

States without Borders: Westphalia Territoriality under Threat

Stephen Okhonmina

*Department of Political Science and Centre for Presidential Studies,
Igbinedion University, Okada, Nigeria
Telephone +234 803 668 2733, E-mail swik5@hotmail.com*

KEYWORDS States. Borders. Westphalia. Territory. Globalization. Treaty. Threat

ABSTRACT The treaty of Westphalia signed in 1648 formally recognized state system in international politics. By Westphalia treaty of 1648, a system of rules establishing the rights and duties of states was signed. It established the 'territorial state' as the basis of the modern state system and emphasized international boundaries as legal territorial boundaries between one country and the other and asserting their sovereignty as well. This paper focuses on recent developments, especially globalization and contemporary historical, economic and socio-political struggles and rivalries that have seriously challenged this concept, thereby making the original meanings of borders to become more and more ambiguous and contradictory if not problematic. Today, for example, the emergence of supra-state regions as exemplified by the European Union, African Union and others have led to a lack of congruence with the Westphalia principle and have thus created a challenge for the modern nation state. As a result, the protection and order that Westphalia established is giving way to unstable economic fortunes with a consequent question on the contemporary relevance of the Westphalia treaty.