

# Comparing Characteristics across States

## Nation States, State Nations, and Fragile States

### **Nation-States**

1. Formed around cohesive group with shared history
2. Common national identity
3. National governing bodies viewed as legitimate; highly stable political order
4. Common set of informal institutions
5. Robust governing system
6. State closely integrated with and highly reflective of society
7. State security, administrative, and judicial organs competent or better
8. Borders accepted as legitimate
9. High levels of trust and social capital
10. Low costs to hold property and to transact business
11. High incentives to invest given right policies
12. Typically able to avoid natural resource curse
13. Usually found in region of robust states

### **State-Nations**

1. Formed around colonial identity and long-established, robust colonial formal institutions
2. Common national identity stronger than all or almost all subnational and supranational identities
3. National governing bodies viewed as legitimate by the great majority of population; political order becomes increasingly stable as time passes
4. Subnational groups may have common set of informal institutions, but whole population may not
5. If sufficiently rooted, the governing system will be stable in the short term and possibly robust in the longer term
6. State becomes more integrated with and reflective of citizens' diverse traditions over time
7. State security, administrative, and judicial organs able to enforce security, overcome political fragmentation, and rule impartially
8. Borders accepted as legitimate by the great majority of population
9. High levels of trust and social capital within subnational groups; moderate levels of trust across groups
10. Low costs to hold property and conduct business transactions within cohesive subnational groups, especially in homogenous areas; moderate costs across groups
11. Generally good incentives to invest given right policies
12. May be able to avoid natural resource curse
13. Location within a region of robust states assists process of state consolidation during early years of independence

### **Fragile States**

1. Formed around diverse population with little shared history and poorly established, weak formal institutions
2. Weak national identity overwhelmed by conflicting subnational or supranational identities
3. National governing bodies viewed as illegitimate by a significant number of population; political order highly unstable and difficult to reform
4. No common set of informal institutions
5. Dysfunctional governing system
6. State sits on top of and is disconnected from society
7. State security, administrative, and judicial organs so weak or discriminatory that they exacerbate political fragmentation
8. Borders not accepted as legitimate by a significant number of people
9. Low levels of trust and social capital
10. High costs to hold property and conduct business transactions in most cases
11. Little incentive to invest even if good policies are adopted
12. Typically unable to avoid natural resource curse
13. Usually found in region of fragile states
14. In some cases, state's undersized market, dearth of human resources, unfavorable geography, or population distribution makes it especially unstable

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