FRAGILE STATES
NATION-STATES

• Our 21st century world is viewed through the lenses of the nation-state system
  • 193 Nation States Members of the UN
  • Each of these are considered independent, have specific territorial borders and their own “citizen populations”
Are all Nation-States the same?
What can we compare?
COMPARISONS OF STATES

Government  Economy  Geography
“STRONG NATIONS”

- Developed nations as we described in the Wealth of Nations are usually seen as the “strongest” nations
- What are some examples of “strong nations” that you can think of?
FRAGILE STATES

• Some of the other nation-states have been described as fragile
  • Fragile meaning – easily broken or damaged; very delicate; not strong

• Nation-states are not permanent.
  • Because they exist today does not guarantee they will exist tomorrow
What is a fragile state?

Can you suggest some of the nation states you think are in trouble?

What specific nation states are at risk?
WHO DECIDES WHO THE FRAGILE STATES ARE?

• The Fund for Peace produced The Fragile States Index
  • Highlighting pressures that all states experience
  • Uses a ranking system out of 10 with 12 different categories
  • 3 different indicators of state fragility
    • Social
    • Economic
    • Political

• Why do we need to know which states are failing?
# Top 10 Most Fragile States

## Very High Alert

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### TOP 10 LEAST FRAGILE STATES

- Are they problem free?

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**Very Sustainable**

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#178 FINLAND

- Least fragile of all states
- Incredibly high levels of human development
- Large investment in education
- Respect for human rights
- Excellent provision of public services
12 MAIN FACTORS
1) Demographic Pressures

Can the people of the state physically live and thrive within the nation’s territory?
2) Refugees and IDPs

Are there conditions within the state that prohibits or that keeps its people from living in a permanent and secure location within the borders of the state?

Has the flow of refugees affected the availability of public services?
3) Group Grievance

Can different communities within the states’ population live, work, and contribute in a fair way? Can they coexist?
4) Human Flight & Brain Drain

Have the wealthy and talented created an imbalanced society?

Do citizens feel that they have adequate educational and economic opportunities within their country?

Those with resources and talents leave the nation-state poorer and with less potential to succeed.
5) Uneven Economic Development

A small percentage of the population enjoys great wealth, but many are left poor.

Does the “state” have a solid and fair economic base? Are there enough employment options for the majority of the population? Does the country have enough wealth to provide for the poor?
6) Poverty & Economic Decline

Is the government solvent? Does it have enough funding to provide essential services for its people? Can the average person earn enough to cover basic needs?
7) State Legitimacy

Is the government a representative government or is the power of the nation-state in the hands of a few elite rulers? Are the government’s practices and policies corrupt?
8) Security Apparatus

Are the citizens of the country protected by a central security apparatus, or are they vulnerable to many dangers presented by internal conflicts, military coups, the use of dangerous weapons, or through the actions of external powers?
9) Public Services

Is the nation-state able to provide health, educational, and sanitation services for its population?

Has it been able to construct a viable physical infrastructure? (roads, energy, internet access, etc.)
10) Factionalized Elites

Is there internal political conflict and competition within the state that threatens its stability?

Thailand
Are the basic freedoms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights realized within the state?
12) External Intervention

Is an external power (other nation-state or non-state actor such as ISIS) threatening the well-being and sovereignty of a state’s population or territorial borders?

Ukraine