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Sanctions In Foreign Policy: Influence Or Conflict

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ABSTRACT

Political and economic sanctions have appeared as a vital instrument of foreign policy. In this multipolar world sanctions often positioned as a non-military means of manipulating state behavior. This paper explores the growing role of sanctions in current international relations, examining whether they serve as tools of diplomatic influence or instruments that intensify conflict. The study evaluates the efficacy, unplanned consequences, and ethical dimensions of sanctions. It analyses the strategic motivations of sanctioning states, the resilience and adaptation of targeted regimes, and the broader impact on global governance, human rights, and international law. Based on realist theory, liberal theory and constructivist theory the paper assesses those sanctions can be effective under specific conditions, their misuse can destabilize international norms, make worse humanitarian crises, and establish authoritarianism raising critical questions about their legitimacy and future in international diplomacy.

Keywords: Sanctions, Foreign Policy, Western, Regime, International

Introduction:

Sanctions have become tools for applying pressure without direct military engagement. Sanctions are planned to force changes in behavior by targeting governments. Over the past few years, sanctions have been employed in an extensive range of geopolitical contexts. However, the efficacy and ethical implications of sanctions remain extremely contested. There is different view of scholars about sanctions. Some researchers and policymakers are of the view that sanctions are influential instruments that can bring about diplomatic revolutions, others contend that they often fail to attain their specified goals, instead causing extensive humanitarian misery and conflicts. Sanctioned states have shown resilience, often finding ways to avoid limitations through alternative alliances. Moreover, unilateral sanctions mostly when executed without comprehensive international consent raise questions about legitimacy. This research paper scrutinizes the dual nature of sanctions as both instruments of influence and potential activators of long conflict. It seeks to analyze the political motivations behind their use, evaluate their consequences in recent studies, and explore their implications for international law and the future of diplomacy. By explaining the strategic benefits and the unplanned consequences of sanctions, the study aims to provide a balanced understanding of their role in modern foreign policy. In this study following objectives are assessed.



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Research Objectives:

To assess the effectiveness of economic sanctions as tools of influence in foreign policy

To analyze how sanctions affect the foreign policy behavior of targeted states.

To identify factors that influence whether sanctions lead to peace or provoke conflict.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a **qualitative study approach** to examine the dual nature of sanctions as tools of influence or sources of conflict in foreign policy. The research aims to understand the political, economic, and diplomatic consequences of sanctions. Primary data was collected from United Nations Security Council resolutions, and **statements from foreign ministries of different countries**. Secondary data was included from journal articles, books on international relations and credible reports from Chatham House (London), The Wilson Center (US), EconPol Europe (European Economic Policy network) and Henry Jackson Society (UK-based think tank).

Theoretical Framework:

Economic and political sanctions have become dominant tools of foreign policy. States and international organizations hire sanctions to influence the behavior of target states by imposing economic expenses and political pressure. In spite of their extensive use, the efficacy of sanctions remains debated. Some researchers claim that sanctions function as tools of influence that promote compliance with international norms, others are of the view that sanctions worsen tensions, aggravate resistance, and contribute to conflict escalation. This theoretical framework draws upon Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist theories to analyze whether sanctions operate as instruments of influence or as sources of conflict in international relations. Sanctions are defined as coercive measures, short of military force, imposed by one or more actors to influence the policies or behavior of a target state (Drezner, 2011). These measures may include trade restrictions, financial restrictions, diplomatic isolation, and targeted sanctions against political elites. Sanctions are planned to alter cost benefit calculations within the target state while avoiding direct armed hostility.

Realist theory views the international system as anarchic, with states pursuing survival and national interests (Waltz, 1979). From this perspective, sanctions are tools of power hired by stronger states to force weaker states. Realists say that when sanctions threaten a state's core security or government survival, they are likely to aggravate disobedience rather than compliance. Target states may reply by strengthening domestic control, forming substitute cooperation, or engaging in reciprocal actions. Subsequently, sanctions can develop conflicts rather than resolve disputes. Sanctions are more likely to generate conflict when they challenge vital national interests and executed individually by leading powers. Liberal theory highlights economic linkage, international institutions, and cooperation (Keohane & Nye, 2012). Liberals view sanctions as rule-based tools used to enforce international norms and agreements. Multilateral sanctions, particularly those authorized by international organizations, carry larger legitimacy and impose higher economic costs on target states. Economic interdependence increases the efficiency of sanctions. Sanctions function as effective tools of influence when they are multilateral, institutionally reinforced, and accompanied by diplomatic assignment.

Constructivist theory stresses the role of norms, identities and shared meanings in shaping state behavior (Wendt, 1999). From this viewpoint, sanctions serve not only material but also representational functions. Sanctions communicate international displeasure and attempt to pressure target states. However, their efficacy depends on



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whether the target state takes the legitimacy of the norms being enforced. When sanctions are supposed as unfair or politically motivated, they may reinforce nationalist identities and resistance. Sanctions influence behavior only when they align with shared norms; otherwise, they may deepen ideological and identity-based conflict.

Literature Review

There is sufficient literature available on sanctions in foreign policy. Pape (1997) argues that sanctions often do not achieve their goals and can even have negative effects. Morgan and Schwebach (1997), support this view by showing that sanctions are especially ineffective against countries with strong nationalist feelings or serious internal stability problems. The economic sanctions not just as tools of pressure but as instruments whose influence depends profoundly on design, multilateral support, and the target's resilience. The effectiveness of economic sanctions is widely debated by policymakers and scholars. Some believe sanctions can help achieve political and economic goals, while others argue they mainly harm the targeted country and weaken its economy. Recent research shows that sanctions depend on factors such as how strict they are, how strong the targeted country is, and how much support the sanctions receive from other countries (Özdamar and Shahin, 2021). Studies on the effects of economic sanctions show that they often cause serious harm to the targeted country. These effects include slower economic growth, higher inflation, and reduced foreign investment (Özdamar and Shahin, 2021). According to report of Center for Economic and Policy Research US (2023, May 4) that economic sanctions hurt ordinary people in the countries they target. The report finds that sanctions can lead to more deaths, higher poverty and inequality, lower income, and worse human rights conditions. Sanctions can also negatively affect ordinary people, especially weak groups such as children (Zoë Pelter, 2021). For example, Cuba and North Korea have faced economic sanctions for many years. Cuba has been under a U.S. trade embargo since 1960, and these embargo severely damaged Cuba's economy.

In addition to political and economic impact, recent work highlights that the sanctions often have unintentional humanitarian effects, which may in turn weaken their normative legitimacy. The Iran-West conflict case shows that sanctions degraded macroeconomic stability in Iran but they did not succeed in curbing Iran's regional influence or fully altering its foreign policy behavior (Abdelbary & Elshawa, 2023). In contrast, recent analysis of the Russia-Ukraine war shows that while sanctions have imposed substantial economic costs and disrupted some sectors. Russia's management has maintained internal unity and used countermeasures, suggesting that sanctions alone are insufficient to resolve armed conflict without diplomatic, legal, or military pressure. Recent studies show that sanctions can have both positive and negative effects. They might work well when many countries support them, when the goals are clear, and when the rules mainly target powerful people. But sanctions also come with big risks, like making conflicts worse, hurting innocent people, or causing repercussion. They don't always succeed and can sometimes cause unforeseen problems, such as weakening their own legitimacy. Economic and political sanctions have long been used as devices of foreign policy proposed to influence the behavior of target states without military force. Sanctions as tools of coercive diplomacy, aiming to alter state behavior by increasing the economic and political costs of nonfulfillment (Hufbauer et al., 2007). From this viewpoint, sanctions function as mechanisms of influence that can discourage aggression, signal international rules, and force policy change. Studies rooted in positivist theory argue that sanctions are most effective when they are multidimensional, clearly targeted, and



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attended by reliable diplomatic assignation (Drezner, 2011). However, experimental findings remain mixed. Scholars like Peksen (2019) and Allen (2008) are of the view that sanctions often fortify authoritarian elites, heighten domestic authoritarianism, and reduce the possibility of negotiated settlements. Rather than promoting compliance, sanctions can foster nationalist confrontation and sometime make tough political positions, and intensify regional tensions. Experimental studies establish that sanctions are associated with higher risks of militarized clashes and lengthy conflicts, especially when imposed unilaterally or seeming as unlawful by the target state (Peksen & Drury, 2009). This aspect of literature reframes sanctions not just as unbiased policy tools but as instruments that can expand political divergence and increase conflict dynamics.

In addition to their humanitarian effects, some studies show that economic sanctions can also affect the political stability of targeted countries. Research finds that sanctions can weaken political leaders and increase political unrest (Marinov, 2005). Other studies show that sanctions, especially in more democratic countries, can lead to higher levels of political violence, such as riots and public protests (Allen, 2004). One key reason for this instability is that sanctions place heavy economic burdens on civilians, which increases public frustration and leads to protests against the government. As a result, these studies suggest that sanctions often fail to achieve their policy goals and instead harm domestic political stability in the targeted states. Many think tanks come to an agreement that sanctions often do not work well when they are not planned better. A study by Chatham House describes those sanctions fail when goals are undecided, implementation is weak (Sabatini & Isard, 2025). Likewise, the Henry Jackson Society claims that sanctions can be more active if governments improve coordination, and improve the design of sanction (Ivanov & Zenou, 2025). Both reports stress that sanctions should be sensibly targeted and supported by solid monitoring systems. The Wilson Center finds that economic sanctions often fail to change government behavior and can damage ordinary people instead, particularly in African countries (Jok, 2020). In contrast, Econ Pol Europe shows that sanctions on Russia have had assessable economic effects, such as reduced trade and economic pressure (Astrov et al., 2024). These findings recommend that sanctions can cause economic damage and their long-term political impact may be frequently undefined. More recent research highlights the humanitarian and societal consequences of sanctions, which straight form foreign policy results. Studies show that broad-based sanctions can weaken public health systems, increase poverty, and excessively affect civilian peoples, thereby raising ethical concerns and possibly fueling internal instability (Gordon, 2011; Chaufan et al., 2022). These unplanned effects may worsen state capacity while at the same time reducing public support for international cooperation. As a result, in modern views sanctions as a double-edged instrument. This literature suggests that understanding sanctions in foreign policy requires moving beyond a success and failure framework toward a different calculation of their political, social, and conflict-related consequences. Researchers recommend that future studies should emphasis on measuring how sanctions influence consequences and compare their effects across different types of governments. Objectives of this research study are assessed below.

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS SERVE AS EFFECTIVE TOOLS OF INFLUENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY

Economic sanctions have become a dominant tool in the foreign policy of many states, mainly influential ones such as the US and members of the European Union. Their key objective is to apply pressure on a target state to change behavior without resorting to military force. Although sanctions can, under specific conditions, be active tools of



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influence and their general impact is mixed. In many cases, they also act as catalysts for conflict, especially when they are seeming as coercive, unfair, or excessively punitive. Sanctions are most effective when they are **multifaceted, targeted,** and go together with **diplomatic engagement.** Research suggests that sanctions have a success rate of roughly 34%, mainly when aimed at **modest policy changes** and when there is **international consensus** behind them (Hufbauer et al, 2007). In such cases, sanctions serve as tools of calculated influence by altering the cost-benefit calculations of the target regime. Similarly, "smart sanctions" that target elites rather than the general population are gradually viewed as more humanitarian and potentially more effective (Cortright & Lopez, 2002). However, sanctions can also function as **catalysts for war,** especially when they are unilateral, poorly enforced, or perceived as acts of aggression. For instance, U.S. sanctions on Russia after the annexation of Crimea have contributed to deteriorating diplomatic relations and the solidification of anti-Western sentiment within Russia (Galtung, 1967; Dreyer & Popescu, 2014). Besides, inclusive sanctions, such as those historically imposed on Iraq in the 1990s, often cause severe humanitarian consequences without attaining important political change (Weiss, 1999). Research on the humanitarian effects of economic coercion shows that sanctions can cause suffering for civilians. Sanctions can weaken a country's economy, population well-being, health systems, and government institutions (Cortright & Lopez, 1995, 2000; Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Gibbons, 1999). These economic pressures often create immediate financial problems and other indirect effects that harm ordinary people. As a result, citizens may experience reduced personal security, poorer living conditions, and a decline in social services such as healthcare and education. In these cases, sanctions weaken trust, damage economic and political stability, and intensify tensions, particularly when the target regime uses them as propaganda to consolidate domestic support. Economic sanctions can be effective tools of influence in foreign policy, but their success is **conditional** on strategic design, international cooperation, and the broader geopolitical context. Poorly designed sanctions may fail and pushing target states further away from dialogue and closer to confrontation. Therefore, policymakers must wisely evaluate the goals, implementation strategies, and potential consequences of sanctions. While analyzing the objective **economic sanctions serve as effective tools of influence in foreign policy** the realist is of the view that sanctions are tools of power used to pressure states, but their effectiveness is often limited because target states may resist or react. Realism emphasizes that sanctions work only when they threaten critical state interests, but may provoke defiance instead of compliance. Similarly, according to Liberal perspective sanctions are more effective when implemented multilaterally and supported by international institutions. Compliance is more likely if sanctions are paired with diplomacy and economic interdependence. Constructivist viewpoint is that the effectiveness of sanctions depends on whether target states recognize the legitimacy of the norms being enforced. Sanctions can influence behaviors when they align with shared identities and norms but may fail or backfire if seen as unjust or biased.

SANCTIONS AFFECT THE FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR OF TARGETED STATES.

Sanctions have long been a vital instrument in the foreign policy of powerful states and international organizations. Designed to force, or punish, economic sanction's goal to change the behavior of targeted states without resorting to military force. The influence of sanctions on the foreign policy behavior of targeted states usually falls into three broad types: compliance, resistance, or escalation. Each response is influenced by a



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variety of factors including the nature of the regime, the economic impact of the sanctions, the presence of alternative economic partners, and the level of domestic political cohesion. Below is a comprehensive examination of these responses, supported by academic literature.

Compliance

Compliance happens when the targeted state changes its foreign policy behavior in accordance with the sanctioning state's demands. This is the desired outcome of most sanction regimes. However, compliance is comparatively rare and tends to occur under specific conditions. One major determinant of compliance is the economic pain imposed by sanctions. Severe economic disruptions can lead targeted governments to alter their behavior in order to secure relief. Another factor is the unity and credibility of the sanctioning coalition. When multiple countries participate in a coordinated sanctions regime, the pressure on the targeted state increases, making compliance more likely. However, compliance is more probable in democracies or hybrid regimes where economic hardship translates into domestic political pressure. In authoritarian states with tight control over civil society, sanctions may not produce the internal pressure needed to force compliance. If a state does not fulfill with the demands of an international agreement or the conditions set by the sanctioning state then sanctions may be continued, expanded, or made harsh, such as travel bans, trade restrictions, or financial penalties. The non-complying state may also face diplomatic isolation, loss of international support. In some cases, continued non-compliance can increase political tensions and weaken trust. On 28 August 2025, the Foreign Ministers of the UK, France, and Germany informed the UN Security Council that they were starting a process to bring back UN sanctions on Iran because Iran had not properly met its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, 2025). Similarly, UNSC through its resolution 1737 imposed nuclear-related sanctions on Iran (United Nations Security Council. 2006). Then UNSC through its resolution 1929 further strengthened sanctions on Iran's nuclear programs after non-compliance (United Nations Security Council. 2010). In the same way, UNSC through its Resolution 2321 expanded sanctions against north Korea due to its nuclear and missile tests (United Nations Security Council. 2016).

Resistance

Resistance is a common reply, particularly among authoritarian regimes that can safeguard elites from the worst economic effects and curb opposition. Instead of obeying, these states often adjust to sanctions by seeking substitute economic partners. Russia's response to Western sanctions following its occupation of Crimea in 2014 represents resistance. Instead of retreating, Moscow differentiated trade toward non-Western markets, including China and India, developed domestic industries (Connolly, 2018). Similarly, North Korea has survived years of international sanctions, employing unlawful networks, and support from sympathetic states like China (Habib, 2011). In some cases, resistance can be boosted by the perception that sanctions are unjust or politically motivated. This can reinforce nationalist sentiment, thereby legitimize the regime's defiance and reduce the effectiveness of external pressure.

Escalation

Escalation refers to circumstances where sanctions provoke a fierce response rather than compliance. Instead of changing their behavior, sanctioned states may dial down on



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hostile foreign policies, initiate unforgiving sanctions, or expand regional military actions. A prominent example is Iraq under Saddam Hussein in the 1990s. Instead of complying with UN demands, Iraq used sanctions as justification for further hostility and repression at home, leading ultimately to military conflict (Gordon, 2010). Sanctions can also intensify tensions when they are perceived as acts of economic warfare. Escalation is more likely when sanctions are broad, poorly targeted, or accompanied by challenging embellishment.

Based on theoretical frame work when we assess the objective either sanction **affect the foreign policy behavior of targeted states** then realists argue that sanctions often do not change a country's behavior in a positive way. Instead of collaborating, targeted states may become more persistent, look for new partners, or reply with countermeasures. From this viewpoint, sanctions frequently lead to defensive or hostile actions rather than encouraging compliance in foreign policy. Liberals and constructivists view sanctions differently. Liberals believe that states may change their policies and follow sanctions if they see them as fair, legal, and supported by the international community. Constructivists argue that sanctions can influence behavior by shaping norms and ideas if the targeted state accepts their legitimacy, but if the sanctions are seen as unfair, they may strengthen nationalism or ideological resistance.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WHETHER SANCTIONS LEAD TO PEACE OR PROVOKE CONFLICT.

The efficacy of sanctions in producing peaceful consequences or irritating conflict depends on a complex set of aspects. These include the type and scope of sanctions, strategic objectives of the sanctioning state, regime type and domestic politics of the targeted state, international support and implementation mechanisms, and diplomatic engagement. Understanding these elements is essential to assessing whether sanctions serve as instruments of peaceful influence or activates for conflict.

Kind and Scope of Sanctions

Sanctions can be grouped into different types based on their direction. The most common types are **economic sanctions**, which include trade bans, freezing assets, and limiting access to financial systems. **Diplomatic sanctions** involve actions such as cutting diplomatic ties. **Military sanctions** usually take the form of arms embargoes that prevent the sale or transfer of weapons. There are also **targeted or "smart" sanctions**, which focus on specific individuals, companies, or few sectors instead of an entire country. Today, targeted sanctions are used more often because they reduce harm to civilians while still putting pressure on political leaders (Drezner, 2011). Sanctions are frequently imposed by international organizations like the **United Nations**, as well as by individual countries or regional groups. Their main purpose is to change behavior that goes against international rules, such as acts of aggression, human rights violations, or the spread of nuclear weapons. By applying these measures, the international community seeks to encourage compliance with global norms without resorting to military force. The scope of sanctions refers to their geographical reach, legal authority, duration, and impact. Sanctions may be multilateral, involving multiple states acting collectively, or unilateral, imposed by a single state based on its domestic laws. Their scope can extend across global financial systems, specific industries. The effectiveness and legitimacy of sanctions largely depend on their scope clearly defined, and consistent with international law (United Nations, 1945). Poorly designed sanctions make inadvertent economic risk and humanitarian consequences. The nature of sanctions whether comprehensive or



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targeted plays a critical role in determining their impact. Targeted sanctions, are more likely to influence behavior without causing mass suffering, thereby increasing the potential for peaceful resolution (Cortright & Lopez, 2002). For example, broad sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s caused widespread civilian suffering. Instead of promoting peace, they contributed to regional instability and eventually military intervention (Gordon, 2010). In contrast, targeted sanctions against specific individuals in Zimbabwe and Iran have had more limited side effects, allowing room for negotiation and diplomacy (Portela, 2014).

Strategic Objectives and Reliability

Sanctions are more likely to produce peaceful influence when they are tied to clear, achievable, and limited objectives. If the sender state's goals are ambiguous the targeted state may view sanctions as experiential threats and respond with aggression. Reliability also matters. If the targeted state doubts the sender's willingness to lift sanctions even after compliance, it has little incentive to cooperate peacefully. The lack of trust can thus transform sanctions from instruments of diplomacy into pioneers of conflict (Drezner, 2011). The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran in 2015 serves as an example of a sanction's regime with clear goals limiting Iran's nuclear program which contributed to a peaceful agreement. However, the U.S. withdrawal from the deal in 2018 and the reimposition of sanctions damaged credibility, leading to renewed tensions and regional instability (Nephew, 2017). Sometime lack of trust can transform sanctions from diplomacy to conflict.

Regime Nature and Domestic Political Dynamics

Authoritarian regimes often protect themselves from the effects of sanctions. This reduces the prospect of internal pressure for peaceful change and may strengthen the resolve of the ruling elite to resist or retaliate. Conversely, in hybrid regimes with more open political systems may be more susceptible to public pressure when sanctions cause economic pain, leading to peaceful adjustments in policy (Peksen, 2009). However, sanctions can also trigger some effects, where leaders use external pressure to unify the population against a perceived foreign threat. This is particularly effective in autocracies with control over media and political narratives, reducing the chances of peaceful compliance and increasing the risk of escalation (Galtung, 1967).

International Support and Execution

Multilateral sanctions endorsed by international organizations such as the United Nations or the European Union generally carry better legality. When sanctions are backed by a broad coalition of states, they generate stronger economic and political pressure on the targeted country. Coordinated action also signals international harmony, which can enhance compliance and reinforce global norms. In contrast, a lack of coordination among sanctioning states can weaken the overall impact of sanctions and, in some cases, exacerbate political tensions. Unilateral sanctions, particularly those imposed by powerful states, are often criticized as extraterritorial and lacking legitimacy. For example, U.S. unilateral sanctions have frequently been contested by both targeted states and allied countries, leading to diplomatic resistance and reduced cooperation, which eventually weakens the effectiveness of the sanction's regime (Early, 2015).



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Diplomatic Engagement

Sanctions are more active and less expected to cause conflict when they are combined with diplomacy and clear ways. When states clearly explain, what actions are needed to remove sanctions, it creates incentives for peaceful solutions. In contrast, sanctions imposed without dialogue, often increase tension and resistance. Diplomatic engagement helps reduce misinterpretations, supports negotiation, and allows states to change their behavior without appearing weak (Biersteker et al., 2016). **Based on theoretical framework If we analyze whether sanctions lead to peace or provoke conflict then** from a realist perspective, it depends on power and strategic interests. Realists argue that the strength of the sanctioning state, the importance of the targeted state's interests, and the risk of retaliation are key factors. Sanctions that damage a country's most important national interests, or are more possible to cause irritation and resistance. Instead of leading to cooperation, they often increase tensions and make conflict. Liberal and constructivist theories offer different explanations. Liberals believe sanctions are more expected to promote peace when they have broad international support, strong institutional backing, and are applied among economically unified states. Constructivists focus on ideas and norms, arguing that sanctions work best when they are seen as fair and legitimate and align with shared values. When sanctions are viewed as unjust or illegitimate, they are more likely to increase hostility and deepen conflict.

CONCLUSION

Sanctions remain an essential instrument in foreign policy. It exerting the potential influence without resorting to military action. By targeting economic and political pressures, sanctions can compel states to alter objectionable behaviors, uphold international norms, and promote diplomatic resolutions. Purposefully applied sanctions serve as a non-violent means of shaping global affairs and encouraging compliance with international laws. However, the efficacy of sanctions is often contested, as they can also ignite conflict rather than resolve it. In many cases, sanctions intensify tensions between nations, provoke revengeful measures, and develop geopolitical divisions. The inadvertent consequences of the sanctions are humanitarian suffering and economic instability. Moreover, without reliable implementation and cooperation among global actors, sanctions danger becoming emblematic signs rather than instruments of meaningful change. Eventually, the dual nature of sanctions as tools of influence and potential sources of conflict demands careful adjustment. Policymakers must weigh the ethical, political, and economic implications to ensure sanctions contribute to peace and stability rather than escalating conflicts. If sanctions are designed correctly, they can encourage dialogue and positive cooperation between states. If sanctions handled poorly, they may generate division, and conflict instead of solving problems. Based on theoretical framework sanctions are not inherently effective nor inherently conflictual their impact depends on context and design. Realism emphasizes that sanctions can provoke conflict when they threaten main national interests, while liberalism highlights their potential as effective instruments of influence when implemented multilaterally, supported by institutions, and paired with diplomacy. Constructivism stresses that legitimacy, norms, and identity shape whether sanctions produce compliance or resistance. Inclusive, sanctions are most likely to succeed as tools of influence when they are multilateral, institutionally valid, balanced, and accompanied by diplomatic engagement. In contrast, they are susceptible to generate conflict when unilateral and threatening to regime survival. Therefore, sanctions play a dual role in foreign policy,



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capable of either fostering peaceful behavioral change or deteriorating tensions, depending on their design, implementation and perception.

Recommendations

Targeted Device not a Broad: Governments should prioritize targeted sanctions like asset freezes or travel bans on leaders rather than wide-ranging economic sanctions that damage normal citizens.

Sanctions with Negotiation: Sanctions are most actual when harmonizing with dialogue and negotiation. Diplomatic engagement can offer clear ways for compliance, making sanctions an instrument for impact rather than conflict.

Clear Objectives: Sanctions should have well-defined goals and conditions for removal. Without clear objectives, sanctions risk becoming everlasting, increasing anger and reducing their efficacy.

International Cooperation: Sanctions, supported by international organizations are more genuine and effective than unilateral actions. There should be cooperation which lessens gaps and prevents escalation between states.

Humanitarian Impact: Sanctioning bodies should constantly evaluate the social and economic effects on civilians. Humanitarian immunities must be imposed to prevent shortages of food, medicine, and important services.

Avoid Sanctions as Punishment: Sanctions should have the objective to change behaviour, not simply punish states. There should not any kind of misuse which can increase nationalism and contribute to conflict rather than resolution.

Review of Sanctions: There is dire need of regular evaluations which can help to determine whether sanctions are achieving their proposed goals. If they fail to influence policy change, substitute methods should be considered.

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