Types of Border Disputes

✓ Territorial Disputes

• Conflicts between states or regions over the ownership of a given area.

• Reasons for territorial claims include:
  ➢ A country’s desire to increase its power.

  ➢ A political need to divert attention from existing problems.

  ➢ Claimed “rights” to an area based on history, ethnicity, or geography.

✓ Positional Disputes

• Conflicts over the interpretation of documents defining a boundary or the way it is shown on the ground.

• Reasons for positional disputes include:
  ➢ Boundary was drawn at a time when accuracy was not important.
    ◊ Example: river boundaries (banks, navigable channel, center, etc.)

  ➢ Some groups not represented when boundary was created.
    ◊ Example: Colonial boundaries

  ➢ Population increases or discovery of resources make accurate boundary important.

✓ Functional Disputes

• Conflicts over the national policies applied at a border.

• Reasons for functional disputes include:
  ➢ Immigration or customs regulations.
    ◊ Example: Need for visas or papers to cross borders

  ➢ Land use and location policies between neighbors.
    ◊ Example: locating landfills, or polluting industries near border

✓ Resource Disputes

• Conflicts over the use of resources created or complicated by a boundary.

• Reasons for resource disputes include:
  ➢ Resource straddles a border.
    ◊ Example: River Basin, oil fields