

Largely owing to the political paralysis of the Cold War, as well as the emphasis placed on political independence during the de-colonization era, the concept of a singular "statist" sovereignty evolved slowly over the past forty years, even while practices were evolving which undermined its centrality in international relations theory.

B. Non-Intervention:

The corollary of the concept of sovereignty is the principle of "non-intervention in the internal affairs of a state". Intervention undermines political independence and, to the extent that it might result in imposing a foreign presence on the territory of a state without consent, it contradicts the idea of territorial integrity. The principle of non-intervention precludes the use or threat of force against another state, including debilitating economic sanctions which are defined as coercive in nature. These coercive measures should be distinguished from other forms of "interference", such as public criticism, aid conditionality, human rights monitoring or political pressure to respect human rights. It also should be noted that, whereas "non-intervention" has a generally understood meaning in international law, "non-interference" is without firm definition.

Two exceptions to the prohibition of the use of force or coercion are recognized under the United Nations Charter: self-defence, and collective security under Chapter VII. Beyond these two exceptions, all United Nations provisions regarding non-intervention are clear and specific. For example, the 1970 United Nations Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations And Co-operation Among States stated that it is "the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State", such that:

"No state or group of states has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or external affairs of any other state. Consequently, any armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the state or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are in violation of international law."

These proscriptions are so strong in the United Nations system that one scholar has argued that if "the sovereign territorial state claims, as an integral part of its sovereignty, the right to commit genocide..., the United Nations, for all practical purposes, defends this right."

2. The Emergence of New Practices

Between the extremes of interventionism and complete non-interventionism, practices have arisen over the past forty years which have gradually created a large and