

## 3.4 Political Geography

**Main Idea** Countries around the world have different forms of government.

How is trash collection related to the protection of free speech? Both are responsibilities of government.

A **government** is an organization that keeps order, sets rules, and provides services for a society. Political geographers study boundaries between different places, where different types of government exist, and how geography affects government.

### Government and Citizens

Governments govern citizens. A **citizen** is a person who lives within the territory of a government and is granted certain rights and responsibilities by that government.

Governments are either limited or unlimited. A limited government does not have complete control over its citizens. The citizens have some individual rights and responsibilities. An unlimited government has complete control over every aspect of its citizens' lives.

**Critical Viewing** Voters in South Africa line up for miles to vote. How important to them is the right to vote? How can you tell?



## Types of Government

In the modern world, five types of government are common. The major differences among them are in the power and rights that citizens have.

- In a **democracy**, citizens elect representatives to govern them. A legislature creates laws, an executive branch carries out laws, and a judicial branch interprets laws. Citizens have many rights, such as those in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. The United States was the first modern country to establish a representative democracy.
- In a monarchy, a king, queen, or emperor rules society. The ruler usually inherits, or is born into, the office. Citizens in an absolute monarchy, such as Saudi Arabia, have few or no rights. In a constitutional monarchy, such as the United Kingdom, the queen or king shares power with a government organized by a constitution.
- In a dictatorship, one person, the dictator, rises to power and rules society. The dictator controls all aspects of life, including education and the arts. Citizens have few or no rights. North Korea has been ruled by a dictator for more than a half century.
- In an oligarchy, a group of a few people rules society. The ruling group usually is wealthy or has military power, and citizens have few or no rights. The government of Myanmar (Burma) has been an oligarchy since 1988.



**Critical Viewing** Female soldiers march in a military parade in North Korea to celebrate the country's 60th anniversary. Based on the photo, what qualities are valued by North Korea's government?

- Communism is a type of command economy in which the government, controlled by the Communist Party, owns all the property. Citizens have few or no rights. Cuba has been a communist country since 1959.

### Before You Move On

**Summarize** What are common types of government in the modern world?

#### ONGOING ASSESSMENT

### READING LAB

1. **Monitor Comprehension** Which of the five types of government are limited governments? Which are unlimited governments?
2. **Create Charts** Create a chart in which you compare the five forms of government. Use the following format:

Type of Government	Source of Power	Leader or Ruler	Citizens' Rights
democracy			
3. **Make Inferences** Look at the map of Russia in the National Geographic Atlas in the front of your textbook. How might Russia's geography affect the government's ability to rule?