

*The*  
**Sovereignty**  
**Wars**



*Reconciling America*  
*with the World*

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**STEWART PATRICK**

# The Sovereignty Wars

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*Reconciling America with the World*

**STEWART PATRICK**

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I've incurred many intellectual, professional, and personal debts in writing this book, and I offer my sincere thanks to those who inspired me to write it and helped me bring it to fruition.

The topic of sovereignty has fascinated me since my first undergraduate class in world politics at Stanford University—taught by Stephen D. Krasner, who would later write the definitive theoretical work on the concept. That early exposure came in handy two decades later when I became a fellow on the State Department's policy planning staff. Its director, Richard N. Haass, asked me one day to craft a speech on "Sovereignty: Existing Rights, Evolving Responsibilities." A daunting assignment, given Richard's reputation as an exacting boss. Some twelve drafts later he pronounced the text acceptable, allowing me to move on to related topics. I spent the next few years analyzing the connection between weak sovereignty in the developing world and transnational security threats such as terrorism and infectious disease.

What increasingly fascinated me, though, was my *own* country's attitude toward sovereignty—and the often explosive U.S. domestic debates it sparks. I learned just how volatile my fellow Americans' feelings could run when I

# ADVANCE PRAISE FOR

# The Sovereignty Wars

“Stewart Patrick unpacks a complex subject in a short, clear book that could not be more timely. The stakes in the ‘sovereignty wars’ he describes are high and rising for the United States and the world.” —ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER, President and CEO, New America

“With lucidity and verve, Stewart Patrick shows how the right-wing fixation with alleged threats to U.S. sovereignty—from the UN, foreign courts, human rights organizations, and other demonic forces—has damaged rather than enhanced American power. I implore the nationalist crowd to overcome its resistance and read this book.”

—JAMES TRAUB, columnist, *Foreign Policy*,  
and author of *John Quincy Adams: Militant Spirit*

“In this intelligent and beautifully written book, Stewart Patrick has brought into sharp focus the deep, tangled, and contested ideas of sovereignty that swirl beneath the surface in foreign policy debates about America’s role in the world. In illuminating the different meanings of sovereignty and the great historical struggles over them, *The Sovereignty Wars* provides the terms for new and enlightened thinking about America’s global engagement.”

—G. JOHN IKENBERRY, Albert G. Milbank Professor  
of Politics and International Affairs, Princeton University

“Stewart Patrick has written a perfect Guide to the Perplexed that helps sort through the muddled arguments being thrown about today regarding perceived threats to American sovereignty and shows how international engagement often enhances rather than limits U.S. influence.”

—FRANCIS FUKUYAMA, Olivier Nomellini Senior Fellow,  
Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University



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