

- Arms embargoes are often desirable, but they will remain largely ineffectual unless they are tightly enforced, and supplemented by efforts to reduce the global arms trade, particularly in regions which are prone to violent conflict.
- Sanctions are rarely effective as coercive instruments, but they may be more effective in deterring the target, and in deterring other potential wrong-doers from adopting similar objectionable policies. They can also be valuable in their capacity to strengthen international norms.
- The threat of sanctions is often more valuable than the practice of sanctions. Sanctions therefore have tremendous potential as an instrument of preventive diplomacy. However, this potential will remain unrealized unless threats of sanctions are widely viewed as credible, realistic, substantively painful, and likely to be effectively monitored and enforced.
- It is imperative to view sanctions within the context of a broader diplomatic demarche. This study points to the conditions under which the threat of force is a desirable accompaniment to a sanctions programme, and shows how sanctions can complement a strategy of constructive engagement.
- States should be willing to consider the idea that the threat or use of force is sometimes a more effective, humane, and cost-effective means of dealing with real or potential violent conflict.
- When designing sanctions, states must take account of the political difficulties of lifting sanctions which have not brought about the desired change in the behaviour of the target. If they do not do so, they may be tempted to leave ineffective, inhumane sanctions in place for an indefinite period.

3. Process-oriented reforms

This study supports the idea of a 'sanctions forum': a group of concerned small- and middle-powers which would explore options for sanctions reform and work to build support for the implementation of these reforms. The experience with the recent landmines treaty suggests that the effectiveness of such an initiative would be greatly enhanced by the active involvement of NGOs and other elements of civil society. The sanctions forum should concentrate on reforms in three areas: strategic planning, the assessment and management of humanitarian consequences, and the administration and enforcement of sanctions.

a) Strategic planning

- As a member of the Security Council, Canada may wish to encourage the use of time-limited sanctions. By imposing strong sanctions (such as trade embargoes) for a short period of time, senders could inflict substantial pain on the target without appearing arbitrarily vindictive, risking long-term damage to the target economy, or causing massive humanitarian suffering.