

## I. Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, UN-sponsored sanctions have become a prominent tool of multilateral statecraft. Increasingly, sanctions are viewed as legitimate means of responding not only to inter-state aggression, but also to intra-state humanitarian crises, civil wars, illegal seizures of power, arms proliferation, and international terrorism.

At the same time, there is growing concern that sanctions, as practiced in the past, have been both ineffective and inhumane. For the past three decades, states have tended to impose sanctions in a manner that has been distinctly lacking in nuance. The policies of sanctioning states - 'senders' in the sanctions literature - seem often to have been guided by one, overriding assumption: that sanctions are most likely to be effective to the extent that they inflict economic isolation and pain on the 'target.' Even when political considerations have resulted in the adoption of relatively weak measures, the 'brute force' philosophy of sanctions has been implicit in the debate as an ideal type.

Many scholars have long recognized that this theory of sanctions provides an insufficient account of the conditions under which sanctions bring about desirable policy change. To put it in stark terms, not only are comprehensive sanctions rarely effective; they are often both counterproductive in terms of effectiveness, and carry significant humanitarian consequences.

Recent experience, most notably in Iraq and Haiti, seems to have driven these lessons home. There now exists a broad-based consensus among UN member states that comprehensive sanctions are rarely the best way of achieving any diplomatic objective. The terms of the sanctions debate have apparently shifted from "when will comprehensive sanctions work?" to "how can sanctions be targetted to achieve their goals in a more effective and humane fashion?"

However, it bears noting that this limited approach to sanctions is not necessarily indicative of a newfound enlightenment: it is also consistent with the interests of some member states which - for various commercial and political reasons - wish to limit the scope of collective measures undertaken by the UN. Given these biases, it is vitally important that the debate concerning sanctions should be placed on a solid empirical and theoretical foundation.

Moreover, the uncertainty engendered by the shifting political terrain of the sanctions debate is compounded by other factors, such as the increased prominence of humanitarian NGOs, the globalization of finance, and the ubiquitous role played by computers and communications technology in the enforcement and evasion of sanctions. All of these factors present policymakers with new challenges and opportunities in the use of these measures.

This study locates the sanctions debate in the context of this new political and material terrain. More importantly, it does so in a way that provides policymakers with concrete suggestions for improving the effectiveness of sanctions and mitigating their humanitarian impact. It also provides a realistic appraisal of the limitations of sanctions, and the relative merits of other instruments of statecraft, including positive inducements, constructive engagement, and the threat and use of force. Finally, it demonstrates how Canada can use its