

# Interconnection and Sovereignty

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we'll discuss sovereignty as one of the major sources of contemporary conflict among nations and how this relates to interconnection. The specific areas of focus include:

1. Interconnection and Globalization
2. Impacts of Interconnection on Sovereignty
  - a. Human Rights
  - b. The Environment
  - c. The Economy
3. Conflict Resolution Between Nations

## 1. Interconnection and Globalization

As you learned in a previous lesson, **interconnection** refers to the way in which the decisions of any one country are going to have an impact, not only locally on that country and its neighbors, but also globally.

Because of how connected the world has become, these global impacts can manifest themselves in both formal and informal ways.

🔗 **EXAMPLE** Countries are very connected through business trade and business travel, as business becomes more and more global. Many companies have even moved their manufacturing and business offices to other countries, which has naturally led to more business travel.

There is also a lot of tourist travel between countries. If a citizen from one country is visiting another country, that person will follow the rules of that country while there. But should there be any type of legal issue with that person during their visit, the two countries would be dealing with one another because the citizen of one is being affected by the laws of the other.

**Globalization** is a term that refers to the increasing interconnection that exists between countries. With the internet and increased communication via social media, that connection is building more and more.

Because we are just a second away from knowing what's happening around the world, there have been times when entire events have been learned about or responded to via the internet.



## TERMS TO KNOW

## Interconnection

In international conflict, the understanding that the decisions of one country have an impact on other countries through various kinds of formal and informal relationships.

## Globalization

A term used to describe increasing interconnection between countries.

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# 2. Impacts of Interconnection on Sovereignty

The fact that countries have become so interconnected can, in turn, impact issues of national sovereignty.

**Sovereignty** refers to the right of any recognized nation to decide its own policies and laws. Within the borders of any particular country, that country's government gets to decide how the nation is run.

There are many elements within a country that can be affected as a result of interconnection's impacts on sovereignty. Three of these elements are:

- Human rights
- The environment
- The economy



### TERM TO KNOW

## Sovereignty

The established right of a recognized government to determine internal policy and law of its country.

### 2a. Human Rights

When it comes to human rights, some countries use sovereignty in order to treat their citizens, or certain groups of their citizens, a particular way in accordance with their worldviews.

However, this can sometimes lead to discrimination against specific groups, such as women and minority groups. These discriminatory tactics can escalate and can sometimes initiate a full-out war against particular groups.

When this conflict results in gross human rights violations, other countries sometimes get involved because human rights are considered a universal value extending beyond the borders of any one nation.

Under these circumstances, countries come together, many times under the auspices of the UN, against atrocities being committed in a particular nation.

While technically sovereignty means that this country has the right to do what it's doing, other countries can take a stand against those actions, and respond in any number of ways.

➦ **EXAMPLE** In response to the actions of one country, other countries can enforce trade embargoes. Or if countries are giving aid to the particular nation that's violating human rights, they may cut off the aid. There could also be tariffs imposed. In some cases, the nations may even send in troops to stop the killing.

### 2b. The Environment

The environment is another element that can be affected when interconnection and sovereignty clash.

➡ **EXAMPLE** Say a developing country wants to grow its economy and has begun manufacturing without regulations in place to control carbon emissions. This raises climate concerns regarding pollution, particularly from this country's neighboring nations.

If this continues, the concern will spread globally, as the rest of the world notices the environmental consequences from the sovereign decisions made by this particular nation. If this country responds to the concern by asserting its sovereign rights, conflict will likely arise because the other nations will then be protesting that decision due to its impact.

## 2c. The Economy

A third element that's affected is the economy. Economic policies in particular countries may make it easier or more favorable for other countries to do business there.

This can lead to the outsourcing of jobs to other countries, which can, in turn, cause internal conflicts if local employees lose their jobs.

In other words, because of interconnection, the economic policies of a particular country may be favorable to another country's businesses, causing that company to outsource some of its jobs.



### BIG IDEA

Human rights, the environment, and the economy are all areas in which the decisions of any one nation are going to have impacts, both formal and informal, on other countries.

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## 3. Conflict Resolution Between Nations

When these types of conflicts occur between nations, there are often attempts made to resolve them through peaceful methods of conflict resolution.

This is because the issues, while much more complex with the involvement of many more people and perhaps more hardened positions, are much the same as they would be in an interpersonal conflict.

Two ways nations may attempt to resolve conflict are through:

- *Mediation/Negotiation.* Both mediation and negotiation can often be used in certain conflicts between countries. The parties may select a mediator or negotiator from a country who both nations feel friendly towards to come in and conduct a mediation or discussion.
- *Shuttle Diplomacy.* In situations where the countries don't want to meet together, shuttle diplomacy can be used. As you know, this involves a negotiator or mediator meeting separately with each party and bringing back agreements and questions from each to be discussed with the other.



### BIG IDEA

On a global scale, mediation/negotiation, and shuttle diplomacy can be used as conflict resolution methods to work with decisions made by sovereign nations that may be impacting other nations.



### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **globalization and interconnection**, or the way in which one country's decisions can impact other countries both locally and globally, manifests itself in a variety of ways as the world continues to become more connected.

You now understand that this **interconnection impacts sovereignty**, or a nation's right to make its own laws and policies, through certain elements. Three elements that are very often affected are **human rights, the environment, and the economy**. When conflict arises over one of these elements, **conflict resolution** can take place between nations. **Mediation/negotiation** and **shuttle diplomacy** are the resolution methods often used in these circumstances. Good luck!

Source: Adapted from Sophia tutorial by Marlene Johnson.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### **Globalization**

A term used to describe increasing interconnection between countries.

### **Interconnection**

In international conflict, the understanding that the decisions of one country have an impact on other countries through various kinds of formal and informal relationships.

### **Sovereignty**

The established right of a recognized government to determine internal policy and law of its country.