THE EXTENT OF USEFULNESS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SANCTIONS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Cases of South Africa, Islamic Republic of Iran and The Russian Federation

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ABBREVIATION LIST

ANC-African National Congress

BRICS- Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

DRC-Democratic Republic of Congo

EC-European Community

JPA-Joint Plan of Action

IMF-International Monetary Fund

NPT-Non-Proliferation Treaty

PAC-Pan Africanist Congress

SINOPEC- China National Petroleum Corporation and the China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation

WTO-World Trade Organization

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present paper is to to find whether political and economic sanctions imposed by the West, namely by such international institutions as the EU, UN and a number of countries including the US were effective punitive actions for the policy change in the three essentially different cases. The data are based on the case studies (triangulation) of South Africa (1962-1994), Islamic Republic of Iran (1995-in the phase of negotiations) and the Russian Federation (2014-current). Discussion of the findings revealed that effectiveness of sanctions on the three cases under consideration largely depends on the fear of international isolation, high economic costs, saliency and promptness of the goal, length of sanctions and the type of sanctions imposed. While the economic and political sanctions imposed on South Africa were effective for the policy change as they impacted the country politically to a larger extent and economically to a lesser extent, they were partially successful in the case of Iran economically to a greater extent and politically to a lesser extent. The preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of sanctions in driving a policy change of Russian behavior in Ukraine is negative.

INTRODUCTION

Sanctions came into extensive use after World War I. In the recent years the popularity of both economic and political sanctions has increased and it has become the defining characteristic of the West in response to different geopolitical changes. Latest sanctions have been imposed by such international organizations as the European Union and the United Nations and leading economies in the world that is the US and many European states. But the question still holds today if sanctions are effective foreign policy tool in an attempt to change a target country's domestic and outdoor behavior.

The sanctions that will be discussed in the present paper particularly target South African apartheid policy, Iran's nuclear proliferation deal as well as Russia's annexation of Crimea and intervention in Ukraine. Although the South African case is discussed in the paper as an apparent illustration when sanctions have a positive outcome for the sending state/institutions, economic and political sanctions against Iran and Russia are still ongoing processes with unpredictable outcomes.

The contribution of the current paper lies in the attempt to find whether the political and economic sanctions imposed by the West were effective punitive actions for the policy change in the three essentially different cases discussed above. In the cases of both Iran and Russia as two petro regime countries which are sufficiently rich in oil and gas reserves economic and political sanctions particularly target these fields to make tangible policy change.

The limitation of the study is that we cannot see the outcome of sanctions in the three cases under discussion in the same scale as both the cases of Iran and Russia are still in the phase of imposition while the sanctions against South Africa were removed in 1994.

THEORY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Economic and political sanctions are imposed by state governments or international institutions such as the UN, EU, etc. to punish, change or refrain a certain state or a non-state actor from violating or threatening international norms (Masters 2017). While Brewer (1989) regards sanctions as “punitive actions by one state against another state, designed to force a change of policy without resorting to overt aggression”, Pape (1997) views economic sanctions as a means aimed at altering a state’s political behavior by reducing its “international trade and its subsequent economic warfare”. Both partial and full trade restrictions may cause tariff decrease while financial restrictions may result in “flow blocks and asset freezes”.

A number of scholars support the argument that sanctions are “low-cost and low-risk actions” and are somewhat effective in resolving problems without the use of military force (Masters 2017). Sanctions that make target countries suffer most from high economic costs have a higher probability to succeed than those which do not (Lektzian and Patterson 2015; Dashti-Gibson, Davis, and Radcliff 1997). Dashti-Gibson, et al. (1997) find that the length of the sanctions causes the target country high costs and utility which in turn affects not only local economy and elites but also citizens who are dependent on foreign currency and assets and hence result in more favorable outcome.

Given the three different cases of sanctions, namely sanctions imposed on South Africa, Russia and Iran the theory of the current paper sets on *the structural realism* albeit with different theories for specific cases. Structural realism implies that “struggle for security and inter-state conflict” is a result of an absence of overarching authority above states. The main theory that is applied to two cases discussed in the current paper that is South Africa and Iran is Waltz’s theory of international politics also known as *"defensive realism"* whereas for the Russian interference in Ukraine Mearsheimer's theory of "*offensive realism"* is applied.

Waltz views international system as a phenomenon composed of three elements "organizing principle, differentiation of units and distribution of capabilities" (Dunne and Schmidt 2014). The distribution of power in this system is the key to understanding the outcomes of "inter-state relations and international geopolitical arrangement". Structural realists tend to rank great powers from the less strong ones. Moreover, states, particularly economically and politically strong ones should be sensitive to the capabilities of others. The stable way of power distribution in this kind of system is the world of bipolarity. According to Waltz prevailing organizing principle-anarchy draws sovereign states to "self-help and corresponding maximization of their security" (Dunne and Schmidt 2014).

Mearsheimer, on the other hand, argues that states do not actually seek security in this anarchical, self-help system but intend to increase their power in world politics. Furthermore, states cannot fully predict behaviour of other states. One thing, however, is certain. Great states seek "hegemonic power at the expense of other states" which leads to power competition (Dunne and Schmidt 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

What are Economic and Political Sanctions?

Economic and political sanctions are imposed by state governments or international institutions such as the UN, EU, etc. to punish, change or refrain a certain state or a non-state actor from violating or threatening international norms (Masters 2017). These sanctions are aimed at fighting against terrorism, arms proliferation, narcotics on the one hand and promoting democracy on the other hand. They can coerce the government to change its policy either directly by bringing up the costs and benefits of their actions or indirectly by pressing it or by giving rise to a revolt that will overthrow the incumbent and set a new government.

While Drury (2001) considers economic sanctions as “an economic means to a political end”, Masters (2017) defines economic sanctions as “the withdrawal of customary trade and financial relations for foreign and security policy purposes” with the intensity and scope determined by the imposing institution or state. They may be directed at the “prohibition of commercial activity or transaction of/with specific people, individuals and businesses”.

Economic sanctions, Amerongen (1980) argues, are only used as a “flanking maneuver” which should not be applied unless all political and diplomatic means have been utilized. Pape (1997) views economic sanctions as a means aimed at altering a state’s political behavior by reducing its “international trade and its subsequent economic warfare”. Both partial and full trade restrictions may cause tariff decrease while financial restrictions may result in “flow blocks and asset freezes”. Hence, they can be imposed as “travel bans, capital restraints, trade restrictions, arms embargoes, asset freezes and foreign aid reductions”. In case of financial sanctions the target country faces halt in foreign investments and in its export and import as well as various financial restrictions. Trade sanctions include but are not limited to cripple in “trade transactions and exchange of services and goods” with other dependent countries. If a sanction is only applied among the two actors imposing state and the target state then this sanction is called primary sanction. Whenever a third actor is involved that is another country which has a certain relationship with the target country then the secondary sanction is applied on the second country which undergoes corresponding halt of trade and financial resources.

There are three types of economic sanctions with declining severity, namely instrumental (prohibition of goods and capital), punitive (economic costs) and symbolic (slight measures not causing great harm) sanctions. Economic sanctions may also be smart or comprehensive (Masters 2017; Aluoch 2015; General Accounting Office 1992; Jonge-Oudraat 2000). The former contribute to most of the population as they are being pressed by their incumbents or misbehaving organizations. Also known as targeted sanctions, smart sanctions are directed at those individuals, associates and decision makers who exploit general population. They are enforced through “arms embargo, asset freezes, travel restriction, visa ban, personal financial sanction and sanction on specific commodities (oil or diamonds)” (Aluoch 2015). Comprehensive sanctions, on the other hand, incorporate such forms of measures as “diplomatic isolation, trade and financial sanctions, restrictive measures, threat and withdrawal of customary trade and assistance” (Aluoch 2015). In the case of Sudan the given political and economic conditions even worsened with the imposition of the US sanctions. By targeting particularly few individuals sanctions imposed brought deterioration of the welfare, economy, its citizens and the entire state in the long run.

While a number of scholars have focused on the study of the outcomes of economic sanctions, Drury (2001) concentrates on the study when sanctions are initiated by the US as a responsible actor for most of the recent sanctions. First of all, decision to initiate a sanction is international that is the more tense are the relations between the two countries the higher the likelihood of the sanctions. Second of all, two domestic factors affect the decision to impose sanctions, namely “domestic approval and support and high unemployment rate”. The sanctioner is more likely to impose sanctions when the nation is not afraid of backlash and when it gets a market advantage and high protection for industry due to less competition.

As one of three options, namely diplomacy, military force and economic or political sanctions to make a coercive action on the target state, sanctions are the ones with the most controversies about its effectiveness. Hence, extensive amount of literature has focused on the question whether economic and political sanctions are an effective foreign policy tool or not.

When are Economic and Political Sanctions effective?

A number of scholars support the argument that sanctions are somewhat effective and are a good means to resolve problems without the use of military force. They are “low-cost and low-risk” and stand between diplomacy and war (Masters 2017). Pape (1997) discusses three cases when sanctions can be successful. First, economic sanctions may be effective in minor cases that are not concerned with “the target country’s territory, security, wealth or regime change”. Second, sanctions may be more effective if the target state is economically fully dependent on the imposing state/states. Lack of economic exchange with leading international economies hinders the target country from entering the foreign market which in turn results in the loss of country’s wealth and shift in long term political power of the incumbent government. If this occurs then the governing groups will most likely make the concessions required (Lektzian and Patterson 2015; Kimberly 1997; General Accounting Office 1992). Third, sanctions may be more productive if there is an unequal income distribution in the target state (Pape 1997; Lektzian and

Patterson 2015). Lektzian and Patterson (2015) argue that success of sanctions is determined by the change of wealth of owners and those who use land, capital and labor that will affect the overall distribution of political power with its corresponding structure. As the internal political conditions deteriorate the incumbents will be coerced to launch negotiations to cease the sanctions.

Sanctions will have more favorable outcome if they are “multilateral, specific and strongly enforced”. They are more probably to be successful when the target country is “smaller, economically fragile and politically unstable” than the sending country and when the sending country is quick and determinant in imposing sanctions (Kimberly 1997; General Accounting Office 1992).

Monitoring of economic and political influence on the target country as well as compliance of non-sending states is an essential component for successful sanctions. Dashti-Gibson (1998) distinguishes between institutional, administrative and procedural monitoring. For sanctions to be successful, monitoring should incorporate “institutional complexity and resourcefulness” at the outset of the sanction imposition. Administrative aspect of monitoring requires trained and skilled personnel that will supervise the whole procedure of sanctioning and who would lead third states to cooperate. Yet, monitoring is an indispensable but insufficient aspect that should be taken into consideration.

Instrument choice which in turn depends on the policy goal extensively determines the effectiveness of international sanctions. The regression analysis applied based on the following variables-“change in the target’s behavior, assistance from other countries to the target, prior economic and political stability of the country, tradelink and friendly relations between imposing and target states, international cooperation and the size of the imposing state relative to the target" demonstrates if a country is economically and politically stable then state/states are less likely to apply military actions there. Yet, it may be applied if the sanctioning country has assistance from other countries (Jing, Kaempfer, and Lowenberg 2003).

Sanctions that make target countries suffer most from high economic costs have a higher probability to succeed than those which do not (Lektzian and Patterson 2015; Dashti-Gibson, et al. 1997). Dashti-Gibson, et al. (1997) find that the length of sanctions causes target country high costs and utility. Whenever import or export is utilized it affects not only local economy and elites but also citizens who are dependent on foreign currency and assets.

Dashti-Gibson, et al. (1997), Woodward (1995) and Hufbauer, et al. (1990) cast success of sanctions on the goals that imposing states pursue. If the imposing states only aim at destabilizing the target country, then stability of the country at early stages determines the outcome in the end. Political influence of sanctions also increases whenever imposing states apply coercive diplomacy which is achieved through identification of a specific goal. Furthermore, Ang and Peksen (2007) signify the salience of these goals/issues between imposing and the target country as a determinant for the sanction outcome and subsequent success. Issues are essential for the sender's demands and for the target's reaction to these demands. If the issue salience is high among the imposing states as a threat to "territorial integrity and regime stability" then the probability that sanctions will succeed also rises. Moreover, if the goals and intentions of the sanctioner are explicit, then more states would like to participate in these sanctions like the case of South Africa where sanctioner's intention was to reach apartheid of government (Woodward 1995). Based on the cases of 116 sanctions Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990) distinguish the following main goals while imposing sanctions on the target, namely alteration of target country policies, destabilization of the sanctioning government and weakening of military capacities of the target.

Most often economic sanctions rather than political ones are more likely to be effective as it is very hard to change the country's political behavior. Moreover, the sanctions that have a limited scope of imposition are more successful than the ones with extensive political ambitions (Pape 1997). However, in their paper Morgan and Schwebach (1995) discuss effectiveness of political sanctions depending on the domestic factors. Spatial model is utilized to this end based on the comparative study of eight cases of the US-Latin America sanctions. The findings indicate that there is a high level of human rights violation in these cases before and after sanctions have been imposed. The overall impression is that sanctions do have some slight impact on the target state in changing its behavior due to high costs they produce on the powerful domestic actors who are only concerned about their power and money rather than the issue discussed. Yet, there is no empirical support to this argument. They produce economic deprivation which affects political elites and leads to their subsequent removal from power (Jonge-Oudraat 2000). Moreover, for political sanctions to be effective they should empower local opposition groups rather than repress them. By empowering these groups the sanctioning country can accumulate valuable data on the political outcomes of the sanctions and the sender should avoid any measures which will undermine the activity of the opposition. For instance, if the opposition needs some materials for newspapers then sanctions should not prohibit its acquirement (Doxey 1987).

Caswell and Caswell (1981) illustrate the case of Iran that had a successful outcome due to the interference of the US which imposed economic sanctions on the former for taking fifty-two Americans hostages in 1979. The sanctions were in the form of asset freezes of the Iranian government in the US and outside its borders. Iran was deprived of utilizing $12 billion in bank deposits both in dollars and other currencies (French francs). The US simultaneously cut off any transaction of goods in the form of exports and imports between the two states and asked the UN Security Council to implement the same measures. Although the latter's action was vetoed by the USSR, other states such as Switzerland, Italy, etc. decreased commerce with Iran and Japan eventually ceased buying oil from the latter. In addition, the Iran-Iraq war, launched in 1980, considerably deteriorated economic condition of the state with the decrease of oil sale. Even importing did not fill country reserves which led to the drop of financial reserves. All these measures caused Iran consumption of most of its supplies and subsequent surrender of the US requirements. After approximately one year of the sanction imposition Iran released the US hostages. Although it is uncertain whether these measures by the US and foreign government were the reason for the Iran policy change, it clearly did have an impact on the Iran government resolution (Caswell and Caswell 1981).

Another case of successful outcome of economic sanction is that of Egypt in 1963 when it intervened in Yemen thus causing concerns over its destabilization policies in Saudi Arabia. To this the US threatened to impose sanctions in the form of cutting off aid and food unless Egypt took its troops out of Yemen. Although the government of Egypt implemented the request, government officials provoked anti-American sentiments among citizens. Egypt later supported Congo rebels by providing them with financial and military assistance. The US sanctions did not delay and suspended developmental aid and food supplies. After Egypt ceased its actions in Congo, the US dropped its sanctions. Although some cast the outcome as a failure on the side of the Egypt government, one cannot deny the impact of sanctions on the policy change of Egypt (Selden 1995).

When are Economic and Political Sanctions not effective?

A variety of literature exists on the argument that sanctions are not effective (Kimberly 1997; Pape 1997). Pape (1997) contradicts to the conventional view of sanctions which regard them as more liberal, more humane and as effective a foreign policy tool as military force. According to Pape (1997) the role of economic sanctions have been extensively exaggerated by casting it a label of "effectiveness". Those scholars who hold conventional wisdom have not considered the following reasons why sanctions fail. First, they have been successful only five percent of the times and not 34% as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) data claim.

Second, it is uncertain how long or to what extent the political cooperation between economically strong nation-states will continue and in case it fails, these powers would most likely focus on their national interests rather than on economic pressures on target countries. Third, the nature of target states as well as alternative of trading partners in the market should be taken into account. Thus, modern states have much stronger economies than other sanctioning states predict. Hence, these states are not that fragile and most of the times these sanctions do not affect them to the extent desired (Klotz 1996; Pape 1997; General Accounting Office 1992). Fourth, Kimberly (1997) and Wagner (1988) argue that economic sanctions are not only costly but the costs are tangible on both sides and both sides suffer economic imbalance. For instance, when a country has trade ties with the sanctioning country then the target country will most probably cease importing from the sending country thus giving other countries a competitive privilege in the market. This demonstrates that unilateral economic sanctions are more costly than useful.

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Research Design: Descriptive

Triangulation on the basis of comparative case studies of South Africa, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation was applied.

Methodology: Qualitative

Secondary data of scholarly articles, newspapers and journals were used.

$\boldsymbol{RQ_1}$: To what extent did economic and political sanctions drive policy change in South Africa?

$\boldsymbol{H_1}$: Economic and political sanctions imposed by the West had a positive effect on the policy change in South Africa.

$\boldsymbol{RQ_2}$: To what extent did economic and political sanctions drive policy change in the Iran nuclear proliferation deal?

$\boldsymbol{H_2}$**:** Economic and political sanctions led to the emergence of negotiations on the Iran nuclear proliferation deal.

$\boldsymbol{RQ_3}$: To what extent did economic and political sanctions drive policy change in Russia-Ukraine conflict?

$\boldsymbol{H_3}$**:** Economic and political sanctions moderated Russia’s behaviour in Ukraine.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA

After Afrikaner-supported National Party had gained power in 1948, it launched its apartheid policies, also referred to as segregation, aimed at increasing economy of South Africa by enabling the white with colossal supremacy over the black. This was a period in the South African history which was marked with the repression of civil and human rights of the non-white residents. The white intended to maintain their economic, political and social stability at the expense of the exploitation of the black. South Africa was considered to hold an "anocracy" type of regime at that time which was something intermediate between democratic and autocratic systems (Roekel 2016). The new government adopted a Population Registration Act which classified the population into four groups, namely the white, the colored, the Asiatic and the natives. With time different Acts passed led to the deprivation of political representation of the non-whites in the government labeling them as second class citizens that is Africans who were non-citizens. Thus, Africans were deprived of the basic rights they had as citizens and were deported from their homes to the so-called "Batustans", a place of cheap labor. Under the veil of combating communism during the mid 1960s South African government was continuing to conduct its foreign and domestic policies. As the situation escalated anti-apartheid movements influenced by South African organizations, networks and African National Congress (ANC) headed by Nelson Mandela emerged. These boycotts, massive campaigns and the violence utilized by ANC particularly targeted government institutions and those actors that were responsible for the apartheid. Nelson Mandela was arrested and imprisoned for thirty years. It was only in 1990 after Nelson Mandela was elected new president of South Africa and new government was established that half a century long apartheid came to an end (Nieuwhof and Ngeleza 2004; Horger 1996; Laverty 2007; Becker 1987).

The sanctions against South Africa have been the longest in the history as they lasted thirty-two years from 1962 to 1994. Hence, the first UN calls for sanctions against South Africa date back to 1962 with the oil embargo followed by a call of voluntary arms embargo a year later (the US and UK were against further actions). It was only in 1977 that the UN ultimately passed the resolution 418 for the sake of international peace and security in the form of mandatory arms embargo against South Africa followed by multilateral sanctions by the European Community in 1985. Western sanctions were aimed at coercing National Party to alter its behavior against the black. Sanctions were in the form of ban on air travel, investments, bank loans, imports of iron, coal, uranium, prohibition of trade unions, etc. As South Africa did not have any discovered oil reserves, oil sanctions against the former were in the form of prohibition of oil imports of the territory by Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Iraq (Laverty 2007; Manby 1992; Roekel 2016).

But the question is if it was the anti-apartheid movements that brought the downfall of the government and establishment of the new one or it was the sanctions that were at the core of the process.

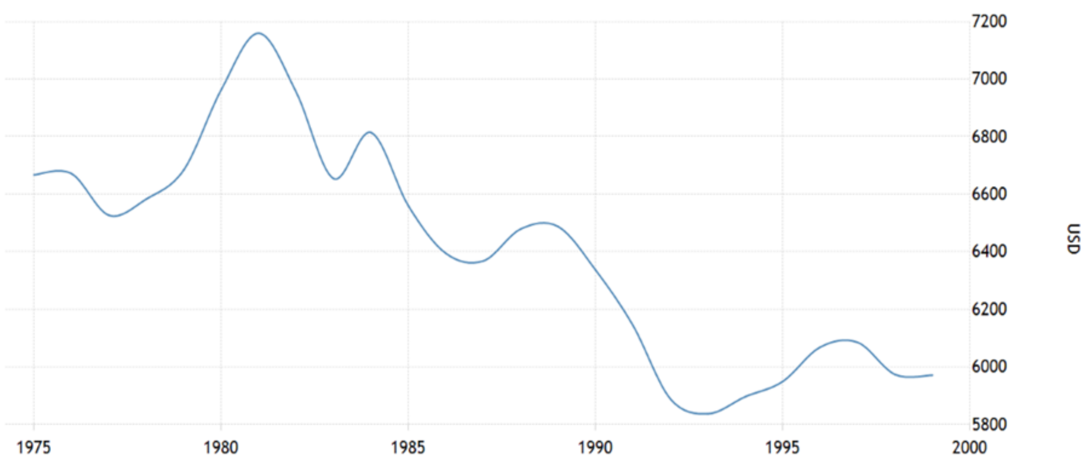
Nelson Mandela, the first post-apartheid president, cast the policy change in South Africa to both anti-apartheid movements and the sanctions imposed by the West. Former South African president and a devoted supporter of apartheid de Klerk (1999) signifies “international movements” as the cornerstone of successful outcome. It was the first time in history that comprehensive international measures were applied against a country in that scale. South Africa became isolated from the rest of the world due to restrictions on travel, economic hardships, social unrest and financial downfalls (De Klerk 1999).

De Klerk argued that it was rather violence that made the change. Besides, spending on military equipment extensively consumed economic resources. In addition, political unrest in the country worried a number of foreign investors who started to rethink about disinvestment. To bring back economic stability and economic prosperity de Klerk decided to make reforms in the apartheid regime. First, he released Nelson Mandela from approximately thirty years of imprisonment. Then he reviewed ban on a number of illegal organizations such as ANC, PAC, etc. But citizens did not want reforms they longed for the abolishment of the regime altogether. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the 1985 and 1986 trade sanctions and Comprehensive Anti-apartheid Act by the EC and the US respectively (that are considered the most expensive ones to date) deteriorated the situation. All these factors increased foreign debt and reduced private capital of South Africa in the 1980s (Laverty 2007).

The evidence demonstrates that sanctions impacted South Africa both politically to a larger extent and economically to a lesser extent. South Africa was extensively dependent on the trade with Western partners such as the US, Japan, etc. and huge segment of its economic growth was due to these ties. According to the IMF report the country indeed underwent economic deterioration by 1.5% during 1980s and 1990s. However, there was no direct influence of trade sanctions in South Africa. They could still trade with the countries that were not among the sanction senders. The import substitution and alternative allies brought the increase of the percentage of export from 1985 to 1989 albeit with some trade suffering. Statistically South Africa underwent only 0.5% loss of GNP which is not a large amount for such a country. Besides, South African economy was considered to be one of the most stable ones at the time, an evidence that made other neighboring countries depend on it economically (Becker 1987). This implies that imposition of economic sanctions on South Africa would most probably hit economically dependent nations more severely than the former (De Klerk 1999; Nieuwhof and Ngeleza 2004; Levy 1999).

The South Africa GDP per capita below demonstrates that the UN sanctions did not have a tangible impact on the country economy whereas multilateral sanctions imposed during 1985-1987 decreased the country GDP considerably from 6800 USD to 6400 USD.

Figure 1: South Africa GDP Per Capita



Source: www.tradingeconomics.com | World Bank

Furthermore, after the sanctions had been imposed, there was an upturn in white unemployment and an employment growth among the black thus resulting in the reduction of white wages. As apartheid regime could not overcome its financial hardships, it had to borrow from international banks. The latter, however, fearing of the growing economic instability, either ceased any kind of loans or made them short-term. As a consequence, the government faced with an increase of inflation from 11% in 1983 to approximately 19% in 1986. Moreover, because of oil embargo the country had no other choice but to sell its oil at rather low prices. It was the decline in private capital rather than governmental sanctions directed against the incumbent National Party that positively affected the outcome and drove policy change (De Klerk 1999; Nieuwhof and Ngeleza 2004; Levy 1999; Becker 1987).

Disinvestment, trade restrictions eventually brought deterioration of country economy with the accumulated high debt. Yet, debt crisis was a political rather than economic consequence as Africa was actually facing a political crisis with a destabilized political system and large scale anti-apartheid movements. In this case political crisis led to the emergence of economic one rather than the other way around. Large scale riots, boycotts and other forms of disobedience were also significant in pressing the government to change its regime (Manby 1992; Becker 1987).

Some specialists argue that sanctions did not hit South African economy extensively as most of the country exports came from gold bullion and metals which were not included in the sanction list (Fletcher, Cole, and McMorran 1988). In this sense, the reforms should not only be attributed to the sanctions but four significant events that took place in the 1990s; first, liberalization and subsequent collapse of the USSR, second, active political opposition by the black population and third, inefficiency and high economic costs of the preservation of apartheid system, fourth, psychological impact of being internationally isolated. Although sanctions were not the only factors that initiated policy shift in South Africa, their impact is still tangible in the process. Sanctions succeeded in the sense of unbanning the ANC and other organizations, abolishing apartheid system and releasing political prisoners. Nevertheless, they failed in providing “united, democratic and non-racial country” with no discrimination between the white and the black (Manby 1992; Levy 1999).

There is also a high probability that if sanctions were short-term they would not disrupt South African economy to the extent it did. Besides, the world economy, as a whole, was in a recession as the oil prices were gradually increasing while gold was losing its value. South African government realized that being internationally isolated it had no other choice than to break this isolation through implementation of strict economic measures and political development. This led to the launch of negotiations to change legal structure of apartheid with the more democratic system (Manby 1992).

The case of South Africa is unique firstly due to its measures of pressure imposed by international and non-governmental organizations, international governments and secondly owing to its purpose of imposition that is for the sake of morality, human rights protection rather than security and peace. Moreover, whenever political situation in South Africa seemed to worsen, international economic sanctions tightened, living standards deteriorated and unemployment among the black again increased (Manby 1992).

Hence, the African case is a good illustration that the more specific and economically costly are the sanctions by the imposing state the more effective will the outcome be in the long run provided that the country faces domestic upheavals as well. In this case sanctions were also successful as they targeted at the time a rather fragile, less developed state. Apart from economic costs, among the factors that impacted successful outcome of the sanctions were saliency and promptness of the goals, implementation speed of sanctions, sanction type applied as well as political strength and costs (Roekel 2016). Although economic sanctions did not hit the country significantly they eventually led to the political transformation.

THE CASE OF IRAN

As the theory of structural realism particularly Waltz's theory about defensive realism holds, sovereign states including Iran seek to self-help and maximize their national security with the most available means possible. In this context, Iran's inclination towards building its nuclear program is not only natural but indispensable for the enhancement of its national security.

In spite of the fact that the history of sanctions by the West on Iran date back to 1979-1981 when the hostage crisis occurred, Iran underwent unprecedented economic and political pressure from the West in the form of sanctions in 2000s when the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) headed by the UN found that Iran was violating international norms by conducting its nuclear proliferation program. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which Iran signed in 1967 claimed that Iran will not launch its nuclear program. In addition, another agreement, the IAEA Safeguards Agreement was signed in 1974 with approximately the same context. Nevertheless, the utilization of high masses of uranium and the existence of uranium enrichment plant at Natanz as well as of a heavy water reactor at Arak emerged some suspicions among the Western community that Iran had intentions of building nuclear weapons especially given the eight year war with Iraq which already possessed its nuclear weapon (Laub 2015).

To this the US, UN (Resolution 1696) and EU responded with imposition of corresponding economic and political measures in 2006. These measures were in the form of restrictions on financial and banking activities, namely ban on subsidiaries between foreign-based institutions and banks in Iran, the US also prohibited importers of Iranian oil to make any payments via Iran banks. As a consequence, many states cut transaction of goods with Iran. Sanctions also incorporated trade restrictions, asset freezes of renowned individuals, banks and institutions to curtail assistance of terrorism, travel bans, ban on weapons development and more importantly prohibition of any investment or service delivery in the energy sector by other states (Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs 2015; Laub 2015) .

In addition to the Resolution 1929, the US imposed another range of economic sanctions against Iran under the Accountability and Disinvestment Act in 2010 which was aimed at prohibiting delivery of goods and services as well as any investments, assets or loans in Iran. Apart from the UN, the US and EU sanctions, further sanctions against Iran were imposed by such states as Canada, Switzerland, Japan and South Korea that also targeted oil and gas sector in an attempt to extensively hit the country economy. In short, the aim of sanctions was complete isolation of the country by hitting its most vulnerable sector-oil and gas industry (Hamilton 2010; Tawat and Zdanovich 2015; Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs 2015; Laub 2015).

Yet, not all of the states were in consent on the imposition of sanctions against Iran. Russia and China were among the states that vetoed the resolution of sanctions. Both of the states had other motives behind their veto. They pursued national interests rather than security issues as a number of Chinese (SINOPEC) and Russian gas corporations (Gazprom) intend to make investments in Iran in the future (Tawat and Zdanovich 2015).

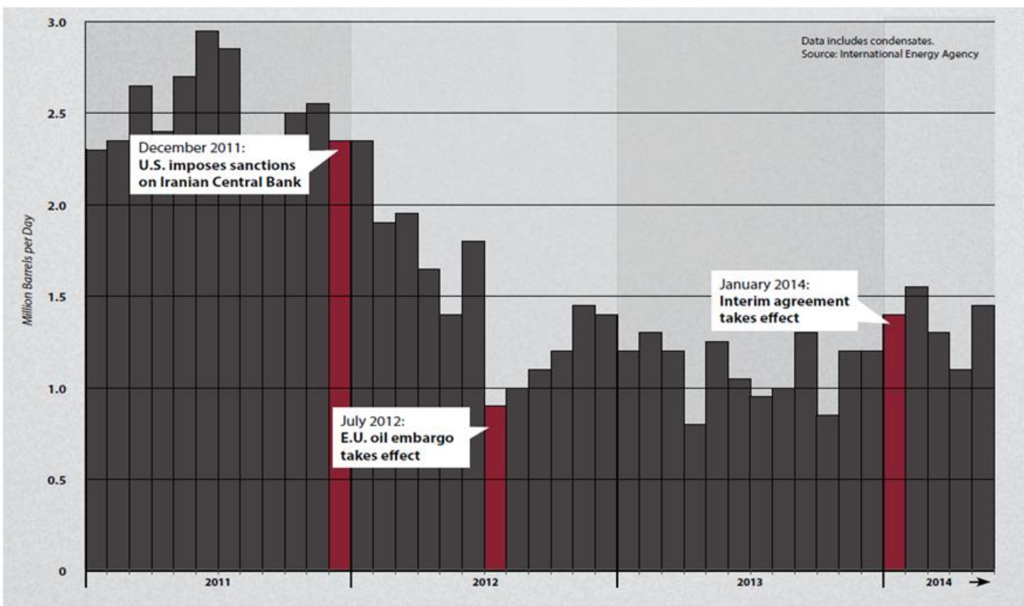
In 2013, Iran gave its consent to the inspections of its nuclear missiles as well as cessation of development of its nuclear proliferation in order to get rid of the sanctions imposed. Iran and the P5+1, namely the UN Security Council’s permanent members in the face of China, France, Russia, the UK, the US and Germany signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that lifted some sanctions from Iran, gave the latter access to its frozen $100 billion assets “in exchange for restriction in the amount of uranium used and interference by international inspectors to the sensitive zones”. Iran also had to decrease the amount of centrifuges to 5.060 and shut down the reactor of Arak. This Agreement came into effect only in July 2015. The JCPOA stopped decreasing Iran’s export of oil and now it could be sold internationally. Most part of the economic sanctions imposed by the US, EU and UN were ultimately lifted in January, 2016 provided that Iran goes on with its non-proliferation deal. The other part of relief in sanctions will be noted when Iran completes all the necessary conditions of the JCPOA. Moreover, there is always the possibility of snap-back unless Iran sticks strictly to the JCPOA (Laub 2015; Robbins 2013).

But the question is what triggered these negotiations? Is it the sanctions or there are other reasons behind this decision? Some scholars argue that it is the sanctions that made Iran move towards negotiations. Iran’s stability has considerably deteriorated ever since the imposition of economic and political measures. Not only did Iran’s oil export declined by half but disagreements emerged among the political elite over the decision of negotiations.

Thus, it becomes apparent, that for the country with petro regime the best available means to coerce it to policy or behavioral change is to strike its core industry that is gas and oil reserves. Given that Iran gas and oil reserves make up 10% of the world’s energy reserves (fourth largest internationally), make up half of the country’s national revenue and 80% of its foreign currency revenue blocking Iran’s oil exports would make the nuclear program initiation much more costly and would eventually bring the country to the desired negotiations (Hamilton 2010; Tawat and Zdanovich 2015; Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs 2015; Laub 2015).

As the following graph indicates from the time of the sanction imposition up to the year 2014 Iran experienced high downfall in oil exports that is approximately 71% reduction from 2.8bbl/d to 0.8bbl/d from 2011 to 2013. The severest falls in the oil exports were in 2012 when the US imposed sanctions on Iran's central bank reducing to 1.4bbl/d of exports and July when the European Union embargo came into effect resulting in a decrease to 0.8bbl/d After the negotiations (interim agreement) between P5+1 and Iran launched in January 2014 oil exports started to gradually increase reaching to 1.6bbl/d.

Figure 2: Impact of Sanctions on Crude Oil Exports



Data includes condensates
Source: International Energy Agency

As the theory holds, economic and political sanctions will not have devastating effect provided that the targeting country has alternatives in the market. To bring its economic balance back Iran embarked its sale of oil to Asian countries, namely Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and especially China, India, Turkey. It has also signed cooperation contracts with these countries that will bring Islamic Republic $4.5 billion investment in its oil and gas industry. It also gathered some investors in the field of technologies. Iran is working on a number of projects, namely National Development Fund of Iran (NDFI), Five-year Socio-Economic Development Plan, etc. to make its domestic market more productive, independent and attractive for foreign investors (Tawat and Zdanovich 2015).

The following graph demonstrates crude oil exports with the main partners of the Islamic Republic and the changes in their trade before and after sanctions have been imposed. According to the data of 2011 and 2014 some of the largest importers of Iranian oil, namely the EU, China, Japan, India, South Korea and Turkey either ceased importing of the Iranian oil altogether (the EU, South Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore) or cut the amount imported such as China (-25%), Japan, India, South Korea, Turkey (-40%) and Taiwan (-70%).

Table 1: Iran Crude Oil Exports, Pre- and Post-Sanctions

Measured in barrels/day

Buyer	Average Pre-Sanctions (2011)	Average Post-Interim Agreement (2014-present)	Percent change
European Union	600,000	*Negligible*	-100%
China	550,000	410,000	-25%
Japan	325,000	190,000	-40%
India	320,000	190,000	-40%
South Korea	230,000	130,000	-40%
Turkey	200,000	120,000	-40%
South Africa	80,000	0	-100%
Malaysia	55,000	0	-100%
Sri Lanka	35,000	*Negligible*	-100%
Taiwan	35,000	10,000	-70%
Singapore	20,000	0	-100%
Other	55,000	*Negligible*	-100%
Total	**2.505 million**	**1.057 million**	-60%

Note: Includes condensates.
Data: International Energy Agency: Congressional Research Service
Source: Congressional Research Service

According to the data from International Monetary Fund Real GDP growth extensively decreased from 2010/2011 to 2013/14 during the times of severe pressure from the international community from 6.6% to -1.9% respectively and started to gradually increase again from the 2014/15 onwards up to 4.0% when the negotiations started with Iran the number reaching to 6.5% in the year 2016/2017 (IMF 2017; Devarajan and Mottaghi 2015).

The restrictions on oil and gas industry of Iran by the West resulted in subsequent deterioration of political condition of the country as well. These socio-political bad conditions caused dissatisfaction with the government decisions and emergence of demonstrations against their nuclear proliferation policy. The poll conducted among the citizens of Iran indicated that although Iranians support nuclear project they are more in favor of a nuclear non-proliferation treaty. A large proportion of the population blames sanctions rather than government for economic deterioration that in turn results in the rise of anti-Western sentiments in the country and ultimately leads to the gradual decline of the West's influence in the region. In addition, citizens regard both sanctions imposed by international community and President Ahmadinejad's led populist policies as the cause of 25% inflation in the economy. Moreover, some citizens even view election of the President Rouhani as an obstacle towards democratization and liberalization (Beehner 2007; Jacobson 2008; Macaluso 2014).

As one of the officials put it "The society has become nuanced in its political awareness. It can be analyzed to see how far the current economic conditions are a result of Western pressure and Western double standards and to what extent it is the doing of the Iranian government" (Khajehpour, et al. 2013, 16). A number of officials in the government system attempt to use the given situation in order to benefit from the chaotic situation which results in subsidy reforms, spread of corruption and mismanagement in the government (Khajehpour, et al. 2013).

After all, the stick and carrots implemented by the Obama administration reveals that although sanctions considerably impacted financial and economic sector of the country they did not have a huge political impact that would in turn bring up a policy change. Besides, Iran could mitigate economic effect by finding alternative investors, creating informal banking exchange mechanisms (barter system) and concentrating on hydrocarbon products rather than crude oil as well as increasing its GDP through the revenues aggregated via VAT and privatization. Likewise, sanctions could not disrupt political stability of the country. In this sense, the launch of the negotiations may also be attributed to Iran's intention to have a say in the international community particularly in the Middle East than to end up in complete isolation (Macaluso 2014).

Thus, fifty percent of the fall of economy is a result of the sanctions while the other fifty percent is a direct result of failed economic policies by the government (Khajehpour, et al. 2013). As the sanctions are now in the phase of negotiations it is indeed hard to anticipate their future outcome. However, one can claim that sanctions against Iran have been partially successful economically to a greater extent and politically to a lesser extent.

THE CASE OF RUSSIA

In November 2013 after the Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych refused to sign the Association Agreement with the West, the Ukrainian crisis under the name of “Euromaidan” broke out. The pro-European wing who provisioned their future in the adaptation of the European norms and culture blamed Yanukovych for supporting the Russian side and organized large scale movements and protests against the government. After Yanukovych had fled Kiev on February 2014, the pro-European leaders took power which resulted in anti-revolution and pro-Russian boycotts and movements in Eastern Ukraine, namely in Kharkiv, Luhansk, Odessa and Donetsk. As the situation escalated and Russian troops entered Crimea and Sevastopol to protect its civilians, the referendum held in Crimea resulted in the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation (Tawat and Zdanovich 2015; Wang 2015).

Russian actions in Ukraine were treated as acts of aggression and violation of Ukrainian territorial integrity and security by such international actors as the UN, EU, NATO, PACE, OSCE and the US. They also blamed Russia for supporting pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine, particularly in Donetsk and Luhansk regions also called Donbass. As a consequence, to hold Russian further aggressive actions in the post-Soviet area punitive measures, namely three-tiered economic and political sanctions were imposed on the Russian Federation (Wang 2015; Nephew and Nephew 2016).

Overall, these three tiers were imposed on private, financial, energetic and military spheres and were targeting organizations, individuals and public elite. The actors involved in the imposition of these sanctions include but are not limited to the EU, the US, the UN, Australia, Canada, Japan. The first tier of sanctions which was imposed on March, 2014 by the US and the

EU was aimed at asset freezes, visa bans and blocking on those people's property who supported Russian stance and change of the government in Crimea. The number of those affected by sanctions increased to more than hundred with thirty organizations targeted (Bond, Odendahl, and Rankin 2015; Gros and Mustilli 2016).

The second tier was imposed on April 2014 and was aimed at prohibiting any kind of trade, investment or financial transactions between the European states and Crimea. As the first and second tier of sanctions did not have a tangible effect on the economy, the third tier of sanctions (July 2014) was imposed on Russia targeting its most vulnerable sector-oil and gas industry. Like Iran, more than fifty percent of the Russia's national revenue comes from its gas and oil industry. Among the energy sectors targeted by the West were such major companies as Gazprom, Transneft, Rosneft, etc. Sanctions particularly targeted Russian five state banks as well as military and energetic sectors by putting a ban on the export of Russian oil and gas to the European community and the dual-used items that could also be utilized for the arms production (Bond, et al. 2015; Gros and Mustilli 2016).

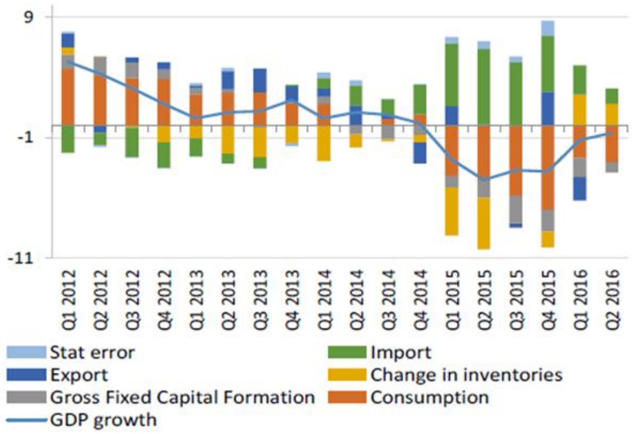
As a response to the Western sanctions, Russia prohibited importing any agricultural products from the Western community (food embargo), namely from Australia, Canada, Norway, the US and EU. Russia is considered to be the second largest importer of the EU agricultural products. Hence, the agricultural embargo by Russia caused $5.1 billion loss on the EU. This in turn promoted Russian manufacturers to rely on domestic production rather than on foreign goods. To balance its economy and reduce the effect of sanctions on its economy the EU has already found a replacement for its exports among the DRC countries. Not only did Russia impose food embargo on the Western community but it has also put sanctions on some US government members and politicians. Besides, many European countries are still dependent on the Russian gas which comes to Europe through Ukraine and blocking this route would significantly press the former (Kyselchuk and Marioni 2015; Bagheri and Akbarpour 2016; Veebel and Markus 2016).

But the question is to what extent did economic and political sanctions affect Russian economy and internal stability and if they were effective in driving a policy change in Russia-Ukraine conflict?

As President Vladimir Putin has put it “Sanctions are hurting us. We hear that they are not a problem, but they are, particularly with technology transfers in oil and gas" (Rapoza 2016). Although the heads of the gas and oil companies argued that sanctions would not deteriorate these companies’ activity, in half a year both of the heads of major gas companies Gazpromneft and Rosneft asked for financial assistance from the government. The amount of oil and gas exports as well as gas production decreased by almost 3.8% and 4.2% from 2013 to 2014 respectively (Tawat and Zdanovich 2015).

With the overall decline of the global oil prices by 50% (decrease to 30$ per barrel) in 2015 and imposition of Western sanctions in the same year, the Russian ruble fell as well thus triggering high inflation (reaching to 12.9% in 2014) and resulting in low GDP (Thompson 2015; Luhn 2016). Russia faced rise in risk premiums and capital outflows ($210 billion from 2014-2015) that caused approximately 70% national currency depreciation in 2014. The amount of real wages fell (9.5% in 2014) and the population got poorer with 2.3 million citizens ending in poverty. Russian investment sector was also suffering (Stepanyan et al. 2015; International Montary Fund 2015).

Figure 3: Household Consumption Put the Largest Negative Drag on GDP Growth (Year-on-Year Growth Composition, Percent)



Source: World Bank Group 2015

Russia has been undergoing economic hardships since 2014 with the fall of the GDP by 3.7% in 2015 (the highest since 2009) compared to 2014 (0.7%) but it still seeks means to stabilize its economy. Russia is still in the midst of the recession and according to the data from the World Bank the ruble weakened again in 2015 (with a further increase in 2016 reaching to 1.7 cent per ruble in 2017) and the domestic demand is still low, the GDP reduction is slowing down (fall of 0.9% in 2016 compared to 3.7% decline in 2015). The fiscal policy integrated by Russia in 2014 in order to overcome the recession paved the way out from the economic hardship. Russia was successful in cutting the expenditure, setting bank recapitalization and recovering the Reserve Fund. The Russian external debt decreased from 729$ billion to 519$ billion from 2014 to 2016 respectively. Financial and economic trends are gradually stabilizing. Inflation decreased by half, from 15.9% to 7.4% from 2015 to 2016 respectively. Banking sector is also coming into balance. A slight surplus in the budget of regional governments and decrease of unemployment (5.6%) were estimated in 2016. Average oil prices are increasing with time. Oil and gas exports and exports of other goods fell by almost 30.5% in 2014 and by 13.4% in

2016 as a result of the ban on imports of food from Europe and the food embargo from Turkey respectively. In other years the amount of imports was fluctuating with a sharp increase in 2015 and gradual decrease thereafter (Luhn 2016; World Bank Group 2016; Central Bank of Russia 2017).

Nevertheless, Russia did not end up in isolation as the Western community expected. It is still a member of large international organizations namely G20, WTO and BRICS. Furthermore, there are some countries in the European community that are still dependent on the Russian oil and gas supplies and strongly oppose to the Western sanctions among them Italy, Hungary, Finland, Germany (Kyselchuk and Marioni 2015; Emmott and Baczynska 2016). A number of countries are tied with Russia through energy that the latter provides them with (more than 5%) (Stepanyan et al. 2015).

To counterbalance her losses in the oil and gas industry and to gain political advantage, Russia turned from the Western market to the Asian one, particularly to the BRICS. Russia and China signed an agreement on the basis of which Russia will export her gas to China starting from 2018. Russia also has twenty-five joint agreements with India on the development of the IT sector in the country. Russia started using national currencies of China, Iran and India when doing trade transactions with the latter (Bond, Odendahl, and Rankin 2015).

With time Russia is diminishing the impact of sanctions and stabilizing its economy. This is primarily attributed to the global economic and business interests in Russia. A number of investors are ready to adapt to the current conditions and finance state owned businesses. In order to set balance in the fiscal sector, spending cuts will be carried out in the spheres of education, healthcare and defense. In addition, Russia began to boost its domestic products in order to limit its dependency on the foreign market (Luhn 2016). According to the International Monetary Fund 1.1% economic growth is anticipated for 2017 with the increased currency of 58.91 ruble for each dollar. Oil prices have also increased to 108% from 2016 enabling Russia to fill its state budget (Rosenberg 2017; International Monetary Fund 2016; Nelson 2015).

According to the Western commentators Russia has been deploying its military forces in the Eastern regions of Ukraine under the label of "trainings" with the number of troops exceeding from 10.000 in 2015 to 44.000 in 2017. Moreover, large scale military operations have evolved between armed separatists and government soldiers quite recently. Although Russia and Ukraine have signed the Minsk Agreement on the truce of both sides, there have been many occasions of violations (more than 300.000) and explosions (nearly 3000) witnessed by the OSCE Minsk Group since 2017 that killed many civilians. The UN has also extensively condemned Russian "aggressive actions" in the east of Ukraine and threatened to maintain sanctions in force until Russia acts peacefully in the peninsula. Given that the new American President Donald Trump is seeking ways to improve relations with Russia the UN expects reciprocal behaviour by Russia namely return of the peninsula to Ukraine (Fox News 2017; Blank 2017).

Military actions by Russian separatists in Ukraine are regarded as a threat not only to the latter but also to the whole region. The West claims that Russia is building military arsenal, it has created the three Guards Tank Armies in Ukraine which could easily be moved in the direction of Belarus, the Caucasus and the Middle East if needed. It seems that Russia is in the preparatory phase of the attack by deploying its arsenal in Ukraine. Ukrainian side is also enriching its military equipment for confrontation. In 2016 approximately 6.500 cyber attacks were carried out by Russia against the Ukrainian ministries and institutions. Nevertheless, Russia continuously denies arming separatists in Eastern Ukraine (Blank 2017).

Moreover, the US blames Russia for the rising intensity of military and diplomatic actions not only in Syria but also in Libya and Afghanistan. Russia is accused of providing arms supplies to Libya and political legitimacy and artillery to Afghanistan for the purpose of raising its power in the Middle East. While it is allegedly intervening in Libya and Afghanistan, it has mitigated its intervention in Syria. On March 14, 2016, Russia has announced that it was going to withdraw its troops from Syria as it had mostly achieved its objective (Browne 2017; Quinn 2016).

Hence, the lack of effectiveness of the Western sanctions on Russia may be conditioned by the lack of their maintenance. Heads of a number of European countries doubt in the positive outcome of these sanctions (Rosenberg 2017). Besides, they are assessed as ambiguous because of a lack of a specific aim, and because the range of sanctions applied is weak in making policy change. Russian oil and gas industry is still exporting its reserves and Putin is still enjoying large popularity and support of his citizens. Taking all these into consideration it is highly unlikely that Russia will change its policy in Ukraine (Veebel and Markus 2016).

Compared to South Africa and to Iran to a lesser extent, Western sanctions did not make any tangible political impact on Russia. The majority of the Russian population blamed on the West and took the governmental stance in the Ukrainian conflict. As the polls conducted after the economic sanctions had been imposed demonstrated, 85% of the population supported Putin's decision of annexation of Crimea (Tawat and Zdanovich 2015).

After all, Russian economy is too strong and resilient to be impacted to the degree desired by the West. The longer sanctions remain imposed, the milder their impact becomes in the case of Russia as it finds alternative ways of stabilizing its economy. The preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of sanctions in driving a policy change in Russian behavior in Ukraine is negative. Although we can partially accept that Russian behavior has changed, sanctions did not drive to a Russian policy change in Ukraine till now. Given that political sanctions did not have expected political impact in Russia, economic impact was the only tangible outcome of these sanctions. The main failure of the Western sanctions was the broad aims rather than a specific goal of the international community. They focused more on other goals, namely to show Russian political figures that actions against Ukraine are unacceptable, to restrain advancement of the Russian economy in the global market and to hit the Russian economy in the long-term by causing high costs. In this sense, the main aim that is to coerce Russian to change its behavior in Ukraine was slightly touched upon (Veebel and Markus 2016). At last, West should either lift the sanctions and find other strategies to have a change in the Russian policy or make Russia end up in complete isolation (by raising economic costs) which is unrealistic for such a powerful country as Russia.

CONCLUSION

After discussing all the three distinct cases where economic and political sanctions have been applied, namely the cases of South Africa, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation it becomes apparent that the fear of international isolation, high economic costs, saliency and promptness of the goal, the length of sanctions as well as the kind of sanctions imposed are determining factors for the sanction effectiveness.

The discussion of the three separate cases reveals that the hypothesis of the first research question is accepted as the economic and political sanctions imposed by the West on South Africa were effective for the policy change. They impacted the country politically to a larger extent and economically to a lesser extent. Nevertheless, it was not only sanctions but also domestic anti-apartheid movements that drove this change in South Africa and ended a century long apartheid government.

Although Western sanctions against Iran nuclear proliferation deal drove the country to negotiations it did not end up in a policy change altogether. The sanctions are not lifted completely and the negotiations are still in the process. Hence, second hypothesis is partially accepted as sanctions against Iran impacted the country economically to a greater extent and politically to a lesser extent. Iran could mitigate economic impact by finding alternative investors, creating informal banking exchange mechanisms (barter system), focusing on hydrocarbon products rather than crude oil and increasing its GDP through the revenues accumulated via VAT and privatization.

The preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of sanctions in driving a policy change in Russian behavior in Ukraine is negative. Although the Russian economy deteriorated radically which also coincided with the fall of the oil prices and corresponding fall of the Russian ruble, sanctions did not have a large political impact and did not seriously change Russia's behavior. Besides, Russian economy is too strong to be impacted to the degree desired by the West. The longer sanctions remain imposed, the milder their impact becomes in the case of Russia as it finds alternatives for strengthening its economy. Although sanctions have been in force for quite some time, it is really hard to assess their effectiveness. For the moment, it is apparent, that influencing Russia with sanctions is difficult.

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