TOWARD MORE HUMANE AND EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO IRAQ

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INTRODUCTION

After the Cold War, economic sanctions became the policy of choice for the United States. From 1993-1996, the United States Government enacted 61 laws and took executive actions authorizing unilateral economic sanctions against thirty-five countries. The Clinton administration cited several objectives for imposing sanctions. They included: protecting human rights (22), counteracting terrorism (14), reducing nuclear proliferation (9), ensuring workers' rights (6), protecting the environment (3), and aiding political stability (8), (National Association of Manufacturing, 1997).

While success was not expected for all cases, the impact of the sanctions will be felt more or less by all the targeted countries. The size of the damage will depend on many factors, such as: the number of countries participating in the sanctions, the size of the foreign trade sector in the targeted country, the economic scale of the country, and the time of the sanction. The sanctions must be imposed quickly and decisively to maximize impact (Elliott, 1995). Fast, multilateral, and comprehensive sanctions such as the one imposed on Iraq, are producing devastating results in terms of human and economic costs. The Economist (April 8, 2000a) described life in Iraq after nine years of sanctions as "Slowly, inexorably, a generation is being crushed in Iraq. Thousands are dying; thousands more are leading stunted lives, and storing up bitter hatreds for the future." The sanctions claim the life of one child every 12 minutes, 250 people every day, and 90,000 people a year, UNICEF (1998) reported. Indeed, the impact of the sanctions is so large, that the former UN Under-Secretary General Denis Halliday, resigned from the UN in protest over a system he considered "systematic genocide" (Halliday, 1999). Mr. Halliday is not alone in his view. There are many groups and individuals, locally and internationally, who condemned the sanctions and regarded them as instruments that contradict the sprits of the Human Rights Declaration and the principles that guide international law.

This paper addresses the human tragedy created by economic sanctions, such as the one imposed on Iraq. This includes how economic sanctions operate on the targeted country, their effectiveness, and why they contradict the declaration of human rights principles. Finally, the paper suggests a framework to minimize the undesirable consequences of the sanctions.

WHAT ARE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS?

According to Lopez and Cortright (1995), economic sanctions are " coercive foreign policy action of a nation in which it intentionally suspends customary economic relations such as trade or financial exchanges in order to prompt the targeted nation to change its policy or behavior." Thus, economic sanctions are applied to deny a certain economic advantage to the target country in response to violation of legal rules embodied in international agreement or generally accepted international law. For example, the United Nations took actions against Portugal in 1965 in response to Portugal's suppression of independence movements in Portugal's overseas African territories; the United Nations also acted against Rhodesia in 1966 and 1968 in response to unilateral declaration of independent and racial discrimination policy pursued by the Smith regime; and in 1990 the United Nations imposed sanctions against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (Miyogaua, 1992).

An individual country against another individual country can also apply economic sanctions if the imposing country decides the target country's policy is against its interests. For example, in 1960, the United States imposed sanctions against Cuba in response to Cuba's new political affiliation with the Soviet Union and nationalization of American-owned oil refineries. In1960, the USSR imposed sanctions against China for declaring its independence from Moscow; and in 1980, the United States placed sanctions against the USSR in response to its invasions of Afghanistan (Miyogaua, 1992).

Proponents of economic sanctions see them as necessary foreign policy to stop aggressing countries from disturbing international peace and security. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, for instance, declared on October 5, 1937, "It seems to be unfortunately true that the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading. When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a 'quarantine' of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of disease" (quoted in Daoudi and Dajani, 1983). Daoudi and Dajani (1983) summarized what economic sanctions can do: (1) sanctions would prevent war by threatening to punish aggressors, (2) sanctions have a punitive effect, (3) sanctions would settle international disputes peacefully, (4) sanctions give substance and meaning to international law, (5) sanctions give signals to the population of the target country of their government undesirable policy, (6) middle class population of the target country will be affected by the shortage of the imported luxury goods, thereby isolating their government, (7) sanctions make it hard for the target country to import goods essentials to conduct war, and, (8) sanctions are an effective means of mobilizing international public opinion against an aggressor.

Table -1
Incidence of sanctions during 1920's to 1980's

Decade	Total Number of Sanctions	United States as Primary Sender	% of Sanctions by United States
1920's	2	0	0
1930's	5	1	20
1940's	9	5	56
1950's	13	6	46
1960's	22	12	55
1970's	36	28	78
1980's	25	20	80

Source: Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1992, pp. 3

Table 1 lists the incidence of sanctions during the 1920's to 1980's. There are

112 cases, most of them initiated by the United States; about 80 percent during the 1980's. The growing number of sanctions cases, however, did not prove that the sanctions were working. On the contrary, a study made by Hufbauer, Scott, and Elliot (1990), found that only one-third of the 115 sanctions were successful in producing the desired policy change in the targeted countries. Hufbauer and his associates believe that much of the sanctions' failure rate is related to the problem of monitoring. Sanctions cannot control the movement of goods and services between the target and the rest of the world and thus will nullify most of the intended effect of economic restrictions. In other words, sanctions, most of the time, are ineffective in producing substantial economic damage on the target countries. Hufbauer and his associates recommended several ways to maximize the damage including "(3) Do pick on the weak and helpless....,(5) Do impose the maximum cost on your target…."

HOW ARE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS OPERATING?

The economic sanctions are assumed to work in stages (see Figure-1). The first stage is sending a signal from the affected country, showing its displeasure of the new policy of the target. If the accused country does not respond to the affected country's demand in an appropriate time and does not give a satisfactory response, then the process moves to the second stage, which is the implementation of the sanctions. The kind of sanction will depend on the kind of the disputed policy and the number of countries that can be affected negatively (politically and economically) by that policy. One or a group of countries can impose sanctions. Sanctions can range from sanctioning trade in one commodity, like the 1973 Arab oil embargo against the United States, West European countries, and Japan to total trade, like the 1990 USSR sanction against Lithuania in response to Lithuania's unilateral declaration of independence from the USSR and the comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations in 1990 which included a ban on trade, a ban on capital movement and freezing all Iraqi assets worldwide.

The gross domestic product (GDP) is the prime target of the economic sanctions. Sanctions hit GDP directly by lowering export outputs and second indirectly through the effects of export and import multipliers. In a country that is highly dependent on export sector, all economic variables will be affected. For example, a decline in exports reduces the country's foreign exchanges, which in turn reduces the country's capacity to import. If a country's domestic supply cannot meet the domestic demand, then a decline in imports would push the domestic price level up and create a demand pushing inflation. For example, in Iraq the wheat-flour prices increased by 11,667 times in the fifth year of the economic sanctions, and reduced the real salary of public workers to averages about $3 to $5 per month. One reason is that domestic productions cannot match domestic demands without the help of imports. Iraq imports about 70 percent of its needs and, thus a decline in imports will push the domestic price level up (Shehabaldin and Laughlin, 1999).

But a high rate of inflation is not the only consequence of the sanction; they also create massive unemployment in the export sector. And if the export sector is an integral part of the rest of the economy, it can create massive unemployment in all sectors of the economy. For example, coffee is a large sector in the economy of Burundi. Coffee exports make up 81 percent of the country's total exports and about 50 percent of the labor force (Carbaugh, 2000). Thus, imposing sanctions on Burundi's coffee exports could create real economic problems. The shut down of Iraqi oil export sector did not affect employment directly, because the sector is not well linked with the rest of the economy. Oil production is mainly for export. Nevertheless, the ban on oil export has reduced the country's income and its capacity to invest, a situation that creates massive unemployment in all sectors of the economy.

THE EFFICIENCY OF ECONOMIC SANCTION

As stated earlier, not all economic sanctions are effective. Some of them were remarkably successful; others were not. There are several variables whose availability will determine the degree of success (Doxey , 1980; Elliott, 1995; Smeets, 1990). These are the following:

1. Dependence on trade. A country, which is highly dependent on international trade, is highly subjected to the impact of the sanctions. For example, Saudi Arabia with more than 50 percent of its gross domestic product derived from oil sales overseas will be economically more affected by the economic sanctions than a country whose exports make up to 10 or 15 percent of its gross domestic product.

2. Trade partners. A country that trades with many countries will be less influenced by the sanctions than a country that trades with few. For example if Nigeria exports its oil to only Japan, France and the United Kingdom, then a sanction by these three countries on Nigeria oil sales will have a greater effect than if Nigeria trades with many countries. In this case, Nigeria could redirect the oil surplus from the sanctioning countries to the non-sanctioning countries.

3. Availability of substitutes. A target country will find it easier to resist economic sanctions if it finds alternative foreign sources of supply. For example, if oil is available everywhere, then it will be easier to the United States to find oil if OPEC countries decide not to sell oil to the United States. On the other hand, if a commodity being traded is characterized as an inelastic demand (has no substitute in the short run), the importing country has two choices, either to comply with the demand of the sanctions or pay higher prices for its imports. For example, in 1973 oil importing countries had to continue imports of oil from OPEC at higher price because there were no other sources of energy that satisfies their demand in the short run.

4. Foreign exchange reserve. A country with large foreign reserves will have less reason to comply with sanctioning countries' demands. Foreign exchange reserve is the number one problem of most of the Third World countries. Thus, these countries are becoming sensitive to the economic sanctions. However, even the countries with large reserve are subject to the same impact if the sanctions last a long period of time.

5. Monitoring. Monitoring sanctions by imposing countries is critical because without monitoring, the target country can easily exchange suppliers and buyers. Furthermore, a country bordering many countries would make monitoring even harder than a country located in a middle of an island. Thus, the cost of monitoring has to be less than the benefits that generate from the sanctions; otherwise, the sanctions will fail. For example, Iraq economic sanctions do not cost United State or the West any economic hardship. Iraq is a small country surrounded by countries that have no friendly diplomatic relations

with it. Thus, the cost of monitoring would be much higher if Iraq had friendly relations with its neighbors.

6. Government and economic system. Sanctions imposed on a market economy have more chance to succeed than a sanction imposed on a highly centralized economy. In a market economy, trade is carried by private sector. A ban on trade by the international community will have direct negative impacts on the level of income, employment, and government revenues, a situation that cannot be tolerated in a democratic society like the United States and Great Britain. On the other hand, a ban on trade on state control economy will have less chance of succeeding because the rulers usually are not elected by the people, and therefore, have less to worry about in next year election. This is what Mack and Khan (1999) concluded in their study that "authoritarian states failed in more than 98% of the total number of hundred-plus cases."

THE IRAQI ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AS A CASE STUDY

Iraq is an agricultural country. It has fertile land and two great rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. It produced grains of all kinds, fruits and vegetables more than enough to feed its people and exports the surplus. The discovery of oil in the early 1930s changed the economic structure of the country substantially. Oil exports became the prime sector in the country. However, the discovery of oil creates only a few jobs, but it became the major source of income to the country. In a few years, the oil production's share in the GDP increased to reach more than 50 percent, while the share of the agriculture sector declined to reach only 6 percent of the total GDP (World Bank, 1995).

The decline of the agricultural sector created real problems to Iraq. First, the country becomes a net food importer, a situation that forces Iraq to pay hard currency for products that they used to produce at home some years earlier, such as meat, grains and others. Second, the decline in agriculture sectors forced millions of peasants to migrate to the major cities for a better life. Third, the new immigrants put more pressure on the demand of services, such as health facilities, housing, schooling, water, electricity, and transportation. Thus, Iraq has no choice but to use oil money to pay off the import bills. Oil export revenues make up more than 90 percent of the total Iraqi exportation and finances as well as 100 percent of the economic development of the country (Khalil, 1988).

Iraq produced about 3.5 million barrels a day of crude oil before the embargo. About 5 percent of the product is consumed domestically and the rest is sold overseas. The Iraqi's main trade partners were the United States, Italy, Japan, and France (Europa, 1997). Iraq ships oil through two terminals, one in South of Basra, on the Persian Gulf; the other through Turkey.

Iraq does not have friendly relationship with its neighbors. Before the invasion of Kuwait, it fought Iran for eight years, costing both countries $1.186 trillion; the Iraqi share was estimated at $452 billion (Times Atlas, 1996). Turkey was officially neutral, while Syria opposed the war. However, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia sided with Iraq. Indeed, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were major financial sponsors of the war. In the end, the Iraqis walked out of the war with $65 billion in debts. The Iraqi policy makers figured out that the only way to solve the Iraq economic crisis was to annex Kuwait. All neighboring countries condemned the occupation; all fought Iraq, except Jordan. The kingdom of Jordan had become the only outlet to Iraqi trade and travel.

The sanctions could not last long if a shortage of oil developed in the world. Except for a brief period of time, oil prices stayed stable even during the war. Other OPEC members increased their oil production to compensate for the lost oil production of Iraq and Kuwait. Thus, the imposers did not experience any shortage of oil or pay high oil prices. Even the $57 billion war costs were shared by the United States, Japan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates.

Finally, the sanctions were quick and decisive. In a period of four months, there were twelve resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council demanding that Iraq comply with world order. During the month of August, there were five resolutions, three during the month of September, one in October, and two in November of 1990. The November 29 resolution (number 678) authorized United Nations members to use all necessary means to bring about Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait by January 15, 1991 (Annual Review of UN Affairs, 1993).

In summary, the Iraqi sanctions are ideal. All conditions that lead to effective sanctions are available including: (1) dependence on trade; (2) trade patterns; (3) easy monitoring; (4) availability of substitutions; (5) unfriendly neighbors; (6) the cost to the imposers are minimum; (7) quick and decisive; and (8) time. The sanctions are eleven years old as of year 2002 and continuing. Iraq has to satisfy the United States and United Kingdom demands; and without their blessing, assuming that the other three permanent members, France, China, and Russia are in favor of lifting the sanctions, the chance of lifting the sanctions in the near future is slim.

Eleven years of sanctions is more than enough to erode the economy of any country in the world, regardless of the political system. Barbara Crossette (1997) of the New York Times wrote "along the roadsides, impromptu markets have sprung up where people who are trying to maintain their dignity came to sell their clothes, chandeliers, and household furniture." McGeary (1998) of the Time magazine reported "grim and desolate: that's both Iraq's landscape and its state of mind. The once proud city of Baghdad wears the rags of poverty: marble chipping off the extravagant examples of modern architecture built in an era of prosperity, doors and window glass for sale from middle class villas, grime and time eating away the old tenements of the poor. You see few smiling faces, and only the black market profiteers and smugglers are well dressed."

IMPACT OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON IRAQ

Woodrow Wilson, the thirty- fourth president, once spoke to the League of Nations describing economic sanctions as follows: "A nation 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 is a terrible remedy. It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted, but it brings pressure outside upon the nation that, in my judgment, no modern nation can resist." President Wilson was right, a comprehensive economic sanction may surpass the damage of "total war," in size of human and economic costs. In wartime, only the soldiers are subject to enemy attacks; civilians are supposedly not. Even the siege and blockades of civilians are considered as immoral because the civilians are innocent. There are several international laws that demand protection of civilians from the indiscriminate effects of siege. For example, the fourth Geneva convention (article 23) requires free passage of medical supplies for civilians and foodstuffs for children under fifteen and the first Geneva protocol (1977) (articles 69-71) requires that essential humanitarian supplies be provided to the civilian's in non-occupied territory if the civilian population is threatened in its survival (Christiansen and Powers,1995).

Comprehensive economic sanctions hit everybody in society, including the poor and young children. Economic sanctions reduce the level of employment and increase the rate of inflation faster than the income growth rate. Thus, most of the people will feel the cold of unemployment and the heat of inflation. In Iraq, for example, the unemployment rate has been estimated at 70 percent in the industrial sector. At the same time, food prices were 4000 to 5000 times their August 1990 level, while monthly salaries of most wage earners ranged between 3000 to 5000 dinars (FAO, 1995). At 5000 dinars monthly income, a person can buy thirty eggs, two kilograms of beef and a few kilograms of vegetables and fruits. A family of six (the average family size) needs at least 200,000 dinars a month to have the minimum calories required (providing 3,000 kilocalorie per person per day). The government coupons (ration) provide about 37 percent of the calories needed; a family of six would still need approximately 125,000 dinars monthly to purchase the shortfall in food. Per capita income reaches the lowest in the world (about $44), less than income of an Indian villager (UN Children's Fund, 1993).

Increasing food prices restricted the population's access to essential food. Malnutrition quickly emerged as one of the biggest threats to Iraqi children and their mothers. According to the World Health Organization (1996), the percentage of low birth weight babies (less than 2.5 kilograms) quadruped from 4 percent in August 1990 to 17 percent in late 1992 and 22 percent in 1995.

Sanctions have resulted in shortages of doctors and medical supplies. It is being reported that some hospitals have lost up to 75 percent of their pre-1990 staff (UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, 1995). Hospitals also are short of vaccines, syringes, anesthetics, surgery tools, radiology, and laboratory and diagnostic tests. Beth Osborne Daponte (1993), of the United States Census Bureau, estimated that 111,000 civilians died in 1991 from the health effect of the Gulf War, of these deaths 70,000 were children under fifteen years of age, while another 8,500 were people of sixty-five years or older.

The health conditions further deteriorated in recent years. FAO (1995) estimated the death rate of children under five years old to be five times higher than during the immediate prewar (1990) period. The team appointed by FAO reached the conclusion that about 500,000 children died in the five years period following the Gulf War between 1991 and 1995.

The critical shortage of drugs is still a problem to physician. A doctor at Saddam Hospital lost about seventy-five children during a two-week epidemic of chest infection and gastroenteritis. He believed every one of then could have been saved with antibiotics, which are commonly available in neighboring countries (Kinzer 1998). As of February 2002, shortages in the medical supplies are very common. A doctor at the Basra Maternity complained about the irregularity of the medical supplies to the Hadani Ditmars of the San Francisco Chronicle (2002), "We have fewer drugs available this year than we had last year" the doctor continued to say "But the real problem is that we don't have consistency, so that a patient may not have a full course of say, antibiotics or other drugs, and therefore will not heal properly with an incomplete course."

Deteriorating standards of living in Iraq also are reflecting on women's health and children's behavior. A research done by Bhatia and Kawar (1992) found 60 percent of women suffered from psychological problems, such as depression, anxiety, headache, and insomnia. During the same time, Raundalen and Dyresrov (1992) interviewed 214 children of primary school age. They found that two-thirds of the children did not even believing they would survive to become adults. They concluded that postwar Iraqi children were “the most traumatized children of war ever described.”

Another study conducted by Geoff Simons (1996) on a sample of 2000 male and female children from 50 schools in Baghdad, found that the sanctions are affecting the children behavior and performances. The study found a number of startling increases in the children’s misbehaviors after the sanctions: anxiety among children rose from 22.2 percent to 49.4 percent; the desire to acquire and possess things (including theft) went from 20.9 percent to 48.8 percent; lying doubled, from 24.4 percent to 51.9 percent; aggressive behavior nearly doubled from 22.5 percent to 43.9 percent; falling asleep during studies from 18 percent to 33.7 percent; loss of confidence moved from 23.3 percent to 40.1 percent; difficulty in concentrating from 25.3 percent to 50.9 percent, and failure to do homework also doubled from 24 percent to 50.7 percent.

The above facts and figures are incompatible with all United Nations conventions. The human tragedy and economic deprivation caused by the economic sanctions contradict the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration called for preserving human life and dignity. Article I stated that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood;” while Article 5 stated that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” The condition of the Iraqi children is violating the Geneva Declaration of September 1924 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Declaration stated that “Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.” The rights of Iraqi children are also violated according to 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The last covenants were adapted on December 16, 1966 and incorporated some of the fundamental rights of the child, such as the right to enjoy the highest standard of health and the right to enjoy the protection and care of their family and society as long as they are minors.

Several prominent writers started to question the wisdom of economic sanctions, demanding they be lifted. Cortright and Lopez (1995) wrote, “The current sanctions have been partially successful in containing Iraq’s weapons programs and limiting its military potential, but those gains have come at too high a price in human suffering.” Mueller and Mueller (1999) wrote, “Economic sanctions may well have been a necessary cause of the deaths of more people in Iraq than have been slain by all so- called weapons of mass destruction throughout history.” Zunes (1998) wrote, “Indeed, perhaps there has been no other time in history when so many other people have been condemned to starvation and deaths from preventable diseases due to political decisions made over seas.” Andraw K. Fishman (1999) wrote “The sanctions against Iraq have killed more people than the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan during World War II.” And Andrew Mack and Asif Khan (1999) wrote that the number of children under-five-year-old who died as a consequence of sanctions exceeded 200,000, a number “far more than the total number of Iraqis killed in the Gulf War.”

LESSONS FROM IRAQI ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

The previous analysis showed that economic sanctions are not benign policies. Multilateral and comprehensive sanctions could inflect painful hardships to the population of the target country. They do not discriminate between goods and evildoers.

Indeed, sanctions tend to harm the innocent and vulnerable the most. Thousands of children have to die in Iraq because of the sanctions. These undesirable consequences are the reason for the condemnation of sanctions from religious and non-religious groups. Pope John Paul II (quoted in Ali and Camp, 1999) declared in Cuba that material and moral poverty arises from "restrictive economic measures imposed from outside the country." In the case of Iraq, poverty is not the only outcome of the sanctions; we have learned several lessons:

First, sanctions against totalitarian regime do not work; the sanctions failed to accomplish any of their objectives. The Iraqi army did not withdraw from Kuwait peacefully. The sanctions did not stop Iraq from developing weapons of mass distraction, nor did they dislodge the leadership of Iraq from power. On contrary, many studies suggest that sanctions help the Iraqi leader to stay in power longer (Gause, 1999; Fishman, 1999; Whitelaw, 2000; Morgan, 2001; Ghattas, 2001; and Thomas, 2002).

Second, thousand of lives could have been saved if the impact of economic sanction on population were reviewed every year. The Oil-for-Food program of 1995 that allowed Iraq to sell oil was too late. Originally, the program allowed Iraq to sell $1.32 billion worth of oil every six months to cover humanitarian imports, which rose in 1988 to $3.4 billion. The program was criticized by the past two heads of the UN's humanitarian mission as "hopelessly ineffective." Carmens Pauls and his associates of the Middle East Council of Churches (Feb.22, 2000), reported that " oil for food does some good, but is not nearly adequate, especially regarding non-physical needs, which remain completely overlooked." And Andraw Mack and Asif Khan (1999) wrote, "The Oil-for-Food Program will not arrest the insidious decline in the economic development infrastructures of Iraq, in the education and public health systems, and in the institutions of civil society. These may be the most serous long-term cost of sanctions to Iraqi society."

Third, comprehensive economic sanctions are very difficult if not impossible to manage. There are many reported delays in purchasing and distributing the imported goods by the Iraqi authority, as well as by the sanction regime authority. For example, sanctions authority blocks suspicious imports because the goods in question might be used for military rather than humanitarian purposes. Among such supposedly threatening purchases are ambulances, bulldozers, crop-duster, pumps, and oil spare parts. The Iraqi authority, on the other hands, claims that a delay in distributions is caused by shortage of storages and transportation means (Antonius and Legault, 2000).

Fourth, the objective of the sanctions changed since the invasion of Kuwait. Initially the sanction was imposed to force the Iraqi withdraw from Kuwait, later on to force the Iraqi to destroy the weapon of mass destruction, and finally to force Iraqi leader out of power. While the whole world (with the exception of few countries) honors the first goal, not many countries are willing to accept the other two goals. Indeed, only United States and Great Britain of the United Nations Security Council are defending the sanctions while France, China, and Russia are not.

Fifth, the sanction also changes the structure of the regional power. Before the sanctions, Iraq used to be good neighbor to Jordan, Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. Iraq also was a good friend to the United States and the West. The sanctions force the Iraqi leader to switch sides toward Iran and Syria, a move that could change the regional balance of power and create more headaches for the USA and the West in the future.

Sixth, the economic sanctions undermine the operation of international trade. Free trade theory requires several conditions among them are free movement of economic resources between nations with minimum government intervention. Economic embargo is one form of government intervention that could hinder the smooth movement of goods between nations and consequently reduce the benefits of the free trade principle. For example, the oil embargo of the 1973 affected all oil importing countries including the United States. The oil embargo was the reason of increasing general price level (inflation) and the rate of unemployment in the United States in 1972 (McConnell and Bruce, 2002). Thus, it is safe to say that if several major economic powers apply sanctions on each other, the world economy will be doomed.

Seventh, the economic sanctions contradict the declaration of human rights principles. The Iraqi rulers are not elected officials. They assumed power by military coup in 1968 and since than, they used every inhuman means to control the population. Therefore, it is not fair to punish the whole population for the sins that they did not commit. The number of civilian deaths that resulted from the economic sanctions "constitute massive violations of the most fundamental human right," declared Roger Normand (1998). Fishman (1999) too, reached the same conclusion that the maintenance of economic sanctions against Iraq by the UN Security Council is "an abuse of power under the UN Charter" because the Council did not show an "appropriate concern for basic human right and human dignity."

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING THE HUMANITARIAN COSTS OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

In order to minimize the undesirable consequence of economic sanctions, we follow the framework that was suggested by Abbis J. Ali and Robert C. Camp (1999) of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. We think the framework is practical and meets the needs of policy makers.

First, sanctions must be multilateral. Unilateral sanctions are rarely effective for at least two reasons. First, they are costly to the sender. Second, the senders' foreign policy may not be favorable by all nations. Hence, target countries can switch to the suppliers and buyers of those countries whose foreign policies are in disagreement with the sender. China, for example, has made a point of awarding lucrative aircraft purchases to Europe to express its displeasure with U.S. sanctions. Also multilateral sanctions are more credible to the target and less costly to the senders. The cost of the sanctions is shared evenly between the participants.

Second, sanctions must have specific measurable goals. Sanctions without goals are doomed to failure. However, the goals have to be measurable, so that the sender will have good reason to keep or lift the sanctions. If sanctions reach their goals, then the sanctions are considered a success, or otherwise sanctions will stay until the target complies with the demands of the sender.

In some cases goals cannot be measured, either because the imposer has undeclared objectives or the objectives are impossible to achieve. For example, the economic sanctions against the former Soviet Union following the 1979 occupation of Afghanistan may be meant to stop the Soviets from more aggression against its neighbors Iran and Pakistan. This is also true, with Iraqi sanctions. The declared objective of the sanctions is to end the weapon of mass destruction program in Iraq, but the undeclared objective of the sanction is to check Iraq from future aggressions against its neighbors, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Turkey.

Goals may not be measurable because they are simply too broad. For example, each year between 1989 and 1994 China faced the threat of sanctions should it not satisfy US demands to improve its human rights policies. Hence, improvement can be interpreted in several of ways. Does improvement mean release of the jailed dissidents, freedom of press, freedom of assembly, or free elective? In this instance, China will never satisfy the United States unattainable goals and the United States will never have smooth political relations with China.

Third, sanctions must have a specific time frame. The economic sanctions greatest impact on the target appears in the first year, at most three years (Lopez and Cortright, 1995). We believe three years is reasonable timetable for sanctions. Because beyond three years the impact of the sanctions will be mainly against the innocent civilians and good proof that sanctions will not make "the leaders of the targeted states l behave rationally as defined by the states that impose sanctions."

Fourth, sanctions must have an effective humanitarian provision for the affected population. Economic sanctions do not discriminate. Their harms affect the entire population, but they hit the poor the most. And if sanctions stay for a longer period of time, say more than five years, then it is the responsibility of the United Nations and the sponsors of the sanctions to provide the affected populations with foods, medicine, and a visa to those who would like to leave the country. Sanctions that leave people sick and starving are worse than war.

Fifth, sanctions against a dictatorship regime should aim at the leaders and the elite of his regime. A dictator comes to power either by force or party promotion not by elections. Hence, the population has no responsibility of the dictator's international misbehavior or the power to stop him. Therefore, sanctions' sponsoring countries have to help opposition leaders inside and outside the target by supplying them with financial needs, military supplies, and news media. Another way to punish the dictatorship regimes is to freeze their personal financial assets, deny them visas, prevent them from attending international meetings, and, if possible, sue them.

Sixth, sanctions must be a subject of annual evaluation. Whether the sanctions are unilateral or multilateral should be evaluated by the senders so that they will have some understanding of their present and future effectiveness. The annual review will include answers to many questions, such as the economic, political and military impact of sanctions, the degree of international support and oppositions, the criteria for lifting the sanction, the expected cost to the sender, the humanitarian effect on the population of the target country, whether the original goals of the sanctions continue to make sense and whether sanctions continue to be an appropriate policy tool.

Annual sanctions evaluation works like loss and profit of a business statement. Profits mean a business is accomplishing its objective, while losses indicate a business policy has to be changed. Hence, when the negative sides of sanctions exceeds the positive sides, policy makers will have fewer reasons to use sanctions any more.

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