



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## PREFACE

International Relations (IR) is not only a fascinating discipline but also a complex one. More interestingly, we all live in an increasingly globalized world. Unsurprisingly, much recent work in IR is inspired by globalization, which emphasizes that we belong to one world, and have shared concerns. Inasmuch as globalization brings important benefits to our everyday lives, the global interconnectedness adds a rich complexity to our international relationships. We hope our book will help IR students to unlock the puzzles of international affairs in various domains such as political, economic and cultural ones.

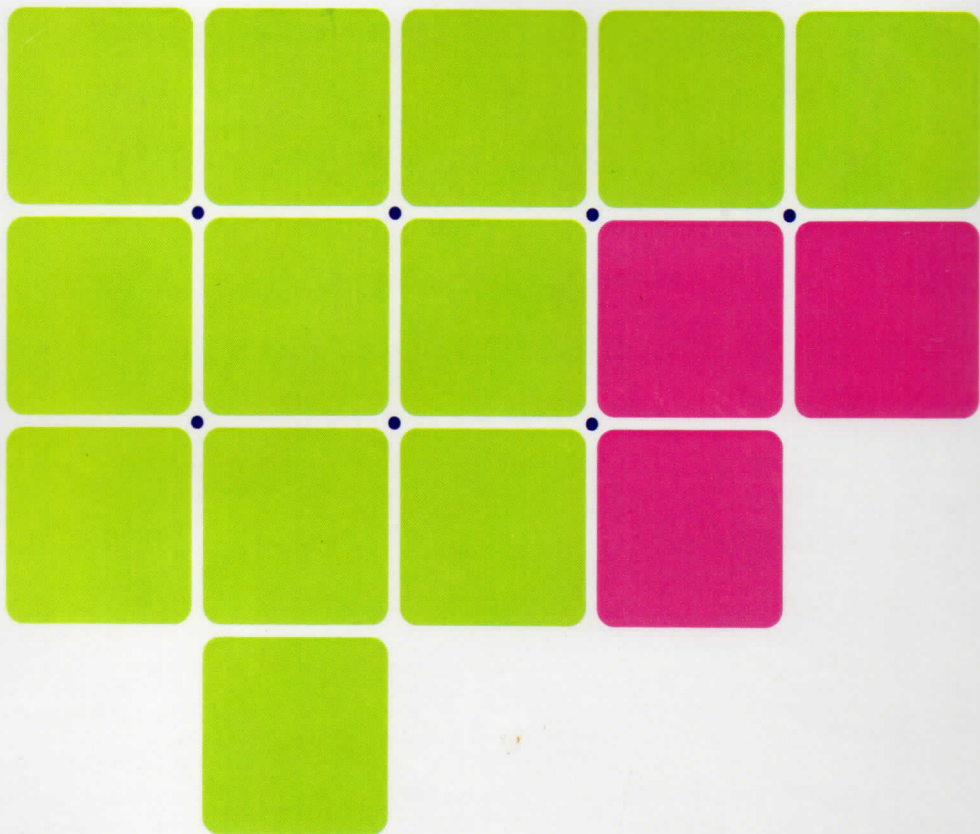
When IR emerged as a formal field of academic study soon after the end of the First World War, it was primarily concerned with the causes of conflict between states. This state-centric approach was reinforced and deepened by the experience of the two World Wars and the subsequent Cold War. Nonetheless, more recently, scholars have adopted a broader conceptualization of IR. They have taken more account of domestic political, economic and social factors. They have also turned their attention to non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multi-national corporations (MNCs) as well as terrorist and criminal networks.

It should be pointed out at the outset that this book is a culmination of efforts by several scholars brought together by the School of International Studies (SOIS), College of Law, Government and International Studies at Universiti Utara Malaysia. Many of the scholars came from SOIS or at least had been associated with the school before. In essence, this book will speak to students of global politics at all levels as well as arousing debates in scholarly circles about the state of contemporary IR and practice. In a way, this book is an attempt to provide an account of the nature and development of the discipline of IR. The approach is largely theoretical with a little historical dosage but one which hopes to trigger debate and offer some re-interpretations to general IR students. Several chapters reflect the ever changing dynamics in IR including the deepening and broadening of the concept of security as well as the increasing importance of environmental issues in international politics.

I am grateful for the support and encouragement from a number of people. I would like to express my special thanks in helping to prepare this demanding manuscript to Rie Nakamura and especially to Knocks Tapiwa Zengeni for improving the language and style of contributors from so many different academic backgrounds. We also owe a significant debt to our students who have continuously engaged us intellectually and thereby encouraged our endeavour to produce an IR textbook. This book will have achieved its goals if it can stimulate the minds and intellectual curiosity of our students (as well as those in other parts of the world) to engage critically with the dynamic and complex discipline of IR.

**Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani**

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