

Political Science 12: IR -- Eighth Lecture, Part 2



12

Human Rights

Human Rights

1. Half a Century of Progress
2. Defining Human Rights
3. Why Do States Violate Human Rights?
4. Treaty Politics
5. Enforcement
6. Will Protection Improve?

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Half a Century of Progress

Table 12.1: United Nations Human Rights Agreements

Treaty	Date Signed/ In Force	Brief Description
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	1948	Outlines basic human rights.
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	1948/1951	Bans acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	1965/1969	Bans all racial discrimination, with particular attention to policies and practices of apartheid.
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	1966/1976	Details the basic economic, social, and cultural rights of individuals and nations.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	1966/1976	Details the basic civil and political rights of individuals and nations. Optional protocol (1966/1976) permits petitions from individuals. Second optional protocol (1989/1991) commits state parties to abolish the death penalty.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	1979/1981	Bans discrimination against women, focusing on education, employment, health, marriage, and the family. Optional protocol (1999/2000) permits petitions from individuals.
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	1984/1987	Bans torture under all circumstances. Optional protocol (2002/2006) establishes regular visits to monitor state practice.
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1989/1990	Details the special rights of children. Optional protocol (2000/2002) bans children in the armed forces from participating in hostilities. Second optional protocol (2000/2002) prohibits the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography.
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)	1990/2003	Details the special rights of workers outside their country of origin.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	2007/2008	Mandates equal status and treatment for individuals with disabilities. Optional protocol (2007/2008) permits petitions from individuals.
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	2007/2010	Prohibits arrest, detention, or abduction of individuals without acknowledgment by the state.

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Defining Human Rights

Conceptions of human rights usually follow Western ideals

Defining Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Two binding agreements

1. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
2. International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

Defining Human Rights

Vague consensus on rights masks
major differences in definition

Defining Human Rights



Defining Human Rights

Weaker states may see foreign efforts to promote individual political rights as a means of increasing Western influence

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Why Do States Violate Human Rights?

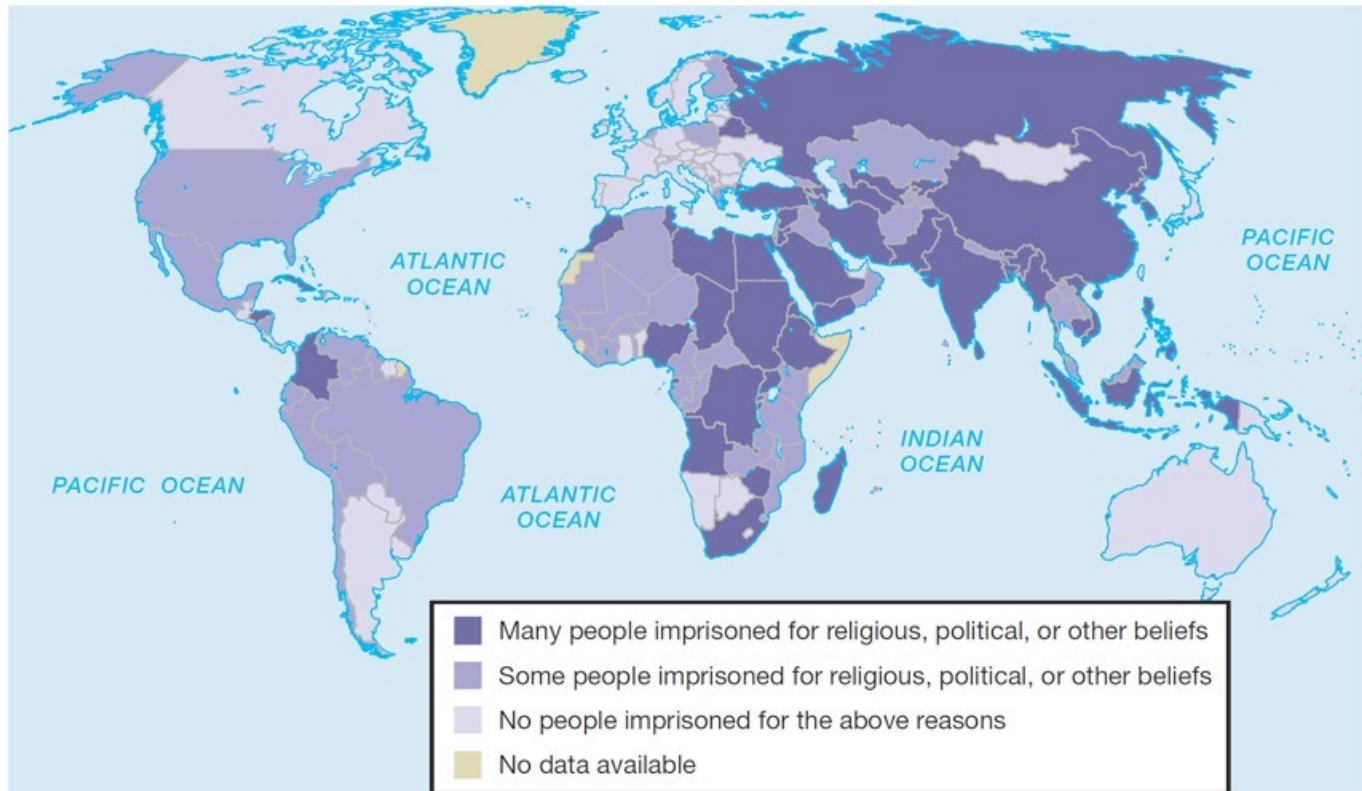
- Lack of capacity
- Foreign threats
- Sovereignty
- To maintain power

Why Do States Violate Human Rights?



Why Do States Violate Human Rights?

Map 12.1: Imprisonment for Nonviolent Politics Beliefs and Actions, 2009



Why Do States Violate Human Rights?

Map 12.2: Torture, 2009



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Treaty Politics

Why sign human rights treaties?

Treaty Politics

Why do states care about human rights abuses overseas?

Treaty Politics

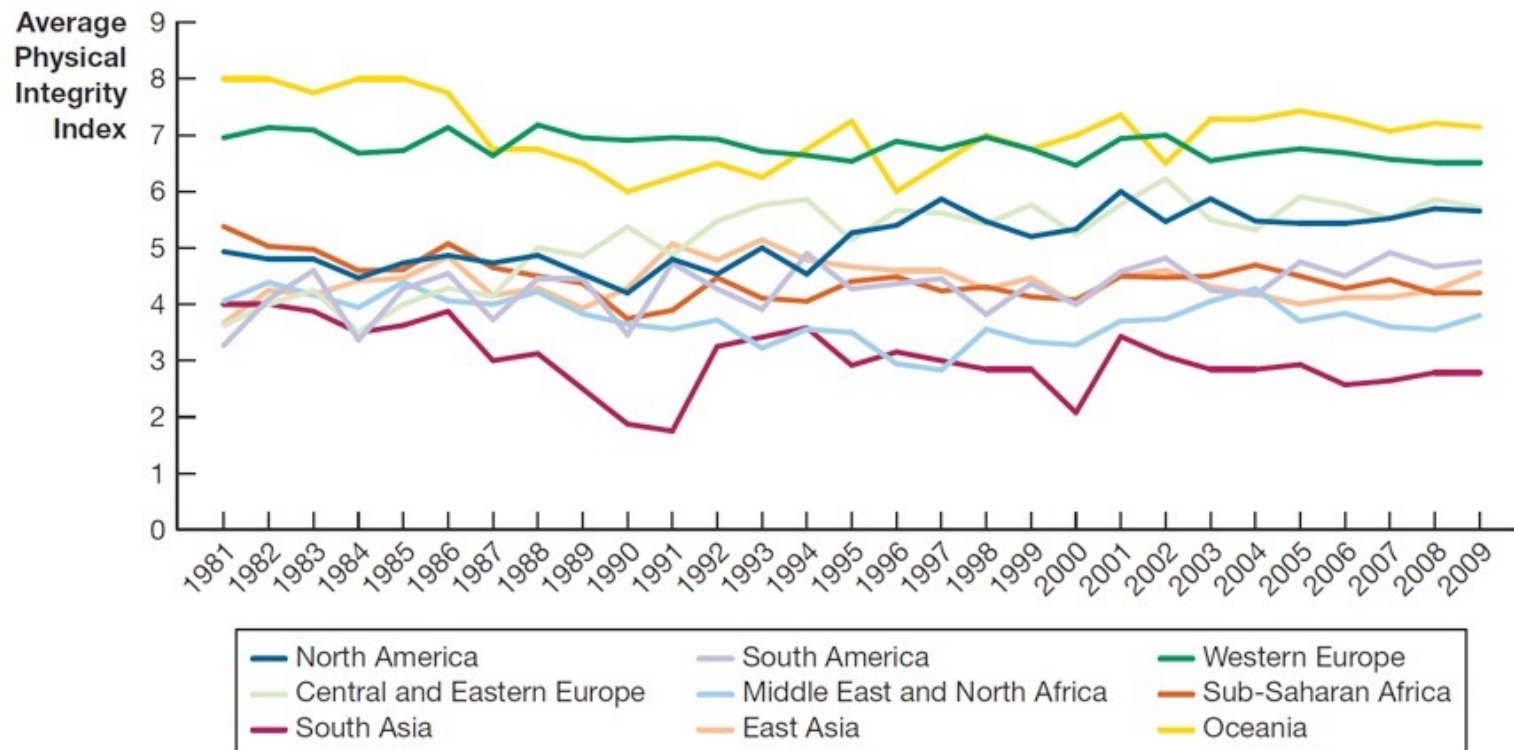


Treaty Politics



Treaty Politics

Figure 12.A: Human Rights Practices Around the World, by Region, 1981–2009



Treaty Politics

Optimists hope that treaties may have longer-term effects.

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Enforcement

- Cost / benefit analysis
- Interests
- Motives for others to punish violators may be weak, or provide too few benefits
- Under what conditions are states likely to enforce human rights?

Enforcement



Enforcement



Enforcement



Enforcement



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Will Protection Improve?

- Transnational justice
- Individual petition
- Universal jurisdiction
- The International Criminal Court (ICC)

Will Protection Improve?



Will Protection Improve?

Linking material interest to human rights

Will Protection Improve?

Map 12.3: Women's Political Rights, 2009



Political Science 12: International Relations

