
UNIT 2 STATE SOVEREIGNTY AND JURISDICTION*

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, you will be reading about state sovereignty and its jurisdiction. At the end, you would be able to understand:

- The meaning of state sovereignty and jurisdiction;
- The effects of globalisation on state sovereignty and jurisdiction;
- Impact of globalisation on political, economic and cultural sovereignty; and
- Analysis of state jurisdiction in a globalized world.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A nation-state is also commonly called a 'country', a 'nation', or a 'state', but, it is a specific form of sovereign state (a political entity on a territory) that is guided by a nation (a cultural entity), and which derives its legitimacy from its citizens. The *Compact OED* defines 'nation-state' as a sovereign state of which most of the citizens or subjects are united also by factors which define a nation, such as language, common descent, culture and history. The nation-state implies that a state and a nation coincide.

It is also said that the nation is the only legitimate political community, and therefore it is the highest form of political organization. Indeed, national sovereignty is usually understood to be the cornerstone of international law, giving each nation the right of self-defence and to determine its own destiny.

The modern state has a territorial base. This means that the state exercises its authority within its territorial borders which are acknowledged by other states.

*Ms.Suruchi Aggarwal, Research Scholar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

The modern 'nation-state' tries to bring together the state, the society and the economy under the ideology of nationalism.

The concept of sovereignty is one of the central concepts of modern nation state. However, due to the processes of economic globalisation as well as legal and political universalism, contemporary political theory struggles to account for the exercise of state power in terms of the traditional understanding of sovereignty. The renewed interest in the concept of sovereignty in contemporary political philosophy should come as no surprise to observers of recent developments around globalisation and the rise of supranational and transnational entities. In its traditional meaning, elaborated by early modern theorists of the state like Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes, sovereignty means supreme, indivisible and absolute power within the bounded territory of a state.

2.2 SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty means absolute and unlimited power of the state within its territorial boundaries; here, it is both supreme legal authority and unchallenged political power. In the form of internal sovereignty it refers to the distribution of power within the state, and leads to questions about the need for supreme power and its location within the political system. In the form of external sovereignty, it is related to the state's role within the international system and whether or not it is able to operate as an independent and autonomous actor. The sovereignty of modern states is reflected in the supremacy of law; others such as family, club, trade union, private business etc., can establish rules which command authority, but only within limits defined by law as stipulated by the sovereign state.

The principle of sovereignty underlies the modern international system of states. The origins of this system are often traced in scholarly and popular literature to the Peace of Westphalia – a series of treaties signed in 1648, which ended Europe's religious wars. The 1648 treaty resulted into the coining of a principle known as Westphalian sovereignty which simply meant that each nation state has sovereignty over its territory and domestic affairs and to the exclusion of all external power. It simply means that there should be no interference in domestic affairs from another country and all states are equal in international law. Westphalian sovereignty located supreme legal and political authority within territorially delimited states, which claimed to be coterminous with the nation.

The system of states is organized around the central model of sovereignty. A sovereign state has territorial integrity and its law making authority is unquestionable. It has total control over its internal affairs within its territory and the legal right to govern its people. A sovereign state will brook no interference from another nation-state.

Internal sovereignty refers to the internal affairs of the state and the location of supreme power within it. External sovereignty refers to the state's place in the international order and therefore to its sovereign independence in relation to other states. A state can be considered sovereign over its people and territory even when no sovereign figures in its internal structure of government for some time. External sovereignty can thus be respected even though internal sovereignty may be a matter of dispute or confusion. Moreover, while questions about internal sovereignty have, in the present age of democratic governments, appeared to have become increasingly out dated, the issue of external sovereignty has become

absolutely vital. Indeed, some of the deepest divisions in modern politics involve disputed claims to such sovereignty.

2.3 JURISDICTION

The jurisdiction of a state originates from state sovereignty, and is an important and central feature of it. It is the authority of a State over persons, property and events which are mainly within its territories (land, national airspace, internal and territorial waters). This authority involves the powers to prescribe the rules of law, to enforce the rules of law and to adjudicate. The powers related to State jurisdiction raise the question regarding the types and forms of State Jurisdiction. State jurisdiction may extend beyond its territory over persons and entities which have a national connection such as business firms. This extension raises the question regarding the grounds or the principles upon which the State can assert its jurisdiction within and beyond its boundaries. A state is entitled to make binding laws within its territory. It has a legislative exclusivity in many areas. This supremacy is entrusted to constitutionally recognized organs.

Although legislation is primarily enforceable within a State territory, it may extend beyond its territory in certain circumstances. International Law, for example, accepts that a State may levy taxes against persons not within its territory as long as there is a real link between the State and the proposed taxpayer, whether it is nationality or domicile. Generally, since States are independent of each other and possess territorial sovereignty, they have no authority to carry out their functions on foreign territory. No State has the authority to infringe upon the territorial sovereignty of another State. In this sense, a State cannot enforce its laws upon foreign territory without the consent of the host State; otherwise, it will be liable for a breach of International Law.

When the Westphalian doctrine of absolute sovereignty was prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was commonly assumed that the autonomous decisional powers of constitutionally independent sovereign states could not and would not be weakened by their activities in international institutions. International law was essentially concerned with forestalling conflicts and confirming the independence of national jurisdictions. Until the end of the Second World War, legally speaking, states were considered sovereign in an almost absolute sense, exercising supreme authority over the people and resources living in their territories.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Explain the external dimension of state sovereignty.

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2.4 GLOBALISATION

The Unit-1 explained to you the meaning and features of globalisation. At a general level, one can say that the post-1945 period has been characterized by a marked trend towards globalisation, reflected in the growth of economic interdependence as national economies gradually got incorporated into a global economy. Besides, the period is also marked by the emergence of supranational bodies such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and the European Union. The state exercises its sovereignty in three important spheres: political and legal sovereignty, economic sovereignty and external sovereignty. All are impacted by the globalisation process.

As Unit-1 described in details, with globalisation, borders of sovereign states become more fluid with the impact of electronic and other flows such as money transfers, satellite communications, computer data flow, capital flows and merchandise trade. The contemporary state is unable to control phenomena such as global companies, global production and trading, movement of people – immigrants refugees etc. Globalisation has also loosened some important cultural and psychological underpinnings of state sovereignty. For example, with the help of global communication supra-territorial bonds and solidarity have been created among a diverse range of groups, from women's movements to environmentalists. There is strong evidence that globalisation challenges the very state and its idea of sovereignty. According to John Naisbitt, "the international society is being transformed from an industrial society to an information society. Virtually all nation-states become part of a larger pattern of global transformations and global flows. Goods, capital, people, knowledge, communications and weapons, as well as crime, pollutants, fashions and beliefs, rapidly move across territorial boundaries. It has become a fully interconnected global order...."

2.5 EFFECTS OF GLOBALISATION

Sovereignty of modern states is a much discussed issue in the era of globalisation. National sovereignty is severely undermined because the state can no longer control the movement of resources, people and cultural influences across its borders. The need of the hour demands a growing interdependence of economic and cultural life. The state no longer has control over transnational movements of people, ideas and resources across its sovereign territories.

Three ways that globalisation has affected sovereignty. First, the rise of international trade and capital markets has interfered with the ability of nation-states to control their domestic economies. Second, nation-states have responded by delegating authority to international organizations. Third, a 'new' international law, generated in part by these organizations, has placed limitations on the independent conduct by sovereign states of their domestic policies.

2.5.1 Globalisation and Economic Sovereignty

Economic globalisation has ensured that no national economy is an island. All national economies are more or less invested into an interlocked global economy. The interconnectedness of markets, finance, goods and services, and the links created by the transnational corporations are the consequences of economic globalisation. Though international trade has been going on since centuries, but

the expanse and pace of trade and global investment has increased manifold in the recent times. Economic globalisation has accelerated due to advancements in information technology which has made movement of money, decisions and ideas easier across international borders. It is commonly claimed that the market's ability to shift money from one part of the globe to another by the push of a button has changed the rules of policy-making, putting economic decisions much more at the mercy of market forces than ever before. According to Karky, economic globalisation is a historical process; the result of human innovation and technological progress. The economies of the world are increasingly integrated through trade and financial flows. Now, shifts in economic activities in any part of the world, are felt in countries all over the globe. The internationalization of financial markets, of technology and of some manufacturing and services bring with them a new set of limitations upon the freedom of action of nation states. In addition, the emergence of institutions such as the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, involve new constraints and imperatives.

The supremacy of international institutions in this era has led to developing countries in particular into ceding their sovereignty. In today's time, International Institutions play a vital role in altering any local infirmities that may affect the global market or trade scenario in any way. Institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the United Nations are regarded as the supreme authorities in the global economic and political sphere. These institutions have been empowered with the authority to make member-states implement domestic laws in order to form uniform standards in the global economy.

The understanding of sovereignty as discussed earlier lies essentially within the State. Sovereignty allows the State to make laws in order to govern its citizens, but when international institutions implement policies and mandate States to implement laws which are in coherence with the policy, irrespective of whether the State is in a position to do so domestically, international institutions admittedly overstep their ambit and encroach upon the sovereignty of the State.

International Institutions do encroach upon the sovereignty held by member-states by implementing policies that don't serve the needs of the states. Developing countries are left with no option but to revise these policies as domestic laws because a failure to do so will disrupt their international trade with member countries. Grant of financial aid, market access etc becomes contingent upon a sovereign state agreeing to the conditionalities as laid by international financial institutions or the rich and developed countries. Therefore, it is extremely necessary to acknowledge the disparity between countries, their developmental levels and social climates. If international institutions successfully undertake these factors, it would enable the world economy to boom as a whole instead of only developed countries profiting and progressing.

The sovereign powers of a nation-state are not only to defend its territorial region. Yet, another important aspect of governance of a sovereign state is to formulate and implement policies which take its Human Development Index higher and gives its citizens a safe social security net. This is the welfare state in modern times.

However, over the last thirty years or so, the welfare state has been under attack in many developed democracies due to the increasing scope and extent of

economic globalisation. For example the devaluation of currencies, the high regulation of capital markets, the nationalization of domestic industries to protect them from going bust, extensive public spending leading to expensive public deficits. Yet as the markets have become more integrated and pressures from international competition encouraged states to take risks, opening up fiscal markets, and considering the implications of high labour costs on goods and services in the global economy.

More explicitly, economic globalisation, in its most recent form, has been limiting the capacity of states to determine their own policy outcomes in three main ways: through trade and economic integration; financial markets; and the competition for employment. Due to the increasing pressure of international competition in trade markets as well as the increased mobility of capital and multinational corporations, states are incentivized to cut labour costs, to reduce the price of goods and services, reduce taxation to make their domestic market more competitive, and to decrease the size and scope of the welfare state.

2.5.2 Globalisation and Political Sovereignty

Globalisation has led to a decline in the power of national governments to run and influence their economies or to determine their political actions. There is a strong indication that the impact of globalisation is felt more because politics to a large extent everywhere are now essentially driven by economics. It is not that governments are now unable to run their states, but to remain in power they must manage national politics in such a way as to adapt them to the pressures of transnational global economic forces. The institutionalization of international political structures has led to political globalisation. Since the early 19th century, the European interstate system has been developing both an increasingly consensual international normative order and a set of international political structures that regulate all sorts of interaction. This phenomenon has been termed 'global governance.' There is no supranational government or authority; yet matters of global importance and concerns have to be managed in an effective manner. Global governance here refers to the growth of both specialized and general international organizations which manage varieties of issues. The most dominant of the general and global organizations that had emerged was the League of Nations and now succeeded by the United Nations. At the regional levels, the African Union, European Union, Organization of American States, the Arab League, etc exist. The impact of these organizations is to create of a process of institution-building, where the organizations are able to influence and dictate what happens in the governance of member states. This is the trend of political globalisation. Non-member states find themselves outside this cooperation and are regarded as non-conformists. The future will see more states edging to conform to the norms laid down by these organizations.

Already, the impact is being felt in the area of human rights. Due to the internationalization of human rights, a state is no longer free to treat its nationals and aliens the way it pleases. It must conform to international standards laid down in the various human rights treaties.

2.5.3 Globalisation and Cultural Sovereignty

Culture refers to the patterns of behaviour and thinking that people living in social groups learn, create, and share. Culture distinguishes one human group

from others. People's culture includes their beliefs, rules of behaviour, language, rituals, art, technology, styles of dress, ways of producing and cooking food, religion, and political and economic systems. Culture has several distinguishing characteristics. First, it is based on symbols – abstract ways of referring to and understanding ideas, objects, feelings, or behaviours; and the ability to communicate with symbols using language. Second, culture is shared. People in the same society share common behaviours and ways of thinking through culture. Third, culture is learned. While people biologically inherit many physical traits and behavioural instincts, culture is socially inherited. A person must learn culture from other people in a society. Fourth, culture is adaptive. People use culture to flexibly and quickly adjust to changes in the world around them. Since no human society exists in complete isolation, different societies also exchange and share culture. Cultures do not live and grow in isolation. They interact and exchange with each other. In fact, all societies have some interactions with other societies, both out of curiosity and because even highly self-sufficient societies sometimes need assistance from their neighbours. Economic activities often force diverse cultures to interact and exchange. Today, for instance, many people around the world use similar kinds of technology, such as cars, telephones, and televisions. Commercial trade and communication technologies, such as computer networks, have created a form of global culture. Therefore, it has become increasingly difficult to find culture that is shared within only a single society.

Cultural exchange provide many benefits for all societies. Different societies exchange ideas, people, manufactured goods, and natural resources. Such exchanges also have their drawbacks, such as the introduction of aspects and values of another society's culture can disrupt the cohesive life of the people of another culture. Cultural globalisation relates to the diffusion of two sets of cultural phenomena: (i). the spread of individualized values, originally of Western origin, to large parts of the world. These values are expressed in social contracts that recognize individual rights and identities and transnational and international efforts to protect 'human rights'. (ii) The adoption of originally Western institutional practices, Bureaucratic organization and rationality, belief in rule of law, the values of economic efficiency and political democracy have been proliferating more under globalisation. Though, it must be stated, these values and institutions have been propagated since the European Enlightenment. The growing influence and acceptance of Western values of rationality, individualism, multiculturalism,, equality, and efficiency is an important trend of the present times – a trend which has heightened both in speed and nature in the context of globalisation. Time and space compression by new information technologies is simply an extension and acceleration of the long trend towards globalisation of values and practices.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) Explain globalisation and cultural sovereignty.

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2.6 JURISDICTION IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Globalisation is transforming the contemporary international system and has impacted the idea of state sovereignty and its jurisdiction. Two major developments have arisen at the expense of the law of the sovereign state. First, specialized regimes of public international law have proliferated into areas previously monopolized by the state, such as human rights, social and environmental laws, economic development policies and trade and investment. Second, rules enacted by intergovernmental organizations, multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and transnational corporations have become increasingly prominent. Inevitably, intertwined with these developments is the undermining of the Westphalian idea of state sovereignty. In a globalized world, the idea of state sovereignty being absolute, immutable, brooking no interference is not sustainable.

The actual impact of globalisation on the state's legal apparatus is far more complex than that of simple negation or dilution of sovereignty. Global forces are likely to transform state law; however, state law has a remarkable capacity to adapt to different environments and to constrain the actions of transnational actors. The result of these interactions will likely lead to a reworking of the concept of 'law'. No matter the pace and depth of globalisation, sovereign states are needed to make globalisation possible. The implementation of varied norms and practices still remain in the hands of sovereign states. Transnational actors in the form of inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs), along with the transnational networks of state agencies, private foundations, and migrants, now play substantial roles on the global platform. It is rightly said that state sovereignty has been 'compromised' to an extent by the competing interests of non-state actors like NGOs. Indeed, many national rules barring the movement of labour, goods, services, and capital have been replaced by new institutions that span several territories.

Currently, the state cannot ignore issues related to the wider interests of humanity, even within its own borders. Individuals and ethnic groups enjoy greater recognition as subjects of international law, as seen in the expansion of legal regimes and enforceable mechanisms in the fields of international human rights law including humanitarian law, international refugee law, and international criminal law. Further to be noted is that international law has evolved into a central framework for the 'emergent system' of global governance. This system supplies the normative mechanisms for the establishment of IGOs and the facilitation of the international response to diverse issues such as nuclear proliferation, climate change, ocean use, and the functioning of the world trade system.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1) How globalisation has impacted state jurisdiction?

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2.7 LET US SUM UP

Globalisation has given birth to a multidimensional world that operates through unique economic, political and cultural processes that are deeply interconnected at global level. Sovereignty, the authority to make rules within the territorial boundaries of the states, is the hallmark of the modern international system. Globalisation, that signifies an ever increasing volume, speed and scope of cross-border transfer of ideas, money, commodities and people, besides its political dimensions such as growth in humanitarian international law, technology control regimes etc, challenges the exclusive territorial authority of sovereign states.

The concept of sovereignty, once uncontested, has recently become a major bone of contention within international law and international relations theory. Earlier the concept of sovereignty had a timeless or universal meaning, but more recently amidst increasing globalisation researchers and analysts are focusing more and more on the changing meanings of this concept across many historical, political, economic and cultural contexts. What is apparent is that the sovereign state is not likely to remain the main and exclusive focus of political authority and community in the future. It is challenged by new scenarios of authority and community which go beyond the divide between the domestic and the international spheres, and might soon be replaced by new forms of political life that know nothing of this distinction. This is due the emerging trends of globalisation across borders.

Sovereignty, earlier concentrated in the nation-state, is challenged by the market economy and its natural tendency to expand beyond the politically defined boundaries of states. As a result, features of state sovereignty have been weakened, such as its ability to make and enforce laws, the power to define and defend territorial borders, as well as the capacity to shape and direct economic performance. While the sovereign state certainly has not withered away, much of its former authority has been dispersed to other levels of governance, above as well as below the institutions of central government.

It is reasonable to speak about the transition of most countries and the system of international relations in general to a new state of sovereignty. We can presume that if such processes gain strength it will surely affect all spheres of life, including changes in ideology and social psychology. There emerges a peculiar system where the problems of separate countries, nations, regions and other subjects (corporations, different associations, global media holding companies etc.) interlink into one tangle. Separate local events and conflicts affect a great number of countries. At the same time decisions in the most significant centres of the world have an effect all over the world. In general the processes of globalisation in the broadest sense are characterized by the abrupt intensification and complication of mutual interconnections in the basic spheres of economic, political, cultural and social life.

Rules and regulations have historically referred to activities or the spaces where the activities are conducted. In an era when activities increasingly cross borders which separate different regulatory environments and regulators seek to maintain some control over these activities, the spatial organisation of rule-making authority is brought into question. Issues of extra-territoriality or disputes of jurisdictional authority inevitably come to the fore as spaces and the rules which govern them

are contested. Spaces and rule-making authority may come to be shared, but the ways in which they are shared and the outcomes of such sharing depend upon the institutional mechanisms which are established to deal with jurisdictional disputes.

The present Unit states that the effects of globalisation and way its processes are working at international level, the idea of absolute, indivisible and immutable sovereignty, as laid down by Hobbes and Bodin, no longer applies. Old concepts of state sovereignty have fallen by the wayside as sovereignty and jurisdiction of nation-states are undergoing vast changes. The problem for political theory is that it has failed to develop analytic tools appropriate to study both new forms of power and modified practices of old forms of power. Put differently, not only is the classical theory of sovereignty inadequate to account for a kind of sovereignty that is no longer indivisible, absolute, and supreme, but it also lacks analytic models to theorize productive forms of power. Thus, as Foucault says the model of Leviathan should be abandoned and power should be studied outside the field outlined by juridical sovereignty and the institution of state.

Globalisation has had an impact on all spheres of life – be it politics, economics or technology. Rapid advancements in communication have created a global society. Economic interdependence amongst nation states is putting new constraints on the sovereignty of states. Economic leverages (sanctions) are used wildly, more so by the United States of America and with the approval of UN Security Council, to influence internal affairs and even change the internal political dynamics of other countries. In a world which is connected on all levels, confining oneself to internal politics in the name of sovereign jurisdiction could isolate a country, as we can see in the case of North Korea. Though the developed democracies profit the maximum from globalisation, it is the developing countries that face challenges as globalisation and their domestic economic development strategies, including welfare goals, may not always be in synchronization. It is widely admitted including by developed economies and multilateral institutions like World Bank that the benefits of globalisation have not reached all, including developing countries and poor and low-income populations living in rich and developed countries. As a result, some of the more ardent critics argue that globalisation has led to neo-colonization of weak, under-developed countries – a phenomena which can be seen in many African countries. No longer able to keep up with the fast moving globalized world, economic failures in these countries has led to state failure and into domestic disorder.

Globalisation has led to the development of a voluntary agreement among states. This is due to the fact that the nation-states recognize this as an advantage in the fluid world that they live. This bolsters their sense of security in the face of common danger or threat. This is the modern supranationalism. The supra-national organizations such as UNO, NATO, EU, IMF etc. facilitate inter-governmental political and economic functioning. These have over a long period of time acquired the ability and bureaucratic apparatuses to impose their will upon member states. Political pundits say globalisation is leading to the highest form of supranationalism i.e. a global state or some kind of world government.

The sum total of the various elements of globalisation has left the individual sovereign state less and less a locus of policy and control as the WTO, the EU and other regional economic integration groupings, free trade agreements and other supranational organizations become more significant players. Further, the

economic policies of developing economies is also to a large extent influenced by the international financial institutions such as IMF, World Bank and WTO, as evidence of a new international system with new centres of power. To access loans and assistance, there are ‘conditionality’ which the recipient countries have to comply. Rich and developed countries often arbitrarily stipulate norms to provide preferential market access to the goods exported by the developing countries. These institutions and norms tend to point to the rise of global institutions of governance and different sets of norms of global conduct. Indeed, it will be increasingly difficult for the future civil servant to draw meaningful distinctions between national and international dimensions of problems.

The essence of globalisation is a complex web of political and economic relationships, this means that the lives of people are more and more shaped by events that occur and decisions that are made at a great distance from us. The world has become truly borderless in the sense of traditional political borders. National and state boundaries have become porous; and divisions between people of time and space have become less important and sometimes totally irrelevant.

2.8 SOME USEFUL REFERENCES

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2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Your answer should include the following:
 - Concept of state sovereignty; internal and external
 - Modification of state sovereignty under globalisation

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) Your answer should include the following:
 - Effects of globalisation on political sovereignty of the state
 - Globalisation and national culture
 - State and economic sovereignty

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

- 1) Your answer should include the following:
 - The concept of sovereign state jurisdiction
 - List the challenges to the idea of state jurisdiction