NAME: VERSHIMA KUMATOR KENNEDY

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**Sovereignty of a State**  
This word derived from a Latin word ***‘sup ramus’*** which means supremacy. The absolute and perpetual power of the state in its domestic use means the power and authority of the state over all persons, things within its territory. In other words, sovereignty means that the state has general power of law making and of the enforcement of laws. Sovereignty’ key features are:

**a) Absoluteness**: Sovereignty is legal in nature in the sense that it is binding on all inhabitants that fall within the jurisdiction of sovereignty i.e. citizens and associations alike. There is no limitation to its legal powers. However, it is important to note the fact that when a state is a member of African Union (AU), United Nations (UN) etc. it will have to abide with the regulations of the organisation, in this sense, the state will be subjected to the laws of the international organisation. For instance, a state like Nigeria is bound to act in accordance with the principles of such organisations not minding her sovereignty. An example of how a state is bound to act in accordance with the principles of International organisations is evident in Nigeria acting in accordance with the decision of the International Court of Justice to Force Nigeria to cede Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon. From this example it appears Nigeria’s sovereignty has been limited to a certain extent. This is not so. Rather, the country is abiding by the regulations of the international organisation as a member state; hence this subjection does not in any way limit the country’s sovereignty. In the same way, world opinion for the safe acquittal of Amina Lawal in Katsina State from the claws of Sharia propagandist did not in any way limit the country’s sovereignty in handling domestic affairs.

**b) Indivisibility**: Sovereignty is the supreme, final, absolute, coercive power of the state over the people living within the same, hence it is indivisible i.e. cannot be shared or divided by a   
state with another state.

**c) Independent of foreign control:** Once a state becomes independent, its sovereignty remains independent (free of external control). However, in contemporary times there has been economic interference with regard to structural adjustment-the generic term used to describe a package of economic and institutional measures which the IMF, World Bank and individual Western Aid donors have persuaded many developing countries to adopt since the 1980s in return for a new wave of policy oriented loans.