 1914 Europe exploded into a war that probably no Great Power wanted. Historians have long debated the reasons for this war—with explanations that have emphasized imperial rivalry, rampant nationalism, and train schedules—but the origins of the conflict are so complex that this issue is still contested. For five years, millions of men fought and died in trenches that stretched across Europe on two fronts, from northern France to modern Turkey. For much of this time, the opposing sides were trapped in a stalemate, which each sought to break with weapons that ranged from mustard gas to underground tunnels that were packed with explosives and then detonated. In the end, the conflict destroyed two Great Powers—the Russian and Ottoman Empires—and the belligerents achieved nothing positive to balance the war's suffering. The complexity and devastation of the war left many shattered veterans wondering what they had fought for.

After the war, Woodrow Wilson, the American president, was determined to create a new order based on his ideals so that such a disaster could never happen again. Wilson, the founder of modern liberalism, believed that new organizations were needed to prevent wars of aggression, to permit the territories once governed by Germany and the Ottoman Empire to achieve sovereignty, and to adjudicate disputes that might lead to war. Wilson told the American people that new organizations and the rule of law—a body of international practices and rules that would resolve disputes—could control the passions and the grievances that led the Old World into conflagration. His allies—France and England—had not fought the war intending to relinquish their empires or create a new national order. But they could not ignore the United States, which had brought the manpower and the money that had tipped the balance to their side.

As a result, the first part of the Treaty of Versailles, which officially ended the war in 1919, contained language describing a new international organization called the League of Nations. Wilson himself suffered a severe stroke in 1919 in the midst of a struggle to persuade the U.S. Senate to join this new body. The United States never joined, and many historians have argued that this fact fatally weakened the league. Another challenge was that Germany was not permitted to join until 1926 (Kennedy 2006, 13). Still, during the 1920s, the League of Nations appeared to be effective, as did the Permanent Court of International Justice, which the league created in 1923. But, faced with the rising power of fascism and without U.S. participation, the league failed to confront the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 (both inspired by imperialist aims), as well as German rearmament. The league's charter contained flaws, which perhaps gave small states too much power and failed to oblige members to act (Sobel 1994, 180). Despite Wilson's vision, the League of Nations could not prevent another conflagration. The postwar period proved to be an interregnum in what came to be a single European civil war.

The United Nations

In 1939 the Second World War began and lasted six long years before the final defeat of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. At this point in 1945, many people believed that a new League of Nations was needed more than ever because they were determined not to repeat the mistakes that made the war possible. (For an in-depth discussion of the creation of the United Nations, see Kennedy 2006, 4–47; and Hurd 2007, 84–91.) For this reason, at the war's end, the victors extinguished the old League of Nations and created the United Nations to take its place, with the intent of learning from the league's failure. In April and June 1945, forty-six nations from around the world gathered in San Francisco to create this organization. The meetings saw heated debates, in part because the wartime alliance among the Allies was ending and the first shadows of the Cold War had crept into the meeting rooms. But there were also many serious questions to be answered. As Stephen Schlesinger (1997, 48) has argued, it is not true that the UN was "born out of a gentle, idealistic vision of a global body, a sort of immaculate conception. In fact, the U.N. Charter was a meticulously crafted, power-oriented document carefully molded by hard-nosed drafters to conform to the global realities of 1945." It divided the UN into

Traffic circle in Vietnam (Used with permission of the photographer, Christina Caponi)

two bodies. The fifteen-member Security Council addressed critical issues and had five permanent members: China, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, which were the Great Powers of the time. As global power balances shifted, this choice of nations appeared increasingly anachronistic. In contrast, most nations were confined to the General Assembly, which could make recommendations to the Security Council, write reports, and approve the budget but did not address key issues of peace and security or send troops into an active war zone.

It could be argued that the UN is not democratic. But it could not have been created without the participation of the Great Powers. The United States' decision not to participate in the League of Nations had helped to doom it. If the UN was to avoid being stillborn, it needed to have the support of each of these major nations, even at the cost of inequality. This inequality might appear to be mitigated by the fact that there are fifteen members of the Security Council, of which ten are nonpermanent members from the General Assembly. But these nations soon rotate off the Security Council, and none of them has the power of veto. It was the latter power that gave the permanent members the "ability to decide on U.N. intervention, determine who leads the organization, block U.N. Charter amendments, and so forth" (Schlesinger 1997, 49; see also Hurd 2007, 93–96). While many smaller states had opposed this arrangement, they failed to overcome the position of the Great Powers. With this assurance, the U.S. Senate was willing to ratify the treaty, and the Soviet Union was willing to join.

The UN has not achieved all that was promised at its creation in 1945. There is no denying its failures. It did not stop the Rwandan genocide of 1994, and it needed U.S. leadership to be effective in Bosnia (Shawcross 2000, 124–92). In the case of Kosovo, the United States ultimately ended the fighting in 1999 without the UN. In addition, the UN has often failed to enforce its decisions. Its members were involved in a serious scandal in Iraq during the "Oil for Food" program, a system through which the Iraqi government was able to sell oil to purchase key goods such as food during the period between 1995 and 2003. It also has a long-standing reputation for being bureaucratic, ineffective, and corrupt. Reform efforts have yet to transform the institution, as a 2007 report by the U.S. General Accounting Office detailed. The wide diversity of membership within the UN has often made it difficult to reach consensus on even the most important issues, which at times has caused even the secretary general to express frustration with the organization (Anonymous 2005). The United States

invaded Iraq without the support of the UN, despite UN Resolution 1441, which required Iraq to meet its obligations to disarm (Glennon 2003, 18; Hurd 2007, 124–28). As an institution, the UN has grave internal divisions regarding when the use of armed force is appropriate (Glennon 2003, 20). The UN has failed to act to end the civil war in Syria, which began as part of the Arab Spring. While its "sister organizations," such as the World Health Organization, the UN Refugee Agency, and the World Food Bank, have been recognized for their achievements, the United Nations is often condemned for the crises it has failed to avert.

Despite these failings, the UN also has a long list of major achievements, from helping to end apartheid in South Africa to moderating crises during the Cold War (Schlesinger 2007, 51). It is a cliché to say that nations do not appreciate the UN until there is a crisis. Cynics can say that the UN only resolves problems when it is in the interest of Great Powers to see them fixed. But as World War I showed, it is possible for nations to slide into war; not every conflict begins through a rational calculation of interests. The UN has provided a forum that has allowed major countries to extricate themselves from hostilities, such as the Suez Crisis in 1956. By providing nations with a face-saving means to avoid conflict, fact finders with a way of determining the truth of events, and peacekeepers with the power to separate rival forces, the UN decreases the likelihood of unintended wars. The UN also possesses moral authority. Perhaps no other power had the legitimacy, for example, to end the violence in East Timor after that nation voted for independence from Indonesia in 1999. The U.S. and NATO air campaign could defeat the Serbs militarily in Kosovo in 1999, but they then needed a UN mandate to send peacekeepers.

Through its role in peacekeeping, the UN has separated many aggrieved parties and laid the groundwork for a settlement of international disputes, despite the questions that sometimes come regarding the legitimacy of its operations (Hurd 2007, 125). The UN also plays a key role by organizing relief after international disasters. This could be clearly seen after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, after which the UN's World Food Program began food distribution on a massive scale. Moreover, some of its components—such as the World Health Organization (WHO)—have achieved stunning successes, such as eliminating smallpox and polio. Because of its legitimacy, the WHO is able to do work in key areas that are not accessible to other organizations. The truly dangerous flaws of the UN lie less in its unending bureaucracy than in the extent to which it froze the global balance of power in 1945.

UN Reform

The Security Council is at the core of the United Nations, and its nature is defined by its history. (For a discussion of the Security Council's role, see Hurd 2007, 111–36.) At the end of World War II, there were five Great Powers, which dominated international affairs. Few scholars or diplomats foresaw that the Age of Empire had ended and that in the space of roughly two decades, both Great Britain and France would lose their empires. Both nations underwent a relative economic decline. They remained wealthy states but were no longer central to global affairs. People at the time could see that both Germany and Japan were key global powers, but the victors of World War II excluded them from the Security Council because of their responsibility for the war that had just finished. While this may have made sense at the time, did that make sense a generation later? Two generations later? Germany and Japan now have great influence on the council, but their exclusion still seems an anomaly (Hurd 2007, 118).

This problem is only likely to increase with time. If current trends continue, most of the world's economic growth over the next forty years will likely take place outside of the United States and Europe. Asia and Latin America have the most dynamic economies, while Africa will see the greatest population increase among the continents (Goldstone 2010, 33). As is common in international affairs, governance systems are created within a historical context, which pertains to that specific time and environment. These systems need the capacity to adapt if they are not to become obsolete as the context changes. But the UN charter did not create a clear process to determine the manner in which new states would be made permanent members of the Security Council. The UN charter can only be changed with the approval of the Security Council, which means that the five permanent members have veto power over any new additions to this body. This reality, and competition among neighbors, has meant that no new nation has ever become a new permanent member (Luck 2003, 15).

China is unwilling to see its old rival Japan join, a step that would dilute Chinese influence. Pakistan bitterly opposes the idea of bringing India into the Security Council. Argentina feels the same about Brazil, with discreet support from Mexico. The idea of adding South Africa to the council raises questions in Nigeria, and similar questions will doubtless cloud any other nation that emerges onto the global stage. Not only has the UN failed to add new members to the Security Council; there also have not been meaningful discussions about removing powers that no longer

Is there a mock UN on your campus, or a UN Club? Find out when they meet, what their goals are, and whether it would be useful for you to participate.

have global influence. While its role on the global stage is a key part of its identity, France might not be included if the Security Council was created today, and the same is perhaps true in the case of Great Britain. But under the current UN charter, it is impossible to remove either of these nations without their agreement, given their veto under Article 108 (Luck 2003, 3). This has led to complaints about the veto power of the Security Council's permanent members (Luck 2003, 15). Germany, the largest economy in Europe, remains excluded from the Security Council seventy years after World War II.

The danger of this situation is that the UN was created to reflect the balance of global power because, without this representation, it would not be effective—a lesson learned from the League of Nations. With each passing year, economic and demographic changes reshape the balance of power, so that the existing makeup of the Security Council seems increasingly out of date, especially in contrast to other organizations that have expanded or adapted. As nations rallied to address the economic crisis of 2009, it was the G-20 that drew media attention because the old G-8 nations no longer had the influence needed to resolve global problems (Goldstone 2010, 41). A similar evolution could not take place within the United Nations. Resolving this problem would entail revising the UN charter to create a clear process for both adding and removing powers: "International institutions will not retain their legitimacy if they exclude the world's fastest growing and most economically dynamic powers" (Goldstone 2010, 41). This problem, however, shows few signs of resolution. (For a contrary view to the above argument, see Hurd 2007, 123.) While this challenge has remained unresolved, the UN has helped to weave a new set of political ties around the globe. This can clearly be seen in the case of the International Court of Justice, which has contributed to the growing importance of international law—another concept important to Woodrow Wilson.

The International Court of Justice

While the UN has many responsibilities—including coordinating disaster relief, peacekeeping, and monitoring elections—few aspects of its work have been as important as the administration of international justice and arbitration of disputes. This was clear immediately at the end of World War II, when the victors decided to try war criminals at the Nuremberg War Trials, named for the city in Germany in which they were held. Rather than being immediately executed, those responsible for the Holocaust, ethnic cleansing, and the war were tried in a court in which they had counsel and genuine trials. The idea of international justice was to be central to the new world order. For this reason, the new International Court of Justice (ICJ), the main judicial organization of the UN, had a broad range of responsibilities. For example, countries could agree to submit boundary disputes and other arguments to the court for a binding settlement. Aggrieved parties could also take their disputes to the court for resolution. The ICJ was intended to provide judicial support to the Security Council to avoid and resolve international conflict.

The ICJ has not always succeeded. During the Cold War, the court was incapable of imposing its rulings on the superpowers. For example, in the 1980s the United States refused to recognize a court ruling that condemned it for planting sea mines in Nicaraguan ports. This substantially weakened the court. While the Soviet Union worried that the ICJ was initially weighted in favor of democracies, the United States eventually came to fear its judicial independence (Posner 2004). There has always been a tension between the ability of Great Powers to veto decisions that they oppose within the UN Security Council and their potential vulnerability within the ICJ. Justices were theoretically impartial—that is, they were not supposed to vote based on their national origin. For this reason, the United States' acceptance of the court and its authority has been conditional in a number of manners. For instance, when the United States became party to the Genocide Convention, it did so with a reservation: "[B]efore any dispute in which the United States is a party may be submitted to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice under this article, the specific consent of the United States is required in each case" (Jennings 1995, 495–96). In other words, the United States could only be brought to court with its own consent. On the surface, the Genocide Convention—which forbade the destruction of a people either through killing, the prevention of birth, or the removal of children—would seem uncontroversial. But the United

States was concerned about how the convention might be interpreted. For similar reasons, after the creation of the International Criminal Court in 2002, the United States made it clear that it would not ratify this document, even though it had been a signatory (Mayerfield 2003). While it is logical for any nation-state to not wish to submit itself to the authority of an outside power, states also pay a price when they do not participate in such institutions.

The power of both the United Nations and the International Court of Justice has been bound by the Great Powers. The ICJ's influence has declined in recent decades. Fewer nations submit cases to it, and the court does not always have the influence to see its judgments enacted. Moreover, the UN and regional powers have created tribunals and courts that now take on cases that once would have pertained to the ICJ for issues that range from environmental questions to the law of the sea (Dupuy 1999, 792–93). Still, the fact that Great Powers worry about the ICJ's rulings indicates that it retains influence. The court has moral authority. As Gowland Debbas (1994, 676) has noted, the ICJ also serves the role of setting the norms that are needed by the international community (see also Dupuy 1999, 793.) In other words, it has helped to codify what understandings and doctrines have the force of law. In March 2009, the court issued an arrest warrant for Sudan's president Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir for crimes against humanity. Even though Sudan refused to surrender al-Bashir, international law has expanded its power and constrains states to a far greater extent than in the past, even given the realities of Great Power politics. The ICJ's role, in turn, should be considered in the context of changing legal and political norms in international affairs, as can be seen with the emerging doctrine of human rights.

The Rise of Human Rights as a Doctrine

Human rights are those claims and protections that people have because they are part of humanity, independent from their citizenship in a particular state. Historically, in Western culture, these claims came not from one's nationality but rather from one's religion; this was also the case in many other civilizations, such as the Islamic world. During the French Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, however, secular and humanist philosophers began to claim that people had the right to protection based on reason and not religion. The first great human rights battle was against slavery, which ended in the Western Hemisphere with its abolition

in Cuba in 1886 and Brazil in 1888. This rights campaign was the model for many that followed. But it was the horrific events of the twentieth century, from the mass killing of Armenian civilians by Turkey during World War I to the Holocaust, that led to the creation of the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1946. Eleanor Roosevelt, the widow of U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt, subsequently campaigned for the UN Declaration of Human Rights, which the General Assembly passed in 1948. Some idea of its moral force can be gleaned from the fact that no nation opposed it, although Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the Soviet Union abstained from the vote. (For a good overview of the history of human rights, see Lauren 1998.)

On the surface, it would seem that both this declaration and the UN proved to be failures because they could not prevent many of the terrible human rights tragedies of the twentieth century. Because of their political power, the Soviet Union and China were able to ignore the UN Declarations as they committed terrible human rights violations. Likewise, the United States shielded authoritarian states in Latin America and elsewhere from UN action during the Cold War. The United States did so in part because it had created many authoritarian regimes as a bulwark against Communism and to serve its business interests, as was the case with the Somoza family in Nicaragua. The United Nations also failed to act to prevent genocide in both Cambodia and Rwanda, despite clear evidence that it could have saved hundreds of thousands of lives in the latter case if it had shown the political will. Yet, the power of human rights has grown as a political ideal, and violating these norms has carried a high political and personal cost for authoritarian leaders and their governments. For example, historian John Lewis Gaddis (2005, 190–94) has argued that the Helsinki Accords, passed in 1975, were fundamental to undermining the Soviet Union's legitimacy. This agreement among almost every state in Europe, as well as Canada and the United States, committed all the signatories to respect human rights and self-determination of peoples. With the end of the Cold War, the United States withdrew its support from authoritarian governments in Latin America, which fell like dominos in part because they appeared illegitimate in the eyes of both their own people and the international community, given their terrible human rights violations. South Africa found it impossible to face sanctions and international condemnation in order to maintain apartheid, which denied rights to citizens based on race. The UN and the United States intervened to end ethnic cleansing and violence in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

States can still violate human rights if they are willing to pay a political price, as nations such as Zimbabwe have shown. But those who suffer have long memories, and many authoritarian leaders must worry that in their retirement, a warrant will be issued for their arrest, and they may be brought before the International Criminal Court in the Hague. This serves as a check on behavior. The proliferation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as Amnesty International, has brought publicity to human rights violations, as has the development of global media. Nations that are willing to isolate themselves, such as North Korea and Myanmar/Burma, are able to continue to violate human rights. But these states are so isolated that they have few allies in the event of a crisis, they pay a heavy economic cost, and no nations look to them as a model. States that violate human rights lose the moral authority to serve as international leaders. The price that the United States has paid for both the use of torture at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and waterboarding and other abuses at Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp in Cuba has been high in terms of its international leadership.

Still, human rights are not uncontested as a doctrine, as the work of Shashi Tharoor (1999) makes clear. Critics ask, who defines what is a human right? The idea itself, they argue, is based on an essentialist vision of human nature; that is, the idea that we are all fundamentally the same. But what an urban, Western citizen in Amsterdam may perceive to be a human right may be very different from what a rural, religious person in Indonesia believes one to be. In this circumstance, who decides? Is female genital cutting an age-old cultural practice or a human rights violation? Is it acceptable to change practices in the name of human rights if that means fundamental changes to a culture will follow? What rights are universally recognized? Those of women? Sexual minorities? How are these decisions made? If it is the West that imposes its vision of human rights upon developing nations through the World Bank or other institutions, do human rights come with a cultural and political agenda? Can they be viewed as an aspect of neocolonialism? What about human rights that are not recognized in all Western nations? Is housing or health care a human right? Clothing? Equal pay for equal work (see United Nations 1948, Articles 23:2 and 25:1)? These are not recognized as such in the United States and many European nations. Critics therefore argue that human rights is an arbitrary concept that is used by powerful Western nations to impose their cultural values on others, while they at the same time disregard those rights that they find inconvenient. The United States

continues to use capital punishment, even though some other nations find this barbaric. From this perspective, Western nations focus on the rights of the individual rather than on collective right, giving too much weight to the concept of rights and not enough to the notion of responsibilities. Can the idea of human rights undermine the collective responsibilities that hold a society together?

As Tharoor (1999) notes, there are powerful counterarguments to these critiques that emphasize the involvement of developing countries in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the fact that many different religions and philosophies share common ideals. No culture exists in a vacuum, and all change through time. Who speaks for a culture? Would not the oppressed oppose slavery and women support their own rights? Human rights are a powerful concept, one which holds intellectual rigor. It is because of this power that authoritarian states feel the need to voice critiques. But this criticism has neither weakened the idea of human rights as an international ideal nor undermined the influence of groups that advocate for them. Indeed, one of the trends of political globalization is the continuing spread of not only this intellectual construct but also that of democracy.

Democratization

At a surface level, democracy is relatively easy to define: it is a system in which the vote of the majority of the population determines the government. Yet this apparent simplicity is problematic, because the idea of democracy contains a number of tensions or questions. Is a system democratic if there is extreme economic inequality, which gives political power to a small elite? How must the will of the majority be balanced against the rights of the minority? What if a democratic state engages in imperial projects that oppress other peoples or nations, as was the case with ancient Athens? And to what extent must democracy reflect local cultures and traditions? Is true democracy procedural, or is there more to meeting the standard of being a real democracy, such as the existence of a civic culture? These contradictions and issues have become increasingly important as the twentieth century witnessed a slow but powerful trend toward the rise of democracy.

Between 1964 and 1973, one Latin American government after another fell to military rule, and such regimes were also common in Africa and Asia. But the 1980s were the "lost decade" in Latin America. A combina-

tion of factors undermined the legitimacy of military governments there, including poor economic performance, terrible human rights abuses, and the lack of a convincing ideology. Throughout the 1980s, many nations in the region returned to democracy. This trend has shown few signs of reversing. With the end of the Cold War in 1991, the United States no longer had an intellectual justification to prop up authoritarian rulers in Latin America (this was not the case in the Middle East), which likely accelerated the decline in military rule throughout the region. But this trend was not confined to Latin America. Globally, traditional authoritarian regimes in many areas lost their intellectual legitimacy and collapsed with sometimes shocking speed.

Asia witnessed an impressive trend toward democratization, as Junhan Lee (2002, 821) has described: "In this region between 1986 and 1999, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand all embraced genuine transitions to democracy." Obviously, these transitions have occurred in nations with widely different cultures and population sizes. Surprisingly, there seems to be little correlation between the level of these nations' economic development and their turn to democratization. Rather, a wave of mass political protests inspired the collapse of authoritarian rule among diverse nations (Lee 2002, 823–25). This was particularly clear in the Philippines in 1986, where dictator Ferdinand Marcos's attempt to steal an election failed before the nonviolent, mass mobilization of the people (Eaton 2003, 470). While this kind of mobilization has not worked in every nation—reformers in China, for example, failed in Tiananmen Square in 1989—the Philippines provided a model for how nonviolent protest could overthrow authoritarian rule in Asia and beyond. Many of these new regimes are imperfect, but democratization remains a powerful trend in the region.

A similar trend took place in Europe and the former Soviet Union after the end of the Cold War. One East European country after another, from Poland to Bulgaria, emerged as a democracy. Russia itself turned to democracy, although it still has strong authoritarian tendencies. Some former states within the former Soviet Union did turn to authoritarian rule. But these states have proved to be vulnerable to democratic currents. In 2005–2006 the "Orange Revolution" brought President Viktor Yushchenko to power in Ukraine in the nation's first free and fair elections. The promise of this revolution, however, was undermined by oligarchical power and political corruption, as well as divisions between the pro-European West and the pro-Russian East. In Russia, the success of the Orange Revolution

in Ukraine was denounced as being the result of a movement funded and inspired by the West (Herd 2005, 15). Russia has also sought to reclaim territory inhabited by ethnic Russians, such as by the seizure of the Crimea from the Ukraine in the spring of 2014. President Vladimir Putin's government is increasingly intolerant of artistic, political, and social dissent, and he has sought to bolster authoritarian leaders in its zones of influence. This combination of Russian influence and internal weaknesses has challenged some newly democratic states bordering Russia, from Ukraine to Georgia.

It is also important to distinguish between these democratic revolutions from below and the effort of outside powers to impose democracy on other nations by military means. There are examples where this has succeeded, as was the case with Germany and Japan after World War II. Overall, however, the United States has a lengthy historical record of using democracy as a justification for invasions and regime change. The record in the Caribbean and Latin America—Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua, among many others—has shown that these regimes lack legitimacy and seldom endure. Despite this fact, the United States has used "democracy" as a basis to legitimate its interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is too soon to know the long-term effects of these invasions. But the general phenomenon of democratization is quite separate from the United States' military activities, particularly in the Middle East.

In late 2010, the Arab Spring began in Tunisia, where a young man set himself on fire to protest his perceived mistreatment by a government official. These actions set off a wave of protest throughout the region, where people resented authoritarian and corrupt governments, serious economic difficulties, and a lack of opportunity for youth. In Tunisia, the government fell with little violence. In Libya, it took a civil war to overthrow Qadaffi, while in Egypt, the military has twice overthrown the nation's leadership. In Yemen, street protests and urban warfare ultimately led to a transition in government, although there was only one candidate in the February 2012 election. In Syria, protests were met with violence, which quickly escalated into a brutal ongoing civil war, which has caused massive destruction, refugee flows, and more than 100,000 deaths. Throughout the region, it has proved easier to overthrow isolated leaders than to establish meaningful democratic societies. While it is very clear what people are protesting against, the victors have often disagreed over their political agenda and the extent to which it includes democratization. Still, the overall trend seems to be against the long-standing authoritarian regimes in the region.

It is not the case that democratic revolutions succeed everywhere. Some nations, such as Zimbabwe and North Korea, have been able to resist all pressures for change. But they have little international influence and will never serve as global models. The same cannot be said for China, in which a nondemocratic regime has been able to oversee stunning growth. China will likely become the world's most economically powerful nation in the next two decades. As such, it may influence how people in some developing countries think about possible paths for their nations. While China has obtained great diplomatic influence, however, few nations aspire to follow the Chinese political model. Globally, we see the decline of the authoritarian and patrimonial state. This trend may wash over many states, including China, Iran, the Central Asian nations, and Russia, which is a quasi democracy. Much as international law has grown in power, so has the power of human rights as an ideal; democratization is the world's dominant trend in political affairs. The point to remember is that democratization's success seems heavily dependent on the process through which it arrives in a nation—that is, whether it is internally developed or externally imposed.

Local-Global Alliances and Multinational Corporations

One clear trend is that local groups, such as environmental movements or democracy campaigners, may ally with international groups, such as Greenpeace or the Soros Foundation, to challenge economic and political forces. For example, during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the Russian government complained that the Soros Foundation was organizing and funding the opposition. In some cases, such allegations seem exaggerated to the point of being conspiracy theories, but they reflect a real anxiety that external forces—not always tied to a particular nation—can create powerful alliances with grassroots movements. This concern is held not only by undemocratic regimes but also by democracies and major global powers. The Canadian government worried in 2011 that outside money streaming in to local environmental groups might undermine its campaign to build the Northern Gateway pipeline to British Columbia. The emergence of powerful NGOs and international organizations has enabled local movements that would otherwise have been isolated or powerless to challenge the authority of governments, the World Bank, or multinational corporations. At the same time, their foreign allies have made them vulnerable to nationalist critiques.

This can especially be seen in regard to environmental issues. The World Bank has announced plans for major programs on multiple occasions, only to be forced to modify or withdraw them in the face of local opposition allied with an international actor, which is sometimes called a "transnational coalition." This can be extremely frustrating for national governments, such as that of Brazil, which perceives itself as making decisions about national development only to find its efforts frustrated by a local-global alliance. In the case of the World Bank, the organization has responded to these critiques to such an extent that some observers have argued that it has "co-opted" outside groups, although other scholars strongly contest this characterization (Brown and Fox 1999, 1–4).

Transnational coalitions face a number of inherent challenges. One of the problems is that typically the grassroots organization is located in a developing country, while most NGOs are hosted in major Western democracies. This means that there can be power imbalances between the two parties, which may have very different interests at stake. For indigenous groups, at issue may be their land, their lives, and their identity. An NGO, however, may be focused on funding, reputation, and mission. This raises issues of authenticity: to what extent do international groups actually speak for local interests? This is a point that critics in home governments invariably raise.

After an earthquake of 7.0 magnitude destroyed much of Haiti's capital on January 12, 2010, ten American missionaries were arrested for trying to take thirty-three Haitian children over the border to the Dominican Republic. The missionaries claimed that the children were orphans and that they were being taken to an orphanage in the Dominican Republic. Reporters, however, quickly tracked down the parents of some of the children, who claimed that they had given them up to go to a center to be cared for but had not necessarily consented to adoption. The missionaries argued that it was a misunderstanding exacerbated by the breakdown of the Haitian government. Eight of them were soon freed, while two remained to face further investigation. In this case, the missionaries may have acted out of a sincere desire to help the children. But how much control did the parents have when they gave up their children, and how did power imbalances shape their choices? What is the difference between human trafficking for indentured servitude and human trafficking for the good of children?

Although there are power differentials in relationships between NGOs based in the Global North and local groups, the NGOs may be the only means for local peoples to challenge decisions that affect their lives pro-

foundly but over which they have had little input. This can make decisions complex when national governments or the World Bank/IMF seek to form alliances with or gain feedback from these transnational coalitions. Are these actually meaningful alliances, or are the NGOs being coopted? While such questions are difficult to answer, there is no doubt about the power of such alliances, whether they involve Brazil's battle with the United States to produce generic drugs for AIDS or environmental issues.

It is also important to note that these transnational coalitions do not always represent alliances between the North and the South, or between local actors and international NGOs. One classic example of this would be groups of indigenous peoples that come together on their own in the belief that they can better advocate for themselves and their interests as a collective rather than individually. Even in these cases, however, questions of power and authenticity can be complex. For example, the Arctic Council is an organization made up of eight nations with Arctic territories, while six indigenous communities have the status of permanent participants on the council. Such governmental/indigenous alliances have the potential to accomplish tasks that neither group could achieve on its own.

Nation-states sometimes also face challenges to their authority from multinational corporations, some of which have total revenues greater than the gross domestic product of small states. In the current era, many companies are increasingly transnational and no longer have a tight bond to an individual nation. But even now, most countries have an historical or economic tie to a particular company, whether it is an auto giant or an oil company. The history of relationships between developing nations and multinational corporations is fraught with difficulty, as is demonstrated by the cases of the United Fruit Company in Guatemala in 1954 and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in Iran in 1953. In both instances, the United States and Britain, respectively, overthrew national governments partly to defend the economic interests of corporations based abroad. Of course, these are two extreme historical examples. But many national leaders believe that multinational corporations are able to influence international policy against their national interests through their alliances with the governments of wealthy states or by buying political leaders. In some cases this perception may be enough to affect behavior. One example of this is the role of multinational corporations in Nigeria, where some Nigerian critics view them (accurately or not) as encouraging political corruption and ethnic division, as well as creating almost a shadow government in oil-producing regions.

Multinational corporations may appear to be an illustration of purely economic globalization. But these corporations are also political actors that are constrained by the decisions of nation-states. For example, the decision of most developing nations to rely on their own national corporations to develop their petroleum resources has meant that the major oil companies—while still extremely wealthy—control a steadily decreasing amount of the world's oil reserves. For this reason, economic globalization both influences and is shaped by political globalization. And in both examples—transnational alliances and major corporations—there is still a great power imbalance between the North and the South, although this is changing with economic development, particularly in Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia.

Regional Organizations: From Europe to Latin America

If the above examples focus on external actors that impinge on the power of the nation-state, it is also true that nations sometimes voluntarily give up some aspects of their power, either to regional organizations or military alliances. Perhaps the most dramatic example of this trend has been the rise of the European Union. In the aftermath of World War II, many Europeans blamed unrestrained nationalism for the horrible conflict. In order to create new bonds across national lines and rebuild trade among shattered economies, six nations came together to form the European Coal and Steel Community. Since that time, a series of agreements (such as the Treaty of Rome and the Merger Treaty) have steadily deepened the significance of participating in this evolving body, while it has rapidly broadened to include new members. The Maastricht Treaty of 1993 formally established the European Union, while in 2004 ten new countries—most of them in Eastern Europe—joined this body. By this point, the EU had become the world's largest economy and a political force, despite its internal divisions and political disputes.

The EU now has twenty-eight members, of which eighteen have adopted a common currency called the euro. Such monetary union requires a nation to give up a considerable amount of authority. Until 2008, the EU appeared to be a dramatic success. It had helped to ensure income equality among its members through transfers to low-income countries, which enabled nations such as Ireland to make dramatic and rapid economic progress. With the Schengen Agreement, EU citizens can travel freely

across national borders without passports. There was unprecedented European labor mobility. But its successes extended beyond economics and into politics. For example, the European Union also has judicial power and has overturned national legislation that it believed violated EU law. The European Parliament sometimes inflames nationalist sentiments with regulations and directives that speak to the most daily aspects of its citizens' lives, such as the food they eat. On a more important scale, nations such as Turkey that wish to join the EU must agree to the Copenhagen criteria, which have significantly changed some countries' behavior. Most observers would agree that this union has brought major benefits. Since the EU's founding, there has never been a war between two of its members. From this perspective, it has clearly achieved the goals for which it was founded.

At the same time, the perception of the EU has changed since the financial crisis of 2008. Youth unemployment rates in southern Europe are horrific. Greece has suffered an economic depression so severe that the government is kept from collapse only by infusions of cash from the EU, which has required the financial power of Germany to implement it. For many Greeks, however, the austerity programs enacted at the EU's insistence have failed to bring prosperity. While the Germans tire of supporting Greece, Greeks resent the extreme austerity that their nation has had to bear. Of all regional associations globally, the EU is the most economically and politically integrated—a remarkable achievement in the aftermath of World War II. The crisis since 2008, however, has caused economic difficulties so severe that they have undermined the attractiveness of this model.

Outside of Europe, some leaders are seeking to use regional associations for their own ends. In the Americas, there are currently three major projects at play. The North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) has brought together the United States, Mexico, and Canada into a free-trade area—but without much likelihood of deeper economic integration beyond trade and no plans for political integration, which likely no leader among its three members would support. Elsewhere in Latin America, two associations are currently in competition under the aegis of two nations vying for regional leadership, which is defined here as the ability to act as a political voice for a larger block of nations. Brazil is emerging as a key southern power, and it is using the South American free-trade agreement Mercosur as a means to provide access to regional markets for its businesses. Brazil also is interested in using regional bodies that can expand its

efforts to ensure the political integration of the region. Brazil's project has been challenged by Venezuela's proposal for an association called Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA), based on ideals of social justice that reject traditional ideas of free trade. ALBA's goals are much more ambitious than those of Mercosur and include a new common currency called the sucre. Still, apart from Venezuela, ALBA's membership is relatively poor; Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Honduras, and Nicaragua are all relatively small economies. Cynics might note that they may have joined as much for the promise of Venezuela's economic gifts—such as debt forgiveness and oil—as for a belief in ALBA's structure. Since the death of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez in 2013, ALBA seems to have lost momentum, but it remains an alternative vision for how regional economic associations might be structured.

Antarctica and the Arctic

The potentials and pitfalls of globalization may be most clearly seen in the polar regions. In both the North and the South, political globalization has the potential to limit or avoid international conflict over resources. In the first half of the twentieth century, various nations made competing claims to territory in Antarctica. Indeed, such claims continue to be made. Britain, for example, renamed a region of Antarctica "Queen Elizabeth's Land" in December 2012 to honor the Queen's diamond jubilee. This step predictably outraged Argentina, which has conflicting claims to territory with Britain, not only in Antarctica but also in the Falkland Islands/Malvinas. But this was also a moot point. While Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom all have made claims to Antarctica (many of which overlap), the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 froze all of these claims (Myhre 1986, 7). The United States had played a leading role in the formation of this treaty, in part because it feared that these territorial disputes would tear apart the Western alliance against the Soviet Union (Myhre 1986, 2). The inhospitable environment of Antarctica made it easier to reach an understanding, because the territory is unsuitable for permanent habitation: "It is the coldest and highest continent with winter winds commonly exceeding 100 kilometers an hour. An ice-sheet averaging over a mile thick covers about 95 percent of Antarctica, and the ice extends into the adjacent sea" (Myhre 1986, 1). The oceans surrounding Antarctica also have the highest winds and largest waves on the planet

and are famous among mariners as being the most dangerous waters on Earth. For all of these reasons, nations were able to collaborate to create the Antarctic Treaty System—a series of further diplomatic agreements following the original 1959 treaty—that has prevented waste dumping, resource extraction, and territorial disputes while fostering scientific research and environmental preservation (Gillian 2011). States still spend funds in Antarctic research for political motives, which perhaps explains why China has made significant investments in its Antarctic program (Brady 2010; see also Child 1988). The Antarctic Treaty System also has weaknesses, particularly in the area of fishing. Nonetheless, these treaties perhaps represent a model that can now be applied to the Arctic, where global warming and energy demands are creating an international rivalry.

Global warming is increasing tensions in the Arctic, where the polar cap may disappear during the summer by as early as 2020 (Borgerson 2013, 76). In a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, Scott Borgerson argues that this change may be positive:

> No matter what one thinks should be done about global warming, the fact is, it's happening. And it's not all bad. In the Arctic, it is turning what has traditionally been an impassible body of water ringed by remote wilderness into something dramatically different: an emerging epicenter of industry and trade akin to the Mediterranean Sea. The region's melting ice and thawing frontier are yielding access to troves of natural resources, including nearly a quarter of the world's estimated undiscovered oil and gas and massive deposits of valuable minerals. Since summertime Arctic sea routes save thousands of miles between the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean, the Arctic also stands to become a central passageway for global maritime transportation, just as it already is for aviation. (Borgerson 2013, 77)

Overall, the tone of Borgerson's article is that the losses from global warming will be more than outweighed by economic growth in the Arctic: "While equatorial microstates may soon disappear into the rising sea, Greenland might well become the first country born from climate change" (Borgerson 2013, 85). Borgerson's article also contained a map entitled "Economic Opportunity in the Arctic," which shows areas likely to have large supplies of oil.

One challenge created by the disappearing Arctic ice cap—besides the risks to sea life, indigenous peoples, and planetary climate—is that this

situation also is increasing interstate disputes, sometimes between unexpected partners. Canada considers the waters through its Arctic archipelago to be within its national territory, while the United States holds them to be international waters. When supertankers of oil begin to thread through northern islands, this situation could lead to tension. If one of the supertankers ruptures, or if there is a release of oil comparable to the Deepwater Horizon spill by BP in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, the countries impacted may not be those extracting the oil wealth. The peoples of the Arctic, who are already disproportionately impacted by climate change, would face the environmental costs without commensurate benefits. Lastly, despite some progress, national boundaries in the Arctic are not all defined, which has led to tension between even such unlikely opponents as Denmark and Canada, which have disputed the ownership of tiny Hans Island. This context of interstate border disputes and potential environmental damage seems not unlike the situation in the Antarctic in the 1950s. It may make sense to look to the Antarctic Treaty System as a model to be applied to the other polar region while there is still time. In this respect, political globalization may be a necessary means to mitigate the damage caused by global warming.

Conclusion

Although the nation-state remains the most powerful factor in global affairs, economic and political globalization are both restraining states' power to act in an autonomous fashion. In some cases, states willingly surrender some aspects of their power through membership in regional blocs like the European Union. In all such cases, states give up some of their political control—such as the decision to engage in military action, economic authority, or the right to a separate currency—as part of their participation in a political and economic body. In other cases, states are compelled to face challenges to their power from international actors, whether it is through international law, transnational alliances, or multinational corporations. While states can sometimes decide to fight such groups, they cannot choose to ignore them without paying a price. For this reason, globalization cannot be thought of as a purely economic phenomenon. Instead, economic, political, and cultural trends all form part of the common phenomenon called globalization. In the next chapter, we continue our exploration of transboundary flows, this time with a focus on cultural aspects of globalization.

➤ VOCABULARY

Great Powers
League of Nations
NATO
Mercosur
Security Council
General Assembly
Helsinki Accords
democratization
International Court of Justice
transnational coalitions
ALBA

➤ DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1 *What three global events did the League of Nations fail to confront?*

2 *Identify a critical difference between the structure of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly.*

3 *What are some criticisms that have been leveled against the UN?*

4 *The International Court of Justice is part of the UN. What is its primary charge, and what are some weaknesses of the court vis-à-vis its authority and the authority of individual nation-states?*

5 *Although it is possible for nation-states to violate human rights, globalization has allowed checks on leaders' behavior as never before. What are some examples of these checks?*

6 *How does culture impact our understanding of human rights? Are certain human rights universal?*

7 *What twentieth-century phenomena have contributed to democratization processes around the globe? How does the general phenomenon of democratization differ from the U.S. approach to democratization?*

8 *Why is the dimension of authenticity important for transnational coalitions?*

9 *What are some examples of regional political organizations? What are some of their strengths and weaknesses?*

10 *What new roles are emerging in the polar regions as sites of globalization due to global warming?*

ACTIVITY 1 Go to the main UNICEF website (http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_framework.html) and examine one of the following pdf documents listed there. Choose one dimension of the document and, in a one-page reflection, discuss how it is linked to a global issue that is important to you.

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
3. International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
4. Convention on the Rights of the Child
5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
6. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
7. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

ACTIVITY 2 In February 2010, the East African Community, a bloc composed of the nations of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi, met to reinforce joint military commitments to each other and to explore food and other joint security issues. Go online to investigate the status of their work at this time. Identify two issues these countries may have in common in terms of security interests.

ACTIVITY 3 Mercosur is the Southern Common Market and the largest trading bloc in South America. Investigate which countries make up Mercosur's sovereign member states and identify their working languages and current leaders. What do you imagine three critical issues to be for this organization and its members?

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