

# Lesson 28 Movements Toward Independence and Democracy

*How have emerging nations fared in their quest for political stability, economic growth, and democracy?*

## Section 1. Introduction



South Korea had a tough start as a nation. Two years after gaining independence from the Japan in 1948, it went to war with its neighbor North Korea. During the ensuing war, at least 2.5 million lives were lost, but no resolution to the essential conflict was ever reached. Although an armistice was brokered in 1953, tensions with the north remained high.

In the years that followed, South Korea struggled to gain political stability. In 1961, the military seized power in a coup d'etat. The military ruled for the next three decades, restricting political freedoms and cracking down on its opponents. But the military also developed the economy, turning South Korea into an industrial powerhouse. During this period, the nation's economy grew at an average of nearly 9 percent a year. South Korea became one of the Asian Tigers, a group of four rapidly growing economies that included Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

In 1992, democratic elections returned South Korea to civilian rule. The new leaders continued to emphasize economic growth. However, the economy stumbled during a financial crisis in the late 1990s. But it rebounded and has continued to prosper.

South Korea now has one of the largest economies in the world. Its population is highly educated and enjoys good social and economic conditions. The country has developed and modernized while retaining its cultural traditions. It has also remained democratic. Overall, South Korea is one of the great success stories among the world's postcolonial states.

Few emerging nations have fared as well as South Korea, however. This lesson presents case studies of five countries that have sought political stability and economic development in the past half-century. Most have had mixed success in their efforts to achieve autonomy, democracy, and economic growth.

### Themes

**Cultural Interaction** Ethnic and cultural differences have made it difficult for many developing countries to unite and achieve stability.

**Political Structures** Emerging nations have faced challenges in forming democratic governments. Some have resorted to authoritarian rule.

**Economic Structures** Some countries have managed to build strong economies, while others have struggled to develop.

## Section 2. Indonesia: A Nation of Islands

Indonesia is a large country made up of thousands of islands. It has the fourth largest population in the world. Today it is a relatively stable and prosperous nation. But it has experienced great upheaval in its path to national development.

**Independence Under Sukarno** In the 19th and early 20th centuries, what is now Indonesia was a Dutch colony known as the Dutch East Indies. Indonesia declared independence from the Netherlands in 1945, at the end of World War II. But the Dutch fought to hold on to their colony. They sent troops to defeat a revolution led by the nationalist leader Sukarno. In 1949, after a series of bloody battles, the Dutch finally agreed to leave.

Indonesia established a democratic government, with Sukarno as president. The new government faced many challenges. Indonesia is an **archipelago** [**archipelago: a group of islands**] of more than 18,000 islands. Its population includes many different ethnic and religious groups. As a result, the country was hard to unify. Rebellions broke out on several islands. The government was also unstable. Many different political parties vied for power.

By the late 1950s, Indonesia was in crisis. At that point, Sukarno moved to assert control. He declared **martial law** [**martial law : temporary control of the civilian population by the police or military, often invoked during times of civil unrest**] to quell unrest. He then established a system he called “guided democracy,” which gave more power to the president and weakened the national parliament. In effect, Sukarno became a dictator. He built large monuments to glorify the state and restore national pride. He also became a leader of the nonaligned movement during the Cold War, and refused to declare allegiance to either the Eastern or Western power blocs. But he was a vocal critic of Western imperialism.



To stay in power, Sukarno relied on support from two key forces in the country: the military and the Communist Party. Sukarno’s reliance on the communists raised fears among the military, though, and eventually led to his downfall.

On October 1, 1965, a group of communists kidnapped and killed six army generals. Chaos spread across Indonesia, as the military and its right-wing supporters waged a brutal crackdown on the left. An estimated half a million people died in violent attacks over the next year. Meanwhile, the military arrested Sukarno and took control of the government. In 1968, a top general, General Suharto, became president.

**Suharto’s New Order** Suharto promised to bring about a “New Order” in Indonesian politics. He reversed many of Sukarno’s policies. He banned the Communist Party and allied Indonesia with the West. He also set out to develop the country’s economy. He encouraged foreign investment to help expand trade and industry.

For the next thirty years, Suharto directed an authoritarian regime. This regime was not a typical military dictatorship. It allowed some political rights, including the right to vote in controlled elections. Most freedoms were restricted, however, including any actions that could threaten the military's hold on power. **Human rights** [human rights : rights that are regarded as belonging to all people, such as the right to life, liberty, and equality before the law, as well as freedom of religion, expression, and assembly] abuses were widespread. This was especially true in East Timor, a region that sought independence.

Suharto also allowed rampant corruption. He rewarded fellow officers, family members, and political allies with lucrative business deals. Bribery was widespread. Critics called this scheme "crony capitalism." (The term crony referred to the unfair practice of cronyism, in which a powerful person or group favors personal allies without regard to their qualifications.) At the same time, the country's economy also grew. Like South Korea, Indonesia became an economic success story.

In 1997, however, a financial crisis swept across East Asia. Indonesia's economy suffered, causing widespread civil unrest. In 1998, Suharto resigned and a civilian president took over.

**The Democratic Era** Since then, Indonesia has worked to strengthen its democracy. It has held democratic elections for local and national office, including the first direct presidential election in 2004. Voter turnout for these elections has been high.

Indonesia's leaders still face many problems, however. Separatist movements have continued to test the nation's unity. In 2002, East Timor won its independence after decades of violent conflict. The region of Aceh (AH-chay), on the island of Sumatra, also gained substantial political autonomy after years of struggle.



Natural disasters have also plagued Indonesia. In 2004, an earthquake off Sumatra caused a great tsunami, or tidal wave, that destroyed coastal areas of Aceh and killed more than 130,000 people. Another major earthquake struck in 2006, killing thousands more. In 2010, a volcanic eruption on Sumatra forced a mass evacuation.

Islamic extremism is another troubling issue. Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population. For the most part, Indonesians are moderate Muslims. But the rise of terrorism by Islamic radicals has also affected Indonesia.

In 2002, a bombing in a resort town on the island of Bali killed 202 people. Other terrorist attacks followed. The government has sought to identify and prosecute extremist groups. It has also sought to bolster Indonesia's tradition of religious moderation. But political violence remains a major concern.

### **Section 3. Pakistan: Dictatorship and Democracy**

Like Indonesia, Pakistan is an important **developing country** [**developing country: a country whose economy is less industrialized and where average incomes are much lower than those of highly industrialized nations**] with a large Muslim population. It occupies a strategic location in South Asia, between India and Afghanistan. Since independence, it has tried to build a stable democracy. But it has spent much of its history under military rule.

**After Partition** Pakistan won its independence in 1947, when the British left India. Under the partition agreement, Pakistan and India, which had both been part of British India, became separate nations. One of the main reasons for partition was the fact India's population was largely Hindu and Pakistan's population was largely Muslim. The founders of Pakistan wanted to establish an independent Muslim state. But partition caused many problems. Millions of Muslims living in India fled for Pakistan, while an equal number of Hindus and Sikhs living in the area of Pakistan moved to India. This mass migration—and the violence that accompanied it—left deep scars on both nations.



Another problem was the division of Pakistan in two parts. The two sections of the country, East and West Pakistan, were separated by more than a thousand miles of Indian territory. This separation posed a major obstacle to national unity.

Ethnic and cultural differences also divided Pakistan. West Pakistan included five major ethnic groups, along with several minor ones. Punjabis were the largest group. East Pakistan, the more populous section, was mostly Bengali. No common language, except English, united these various groups.

In addition, most of the wealth and resources of British India remained in India. Pakistan expected India to share some of this wealth after partition, but India refused. As a result, Pakistan faced great economic and political challenges.

**Civilian and Military Rule** Given these problems, it was unclear whether Pakistan could survive as a nation. Its first leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah—the father of Pakistani independence—managed to hold the nation together for a short time, but he died after a year in office. The leaders that followed were less successful.

Conflict with India added to Pakistan's problems. In 1948, Pakistani forces invaded Kashmir, a largely Muslim region claimed by both Pakistan and India. In response, the Hindu ruler of Kashmir ceded the region to India and asked for Indian support. The two sides fought to a stalemate. In 1949, the United Nations negotiated a ceasefire.

Kashmir was divided along a ceasefire line, called the Line of Control. India kept most of the territory, and tensions with Pakistan continued. Two more wars followed, in 1965 and 1999. Today, Kashmir remains a conflict zone.

At the same time that Pakistan was engaged in conflict with India, it also suffered from the fact that the Pakistani state itself was becoming increasingly unstable. Disputes broke out between East and West Pakistan. In 1958, the president declared martial law. Soon after, the military took over and established a dictatorship.

The military ruled Pakistan for more than a decade. At first, many Pakistanis welcomed military rule. They hoped the army would bring order and stability. The United States also backed the Pakistani military as an ally in the Cold War. U.S. aid helped bolster the military's strength and keep it in power.

During this time, tensions between East and West Pakistan continued to grow. In 1971, East Pakistan declared independence as the new nation of Bangladesh. Civil war broke out and India sent troops to support Bangladesh.

Pakistan soon surrendered. By this time the military regime had lost public support. It handed over power to a new civilian government, led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (BOO-toh).

Bhutto governed Pakistan for the next six years. His policies, which combined elements of socialism and **populism** [**populism: a political philosophy that favors the common person's interests over those of wealthy people or business interests**], at first won him popular support. The economy eventually suffered, however, giving rise to more unrest. Bhutto was also accused of crimes against his political opponents. In 1977, the army took over again. Bhutto was arrested for his alleged crimes and later executed.

Over the next three decades, Pakistan continued its pattern of political instability. Rule shifted between military and civilian hands. During this time, Benazir Bhutto—the former leader's daughter—held power twice. She was the first woman in modern history to lead a Muslim nation. In the 1990s, however, she was charged with corruption and went into **exile** [**exile: the condition of living outside one's home country, usually for political reasons, either by choice or by order of the home country's government**]. She returned in 2007 to take part in elections. Two months later, while campaigning for office, she was assassinated.

**Ongoing Tensions** In 2008, the military handed over power to civilians once more. The new government faced many pressing issues. Chief among them was Pakistan's role in the fight against terrorism.



That role increased after September 11, 2001, when **al Qaeda [al Qaeda : an international terrorist organization, founded by the terrorist leader Osama bin Laden]** launched its brutal attacks against the United States that killed nearly 3,000 people at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in western Pennsylvania. In response to 9/11, Pakistan pledged support for efforts to combat terrorism. It promised to end aid to the **Taliban [Taliban: a radical and ultraconservative Muslim group that supported al Qaeda and ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, when U.S. forces ousted it from power]** in Afghanistan and to crack down on extremist groups at home. This policy sparked a violent reaction from Islamic militants. Terrorist attacks increased in Pakistan. Many Pakistanis criticized their government for helping the United States and other Western powers in the struggle against militant Islam. At the same time, the United States questioned whether Pakistan was truly committed to that struggle. Tensions between the countries were further strained in 2011 when U.S. military forces located and killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of al Qaeda, in Pakistan.

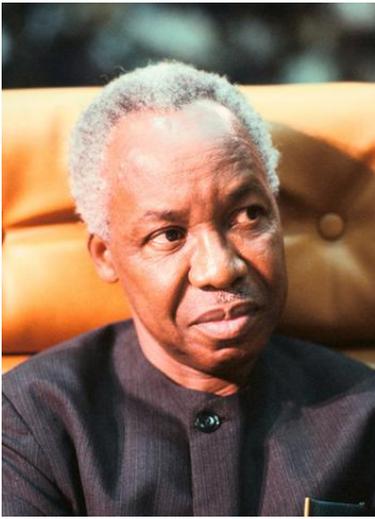
Terrorism poses serious risks to the stability of Pakistan and all of South Asia. So does the ongoing conflict with India. Pakistan has been linked to several terrorist attacks in India, including a bloody assault in the city of Mumbai in 2008. Tensions between the two nations remain high. To make matters worse, both countries possess nuclear weapons. In the past, escalating conflict has raised the threat of nuclear war. Both India and Pakistan have tried to resolve their problems through diplomacy, but a long-term solution is still not in sight.

#### **Section 4. Tanzania: The Struggle for Development**

The East African country of Tanzania became an independent state in the 1960s, along with many other African nations. Its first leader had a strong vision for the country. But like most African nations, Tanzania struggled to develop.

**Independence and Self-Rule** The modern country of Tanzania was formed by the union of the territories of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanganyika was the larger and more populous of the two. It was colonized by Germany in the late 1800s. The Germans established plantations to grow export crops such as rubber, cotton, and coffee.

After World War I, Britain took over Tanganyika under a League of Nations **mandate [mandate : former German or Turkish colonies given over by the League of Nations to France and Britain to administer after World War I]**. When the League dissolved after World War II, the colony became a **UN trust territory [UN trust territory : former mandates placed under United Nations administration after World War II]**, under the administration of the United Nations and also under British supervision. In 1961, Tanganyika gained independence in a peaceful transfer of power. The leader of the independence movement, Julius Nyerere (nee-REH-ray), became president in 1962.



Zanzibar—a group of islands off the East African coast—became a British protectorate in the late 1800s. Before that, Arab sultans had ruled the islands. The sultans continued to act as formal rulers even after the British established a protectorate over Zanzibar. Zanzibar was famed for its spices, especially cloves. In fact, the scent of cloves was said to be so strong that sailors on the Indian Ocean could smell it far out at sea.

Zanzibar gained independence in 1963. A year later, it joined with Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania. Zanzibar retained substantial autonomy, however. Although it took part in the national government, it also had its own president and legislature.

**Socialism Under Nyerere** President Nyerere played a crucial role in Tanzania’s development. He was an honest and respected leader who tried to serve his country’s interests. Unlike many African leaders, he did not use his power for personal gain. But, as he acknowledged himself, he made many mistakes along the way.

Nyerere wanted to build a socialist society in Tanzania. He established free, public education and carried out literacy campaigns. He nationalized industries and placed farmland under collective ownership. He made Tanzania a one-party state, though he allowed democratic rights within that system. Nyerere called his socialist program *ujamaa*, a Swahili word for “familyhood.” He hoped it would ensure equality for all.

Nyerere pursued an active foreign policy. He became a leader of the nonaligned movement during the Cold War. He also helped found the Organization of African Unity, now known as the **African Union [African Union : a group of 53 African states that works to promote peace, security, and development in Africa]** . He supported the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and the independence struggle in Zimbabwe. He promoted democracy in neighboring Uganda by helping to oust its brutal dictator, Idi Amin.

Nyerere’s political leadership earned him widespread praise, both at home and abroad. His social policies helped overcome ethnic and regional differences and unite the country. But his economic policies were a disaster. Tanzania remained one of the poorest countries in the world. Its state-owned industries were inefficient and corrupt. In addition, most farmers opposed Nyerere’s policy of collective agriculture. Individual incentive and productivity declined, and farm production collapsed. In the end, Nyerere was forced to abandon the scheme.

Despite his economic failures, Nyerere’s rule helped make Tanzania one of the most politically stable countries in Africa. He was elected to four full terms in office. Then he voluntarily stepped down. In 1985, he handed power over to another elected leader.



**Tanzania Today** Nyerere's successors moved toward a free-market economic system. They turned many state-owned companies over to private hands. These policies helped promote economic growth. During the 2000s, the country's **gross domestic product** [**gross domestic product : the total value of goods and services produced in a country in a year**] (GDP) grew by around 6 percent a year. Still, Tanzania remains a poor, developing country. Living standards have not improved much for most Tanzanians.

Nyerere's successors also reformed Tanzania's political system. They allowed various political parties to take part in elections. In general, the electoral process has been peaceful and orderly. The country has had some problems with political violence, however. In 1998, al Qaeda militants bombed the U.S. embassy in the main city of Dar es Salaam. Zanzibar has also seen a rise in Islamic extremism. For the most part, though, Tanzania has maintained its political stability.

### **Section 5. Mexico: Stability and Change**

Mexico has been an independent nation for two centuries. It has a large economy with a strong industrial base. It also has a well-established political system. Yet Mexico still faces many of the problems of a developing country, including widespread poverty and corruption.

**Stability Under the PRI** Mexico's modern history began with the Mexican Revolution of the early 1900s. This revolution overturned the old elitist and often repressive political order. But it also left the country in chaos. To restore order, Mexico's leaders created a new political system based on one-party rule. In 1946, this party became known as the PRI: the Institutional Revolutionary Party. The PRI brought decades of political stability to Mexico.



One problem Mexico has faced is a wide gap in the standards of living for their wealthiest and poorest citizens. The homes pictured here are both located in the Mexico City area. Some inhabitants of Mexico City have been forced to construct makeshift houses on the edge of garbage dumps. In contrast, others are able to live in very comfortable, affluent conditions.



The PRI established what some political analysts called the “perfect dictatorship.” It exercised absolute power, while preserving the rituals of democracy. Every six years, Mexico held presidential elections in which various parties took part. But the PRI always won, usually by lopsided margins. The government controlled the political process through bribery, fraud, and violence. In 1968, when students staged a mass protest in Mexico City, security forces gunned them down. Several hundred people lost their lives.

At the same time, the PRI presided over decades of steady economic growth. Analysts called it the Mexican Miracle. The government built roads, dams, schools, and power plants. It funded social welfare programs and developed the tourist industry. But corruption also grew. PRI officials enriched themselves at the public expense. Most presidents left office as wealthy men. No one seemed to mind as long as the economy kept growing.

The benefits of growth were poorly distributed, though. The upper and middle classes profited, while most Mexicans did not. The wealthy lived like their affluent counterparts in developed countries, while the poor barely survived on small farms or in urban slums. Many Mexicans chose to immigrate illegally to the United States in search of jobs and a better life.

In the 1970s, the Mexican economy got a big boost from huge oil discoveries. Mexico became the world's fifth largest oil producer. Suddenly, the country was awash in oil money. Banking on future revenues, it took out large foreign loans to finance major construction projects. Prosperity and growth looked like permanent conditions in Mexico.

In 1981, however, world oil prices collapsed. Mexico was thrown into financial crisis. It could not repay its debts to foreign banks. Building projects stalled and companies went bankrupt. The economy crashed. Mexico got **bailout** [**bailout: the act of saving or rescuing something, such as a business, from financial problems**] money from the United States and other international lenders. But the boom years were over. As one reporter wrote, "The greatest economic surge in modern Mexican history had turned into the worst economic crisis in six decades."

**Changes in the System** Mexico gradually recovered. But in the years that followed, Mexicans grew more critical of their government.

Criticism increased after a massive earthquake struck Mexico City in 1985. The quake leveled large parts of the city and killed at least 10,000 people. When the government was slow to respond, citizen groups formed to carry out much of the relief work. This effort planted the idea of citizen action.

Mexico's political opposition began to play a more active role. In 1988, the PRI candidate for president—Carlos Salinas de Gortari—barely won office in what many saw as a fraudulent election. Opposition candidates won state elections, however. They also won enough seats in congress to challenge the PRI's long hold on power.

During his presidency, Salinas signed the **North American Free Trade Agreement** [**North American Free Trade Agreement: a 1993 treaty, signed by Mexico, the United States, and Canada, to create a free trade zone**] (NAFTA). This treaty between Mexico, the United States, and Canada created a free trade zone in North America. It allowed most goods to pass freely among the three countries, without **tariffs** [**tariff: a tax on imported or exported goods**] or other trade barriers.



In 1994, just after NAFTA went into effect, rebels in the southern state of Chiapas rose up against the government. They called themselves the Zapatistas, after one of the leaders of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, Emiliano Zapata. They demanded land and rights for Mexico's peasant farmers. The government agreed to meet with the rebels, and the rebellion died down. But it had shaken the political structure.

Meanwhile, the political opposition was continuing to organize. In 1997, opposition parties won enough seats in congress to deny the PRI its majority control for the first time since its founding in 1929. A far greater shock occurred in 2000, however, when an opposition candidate—Vicente Fox Quesada—won the presidential

election. The PRI honored the results and gave up power. It was the end of seven decades of control by the official party.

**The New Millennium** Since then, Mexico has continued on its democratic path. The PRI remains an important political force, but it must compete for power with other political parties.

The Mexican economy has also continued to grow, although the gap between rich and poor remains great. Poverty in Mexico still spurs illegal immigration to the United States, but this migration has decreased in recent years due to improved social and economic conditions and a lower birth rate in Mexico. An increase in the cost and risk of migrating illegally to the United States has also helped decrease migration rates

One alarming trend, however, has been rising crime and violence related to the drug trade. For decades, Mexico has supplied illegal drugs to the U.S. market. More recently, the powerful **drug cartels [drug cartel : a criminal organization that controls drug trafficking operations]** that control the trade have threatened security in Mexico. The cartels battle each other for control of the trade. They also bribe and intimidate officials. In 2006, the government declared war on the cartels. It called in the army to crack down on the drug trade. But this only led to a dramatic increase in violence.

Despite these problems, Mexico is a strong developing country. It has a highly skilled population and deep cultural traditions. Although it faces many challenges, it has enormous potential for growth and development.

## **Section 6. Poland: An Emerging European State**

During the Cold War, Poland was an ally of the Soviet Union and a key member of the Eastern bloc. At the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, it freed itself from communist rule. Today, Poland is a democratic state with a growing market economy.

**A Difficult History** For much of its history, Poland was occupied or controlled by foreign powers. Its location in central Europe was an important factor. Poland lay on vital land routes between Western Europe, the Eurasian plains to the east, and the Baltic Sea to the north. As a result, invading armies often overran Polish territory.

Poland enjoyed a golden age in the 1400s and 1500s. It became a powerful kingdom—the largest in Europe—with a strong Catholic culture. But it was later carved up by Prussia, Austria, and Russia. For more than a century, Poland ceased to exist as a nation.

The 1900s brought new problems. The two world wars ravaged Poland. World War II was especially devastating. During World War II, Poland was invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany. Its population was decimated and its economy destroyed. After the war, Poland came under Soviet control.

**The Rise and Fall of Communism** The Soviets had promised to let Poland decide its fate after the war. Instead, they manipulated elections to make sure that Polish communists gained power. By 1947, a pro-Soviet government was in charge.



Poland's communist leaders adopted many features of Soviet rule. They established a **command economy** [**command economy : an economic system in which decisions about production and consumption are made by a powerful ruler or government**] run by the state. They emphasized heavy industry and collective farming. They built a large secret police force to control the population. They also sought to suppress religion by cracking down on the Catholic Church.

These policies had limited success, however. Poland's state-run factories and farms were inefficient and unproductive. Most Polish farmers resisted collective agriculture. By the 1960s, the government had reversed its farm policy and allowed land to revert to private ownership. Most Poles also remained faithful Catholics, despite official persecution. The Catholic Church, for its part, helped keep Polish traditions alive.

Two major events further weakened communism in Poland. One was the selection in 1978 of Polish cardinal Karol Wojtyla (voy-TIH-wah) to become Pope John Paul II. The pope's visit to Poland the following year prompted an outpouring of popular support that undermined communist rule. The pope reminded Poles of their national heritage and their right to basic freedoms. As one historian noted:

*When John Paul II kissed the ground at Warsaw airport on June 2, 1979, he began the process by which communism in Poland—and ultimately everywhere else in Europe—would come to an end.*  
—John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 2007



The second major event was the birth of the **Solidarity** [**Solidarity: a Polish union movement of the 1980s that became the major force of opposition to communist rule in Poland**] trade union movement in 1980. That year, workers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk went on strike, demanding the right to form a union. The strike soon spread to other factories and gained national support. Under intense pressure, the government bowed to the strikers' demands and legalized unions. The strike leader, Lech Walesa (lech va-WHEN-sah), became a national hero and the head of the newly formed Solidarity trade union federation.

Although the government had legalized Solidarity, it still regarded the union movement as a threat. A year later, it declared martial law. It arrested Walesa and other union leaders. It reversed its course and banned Solidarity, although Solidarity continued to exist and organize strikes as an underground organization. In 1983, Walesa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Eventually the government lifted martial law and released opposition leaders from jail. It also began talks with Solidarity.

In 1989, the government agreed to hold elections for seats in a new national parliament. Although these elections were restricted, opposition candidates backed by Solidarity won nearly all the seats open to them. The communists tried to reassert control, but they could not hold on to power. A non-communist was named prime minister. The following year, Lech Walesa was elected president.

**The Polish Republic** The new democratic government overhauled Poland's political and economic structures. It declared itself a republic and replaced central planning with a market economy.

At first, Poland's transition to capitalism was difficult. The new government tried to move quickly toward a free market. It froze wages and removed price controls on consumer goods. It also ended government subsidies to industries and turned many businesses over to private hands. However, these policies caused a severe **recession** [**recession: a period in which there is a decline in economic activity and prosperity**], high inflation, and rising unemployment. Many Poles criticized the government for sacrificing social needs in the rush to capitalism.

Within a few years, however, the economy had turned around. By the mid-1990s, Poland boasted one of the highest economic growth rates in Europe. Not all regions and sectors of the economy benefited equally, and the gap between rich and poor increased. Nevertheless, the growth itself was a testament to Poland's post-communist success.

Poland also continued to strengthen its democratic system. It held regular, free elections in which various parties competed for power. It also became more integrated into Europe. It joined NATO, the Western military alliance, in 1999. In 2004, it became a full member of the **European Union** [**European Union : an alliance of European countries begun in 1993 which was designed to advance the continent's economic integration and unify its laws and foreign policies**] (EU). These steps were another sign of Poland's emergence as a strong, independent nation.

## Summary

**This lesson presented case studies of five countries that are in the process of national development. Each country faces distinct challenges, but all are seeking to achieve economic growth and political stability.**

**Cultural Interaction** In some countries, ethnic and cultural diversity has proved an obstacle to national unity. For example, Indonesia has found it difficult to unite its various peoples and regions in a single nation. So has Pakistan. But this problem is not universal. In Tanzania, strong leadership and wise social policy helped bring diverse peoples together.

**Political Structures** Emerging nations often struggle to gain political stability. All of the countries covered in this chapter have relied on authoritarian rule at one time or another. But they have also sought to build democracy. The democratic outcomes in countries such as Mexico and Poland offer hope for the future.

**Economic Structures** Building a strong economy is a challenge for most countries. In the past, all of the nations described here used state controls to promote economic growth. More recently, they have moved toward free market policies. The results have been generally positive, though poverty and income inequality remain serious problems.