

# Internationalism and Supranational Organizations

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. **Explain** how internationalism and supranational organizations are related.
2. **Distinguish** between the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations.
3. **Summarize** the key events leading to the establishment of the European Union.
4. **Explain** the challenges Turkey faces in terms of becoming a member of the EU.

**A**lthough separatism is a potentially destabilizing force, it is in some ways countered by the spread of **internationalism**, the development of close political and economic relations among states. The growth of supranational political organizations provides the clearest expression of internationalism. A **supranational organization** consists of multiple states that agree to work together for a common economic, military, cultural, or political purpose, or a combination of several of these. The United Nations (UN) is a supranational organization promoting global peace and security. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the European Union (EU) are other supranational organizations whose member states cooperate for political and economic purposes. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance including several North American and European countries. Each of the supranational organizations mentioned here—indeed most of the supranational organizations that exist today—were formed after World War II.

The benefits of membership in a supranational organization vary depending on the purpose of the organization but typically include improved political security or enhanced trading opportunities. Membership in a supranational organization, however, has a cost, and that cost is associated with the loss of a portion of a state's sovereignty. The existence of supranational organizations introduces a tension between internationalism and sovereignty. Therefore the benefits of membership need to be perceived as outweighing any sacrifices to a state's sovereignty. Participation in a supranational organization indicates a willingness to be a team player—

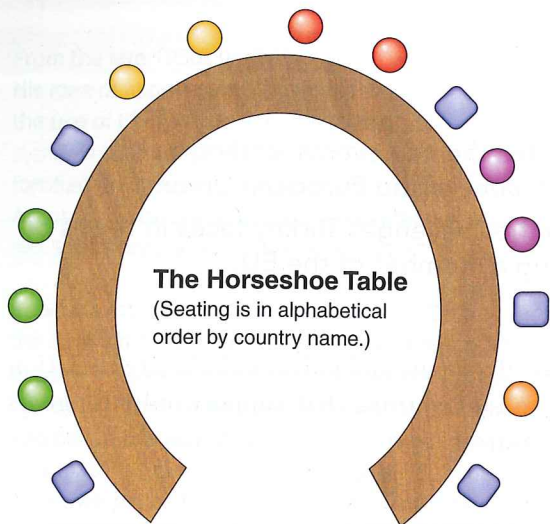
to support the decisions and policies of the organization rather than to take actions that support only the goals of one's own state.

## The United Nations

The **United Nations** was founded in 1945 as a supranational organization charged with promoting peace in the world. The mission of the UN includes building and sustaining cooperative relations among states and, when conflict arises, using diplomacy to negotiate peaceful solutions. The experience of two devastating world wars plus the desire to avoid a third one contributed to international support for an organization like the UN. Almost every country in the world is represented in this organization. At present, Vatican City does not have full membership but maintains permanent observer status because of its expressed desire to remain neutral on certain issues. Although Kosovo declared its independence in 2008, this Balkan territory's status remains disputed, and it is not a member of the UN. (This explains why there are 192 members of the UN but 194 sovereign states in the world.)

Headquartered in New York City, the UN has many different constituent parts. We can distinguish between specialized agencies and principal organs. Some specialized UN agencies include the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The Security Council, General Assembly, and International Court of Justice (ICJ) are principal organs of the UN. Located in the Hague, Netherlands, the ICJ resolves international legal disputes. The General Assembly, which consists of all members of the UN, controls its budget and oversees the activities of the other branches of the organization.

## The UN Security Council and peacekeeping operations • Figure 7.11



- Permanent members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)
- Nonpermanent members (elected by the General Assembly and serve for two years)
- African
- Asian
- Latin American
- West European and Other
- East European

### a. The composition of the Security Council

The UN Charter is vague on how equitable geographic representation of nonpermanent members should be achieved. In practice, seats are allocated according to the regional groups shown. The “other” in the West European group includes Australia and New Zealand.

### b. UN peacekeepers at work

Serving in a humanitarian capacity, UN peacekeepers from Bolivia distribute water and meals to the residents of Cité Soleil, Haiti, after the devastating earthquake in January 2010. UN peacekeeping forces are provided by the members of the General Assembly.

The real power for the day-to-day maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council. Depending on the situation, the Security Council might recommend sanctions against a country or might recommend that peacekeeping forces be deployed. In order for recommendations made by the Security Council to be acted upon, there must be nine affirmative votes from nonpermanent members and unanimous support from the permanent members. In 2003, for example, the United States and the United Kingdom sought UN support for the invasion of Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein. UN support was not forthcoming because three members of the Security Council—China, France, and Russia—opposed it. **Figure 7.11** provides an overview of the Security Council.

## The European Union

Whereas the UN is a supranational organization that is global in scale and focuses primarily on issues of international security and well-being, the **European Union (EU)** is

regional in scale and came into existence in order to enhance economic cooperation in western Europe. Five important developments contributed to the establishment of the EU.

1. Creation, in 1944, of Benelux, an association made up of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. These three small western European countries realized that economically they could lower their costs of production if they cooperated with one another to remove tariffs and ease restrictions on the movement of goods among them.
2. Implementation of the Marshall Plan following World War II, which stimulated the rebuilding of Europe and encouraged regional cooperation.
3. Establishment of the separate European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952. The ECSC worked to remove barriers on the movement of coal and steel. The Benelux countries joined France, West Germany, and Italy as members of the ECSC.
4. Acceptance of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which created the European Economic Community (EEC),

sometimes also called the Common Market. The Treaty of Rome committed its signatories to still greater economic union, through the creation of a single common market to enable the unrestricted movement of goods, people, services, and capital among them. The six countries that belonged to the ECSC were also founding members of the EEC.

5. Implementation of the Treaty of Brussels, or “Merger Treaty,” in 1967. This treaty amended the Treaty of Rome and provided a framework for political cooperation, including a European parliament. To reflect its broader mission, the EEC was renamed the European Community (EC).

The Treaty of Rome incorporated the idea that the EEC would attract other countries sharing the same economic and political ideals. By 1981, six other countries

had become members. Then, in 1992, these 12 member countries signed the Treaty of European Unity (also called the Maastricht Treaty) in the Netherlands. From this point forward, the term *European Union* has been used as the name of the supranational organization. Since 1993 the EU has admitted another 15 countries as members, expanding its membership to a total of 27 countries (Figure 7.12).

Turkey has applied for membership in the EU but has not yet been admitted for economic, demographic, cultural, and political reasons. Economic reasons include the country’s large amount of debt and problems with high inflation. At current rates of natural increase, Turkey’s population is expected to surpass that of Germany in the next few years. If admitted to the EU, Turkey would likely become the most populous member. It would also be the only member whose population is predominantly Muslim.

### EU members and the euro zone • Figure 7.12

The EU now has a population of 495 million and a gross domestic product of nearly \$15 trillion, making it a leading economic power. The passage of the Treaty of European Unity has enabled a greater degree of economic and political integration. Major progress toward monetary union occurred in 1999 when the EU adopted a single currency, the euro. The 16 countries that have since replaced their currency with the euro collectively form a region known as the euro-zone. Why is membership in the EU more widespread than the euro zone? Why has use of the euro expanded to nonmembers?



Political concerns include Turkey's stance on Cyprus (discussed previously in the chapter) and its human rights record, especially discrimination against Turkey's Kurdish minority.

The status of Turkey's application to the EU has become a divisive issue. Proponents of Turkey's membership highlight the value to be gained from additional market expansion, access to a large pool of labor, and the strategic importance of Turkey's geographic location, especially in terms of improved energy security for Europe. Proponents also maintain that admitting Turkey would send a powerful signal that the EU is not an elite, Christian-only club.

The EU is significant for many reasons, but two reasons deserve special attention. First, the EU is the best example of successful supranational economic cooperation and has become a model for other supranational economic organizations to follow. Second, it has pushed supranational cooperation to an unprecedented level such that the EU is beginning to take on some of the functions of a state in ways that challenge the traditional conception of the state. For example, the EU has

a parliament, a central bank, a flag, and a national anthem. It has also developed a constitution, though it has not been ratified. These developments have led many scholars to ask whether the EU represents a new kind of supranational state.

### CONCEPT CHECK

STOP

1. **What** is a supranational organization, and what are some costs and benefits associated with membership in one?
2. **How** is the Security Council different from the General Assembly of the United Nations, and what role does the Security Council play?
3. **How** does the present-day EU differ from its forerunner supranational organizations Benelux, the ECSC, the EEC, and the EC?
4. **Why** is admitting Turkey into the EU a divisive issue?

## Global Geopolitics

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. **Define** geopolitics.
2. **Summarize** the Heartland Theory.
3. **Distinguish** between Cold War geopolitics and contemporary geopolitics.
4. **Explain** how globalization can influence the diffusion of terrorism.

**A**s we have seen, political geographers have spent much time trying to understand how states function—how they organize their territory, how the government distributes power to different territorial units within the state, and how states forge supranational organizations. Over the years political geographers have proposed different theories concerning the development of the state and the nature of political power. In this section we examine a few of the most important schools of thought or traditions within political geography.

### The Geopolitical Tradition

As traditionally practiced, **geopolitics** has focused on the ways in which states acquire power, the relations among states, and the formulation of strategic foreign policy. Geopolitics, one branch of political geography, has its roots in the work of the German scholar Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904). Ratzel, a zoologist by training, became interested in political geography and in 1897 published his *Theory of the Organic State*, which

#### geopolitics

The study of the relations among geography, states, and world power.