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What are Trade Sanctions?

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ABSTRACT

Trade sanctions are actions taken by one country (the initiator) to halt a significant amount of its trade with another country (the target) in order to achieve political goals. Sanction actions have a variety of goals, ranging from expressing disapproval to pressuring the targeted government to change its policies. The United States is the country that has imposed the most trade sanctions. When initiating countries apply trade sanctions, they always have an agenda that must be followed by the target country. One key finding of sanctions studies is that they have a poor rate of success. It can be investigated under what circumstances punishments are effective. In around two out of every three situations, sanctions fail to achieve their policy objectives. The fact that the majority of sanctions policies fail, however, does not necessarily imply that sanctions are not effective.

Sanctions have not shown to be a viable alternative to the use of force. They fail to inflict economic damage on the victim much too often. Even when they do, the expenses usually do not outweigh the benefits that the disputed policy provides to the target leadership. The majority of experts agree that trade penalties are ineffective policy tools. This evaluation has stayed true regardless of the number of countries imposing sanctions, the severity of the economic damage inflicted on the target country, or the target country's economic development level. However, why do states continue to implement trade restrictions if they do not function is a source of concern.

This paper gives an overview about what are trade sanctions with the help of few examples of sanctions imposed in different parts of the world.

Keywords: *Trade sanctions, economic sanctions, origin of sanctions, U.S and sanctions.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper tries to understand the meaning of sanctions and a gives a basic overview about the same. It is also intended to trace back to the origin of sanctions. The historical overview provides evidence for the assertion that economic sanctions, especially trade sanctions are conventional instruments of foreign policy. The position of sanctions with respect to U.S. is also analyzed generally in this paper.

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II. UNDERSTANDING SANCTIONS

A nation that is boycotted is a nation that is in sight of surrender. Apply this economic, peaceful, silent, deadly remedy and there will be no need for force. It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted, but it brings a pressure upon the nation which, in my judgment, no modern nation could resist.

President Woodrow Wilson, 1919³

Economic sanctions are not a new phenomenon on a global scale. Pericles of Athens issued the Megerian Decree in 432 BC due to hostile acts committed against it by nearby Megeira. During the American Revolutionary War, Thomas Jefferson advocated for sanctions as a coercive foreign policy instrument against the colonies' adversaries. Since then, economic penalties have been employed as tools of coercive diplomatic policy, following the historical precedent of economic measures like the Megerian Decree. Following World War I, for example, President Woodrow Wilson advocated for economic sanctions as a more substantial but less expensive alternative to military power. Economic sanctions have long been employed to compel desired responses from target countries (particularly unilateral sanctions), but they have seldom achieved their claimed foreign policy objectives. Unfortunately, reality has not lived up to President Wilson's expectations. Sanctions against Iraq and the former Yugoslavia imposed globally, comprehensively, and zealously have yielded only limited and shaky benefits. Even when the world's most powerful economy is enforcing the sanctions, unilateral sanctions confront significantly greater difficulties, particularly in an increasingly interconnected global economy. Military action was eventually required to attain the objectives even against tiny and weak targets such as Haiti and Panama.

Economic sanctions have been used by states before and/or during wartime with the ultimate objective of weakening the target state. These sanctions come in many forms, including naval blockades, trade restrictions, and embargos. The disasters suffered by all countries participating in the First World War prompted world leaders, especially Woodrow Wilson, to seek alternative dispute resolution methods. During that era, economic sanctions were applied by the League of Nations, and more recently, by the United Nations, as policy instruments to compel states that do not comply with the wishes of the international system. Other states, especially the United States, have used economic sanctions to achieve their interests without incurring the costs of

³Kimberly Ann Elliot, *Evidence on the costs and benefits of economic sanctions*, Peterson Institute of International Economics, 23rd October 1997, <https://www.piie.com/commentary/testimonies/evidence-costs-and-benefits-economic-sanctions#note1>.

war.

The understanding of economic sanctions has evolved from an internationally celebrated action taken against states committing humanitarian atrocities to a unilateral measure that any state may undertake to attain a given political goal. Within the first wave of economic sanctions studies, scholars focused on their international aspects. For example, Galtung (1967) referred to economic sanctions as:

‘Actions initiated by one or more international actors (the ‘sender’s’) against one or more others (the ‘receivers’) to punish the receivers by depriving them of some value and/or making the receivers comply with certain norms the senders deem important.’⁴

With more states, particularly the United States, adopting economic sanctions as unilateral policy tools to achieve their political objectives; the literature has shifted its emphasis from the international to a more state-oriented view. Lindsay (1986) defined economic sanctions as “measures in which one country [the initiator] publicly suspends a major portion of its trade with another country [the target] to attain political objectives”.⁵

Furthermore, even if a larger definition of sanctions is adopted, including the protection of international norms and laws, there will still be a problem with nation-states that do not “display social cohesion to any significant degree.” As a result, it’s unsurprising that international sanctions no longer have legal definitions and that many diverse definitions are utilized today. As a result of this issue, David Baldwin came up with three different definitions for the word “economic sanctions.”⁶ For starters, he characterized economic sanctions as “a pretty narrow definition related to the employment of economic measures to enforce international law”. Second, “sanctions refer to the types of values in the goal state that are supposed to be reduced or increased”. In terms of scope, Baldwin contrasts the definitions. However, Baldwin’s third definition of sanctions is overly wide; allowing any politically motivated coercive economic foreign policy actions to be classified as a penalty.

Nonetheless, the objective to preserve the perception of punishments as penalties tied to real (or even claimed) misbehavior” is both attainable and desirable. Violations of international laws (or even international norms) and the employment of globally backed enforcement measures

⁴Tsebelis, George, *Are Sanctions Effective? A Game-Theoretic Analysis*, Volume 34, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Pages 3–28, 1990, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/174132>.

⁵Sean M. Bolks and Dina Al-Sowayel, *How Long Do Economic Sanctions Last? Examining the Sanctioning Process through Duration*, Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 53, pp. 241–65, 2000, <https://doi.org/10.2307/449280>.

⁶Harold Lee Ingram, *Economic Sanctions: Their Ineffectiveness at Attaining Their Stated Foreign Policy Goals with Specific Reference to the Cuban Case (2000)*, All Graduate Plan B and other Reports, (31 September, 2022, 9:29p.m), <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/gradreports/1500>.

are feasible, but not necessary, to deploy economic sanctions on a global scale. However, it is critical to distinguish sanctions from violent (use of force) or even nonviolent (diplomacy) foreign policy instruments that are employed “particularly to advance the interests of one or more governments at the expense of others.” As a result, international sanctions can be correctly described as penalties threatened or applied as a proclaimed consequence of the target nation’s failure to comply with international standards of conduct or commitments.

Therefore in general, economic sanctions refer to regulations restricting trade between sovereign nations, such as ‘boycotts’ and ‘embargoes.’ Boycotts are usually linked with refusing to buy products and services from a supplier. In contrast, embargoes suggest that no goods or services will be provided to the buyer. The breadth of sanctions varies by instance but can involve a policy of entirely isolating a country and cutting off economic and trade ties, which is likely the most difficult to implement. A complete embargo has been implemented only a few times to sever all financial and business relationships with a particular country. For example, economic sanctions against North Korea are extremely extensive, with the U.S. ratcheting up the pressure in late February 2018. The restrictions are ineffective, with trade between North Korea and several trading partners continuing in some form. Countries attempted to isolate South Africa for decades to overthrow the Apartheid regime, which eventually came to an end. Still, it is unclear what role economic sanctions played in the process, considering that the sanctions were mainly bypassed.

The term ‘sanction’ as a foreign policy tool may have been new to the international politics of the twentieth century when it attained formal legal expression, but not the concept, which traces back to pre-political society, where value deprivation in terms of isolation, monetary aid cuts, confiscation of property, and denial of knowledge (which could be paralleled to the modern concept of technological sanctions). Economic penalties for foreign policy reasons have a long and contentious history, according to sanctions literature. Though it is difficult to pinpoint precisely when the punishment was used for foreign policy purposes, it is widely acknowledged that they were found their early appearance in Greece as early as 432 B.C.⁷

Economic sanctions can be classified into several groups. Sanctions can be applied unilaterally or in a multilateral fashion. President Jimmy Carter, for example, restricted U.S. grain sales to the Soviet Union in 1979 after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and ordered a boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. Those were activities taken just by one person/State. Libyan sanctions are an example of multilateral sanctions. Following civil turmoil in Libya, the

⁷*Supra note 3*

U.N. Security Council unanimously enacted an arms embargo against Libya and a travel and asset freeze on Moammar Gaddafi's regime in February 2011. The Security Council also required investigation of his government's crimes against humanity.

Sanctions can be positive - actual or promised rewards - or negative - actual or threatened punishments. Several studies have suggested that incentives work much better than punishments. For example, Cortright (2000) indicates that "inducement strategies have many advantages over coercive approaches and that a diplomacy emphasizing positive measures over negative ones offers the best hope for building the long-term foundations of international cooperation and peace".⁸

III. ORIGIN OF SANCTIONS

States have used economic sanctions as foreign policy instruments to advance their interests throughout human history. History tells us that economic sanctions are not singularly modern phenomena.

Starting with Kant, scholars have suggested, theorized, and tested the idea that democracies do not go to war with one another. This democratic peace focuses almost solely on the use of militarized conflict. Such a focus is justified when one considers that wars have devastating consequences. Still, other forms of competition also have dramatic effects. The democratic peace scholarship does not include economic strife for the most part. Still, it does suggest that many of its implications extend, at least in part, to other forms of hostility. Those factors which make democracies peaceful toward each other should also make most relations relatively cordial. That democratic dyads tend to resolve their disputes more rapidly than non-democratic dyads alone suggests that democracies will be less likely to resort to economic coercion. The empirical record shows, however, that democracies do sanction one another. So conversely, it seems possible that in place of militarized disputes, democracies engage in economic conflict when a dispute becomes intense enough. This possibility suggests that democracies substitute economic conflict for military conflict.⁹

From the ancient Greeks to the present time, most powerful nations have used economic sanctions as coercive foreign policy tools in their economic relations and political conduct with other countries. Pericles of Athens adopted the Megarian Decree of 432 BC in reaction to hostile

⁸Li, Yitan, *US economic sanctions against China: a cultural explanation of sanction effectiveness*, Volume 38, *Asian Perspective*, Page 311, 2014, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A369550305/AONE?u=anon~1c2a8907&sid=googleScholar&xid=8b7a0d55

⁹Dan G. Cox and A. Cooper Drury, *Democratic Sanctions: Connecting the Democratic Peace and Economic Sanctions*, Volume 43, *Journal of Peace Research*, Page 22, Page 709-722, 2006, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640420>.

acts committed against Athens by Megarian, a neighboring city-state, in ancient Greece. As a result, the Megarian Decree became one of the earliest cases of economic sanctions as a coercive foreign policy tool in history.

Following the historical precedent of economic penalties such as the Megarian Decree, economic sanctions have continued to be employed as coercive diplomacy weapons since that time. They've been employed to defend economic and commercial interests against international competitors. Second, they've been utilized to exert pressure on certain countries. Force is used to swaying target countries' domestic political policy decisions or destabilizing dictators or governments perceived as 'unfriendly' or 'hostile'.

Since the end of the Second World War, powerful countries and international institutions have increased their use of economic sanctions. The League of Nations, and later the United Nations (U.N.), imposed sanctions a few times before the collapse of the Soviet Union. The U.N. and other international actors, such as the European Union, increasingly have used economic sanctions as a coercive policy instrument aimed at engendering a change in the target state behavior. The United States has notably been the single most significant user of economic sanctions in recent history. This increased use of sanctions became possible because of globalization and U.S.'s wide political, economic, and cultural penetrations in world politics. According to the HSE data set, despite the capacity of regional organizations, including the African Union, Arab League, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and countries signing on to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), these organizations have not widely utilized economic sanctions.¹⁰

President Bill Clinton had lamented the "sanctions happy" America that it had become. On the other hand, Clinton as the President signed 27 bills imposing fresh economic sanctions on India, Pakistan, Cuba, Iran, and Libya. He used his executive powers to add to the rich legacy of sanctions inherited from previous White House occupants. Someone "lamenting" America's over-reliance on economic sanctions would exhibit a pattern of behavior very different from what we would expect. The US has used economic sanctions more than any other government globally, maintaining its "sanctions happy" position.¹¹

When President Woodrow Wilson tried to sell the notion of the League of Nations shortly after World War I, he became obsessed with economic sanctions to his fellow citizens, together with its newly crafted foreign policy tool of economic sanctions. In 1919, Wilson famously said, "A

¹⁰*Supra note 6*

¹¹Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Sanctions- Happy USA, Peterson Institute of International Economics, (July 1998), <https://www.piie.com/publications/policy-briefs/sanctions-happy-usa>.

country that is boycotted is on the verge of surrender. There will be no need for force if this economic, peaceful, silent, and lethal treatment is used. It's a lousy cure "for dreadful issues." Even so, the United States did not believe in the League of Nations premise (the Senate refused to ratify U.S. membership in that precursor to the United Nations). However, as time went on, American policymakers adopted Wilson's idea of sanctions as their preferred method of foreign policy. For example, since the end of World War I, the U.S. has imposed economic sanctions on more than 110 occasions.¹² The severance of import or other financial links with a target country has been an often-used instrument of American coercive diplomacy, as well as the denial of a target nation of typical export items. Both are examples of harsh measures implemented to persuade the target country to alter its social, political, or economic policies.

Historically, economic sanctions have been sought comprehensively and have included several tools, including trading restrictions, imposing embargoes, limiting international ties, and freezing target states assets. The advent of the scientific study of economic sanctions is associated with empirical analyses to assess the relative effectiveness of such tools. States have incorporated these tools selectively into their foreign policy and, over time; have adopted smarter sanctions that also are referred to as targeted sanctions. The move from comprehensive to targeted sanctions is motivated by the belief that targeted sanctions are more effective and promote speedier compliance. Regardless of the type of sanctions, the conventional wisdom of political science has been that sanctions are not practical policy tools.

As previously stated, economic coercion (sanctions) is not a novel tactic. Sieges, blockades, and embargoes have all been employed with armed power throughout history. In the absence of military aggression, "sanctions have frequently supplemented the use of force in war and have also been employed overtly and covertly to influence the foreign and domestic policies of target states." However, it is only since the global market's heightened economic interdependence that economic sanctions have become a foreign policy tool that may be deployed independently of any link or threat of military power. With this in mind, sanctions have surpassed the use of force as a preferred foreign policy tool because they do not endanger the lives of the country's residents imposing the sanctions. As a result, economic sanctions may be perceived as less violent and hazardous while also being more "democratic" (based on international norms). The use of economic penalties by both the League of Nations and the United Nations against member states increased considerably due to the encouragement of people like President Woodrow Wilson. These multinational organizations believed that belligerent states would be

¹²*Supra note 6*

prevented from employing military force or pushed to quit using it by imposing penalties. As a result, following World War I, economic sanctions as a strategy by those seeking worldwide collective security increased considerably. However, after sanctions against Italy failed to work between 1935 and 1936, confidence in them as an instrument of collective security began to dwindle. Following WWII, economic penalties became known as expressing disagreement to and discontent with target countries' domestic policies and practices, even if the offending behaviors did not pose a threat to global security. Sanctions have been levied against Rhodesia, Greece, Portugal, and Spain after the end of the war because other members of the international community disapproved of their respective governments' policies and behaviors. In addition, sanctions have even been imposed against other target nations because of their ideologies (e.g. sanctions imposed against Cuba for being Communist). However, then as now, the effectiveness of economic sanctions as a coercive diplomatic tool of foreign policy has been revealed as limited. Many contemporary experts agree that American economic sanctions do not work. For, according to sanction scholars like James Blessing, "it can be argued that the suspensions of aid do not appear to have been a very effective means of inducing a change in recipient behavior."¹³ This conclusion is in general agreement with the conclusions of numerous other studies, which show that neither the granting of aid nor the use of economic sanctions have been effective mechanisms of inducing behavior change" in target countries. American economic sanctions allow Fidel Castro to blame the U.S. for his failures. Some might suggest that the ineffective sanctions be either modified or dropped entirely. This course of action has been recommended to American officials to remove from Castro the opportunity to blame the U.S. for his own economic and political errors in judgment.¹⁴

IV. IMPORTANCE OF SANCTIONS

The study by Haufbauer, Schott, and Elliot (HSE), a group of famous academics on economic sanctions, and their estimate that the instrument of sanctions was used 103 times between 1914 and 1984 is proof that this foreign policy tool has steadily increased since World War I in American history.¹⁵ Sanctions have thus played an essential, if not always prominent, role in US history. During the Cold War, however, the use of sanctions as a tool of foreign policy statecraft grew in importance, with sanctions being used to target the Soviet Union and its allies'

¹³*Supra note 6*

¹⁴*Supra note 6*

¹⁵Sarah P. Schuette, *U.S. Economic Sanctions Regarding the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: A Call for Reform of the Arms Export Control Act Sanctions*, Volume 35, *Cornell International Law Journal*, Volume 35, Page 55, Page 57-60, <https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1503&context=cilj>.

behavior through the withdrawal of Most Favored Nations (MFN) trade status, for example, on Soviet emigration practices, and embargoes introduced against Cuba soon after the communist takeover. Other countries were hit with sanctions to resolve what the US saw as unlawful expropriations, destabilize unfriendly governments, or punish foreign countries for using armed action outside their borders. Following the conclusion of the Cold War, the United States intensified its use of sanctions for a variety of internal and policy reasons.¹⁶ Sanctions were seen as a proportionate response to a scenario in which the interests at stake were regarded secondary. Furthermore, even if no vital interests are served, the sanctions may serve symbolic purposes, such as signaling the US government's displeasure with another country's certain behavior or action, such as human rights violations, resulting in a domestic political need to respond. The imposition of a sanction can serve as a deterrent to uninvolved but vigilant third parties, ensuring that the third parties do not make the same mistakes that resulted in sanctions being imposed on the second parties. When US objectives are not deemed significant enough to justify human fatalities and high moral and financial costs, the instrument of censure provides a less expensive alternative to armed power. The wisdom of history explains why sanctions have become an alternative tool of foreign policy to overt warfare and the failure of pure diplomacy. Aside from the US Executive branch's inclination for imposing sanctions, the rise of congressional power above executive power and the regular presentation of sanctions bills on behalf of individuals or special interest groups are additional factors. Apart from these internal reasons for the surge of sanctions, there are external reasons, including the absence of Soviet Union's opposition and challenge to the American sanctions against Soviet allies like the growth of mass media and consequent awareness of the American public on the international noncompliance and demand for government response for which sanctions became easy option and growth of lobbyists and nongovernmental organizations, called as "single-issue constituencies", pressurized the politicians with campaign funding, media campaigns, and manipulated data to pressure them into imposing sanctions against foreign governments as in the case of human rights groups successfully campaigning for imposing sanctions against South Africa's apartheid regime. Numerous laws for imposing sanctions were introduced in the cold war years. Apart from 30 country-specific sanction laws, numerous sanction laws to achieve at least broad categories of various policy objectives were introduced in the cold war and post-cold war years. Nuclear proliferation, missile proliferation, chemical and biological weapons proliferation, general U.S. national security or foreign policy objectives, and U.S. trade policy

¹⁶John Keane, *US-Russia Cooperation*, American Security Project, April 12, 2017<https://www.americansecurityproject.org/us-russia-relationship/us-russia-cooperation>.

legislation, sometimes used for foreign policy objectives and extradition, are the most important categories of current sanction laws. Sanctions for Nonproliferation Purposes have a long and illustrious history of creation and application. The 1946 Baruch Plan featured recommendations for imposing sanctions as a deterrent to those who violated the universal non-nuclear regime, which was to take effect after the Plan was adopted. The Baruch Plan proposed handing over national control of atomic energy to an international government, whose transgressions would be labeled as international crimes and punished as such. The fact that the punishment could not be vetoed by the UN Security Council demonstrated the gravity and rigor of the nonproliferation penalties. Despite the fact that nonproliferation treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty did not mention sanctions when they were signed in 1970, sanctions were an implicit possibility in the nuclear non-proliferation regime. At the national level, legislation for nonproliferation sanctions has been quickly introduced and invoked by nuclear supplier countries on states suspected of developing nuclear weapons or violators of some aspects of the nonproliferation norm, particularly since the 1970s. In contrast, nuclear nonproliferation regimes at the international level have been slow to include sanctions provisions. The United States was the first country to use sanctions to give teeth to nonproliferation efforts at the national level. Even while sanctions as a foreign policy tool began to evolve in the 18th century (since the American protest against the Stamp Act in 1765), it was not until the 20th century that the US recognized that national security must be given top priority in the nuclear context.¹⁷ Since the Second World War, when the horrors of weapons of mass destruction were observed, the idea of using sanctions as a strategy for nonproliferation has gained traction. During the cold war years, which were marked by vertical nuclear proliferation fueled by the arms race between the US and the USSR, the US introduced sanctions, ironically, to limit the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons technology and other nuclear weapon-related material to non-nuclear weapons states. However, the active involvement of nuclear nonproliferation sanctions began in 1963, with the signing of the Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreement, which stipulated that diversion of American origin nuclear materials for nuclear weapons purposes would be punished by a nuclear fuel cutoff. The civil nuclear proliferation began with Eisenhower's "Atom for Peace" strategy in 1954. The concept of "Atoms for Peace" arose in response to the competitive commercialization of atomic power technology by the Soviet Union, which had conducted thermonuclear tests, the United Kingdom, which had detonated a nuclear explosive device, and Canada, France, Belgium, and Italy, all of whom had begun the national nuclear program.

¹⁷U.S. Relations With Israel, Bilateral Relations, Fact Sheet Bureau Of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, (JANUARY 20, 2021), <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-israel/>.

Despite a statute that enforced the death sentence for nuclear technology leaks, the US was forced to pursue this “Atom for Peace” approach, abandoning its previous nuclear policy of secrecy and denial. The United States was concerned that unless it changed its strategy of secrecy and denial, Britain, which had led the way in developing commercial nuclear power technology, would be able to grab the worldwide nuclear market with its gas-cooled reactors. Changes in the global nuclear market prompted the United States Congress to modify the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 in 1954 in order to implement Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” recommendations and avoid losing a commercially profitable global nuclear market. The original Atomic Energy Act’s strategy for preventing nuclear weapons spread was to achieve “secrecy and denial,” whereas the revised Atomic Energy Act’s strategy for halting nuclear weapons spread was to achieve “influence derived from cooperation” of host countries with which the US had signed nuclear cooperation agreements. The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 not only attempted to exert influence through cooperation, but it also paved the way for other countries to commit to nonproliferation principles and safeguards, which were a requirement for receiving nuclear material and collaborating with the US through bilateral agreements. The recipient country was required to utilize the exported material solely for peaceful purposes. The bilateral agreements featured a peaceful-use clause that required the receiver to pledge that the material would not be used for weapons purposes, failing which the US would shut off the fuel supply. Though Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” strategy stressed America’s philanthropic intentions in spreading atomic energy for peaceful purposes, the new policy’s political motivation was to deflect the world’s attention away from the escalating nuclear-weapons competition. The “Atom for Peace” strategy had a constructive posture, with the US offering to assist any state, under certain conditions, in establishing civil nuclear installations, particularly power generation programs. On the other hand, the US had a secret goal whereby it could be present in the host country legally under the partnership program and watch the nuclear program’s trend and growth. In practice, it meant that the US could monitor any deviation of nuclear fissile material diversion for a weapons program and install a tap on any cooperating corporation.

V. U.S. AND SANCTIONS

Although the instrument of sanction is not indigenous to the United States, it made its first appearance in American foreign policy history and has been used for various foreign policy goals throughout the country’s history. In protest of the Stamp Act, colonists launched a boycott of English goods in 1765, chanting “No taxes without representation.” The Stamp Act was repealed the following year due to the pressure exerted by the embargo. Still, the Townshend

Act was passed in 1767-1770 to cover the wages of colonial governors and judges. The colonists retaliated with a boycott, culminating in the Boston Tea Party of 1774.

Since sanctions have become as prevalent as an¹⁸ American foreign policy tool, we must ask ourselves first of all why American officials are so eager to use economic sanctions as their primary foreign policy tool. And secondly, we must also ask ourselves what we have learned from the American reliance on sanctions as a coercive diplomatic tool. Unfortunately, the answers to these questions are neither simple nor brief. First, as a substitute for military force, sanctions have become the bloodless choice of American politicians wishing to demonstrate their resolve against dictators and authoritarian governments throughout the 20th century. For, according to Charles W. Kegley and Margaret G. Hermann, “the attribution ‘democracy’ carries with it the expectation that such a government will favor bargaining, mediation, compromise, and other nonviolent methods of conflict resolution over forceful coercion for resolving conflicts”.¹⁹ In addition, Kegley and Hermann propose that the more firmly established democracy is (like America), the more likely it is to choose a nonviolent method of dispute resolution along the lines of economic sanctions.

Since 1970, just 13% of unilateral US sanctions have been used have resulted in foreign policy objectives. Other recent research indicates that economic sanctions cost the US \$15 billion to \$19 billion in potential exports each year, aside from the influence that repeated failures might have on US leadership’s confidence. As a result, up to 200,000 jobs in the relatively well-paid export sector will be lost.

VI. RELEVANT INSTANCES OF TRADE SANCTIONS ROUND THE GLOBE

1. US Sanctions against Cuba, 1960–Present

Background: In response to the Cuban Revolution and the ascension of Fidel Castro to power in 1959, the United States imposed an economic, trade, and financial embargo on Cuba in 1960. The terms of the restrictions were severely tightened in 1962, whereby all commercial relations were broken.

Impact: This led to continued shortages in the products supply and slowed down economic growth. For over a decade, the embargo defined the character of U.S.-Cuba relations and stamped its imprint on Cuba's Cold War-era relations.

¹⁸*Supra note 6*

¹⁹*Supra note 5*

2. UN sanctions against South Africa, 1977-1994.

Background: The apartheid regime prompted the United Nations to impose an arms embargo on South Africa in 1977. Individual nations subsequently imposed wider-ranging economic measures, including trade restrictions and financial sanctions.

Result: The combination of such sanctions, along with domestic opposition and external pressure, led to the abolition of apartheid, institution of majority rule in 1994.

3. Iraq Sanctions, 1990–2003

Background: The United Nations imposed widespread sanctions against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait in 1990; likewise, trade embargoes, asset freezes, and limits on oil exports via the "Oil-for-Food" program.

Impact: The sanctions drastically deteriorated the economy of Iraq and further aggravated the humanitarian situation in the country. It remained in place until the invasion of Iraq by the US.

4. Russia: US and EU Sanctions, 2014–present

Background: In response to the annexation of Crimea by Russia and its involvement in the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, the EU and the US imposed sanctions that hit Russia's entire economy, especially finance, energy, and defence.

Impact: The sanctions greatly hit the Russian economy, devaluing the ruble, increasing inflation, and allowing a flight of international investment. Sanctions have remained in place throughout the geopolitical stalemate between Russia and the West at moments in time becoming more stringent.

5. UN Sanctions Against North Korea, 2006–Present

These included launches of missiles and a nuclear weapons program, which led to a number of UN sanctions against major North Korean exports, including coal, iron, and seafood.

Impact: Because of the said sanctions, North Korea is facing isolation; thus, giving the country many problems such as shortage of goods, among other economic problems. The said sanctions haven't yet led to a back step in the said country's nuclear programs and policies.

VII. CONCLUSION

U.S. has imposed sanctions on a larger scale than other nations after the Crimean annexation and occupation of Donbas by Russian forces. This is one of the major reasons why economic sanctions are still relevant even today. Thus we can infer that sanctions have been in use since centuries ago but in different forms. Trade embargoes were a common form of economic

pressure. It has taken its current shape in the previous century and has been used an active mode of punishment by most of the nations among which U.S. stands upfront.
