

Do Economic Sanctions Work?

Thesis: Economic sanctions are more likely to achieve their final goal if there are high political costs at stake for target country, however, just because economic sanctions do not achieve their final goal, does not they did not “work.”

Point 1: Economic sanctions are more likely to achieve final goal if the conditions are right

Point 2: Just because they don't achieve their final goal doesn't mean they haven't “worked”

1. Because the intensity of interest is usually greater for the target state than sender state, they only work when necessary conditions are in place
 - a. Theory
 - i. Economic coercion works primarily when domestic and int political conditions exist that magnify the political costs of noncompliance for the target state (Blanchard and Ripsman, Drezner)
 - ii. State leaders can also redirect costs of sanctions away from their supporters on to opposition groups (Iraqi and Haitian leaders did this), can also use special police forces or army to suppress disenchanted groups (Blanchard and Ripsman 232)
 - iii. Make it harder to make political changes if already unstable u cant suddenlt have massive increases in prices of necessities (Blanchard and Ripsman)
 - iv. Domestic political divisions also make it more difficult for decisionmakers to mobilize the people to participate in strategies like material conservation programs to stop distress of economic sanctions (Blanchard and Ripsman)
 - v. Domestic divisions demand time/energy of leaders to extent they feel forced to comply with sancionng states wishes to focus fully on domestic political problems (Blanchard and Ripsman)
 - vi. Strong political opposition prior to sanctions will help (Blanchard and Ripsman)
 - b. Briefly give Examples
 1. USSR releasing British citizens was effective because of the political costs of US recognition and small cost to USSR to release them
 2. Canada changed planned embassy move because of US diplomatic pressure not to interfere in the Middle East, fear that
 3. Nepalese leaders complied with Indian pressure to reduce ties with China because Indian embargo complicated already unstable domestic political situation, strengthening pro democracy opposition, had no other economic allies
 - c. Further conditions
 - i. Threaten to impose the damaging sanctions as soon as possible- delay on the issue gives target country chance to defray the long-run opportunity cots(Drezner 313)
 - ii. Works better with allies (NK vs SK) (Drezner)
 - a. US offered economic inducements to stop NK effrots but economically coerced its ally (SK) when it attempted to develop weapons 309- bc SK did not