

Enclave, pronounced EHN klayv, is a territory belonging to one country but lying within the boundaries of another country. For example, Macao is a Portuguese enclave on the coast of China (see MACAO). Enclaves were once common in Europe and other areas. In most cases, rulers permitted passage through their territory to the enclaves within it. Today, nations believe that the presence of foreign territories within their boundaries violates national sovereignty.

During the 1500's and 1600's, France and Portugal established several enclaves in India. India claimed these territories after it won independence from Great Britain in 1947. France surrendered its enclaves in 1954. But Portugal kept its enclaves until 1961, when Indian troops seized them. Today, the few remaining enclaves include the Spanish territories of Ceuta and Melilla, which lie in Morocco.

Contributor: Anthony D'Amato, Ph.D., Judd and Mary Morris Leighton Prof. of Law, Northwestern Univ. Law School