

Human Rights

POL 137: IR IN WESTERN EUROPE

“The Member States of the Union have many *common interests*. The Union must increase its influence in world affairs, promote values such as peace and security, democracy and human rights, provide aid for the least developed countries, ... [and] prevent major damage to the environment.”

What Are Human Rights?

Discussion Activity

- ▶ The inherent rights of individuals varies across *time* and *space*
 - e.g. Right to privacy and the internet (US vs. EU norms)
- ▶ Human rights is a normative topic
 - Steeped in rich philosophical, religious, and political history
- ▶ What rights are universal for individuals across humanity?
 - Watch video: *European Convention on Human Rights*
 - Take notes on which issues are “rights”
- ▶ What are rights are universal? (i.e. basic human rights)

I. Human rights in Europe

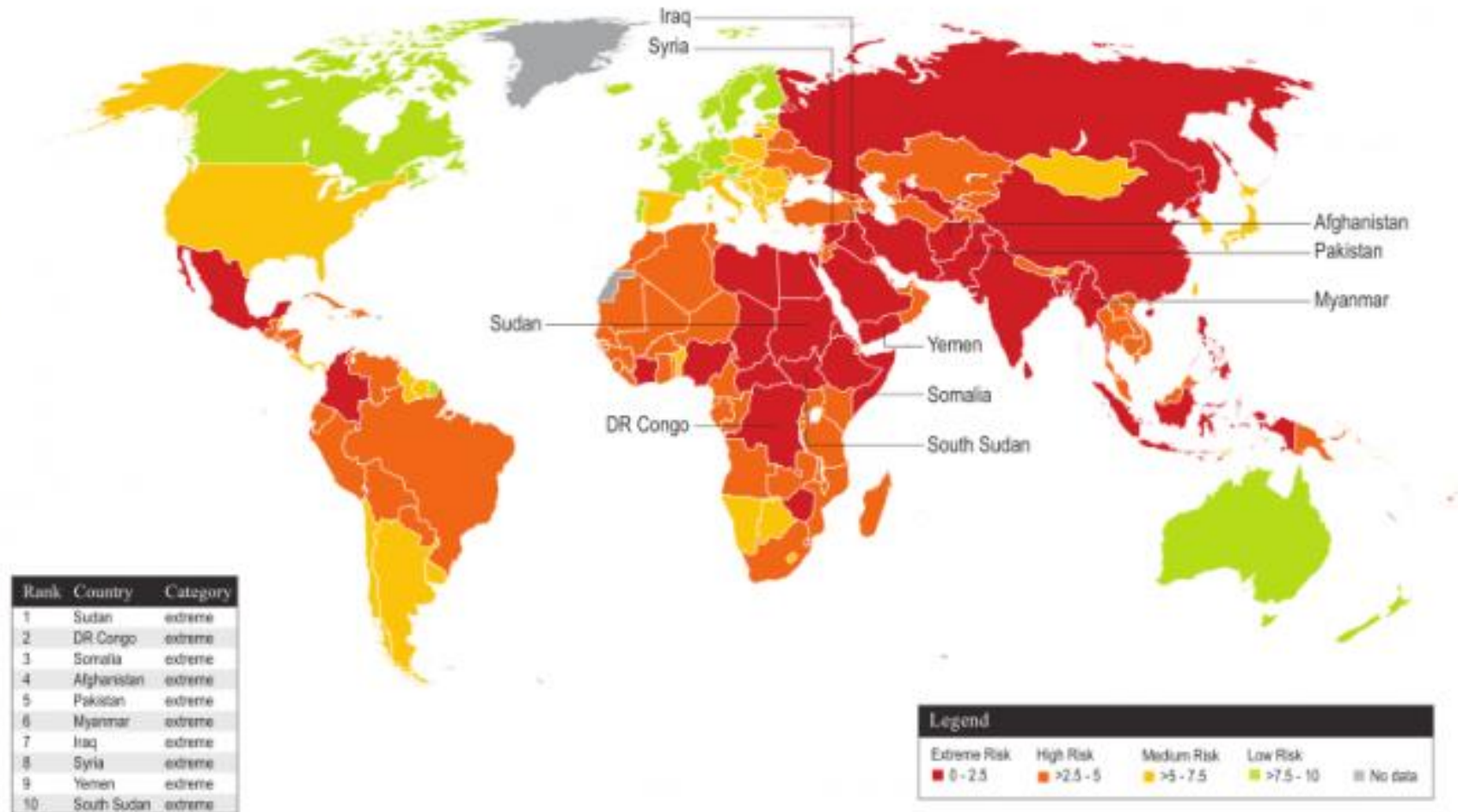
- ▶ Capitalist and socialist histories provide for broad perspective on human rights
 - “1st Generation” and “2nd Generation” rights are present
- ▶ European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
 - Civil rights with some social rights
- ▶ Charter of Fundamental Rights (2007)
 - Applies to EU citizens
 - Components:
 - Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizen rights, Justice



II. EU external human rights policy

- ▶ External human rights policy is under community method
- ▶ But implementation of external policy is under the CFSP
- ▶ Enforcing human rights:
 - All trade agreements with non-EU members have human rights clauses
 - Employment of sanctions

Human Rights Risk Index 2013



III. EU as promoter of human rights

- ▶ EU flexes normative power in international relations (Manners 2000)
 - Normative power derived from founding principles and how EU is run
 - EU has leverage to espouse norms
 - EU is strengthened from collective action
 - But does this affect its ability to take costly actions on int'l issues?

- ▶ EU's normative role in foreign affairs is interactive with strategic politics (Youngs 2004)
 - Normative and strategic goals are bounded by one another
 - Human rights initiatives are limited based upon strategic interests with target state
 - Strategic interests are limited based upon human rights abuses of target state

- ▶ EU foreign policy: constructivist or intergovernmental? (Smith 2006)
 - Socialization has led to similar values → collective votes at UN
 - National interests lead to divergence → individual votes at UN

IV. The paradox of sovereignty

- ▶ Sovereignty: a condition under which a state yields to no other authority in matters of religion or power
- ▶ Two components:
 - 1) Internal sovereignty: legal and political authority to affairs within a state's borders
 - i.e. relations between state and its citizens
 - 2) External sovereignty: state's status of equal to and independent of other states
 - i.e. relations between state and other states (non-interference)
- ▶ Interventions on human rights violate *both* concepts of state sovereignty

The Limits of Sovereignty?

Discussion activity

8

- Although international norms concerning human rights are becoming stronger, China and many other states continue to consider human rights an internal affair over which the state has sovereignty within its territory.
- Do you think human rights are a legitimate subject for one state to raise with another?
 - Is there a limit to sovereignty?
 - Does the EU's "pooled sovereignty" give it more credibility to interfere on human rights issues?



China vetoes Security Council resolution
(2012)