

Sovereignty & Intervention

Political Science

The tension between non-interference and preventing atrocity.

Non-intervention

- Sovereign equality of states
- Protects weak states from strong
- Prevents pretextual invasions
- Basis of the UN Charter
- Stability through predictability

Responsibility to protect

- Sovereignty entails responsibility
- Failure to protect may forfeit immunity
- Requires authorisation in principle
- Aims to prevent mass atrocity
- Contested in application

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

The recurring objection is selectivity: intervention happens where interests align, not where need is greatest.

Educational reference. This is a genuinely contested area of international law and politics, not a settled doctrine.