

**Summary**

**Chapter 11: Non-state Actors and Challenges to Sovereignty**

*EQ: Can the state continue to overcome challenges to its authority?*

* International relations is not just made up of states. Non-state actors are also very important. In fact, some scholars think that the significance of the state is declining as the significance of non-state actors grows.
* Some non-state actors, such as pirates, war lords, criminals, and terrorists, are incredibly dangerous to states and individuals.
  + Pirates are non-state gangs who commit robbery or criminal violence on the high seas. Pirates have existed for centuries, and are most prevalent today off the coast of East Africa.
  + War lords are private authority figures who control their own local armies or militias. In weak states, war lords can gain control over large territories and even form pseudo-governments.
  + International criminals often cross borders with illicit goods, especially drugs and weapons, and often use violence and bribery to protect their operations.
  + Terrorists are those who employ violence against civilians to achieve a political purpose. Globalization and technological advances have made the privatization of war easier than ever, and terrorists have obtained global reach.
* Some countries have governments that are so weak that they can no longer care for or protect their populations. These are often called failed states, and are often a haven for dangerous non-state actors.
* The international community has made many efforts to band together to combat the dangers of terrorism and failed states, and to protect innocent civilians from the violence and other negative effects of these dangerous non-state actors, but these actors remain one of the most pressing dangers in the international system today.