

## GLOBAL EXAMPLES OF EUROPEAN KEY IDEAS

### **March 16, 2009, El Salvador**

In the fifth El Salvador's presidential election after the UN-brokered peace accord ended the country's civil war, Mauricio Funes defeats Rodrigo Ávila of the ruling Arena party by the narrow but clear margin of 51.3% to 48.7%. Funes' victory ends two decades of rule by the conservatives.

*(This example shows the strengthening of El Salvador's **democracy**.)*

### **May 17, 2009, Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka's government declares that it has defeated The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam after army forces take over the last patch of separatist-held territory in the northeast. The Tamil Tigers offer to lay down their arms, bringing Sri Lanka's 25-year civil war to an end. The Tamil Tigers have been fighting for over two decades to establish their own independent state.

*(The example shows Tamil **nationalism** in Sri Lanka.)*

### **October 10, 2009, Cuba**

Canteens providing free lunch at four government ministries are shut down and workers are given a wage increase of 15 pesos (\$0.60) a day in compensation. The government is also discussing a proposition to end the monthly ration of free food staples. Raúl Castro is carefully decentralizing the Cuban economy, giving state companies more autonomy and leasing unused state land to private farmers. The public reaction to the changes is mixed. While Cuban wages average \$20 per month, the state adds a "social wage" of free housing, health, education, transport, and food rations.

*(The example illustrates changes in the **communist** system in Cuba.)*

### **August 19, 2007, Thailand**

Voters in Thailand accept a new constitution in a referendum, which paves the way for elections later this year. The new charter limits future prime ministers to two terms in office and makes it easier to impeach them. It also has many other clauses, such as recognition of minority rights.

*(This example shows **constitutionalism** in Thailand, which will lead to a return to democracy.)*

### **November 16, 2008, Swaziland**

A vocal campaigner for multi-party democracy, People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) leader Mario Masuku is arrested as part of a crackdown under the country's anti-terrorism laws. Political organizations in Swaziland have been banned since 1973; criticizing the king's private life is a criminal offence. King Mswati III has governed Swaziland since 1986. He rules by decree and says the country is not ready for democracy.

*(This is an illustration of **absolutism** in Swaziland.)*

**May 25, 2009, Venezuela**

As part of the nationalization process, Venezuela buys the local division of Spain's Santander Bank. Almost every sector in Venezuela is now under the state's expanding embrace, including power, telecommunications, and agro-industrial companies. The government has also seized rice mills and pasta factories from U.S. food giant Cargill, Inc. Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez says the nationalization will allow more efficient distribution of the country's wealth to all of its people.

*(This example illustrates a step toward Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez' goal to establish a **socialist** system in Venezuela.)*

**July 17, 2006, Uzbekistan**

Uzbek President Islam Karimov signs a decree allowing foreign investment in many state-run businesses as part of a two-year privatization program. This decision opens doors for private investors in many key sectors of Uzbekistan's economy such as oil and gas, cotton, electricity, financial services, aviation, railways, and chemicals.

*(This is an example of transition from a state-controlled economy to a **capitalist** economy.)*

**August 15, 2006, Japan/South Korea/China**

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pays a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, a controversial war memorial in Tokyo, sparking strong protests from neighboring countries. To many of Japan's neighbors, the Yasukuni Shrine symbolizes Japanese militarism and colonialism before and during the Second World War. China makes an official diplomatic protest on behalf of the people of Asia, while South Korea's president refuses to meet with the Japanese prime minister as long as he continues to visit the shrine.

*(The example illustrates difficulties to overcome the legacies of Japanese **colonialism**.)*

**October 7, 2007, Costa Rica/United States**

Costa Rican voters narrowly approve a controversial free-trade agreement with the United States, the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), in a national referendum. The agreement will abolish all trade barriers among Costa Rica and other DR-CAFTA members over the next ten years.

*(This is an example of **liberalization** of trade policies between CAFTA members.)*