



Effectiveness of International Sanctions: Iran Perspective

K. M. Atikur Rahman

Research Fellow, Dept. of Political Science, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Abstract

This is a descriptive type of study which has been conducted in qualitative approach. It is found that most of the sanctions don't function desirably. But humanitarian costs are highly miserable in all sanctions and nationalism and internal political forces gain empowered more than times before. It has been designed to weigh the costs and effectiveness of sanctions. Besides, it's another objective is to elucidate the factors that account for success or failure of sanctions. Secondary sources have been used here for data collection and books, journal articles, media report, records of different organizations etc. are the sources of data. Several outcomes have been identified from the study such as if the goal of sanctions is defined as purely instrumental terms, their effectiveness is indeed limited; sanctions may empower internal political forces, and sanctions appear to be affecting humanitarian operations in the target states. It is thought that all the findings might be helpful for global governance in policy making regarding sanctions. Besides, the students of political science and international relations will get important information.

Key Words: *Humanitarian crisis, Success, Effects, Target state, internal force.*

Introduction: As tools of economic statecraft, economic and trade sanctions have become common place in recent decades. Sanctions have been imposed for purpose as diverse as containing military aggression, punishing factional groups that violate ceasefires and the restoring democracy and advancing human rights. Inducement strategies have been employed to curtail nuclear proliferation (N. Korea and Iran), to encourage peace processes and to facilitate military demobilization. Each approach has direct relevance to a discussion of global governance. In fact, humanitarian vulnerability and regional tensions rather increase in many cases, but sanctions work at a much lowered scale.

Sanctions have already been a process of global governance. Basically they emerged as a principal instrument in global affairs of post-Cold War regime, though they were then regarded as a regime terminology. Actually sanctions are cooperative linkages to meet up various compliance issues in global arenas. Within the complex set of rules, mechanisms, co-operative practices, and emerging mores that constitute global governance. Sanctions offer opportunities for states to exercise both their intentional policies and their more narrowly defined foreign policies. Indeed sanctions are sufficiently complex, if not ambiguous, that they permit both maximum international institutionalization, through the United Nations and regional bodies such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the prospect that powerful single states, such as the United States, may simply commandeer the strategy for their own foreign policy purposes.^{1,2}

It is believed that both approaches, positive and negative, non coercive and coercive, must be considered in any analysis of multilateral institutional concerns and enforcement issues relating to global governance. It is observed that in about all cases inputs view and coercive matters are under consideration while sanctioning. As a result, most of the cases are less effective or ineffective such as Cuba, Iran, North Korea, etc. Rather different internal forces become stronger and regional tensions increase more than before events. Even humanitarian crisis reaches at higher stages that hinder the global peace process. In the long

run the purpose of sanctions gets failure causing global complex relations. So it has been selected as a research case.

Objectives of the Study: This study has been designed mainly to weigh the costs of sanctions. Besides, it aims to elucidate the factors that account for success or failure of sanctions. Moreover, there is an objective to discuss the political stand of opposition internal forces.

Methodology: The study is an explanatory type of research that has been conducted in qualitative approach. Secondary sources have been used for data collection which is based on content analysis. Books, journal articles, record of government and non-government organizations, media (newspaper and television) reports are the sources of data. Moreover, empirical observation is applied herein as the source of primary data. Data has been analyzed in general approach.

Defining Sanctions: Sanctions is a tool used by countries or international organizations over a particular state or governments to change their policy by restricting trade, investment or other commercial activity. For instance, sanctions may be applied upon the countries that are involved in developing nuclear weapons, human rights violation and unfair trade. The magnitude of sanctions is dependent on the severity of violation. Trade sanctions are mostly same and they may be evocated as Most Favored Nation (MFN) status or import quotas against a country. Economic sanctions are meant to isolate the target regime by trade embargo, banning cash and technology transfer, freezing assets, and restrictions on travel. The US Government through UN has imposed sanctions against Cuba, North Korea and Iran among other countries.

Effectiveness of Sanctions: Sanctions have presently been frequent; but many scholars and stake holders raised their questions on their effectiveness. Some thinks sanctions are ineffective measures and they cannot gain desired results. Eminent scholars share this skepticism. Margaret Doxey, whose work on sanctions has appeared in multiple editions, states that sanctions will not succeed in drastically altering the foreign and military policy of the target.³ Sanctions of instrumental terms turn limited effectiveness. Sanctions are seldom effective in impairing the military potential of an important power, or in bringing about major changes in the policy of the target country.⁴ Sanctions serve multiple purposes, however, and these must be assessed as well when calculating impact. As Alan Dowty has argued, "The 'success' of sanctions depends on what goals they are measured against" (1994, 192). Sanctions can be symbolic, a message of disagreement for a target government or an imposition to protect further wrongdoing by the target state. Symbolic sanctions have a significant role in international relations; mainly in uplifting democracy, human rights, and non-proliferation process.

The effectiveness of sanctions depends mainly on rigorous implementation and enforcement. Regional security forces must be active for good enforcement and cooperation from the nations is required acutely that are engaged in business with the target states. But in most cases many of them are reluctant to participate in the sanctions because of their national interests such as Iran case. At the beginning stages China, India, and Russia didn't co-operate UN and USA led alliance. In Haiti, inconsistency was the main problem to enforce the sanctions. But in Yugoslavia, European Union and NATO made a great contribution to implement the sanctions and it was effective. So it is viewed that legal, administrative and institutional capacity are mostly essential for implementation of sanctions that are lagging in most cases. Moreover, Regional and international consensus is very much important factor, otherwise they can't be effective. In Nigeria case, OAU states were reluctant to support stronger measure; so it was actually failure.

Effects on Target Regime: Sanctions may basically empower the target government and nationalist sentiments may grow amid the whole people including the socio-political elites. Target regime can take the protective policies so that they can escape from the challenges of economic and business sanctions. Even they may redirect the sufferings onto the social groups and mass people that create a unique mentality against the coercion. That was applied in Iraq responding the sanctions by UN. Many think political or national disintegration will generate but nationalism, political integration and autarky generate instead in the whole

nation such as Iran, Venezuela. In some cases different elite groups become empowered and they make close relations with the regime. They co-operate with each other resulting in a beneficial environment for all stakeholders that eases the governing and defending the coercive measures by the government. In Haiti, black marketers and business groups were coordinated with the ruling class that makes a failure of the sanctions. Price hikes and socio-economic shortages are a common scenario but strong government actions can meet up with these easily.

Although sanctions sometimes cause a rally-round-the-flag effect, they can also generate an internal-opposition effect. Sanctions may empower internal political forces and render more effective domestic opposition to a regime's objectionable policies.⁵ Sanctions can strengthen the domestic opposition to the governmental policies and it may respond positively to the sanctions. In South Africa, opposition to the African National Congress encourages the international sanctions and thus political transformation gets momentum.⁶ In Nigeria the lack of a strong, coherent domestic opposition to sanctions against the Abacha regime was clouded and less effective. In addition, when civil organizations, mass people, and human rights movements support international sanctions, the political effectiveness of those measures is increased.

The Case of Iran: The United States and other countries have imposed unwanted sanctions on Iran to censure prohibited nuclear activities and to persuade Iran to respond to the international concerns of nuclear programs. In response to Iran's continued illicit nuclear activities, the United States and other countries have imposed unprecedented sanctions to censure Iran and prevent its further progress in prohibited nuclear activities, as well as to persuade Tehran to address the international community's concerns about its nuclear program. Through the UN Security Council and regional or national authorities, the United States, the member states of the European Union, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Canada, Australia, Norway, Switzerland, and others have imposed strong and tight sanctions on Iran's nuclear, missile, energy, shipping, transportation, and financial sectors.

These measures are designed: (1) to make a blockade of the transfer of nuclear weapons, components, technology, and missile programs; (2) to coerce the Iranian economy relevant to the proliferation of nuclear activities; and (3) to make a strong pressure on Iran to participate constructively, through discussions with the United States, China, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Russia in the "E3+3 process," to satisfy the nonproliferation obligations. It is clear from E3+3 processes that Iran must come under fully the Nonproliferation Treaty and thus the sanction would be lifted.

A Number of Resolutions on Iran: The UN Security Council approved a number of resolutions placing sanctions on Iran, following the reports made by the International Atomic Energy Agency, Board of Governors regarding Iran's.

- i) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1696- Passed on 31 July, 2006.
- ii) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1737- Passed on 23 December, 2006
- iii) United Nations Security Council Regulation 1747- passed on 24 March, 2007.
- iv) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1803- Passed on March, 2008.
- v) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1835- Passed on March, 2008.
- vi) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929- Passed on 9 June, 2010.
- vii) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1884- Passed on 9 June, 2011.
- viii) United Nations Security Council Resolution 2049- Passed on 7 June, 2012.

Besides, the European Union, Australia, Canada, India, Israel, Japan, South Korea, the United States have imposed sanctions on financial trade and technological services of Iran.

There is no evidence to indicate that Iran is currently developing nuclear weapons. In fact, the US director of national intelligence James Clapper testified in March 2011 that he has a high level of confidence that Iran has not even made such a decision. Of course, since the Iranian government has shut off all outside interest access except for liaison government officials, open source verification of this statement is not possible.⁷ Hans Blix (2012), former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, currently Head of Blix and Associates said, so far Iran has not violated NPT and there is no evidence right now that suggests that Iran is producing nuclear weapons.⁸

Effective Scale of Sanctions on Iran: According to high profile military personnel's opinion, in fact, strong sanctions against Iran are not effective. Among them top US commander Adam Levine and Gen. Janus Mattis are notable figures. But they all are in favor of the sanctions process and other options to be continued. Even Secretary of State Jhon Kerry prefers diplomatic solutions to military options. In his first interview with CNN he said that he is ready to make conversation with Iran and it is always open. Britain, France and Germany have called for more EU sanctions, but there is no possibility to place further UN sanctions as Russia and China are not in favor of these actions. Moscow has opposed repeatedly unilateral sanctions against Tehran. Russia and China have favored all the rounds of UN Sanctions reluctantly, but worked strongly for weakening the punishment process by negotiations with UN.

Adverse Impacts on Socio-economy: The sanctions generate acute sufferings to oil-dominated nation Iran which accounted for about \$352 billion. The Iranian Central Bank shows a decreasing trend in Iranian exports from oil-products (2006/2007: 84.9%, 2007/2008: 86.5%, 2008/2009: 85.5%, 2009/2010: 79.8%, 2010/2011) (first three quarters).⁹ The sanctions have placed adverse impact on 'Iran nuclear program' as specialized materials and equipment cannot be managed necessarily for the program. Apart from the oil and energy sectors can hardly procure and develop the products and technology for themselves resulting in withdrawal of many oil companies from Iran and thus oil production declined at an alarming scale. According to Undersecretary of State USA Wiliam Burns, Iran may be annually losing as much as \$60 billion in energy investment.¹⁰ The US sanctions hit the Iranian citizens including children, women and the aging imposing embargo on essential goods and civil aircraft has also been unsafe. The value of the Iranian Rial has plunged from autumn 2011 up to 80%, falling 10% immediately after the imposition of the oil embargo causing widespread panic among the Iranian public.¹¹

Over the past years, the US Department of State has spent millions of dollar into exporting internet technology, freedom and trainings. But there are huge complaints about export bans of communication technology and web hosting in the sanctioned countries. Along with the internet freedom, pro-democracy and human rights movements are being severely hampered in Iran as Google, Yahoo, Twitter and certain other web hosts deject their services in Iran. Several European firms were forced to disconnect about 30 Iranian banks from their service networks following EU sanctions. Besides, Iranian citizens can access very little into many digital technology due to sanctions. A major example was when, a woman with Iranian parents was barred from buying an Apple iPad in a US store after one of the Apple salespeople heard her speaking in Farsi, the Iranian language. The salesperson cited the US ban on exports of high technology goods to Iran.¹²

Pharmaceuticals and medical equipments do not fall under international sanctions but the country is facing shortages of drugs for the treatment of 30 illnesses including cancer, heart and breathing problems, thalassemia and multiple sclerosis (MS) because Iran is not allowed to use the international payment systems.¹³ A male child died from hemophilia because medicine shortage is acute due to sanctions. Even the supply of some essential agro-items is seriously affected in Iran. In 2013, Reuters reported that some 85,000 cancer patients require chemotherapy and radiotherapy which are now scarce. Nearly 8,000 Iranians, suffering from thalassaemia and blood disorder, are starting to die because of the lacking of essential drugs such as deferoximine.

Civil Movement against Sanctions: The Civil Movement was initiated by two prominent Iranian economists, Dr. Mousa Ghaninejad - economist at Tehran's Petroleum University of Technology- and Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Behkish -economist at Tehran's Allameh Tabatabaei University- on 14 July 2013. The two economists stated the sanctions as unjust and illogical instrument for Iranian people. As free market economy is vital concern, world community should open the door for logical discussion. Free economy can make better relationships among the nations instead of enmity. In fact political activities should be carried out for the sake of global peace and economic growth. Merely

free market economy may increase growth rate that is beneficial to the mass people. Sanctions to any nation actually punish the people of sanctioned countries along with the people of trade partner nations. This movement gained huge support by intellectuals, civil society, academics, human rights activists, lawyers, journalists and so on. In September 2013, the International Chamber of Commerce-Iran posted an open letter by 157 Iranian economists, lawyers, and journalists complaining of the humanitarian consequences of sanctions and calling on their colleagues across the world to support the humanitarian campaign against sanctions on Iran and to persuade their governments to take steps to resolve the underlying conflict.¹⁴

Current Status: Very recently P5+1 reached a framework deal with Iran in Switzerland and the final round of treaty will be signed by 30 June. As per the deal, Iran will reduce its installed centrifuges - used to enrich uranium - by two-thirds and reduce its stockpile of low-enriched uranium. The centrifuges that are no longer in use will be placed in storage, monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Though the agreement has been done through a long talk among the parties, presently it is moving towards uncertainty to be finalized due to the lack of mistrust. All stakeholders find a one kind of fraudulence with the purpose of the deal. Whenever US Department of State declared just after the 'framework deals' that the sanctions from Iran would be withdrawn step by step, final treaty started to get complexity and uncertainty rapidly. Moreover, Saudi led Collective Alliance has started to strike on Yemen from 26 March that escalate the complexity of Iran nuclear treaty because Yemenis rebel groups have been backed by Iran for a long time.

Results: Several outcomes have been identified from the study. These are:

- Effectiveness of instrumental sanctions is indeed limited.
- The lack of international or regional consensus precluded the effective use of Sanctions.
- Sanctions may empower internal political forces, civil society; even mass-nationalism may be gained stronger such as Iran.
- Sanctions appear to be affecting humanitarian conditions and operations in the target states.

Conclusion: It is obvious in the study that in the authoritarian and nationalist states the effectiveness of sanctions is indeed limited, but not in liberal democratic countries. In Iran sanctions are not working desirably because of their nationalism. Besides, sanctions may render more effective their opposition to regimes objectionable politics. But they appear to be affecting humanitarian operations. This study may be helpful for global governance in decision making. Even the nation states can be conscious about the effects of sanctions. The students and researchers of social sciences would be informative with this study.

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