CFR Resources


An interactive timeline about the Kurds, the largest nation in the world that lacks a country of its own. (3,100 words)

John Campbell, “Belgium Begins to Confront Its Brutal Colonial Past in Congo.”

A blog post that highlights how Belgium’s colonial history in the Democratic Republic of Congo continues to shape both countries to this day. (500 words)

CFR Staff, “The UN Security Council.”

A backgrounder on the UN Security Council, which plays a central role in determining when international organizations or foreign countries might impinge on sovereignty. (2,400 words)

Lindsay Maizland, “China’s Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang.”

A backgrounder that details the situation of the Uighurs in Xinjiang, one of the largest nations in the world that lacks a country of its own. (2,300 words)

James McBride, “How Does the European Union Work?”

A backgrounder on how the European Union functions, pooling the sovereignty of its member countries. (2,900 words)


A backgrounder on Brexit, a process that has in large part been about Britain reclaiming the sovereignty which it had partially ceded to the EU while it was a member. (2,750 words)
Articles


A journalistic look at sovereignty and what makes a country in the case of Somaliland. (2,400 words)


A survey of the recent increase in forest fires in the Amazon, illustrated with outstanding maps and graphs. (1,400 words)


A detailed profile of the Hindu nationalist policies of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government. (13,700 words)


A brief summary of the history and future of the movement for Catalan independence. (1,300 words)


An intellectual history of the idea of nationalism, and an argument that nationalism has an important role to play in the United States today. (4,750 words)

Chris McGreal, “What’s the Point of Peacekeepers When They Don’t Keep the Peace?,” Guardian, September 17, 2015.
An in-depth article that looks at the failures of UN peacekeeping in the 1990s that led the United Nations to begin discussing the responsibility to protect (R2P) norm. (4,300 words)


A discussion of the role of nationalism in the race to develop a vaccine for COVID-19. (2,500 words)


A brief look at sovereignty and self-determination in the case of Crimea. (1,400 words)

Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Was the Libyan Intervention Really an Intervention?” Atlantic, August 26, 2011.

Published during the Libyan civil war, a piece that refers to ongoing debates about that crisis and offers a succinct discussion of the responsibility to protect (R2P) doctrine and sovereignty, and how R2P differs from intervention. (1,250 words)


A good summary of the movement for Catalan self-determination that also provides some consideration of the conflicting viewpoints within the region. (1,050 words)


A thought-provoking discussion of the ways in which Facebook is similar to a sovereign country. (1,250 words)

A comprehensive introduction to the ongoing fight for self-determination in Papua. (1,800 words)

Books

A detailed and accessible book by one of the principle architects of the responsibility to protect norm. (349 pages)

Philip Gourevitch, We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families (1998).

A moving and disturbing account of the genocide in Rwanda that details one of the major incidents in the 1990s that led to a reassessment of peacekeeping policy and the rise of the responsibility to protect norm. (356 pages)

Shashi Tharoor, Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India (2017).

An excellent and accessible introduction to colonialism in India and the Indian movement for self-determination. (288 pages)

Multimedia

This video from a New York Times blog takes a look at the idea of nationalism and what makes a nation. (6 minutes)

A podcast episode on American Samoa, which holds a unique status within the United States, that teases out the meaning of nationality and citizenship. (65 minutes)


A photo series from the New York Times that looks at 1960, a banner year for self-determination in Africa as seventeen countries on the continent gained independence.


A five-episode series in which a New York Times podcast explores nationalist movements in four European countries, focusing especially on their opposition to the European Union.

Resources

Foundation Basics, iCivics.

A lesson plan from iCivics designed for high school students that explores sovereignty, among other concepts.

The Sovereign State, iCivics.

A lesson plan from iCivics designed for middle school students that explores sovereignty.