

PREFACE

Keeping up with the ever-changing global political landscape can be daunting. *Governments of the World: A Global Guide to Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities* is designed to make the task easier. The volumes provide accessible, authoritative background information about governments, political issues, and citizen politics in 198 regions, including every independent nation of the world and several territories under the jurisdiction of sovereign countries. Because no nation operates in complete isolation, *Governments of the World* reaches beyond regional issues to explore the roles of international courts and supranational institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union.

The articles vary in length, ranging from 500 to 3,500 words. In general, we have provided shorter articles for countries that are comparatively small in geographic size or population or, in the judgment of the editors, of lesser economic or strategic significance. This does not mean countries represented by shorter articles are unimportant or uninteresting; many of them are fascinating, for any number of reasons. Common to all of the project's authors has been the diligent struggle to select only the most vital information for inclusion. Because the work we have prepared is an encyclopedia, not a library, authors were forced to select for readers only the essential facts key to the comprehension of the world's governments in the twenty-first century.

Understanding the structure of the world's governments, the interaction between governments and their citizens, and the intricacies of international relationships in a global environment entails much more than the study of isolated countries. To further the learning experience, a selection of articles present and explain in depth many of the institutions and concepts—including representation, dictatorship, and the role of political parties—crucial to the justification for and operations of governments and the roles played by citizens. Biographical sketches introducing readers to some of the most influential people in government and politics of the past century round out these 112 supporting articles.

Each of the 310 articles, arranged alphabetically over four volumes and thematically catalogued in the frontmatter, has been newly commissioned for this project. Entries represent the work of over 200 international contributors. Entry

accessibility is enhanced by sidebars that explore key people, themes, and events. Numerous country maps, photos and illustrations help illuminate the text, while same-page definitions, entry-specific bibliographic citations, and cross-references help users delve more deeply into the topic. Ancillary materials—including a filmography, a glossary, and a cumulative index—provide additional tools for understanding the concepts presented in the set. A selection of primary documents, including international agreements and country-specific legislation, is reproduced in volume-specific appendices; these further explain the structure of governments and justifications and standards for promoting (or in some cases denying) citizen rights.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Governments of the World has clearly been a group effort. The vision and contents of the work were shaped extensively by the members of the editorial board: Martin Edelman of the University at Albany, Stacia Haynie of Louisiana State University, and Donald Jackson and Mary Volcansek, both of Texas Christian University. The set's coverage and contents were initially developed in consultation with David O'Brien of the University of Virginia, Carl Baar of Brock and York Universities, and board members Edelman, Jackson, and Volcansek. When other commitments made it impossible for Professors O'Brien and Baar to continue their involvement, Professor Haynie and I came on board.

Governments of the World would have remained only a vision and a list of potential contents without the leadership and vital contributions of the staff at Thomson Gale. Hélène Potter, director of New Product Development, provided the stimulus and enthusiasm to get us going. Jaime Noce, our editor, was unfailingly supportive and resourceful; her gentle nudges kept us on schedule. Other members of the editorial and production staff worked behind the scenes to do everything necessary to turn rough drafts of individual articles into the polished and well-illustrated final product.

The excellent work of all these people would have been directed toward other projects but for the expertise and eloquence of the more than 200 authors of the individual articles. I learned from reading and editing their contributions more than I ever could have on my own. I frequently experienced a sense of real excitement and a desire to know more as I encountered new knowledge about the world's nations and their characteristics, the state of their citizens' rights and responsibilities, the dimensions of important concepts that help us understand the background and operations of those nations, and the lives and contributions of important individuals whose impacts on citizen rights and responsibilities, both positive and negative, have been substantial. All of us involved in bringing you *Governments of the World*—the associate editors, the editorial and production staff, the publishers, and, of course, the authors of the articles—hope you find it as informative and exciting as we have.

C. Neal Tate
Editor in Chief

INTRODUCTION

Two of the more interesting items in my library are a world atlas published in the 1930s and the set of encyclopedias my parents bought for their growing family in the early 1950s. The former provides a picture of the world as it existed when my parents were in their adolescent years, before adulthood confronted my nineteen-year-old father in the form of a draft notice that sent him to World War II—ultimately, to a place he likely had never heard of before, the island of Guam. The latter depicts the world as it existed at the beginning of the Cold War between the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its communist allies in China and Eastern Europe. It captures the beginning of the end of European colonialism in Asia, but predates its wholesale demise in the 1960s that led to the creation of dozens of new nations in Africa and elsewhere.

THE INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF THE WORLD

In 1930, there were sixty-eight independent nation states in the world—twenty more than there were 100 years earlier. Certainly nations came and went during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but, on the average, people who wanted to keep up with the world across these ten decades had to learn about a new nation every five years. The pace of change in the map of the world was slow.

Despite the trauma and rapid change of World War II, territorially the map of the world looked only slightly different in 1950 than it had in 1930. The War brought small changes in some European borders, changes in colonial rulers for a small number of territories, and, soon, independence from colonial control for several significant Asian nations: India, Indonesia, Myanmar (Burma), Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. Politically, there were significant effects of the war, as the Soviet Union imposed communist regimes on territories that it had conquered from the Germans and Japanese: the eastern portion of Germany, the nations of Eastern Europe, and the northern half of Korea.

Twenty years later, in 1970, as my own family was growing, the map of the world's independent nations had changed more significantly than it had in the

entire previous century, as the continent of Africa was transformed from colonial possessions to independent nations and numerous other dependencies became states. My young daughter—or anyone else who wanted to be informed about the world—lived in an era in which she had to keep up with 131 independent nations, fifty-two more than had existed two decades earlier.

The decade of the 1970s saw continued, though much slower, growth in the complexity of the world, as thirteen newly independent nations made their appearance on the world scene, and the decade of the 1980s saw very little change: the world gained only three newly independent nations from 1981 through 1990, reaching a total of 144. By 1993, however, shortly after my daughter reached adulthood, the world had once again changed rapidly. The number of independent states increased by seventeen, to a total of 161. More important, this sizable single decade increase was produced almost entirely by the breakup of the group of communist nations in Eastern Europe dominated by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the Soviet Union) after World War II and during the Cold War, as well as the disintegration of the world's second super power, the Soviet Union itself.

Determining the number of independent nations in existence at any one time can be problematic. For example, the United States in 2005 recognized 192 independent states; some countries recognized Taiwan as the 193rd nation. Generally, data from the Polity IV project at the University of Maryland include nations that were independent members of the international system during a given year and that had a population of at least 500,000. According to the Polity IV criteria, there were 161 independent nations in 2003, but the United Nations had 191 independent member states, since it includes some very small nations, and the Vatican is not a member. For more information about sources of data on the world's nations, see the article on government data sets.

The consequence of all this change is that citizens of the world in the twenty-first century face a political reality that is by far the most complex in history. People whose formal education was completed some time ago find that much of what they had learned is now obsolete and that important world events often occur in places they never knew existed. People who are still completing their education, high school and college students, for example, face the same complex task of learning about a much more complicated world, albeit one in which they have grown up. Given that they have grown up in this more complicated world, people may lack understanding of the historical and political events and people responsible for making the world what it is. *Governments of the World: A Global Guide to Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities* has been created to provide the valuable reference information both groups need.

THE GROWTH OF THE DEMAND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Governments of the World is designed to do more than help its readers cope with a more complicated world of independent nation states. As its subtitle indicates, it also provides guidance to an array of citizen rights and responsibilities. This focus is the result of another major change that has affected the world and its governments in recent decades: a sharply increased emphasis on the importance of human rights and an insistence that the world's now large array of independent nation states respect and protect rights.

The acceptance of the proposition that human beings are entitled to exercise certain rights and liberties and to have them protected from abuse is not new. It has grown for centuries. The nineteenth century was important as the

era in which almost all the world's nations came to reject the proposition that one human being should be able to own and control the destiny of another through the institution of slavery. It also saw

- the beginning of the acceptance of the previously radical proposition that government should be democratic, that the people—the mass of ordinary human beings, mostly men—should have the right to select and control their governments even if they were not wealthy, and
- the slow growth of acceptance by national governments of most of the basic rights and liberties expressed succinctly at the end of the eighteenth century in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution.

The twentieth century witnessed the continued expansion of national acceptance of the right of the people to select and control their governments. Where that right was accepted, the right to vote and participate in government was eventually extended to women on what was by mid-century a nearly universal basis. The rights and freedoms enumerated in the U.S. Bill of Rights also came into wider acceptance. Importantly, they were supplemented by a growing, though not universal, belief that citizens had a right to expect and governments a duty to provide fundamental social, educational, and economic services.

But the twentieth century was not a completely positive era for the expansion and protection of human rights. It also was the occasion for perhaps the most horrific and systematic attacks on human rights in history through the mechanisms of the brutal Nazi and Soviet dictatorships of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin in the decades before and during World War II. Wholesale eradication and imprisonment of political opponents and class enemies under Stalin gave new and terrible meanings to the word “purge,” while Hitler’s ruthless extermination of population groups singled out as national or class enemies defined the term, “Holocaust.”

Largely as a reaction to the atrocities accompanying World War II, much of the international community began efforts to reestablish democracy and to establish respect for human rights on a sounder and more universally accepted basis. Throughout the last half of the century and continuing with force into the twenty-first century, these and subsequent efforts have put citizen rights and responsibilities on the front burner for almost all of the world’s governments. This does not mean, unfortunately, that citizen rights are secure everywhere—far from it, as many of the country descriptions in *Governments of the World* document. While worldwide democracy did indeed grow after the end of World War II, it did not continue to expand, but, rather, declined through the late 1980s, as the newly independent nations that came into being in that period had difficulty establishing and maintaining democratic governments and the communist regimes remained dictatorial. In fact, the human rights catastrophes of the first half of the twentieth century have not remained isolated instances, as recent accounts of genocide in such diverse locales as Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan and of assassination squads in various Latin American countries confirm.

Individual country articles in *Governments of the World* assess with impartiality the state of rights and responsibilities in ways that are appropriate for the countries being discussed. These volumes also contain numerous other articles that explain for readers the meaning and development of concepts that are crucial to understanding human rights and their condition around the world, descriptions of important organizations, and brief biographies of selected individuals who have had major impacts, either positive or negative, on the development of human rights.