## Executive Summary

The coercive force of economic sanctions is generally inadequate to affect the outcome of critical, time-urgent developments in international relations. The difficulties to be overcome are so great that it may only be useful to conceive of coercive sanctions as a means of punishment and deterrence. The emphasis of United Nations efforts has shifted to what amounts to economic warfare, or quasi-warfare. The centre piece in this strategy has been embargoes placed on the sale of arms, and on the transfer of advanced technology. Economic sanctions have also acquired the political functions within the world community of registering protest, at times of deflecting pressure for other forms of action, and at others of crystallizing a collective response to violations of international peace and morality. These political and symbolic functions of sanctions, however, tend to defeat the ostensible purpose of providing a non-violent means of managing world affairs. Perhaps most disturbing is the idea that the imposition of sanctions could become nothing more than a political formula to overcome a public reluctance to countenance official violence.

Study of the history of economic warfare suggests that new forms of multilaterally approved sanctions could play a useful role in international affairs as pro-active forces with political and economic mechanisms which do not depend inherently upon fuller-scope coercion for their consummation. The mercantilist principle found some place in a 19th century practice known as "pacific blockade" which used a naval blockade to promote limited purposes without resort to war and without abandoning the advantages of a non-belligerent relationship. It is worth considering the possibility that a new system of sanctions analogous to the forms of mercantilist trade war and pacific blockade should be added to the arsenal of the United Nations, a system employing money to halt or reverse the problem created by the target state. The trade embargo could be replaced in part by a tax placed on the target state's imports and exports set by the United Nations at the level which generated maximum revenue. The funds so raised would be employed to promote the United Nations agenda. Although such a tax would inevitably reduce the flow of trade from and to the target state, employment of the revenue generated by it for commercial and aid projects could restore a large part of the lost volume of world trade, and create opportunities for international business to recover lost profits by pursuit of new investment opportunities.