

The cover features a central image of the Earth as a globe, positioned within a target symbol consisting of several concentric red circles. The background is a light grey surface with a network of dark grey cracks, suggesting a fractured or damaged state. The title 'SANCTIONS' is written in large, bold, red capital letters across the top. Below it, the subtitle 'A WRECKING BALL IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY' is written in white capital letters on a black rectangular background. At the bottom, the text 'AN ANTHOLOGY BY SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS' and 'A PROJECT OF THE SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN' is displayed in black capital letters. In the bottom right corner, a red-bordered box contains the text 'Second Edition' in red, slanted capital letters.

SANCTIONS

A WRECKING BALL IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY

**AN ANTHOLOGY BY SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS
A PROJECT OF THE *SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN***

Second Edition

What countries are sanctioned?

US sanctions affect a third of humanity with more than 8,000 measures impacting more than 40 countries. The countries imposing economic sanctions are the wealthiest, the most powerful, and the most industrially developed countries in the world. The intention is to choke the economies of developing countries, most of which were formerly colonized. Sanctions on one country impact the economies of the whole region. As of September 2022 it includes the following countries:

Afghanistan	Haiti	Paraguay
Belarus	Iran	Russia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Iraq	Serbia
Central African Republic	Korea – DPRK	Somalia
China – PRC	Laos	South Sudan
Congo – DRC	Lebanon	Sudan
Cuba	Liberia	Syria
Cyprus	Libya	Tunisia
Eritrea	Mali	Turkey
Ethiopia	Moldova	Uganda
Guinea	Montenegro	Venezuela
Guinea–Bissau	Myanmar	Yemen
	Nicaragua	Zimbabwe
	Palestine	

The U.S., UK, EU countries and the UN Security Council, at the demand of the U.S., use this form of economic warfare. The U.S. far exceeds any other country in the number of countries they have strangled with economic sanctions. Sanctions can be imposed by different U.S. government departments.

U.S. Dept of Treasury - OFAC: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/office-of-foreign-assets-control-sanctions-programs-and-information>

U.S. Department of Commerce: <https://www.bis.doc.gov/index.php/regulations/export-administration-regulations-ear>

U.S. Department of State: https://www.pmdotc.state.gov/?id=ddtc_public_portal_compliance_landing

EU Measures in force: <https://sanctio.com/en>

UK Measures in force: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-sanctions-list>

UN Security Council: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/images/homepage/security_council_sanctions_regimes.pdf (As of October 2022.)

Acclaim for the book

What people are saying about: *Sanctions, A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy* –

“... [A]n extremely important contribution to the antiwar movement. ... necessary reading for all antiwar activists.
–*Joe Lombardo, Coordinator of United National Anti-War Coalition (UNAC)*

“An important book about a little understood problem creating global havoc in our time, this unique collection of essays and articles by activists from every corner of our beleaguered planet destroys the myth that sanctions are some kind of more benign form of warfare....[giving] well-documented examples in dozens of countries who have suffered or currently suffer so grievously at the hands of US indifference to the catastrophic consequences of cruel sanctions.” –*Alice Slater, Board of World Beyond War, Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and UN NGO Rep. of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation*

"What are thought of as mere limits on financial transactions are a form of warfare which kill as surely as bombs and bullets. Sanctions are war crimes, violating prohibitions against the targeting of civilian populations. This book is vital to understanding how the United States and its allies create suffering around the world." –*Margaret Kimberley, Executive Editor of Black Agenda Report*

“The U.S. government is illegally punishing a third of humanity through an action one hardly ever hears about ... virtually never ... with any honesty. ... Here is a book laying out for us what sanctions are, what harm they do, and what we can do about them – all topics glaringly absent from major media outlets. Read it and share it everywhere.” –*David Swanson, Executive Director of World Beyond War*

“... [M]anages to deftly condense history and make accessible the secretive mechanics of U.S. covert warfare – which is what sanctions truly are. ...this book should be on every professors’ required reading list for students.” –*Gloria Guillo, Green Renaissance-Sovereign Rights Movement*

“The reality of [sanctions] is laid out in detail in "Sanctions: A Wrecking Ball in A Global Economy"... a must read for those who want to bring to an end this cruel tool of US foreign policy.” –*John V. Walsh, Professor of Physiology and Neuroscience at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School*

Observations by students at Hostos Community College, New York City, after attending a Sanctions Kill presentation, December 2022:

“I learned that –

“...there are about 40 countries that are sanctioned”

“...America says it’s a great country, ... [and] can help change the world, but decides not to”

“...sanctions affect the poorest people the most”

“...we have a lot of issues and it’s not just the school. Covid brought a lot of overwhelming situations all around the world. I didn’t know there were not enough syringes in Cuba and 40 more countries to vaccinate the people. There’s a lot of misinformation”

“...there is injustice that’s going around the world and how it’s all justified!”

“...sanctions affect the poorest people the most”

“...several Non-Tariff measures imposed by the US are being used to constrain development in many countries affecting the right to food and trade of developing nations”

“...how sanctions affect basically everyone”

“...I am interested in learning and contributing to improve this issue globally, however I can help”

Sanctions

A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy

An anthology by social justice activists

A Project of the SanctionsKill Campaign

Editor: Sara Flounders

World View Forum

Second Editon: 2023

Sanctions

A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy

World View Forum

NY, NY

We want to make the ideas in this book available as widely as possible. Any properly attributed selection of part of a chapter within “fair use” guidelines may be used without permission.

This book is available at special discounts for bulk purchase for sales promotion, premiums, fund raising, educational or institutional work.

ISBN: 978-0-89567-204-9

ISBN: 978-0-89567-203-2 ebook

Second Edition, Copyright © 2023

Editor: Sara Flounders

Design and Production Coordinator: Judy Bello

**Production Team: Paddy Colligan, Stephanie Hedgecoke, Zach Kerner,
Raymond Tyler, Jim Wallace**

Design and Cover Art: Lyn Neeley, Ted Kelly, Alex Mazumder

Ramsey Clark 1927-2021
Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann 1933-2017

*We dedicate our Sanctions Kill book
to two courageous, out-spoken defenders
of those targeted by U.S. imperial aggression:
Ramsey Clark of the United States
and
Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann of Nicaragua.*

They used their positions of political, religious and diplomatic power in their home countries and in the international arena to expose sanctions as a crime against humanity. Again and again they met with the people living under sanctions seeing first hand how sanctions affected them.

Then they exposed the realities of life under sanctions to the people in the countries imposing the sanctions. Ramsey and Miguel made it clear that it is the most vulnerable who are affected and that sanctions are not some gentle alternative to bombing but a deeply destructive and totally cruel weapon against humanity.

They led the way against the inhumane use of sanctions in our late 20th century/early 21st century world. We will continue their work.

Table of Contents

Introduction: Sanctions, a Wrecking Ball in A Global Economy

by Sara Flounders, May 2022

v

Sanctions on Russia and China have boomeranged. No matter the cost and collateral damage, the U.S. consciously demolishes the globalized world economy to maintain its hegemonic control.

Section I: A General Understanding of Sanctions

What Are Sanctions?

2

Sanctions Kill Toolkit

by Margaret Flowers, 2020

3

Sanctions are explained using an audience friendly powerpoint presentation with script showing how this economic warfare works, who is impacted by it and how you can organize to oppose sanctions.

US Sanctions: War by Other Means

by Rick Sterling, John Philpot, David Paul, 2022

17

Summary of the investigative report issued by Sanctions Kill on how sanctions affect dozens of countries. The full 40-page report is a companion piece to this book.

Class Warfare and Socialist Resistance in Latin America

by Ajamu Baraka, November 2021

21

How Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela pose a threat to the U.S. by the power of example. The RENACER Act against Nicaragua is punishment meted out by the U.S.

U.S. Economic Terrorism Will Backfire, Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister

by Ben Norton and Max Blumenthal, December 2019

25

Iran's foreign minister Javad Zarif discusses creative ways that countries have found to break the grip of sanctions.

Pan-African and International Solidarity will Break Sanctions

by the All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party, July 2020

29

When Zimbabwe, Cuba and Venezuela implement programs in their people's interest, the U.S. answers with harsh sanctions. Is the U.S. all-powerful?

US Imposed Economic Sanctions: The Big Heist

by Lauren Smith, July 2022

33

Economic sanctions justify and conceal theft, through asset freezes and seizures, at a rate only previously accomplished through invasion and occupation. They also prop up an unsustainable financial house of cards and buttress troubled industries by establishing them as monopolies.

Recentering Internationalism: An Analysis of Economic Sanctions

by Erica Caines, July 2020

45

Comparing the unequal global effect of sanctions with that of the welfare system on poor families, sanctions most drastically impact vulnerable populations such as children in Africa, Haiti, and Venezuela.

CEPR Sanctions Watch, July 2022
by Michael Galant, July 2022 49
While causing the civilian population of a country great harm and death, sanctions are largely an ineffective tool for achieving U.S. political goals.

Section II: Sanctioned Countries

Korea/DPRK: Surviving US/UN Sanctions and Military Threats
by Erica Jung, June 2022 56
The evaluation of the effect of sanctions on the North Korean economy and people draws from a remarkably detailed U.N. report on industry and agriculture in this heavily sanctioned country.

Ethiopia & Eritrea: Sanctioning the Horn of Africa
by Ann Garrison and John Philpot, September 2022 68
The U.S. is deeply involved in the regional disputes between Ethiopia, Tigray, Eritrea, and Somalia, using sanctions to tip the scale.

China: Sanctions in the New Cold War on China
by Carlos Martinez, August 2022 79
China's economy and Belt and Road Initiative have been very successful and threatens U.S. global dominance. A new Cold War has been launched on multiple fronts to check China by attempting to foment popular unrest.

China: U.S. Sanctions Will Make China Stronger
by Lee Siu Hin, September 2022 89
The CHIPS Act is a new tactic to attack the competition the U.S. and the west face from Chinese technological advances. This tactic may hinder the U.S.'s own development.

Cuba: World Condemns U.S. Blockade of Cuba.
by Monica Moorehead, November 2022 98
For the 30th time the members of the UN General Assembly have voted to end the criminal U.S. blockade of Cuba. The 2022 vote was 185 to 2, the 2 pro-sanction votes were the U.S. and Israel.

Cuba: Washington Humiliated, Cuba Lifted Up by 2022 UNGA Vote
by Ike Nahem, November, 2022 100
Through this annual vote almost the entire world demonstrates opposition to the vise grip of sanctions by which the U.S. holds Cuba. It constitutes an important part of the international moral and political shield that is an obstacle to direct US aggression and military intervention.

Iran: Lessons Learnt
by Hamid Shahrabi, May 2022 102
A series of lessons drawn from Iran's long experience of living under 40-years of increasingly harsh sanctions.

Afghanistan: Let Afghanistan Live!
by Zach Kerner, December 2021 109
In retribution for the Taliban's military victory, the U.S. turned to the financial tools of sanctions to further crush the economy of Afghanistan and make the lives of the Afghan people even more miserable.

<i>Myanmar: China Rescues Myanmar From Dangerous Dollar-Dominated Waters</i> <i>by Brian Berletic, November 2021</i>	112
<i>Myanmar and China use Yuan for their trade, a significant workaround in a world where the U.S. dollar is the usual medium for cross-border trade.</i>	
<i>Syria: Deadly New Sanctions on Syria</i> <i>by Judy Bello, June 2021</i>	116
<i>Details on U.S. excuses for imposing sanctions and an explanation of how sectors of the Syrian economy are being affected.</i>	
<i>Yemen: Evaluating Biden’s Yemen Policy, Bait and Switch</i> <i>by Sara Flounders, February 2021</i>	120
<i>Biden announced the end of U.S. support for offensive operations in Yemen in January 2021, but contradicting this, announced continued arms sales and support to Saudi government. The war goes on.</i>	
<i>Zimbabwe: Solidarity on Ending Illegal Sanctions on Zimbabwe</i> <i>by Amadi Ajamu, August 2019</i>	126
<i>Southern African Development Community – SADC – calls out the negative effect of sanctions on Zimbabwe’s economy and demands they be lifted.</i>	
<i>Chad: Famine in Africa: The Role of Sanctions</i> <i>by Greg Dunkel, June 2022</i>	128
<i>U.S. sanctions on Russian wheat and fertilizer plus drought, COVID and local insurgencies threaten famine in West and North Africa.</i>	
<i>Venezuela: Venezuela Seeks Investigation by ICC as to Whether US Sanctions Constitute Crimes Against Humanity</i> <i>by Ryan Swan, April 2022</i>	131
<i>Detailed examination of the criminal case brought by Venezuela against the U.S. use of sanctions. This case challenges the use of sanctions against a country on several novel legal grounds.</i>	
<i>Venezuelan Diplomat Alex Saab Imprisoned for Circumventing U.S. Sanctions</i> <i>by Roger Harris, December 2022</i>	139
<i>Saab is made an example of what the US will do to those who refuse to obey U.S. dictates.</i>	
<i>Palestine: Sanctions in Gaza</i> <i>by Pippa Bartolotti, February 2020</i>	143
<i>Israel’s inhumane sanctions are collective punishment imposed by an occupying power on the already impoverished civilian population of Gaza; Israel’s sanctions have the full support of the U.S.</i>	
Section III: Campaigns Against Sanctions	
<i>Founding Statement for Sanctions Kill Campaign</i> <i>Sanctions Kill Statement, November 2019</i>	147
<i>Tell the Biden Administration To End Economic Sanctions</i>	

<i>Sanctions Kill Statement, January 2021</i>	151
<i>The United States Is Doubling Down on Deadly Sanctions Sanctions Kill Statement, October 2021</i>	153
<i>End All Warfare! No to Sanctions! Sanctions Kill Statement, March 2022</i>	155
<i>Letter in Support of the Syrian People United National Antiwar Coalition, April 2021</i>	158
<i>Letter: Lift United States Sanctions on Zimbabwe December 12th Movement, February 2021</i>	160
<i>Oppose U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela, Illegal and Criminal Interference Statement by the Chicago Antiwar Coalition, August 2020</i>	163
<i>Joint Statement Against Canadian Sanctions Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War & le Mouvement Québécois pour la Paix</i>	171
<i>What You Can Do — Taking Action! by Jim Wallace</i>	176
<i>A Brief List of Webinars That Explain Sanctions</i>	178
<i>Sources</i>	181

Introduction: Sanctions, Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy

by Sara Flounders, International Action Center, May, 2022

U.S. government strategists are using sanctions as a wrecking ball to demolish the globalized economy. It is a desperate struggle to preserve their global hegemony and a unipolar world. The policy of consciously demolishing supply chains of essential products amounts to a reckless war on defenseless civilian populations. Sanctions disrupt trade worldwide and send shockwaves far beyond the countries directly targeted. This is well understood by financial planners.

“Food shortages — it’s going to be real,” President Joe Biden said in Brussels March 24 at a NATO press conference, an ominous warning reported around the world. “The price of the sanctions is not just imposed upon Russia. It’s imposed upon an awful lot of countries as well, including European countries and our country as well.”

For the first time this intentional disruption is rebounding against the countries imposing the sanctions. Wider sanctions are creating unprecedented inflation — the highest in 40 years — supply chain chaos and sharply higher costs of energy for industries, transport and homes.

Washington is demanding that countries act against their own economic interests and enforce sanctions passed as U.S. legislation, in which they had no voice or prior notice.

In response to the extensive sanctions on Russia, many countries have opened new forms of currency exchanges to carry out trade. This has in turn led to an erosion of dollar supremacy, a bedrock of U.S. economic hegemony.

The U.S. and EU sanctions are creating famines throughout Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) are threatened against India and are already imposed on Turkey, a NATO member, for their continuing trade with Russia.

After Pakistan continued its trade, Washington orchestrated a coup against the government of Imran Khan. The election of right-wing politicians to the presidency in South Korea and the Philippines, who support U.S. plans for military encirclement of China, confirms a new phase in a struggle dividing the world.

Yet this mounting pressure to enforce compliance has failed to reassert U.S. economic domination. Instead, countries inhabited by three-fourths of the global population are increasingly refusing to accept the latest sanctions. This refusal is a serious setback to U.S. hegemony.

Economic interests drive war

Economic interests drive nation states to war. For four decades, corporate interests in the G7 — the top economies of North America, Western Europe and Japan — have applauded and pushed globalization, because they were in control of the process. Their dominant position in the IMF and World Bank and their powerful position in the World Trade Organization assured this control.

During those same decades, and especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, industrial production of commodities, including garments and electronics, moved from the G7 to Mexico, Central America, China, India, Bangladesh and Eastern Europe. Production of a single garment or piece of electronic equipment was carried out in different countries, organized on a global scale. (See "Low Wage Capitalism," by Fred Goldstein)

The threat of U.S. sanctions helped push back countries attempting to assert their sovereignty or even attempting a more favorable trade deal.

But now the Chinese economy is surpassing the U.S. in total production. Well over a trillion dollars spent in Chinese Belt and Road development programs has made China a more attractive trading partner, not only in Asia but throughout Africa and Latin America. European Union trade with China has overtaken its trade with the U.S.

The growing integration of the Eurasian bloc of countries, stretching from China and South Asia through Central Asia and Russia to much of Europe, promises a huge economic advantage to the countries involved.

U.S. provokes conflict to retain hegemony

The growing integration of EU trade and investment with Russia and China challenges both the domination of U.S. corporate power in Europe and U.S. global hegemony.

It is in the interest of corporate power that Washington provokes a conflict where others pay the greatest cost. Ukraine is a country where its capitalist rivals in the EU will carry the heaviest burden.

The immediate threat to U.S. hegemony is that the EU trade with Russia is \$260 billion a year — 10 times its trade with the U.S. The EU is the largest investor in Russia. Breaking this growing economic integration of the EU with Russia and at an even greater level with China serves the long-term strategic interests of U.S. corporate domination, in place since World War II.

A desperate attempt to break U.S. imperialism's slipping economic position has driven NATO's massive involvement in Ukraine.

When the economic repercussions of the present war in Ukraine are reported, the greatest amount of coverage is allocated to European countries and the sanctions' impact on their industries, due to their reliance on Russian gas, oil, coal and fertilizers.

The business/industrial class, the oligarchs in Germany and throughout the EU, were hit hard by the U.S. demand to impose sanctions on Russian gas and oil. Their trade deals, corporate investments and energy supplies with Russia are unraveling.

U.S. Executive Order 14024, originally declared April 15, 2021, before Russia's intervention in Ukraine, and updated with EO 14066 on March 8, 2022, prohibited new investment, trade in goods and services and financing. This was just the beginning of a constant drumbeat of the most expansive, unprecedented economic measures. The U.S. demanded that every country in Europe pass their own legally binding economic sanctions of similar prohibitions.

The inflationary impact and supply chain chaos affecting German industries has been reported widely. British news services report that millions of British families will have to choose between eating and heating. Each European country is dealing with the highest inflation in decades, including in formerly stable Nordic economies.

Why is Russia targeted?

The power of the Russian economy is much smaller than the power of the U.S., the world's largest economy, and the combined economic power of the EU, Japan, South Korea and Australia. The Russian economy today is smaller than Canada's or South Korea's.

Russia's defense budget is one-twelfth of U.S. military spending, and this ratio shrinks further when weighed against the budget of the entire NATO military alliance.

While Russia is neither a military nor an economic threat, it has enormous natural resources that are presently out of U.S. control. That makes Russia a target.

President Joe Biden confidently promised that U.S. and EU sanctions would have a "catastrophic impact" on Russia's economy. U.S. analysts intended and predicted Russian bank and stock market collapses, hyperinflation, soaring prices, supply chain disruptions, empty shelves and massive unemployment.

This was calculated to weaken President Putin and disintegrate the Russian state.

Graphic descriptions of the impact on the poorest Russians and middle class abounded in all the Western media.

U.S., Canadian and European media, along with Japan's, South Korea's and Australia's, were unanimous in predicting complete collapse. Politicians, economists and bankers said that there was nothing the Russian government could do. Russia would be hostage to the seizure of all their assets held in Western banks and from the imposed cutoffs of all future trade credits.

Proud declarations were made that the major economies of the West would operate in lockstep.

Moscow's response was that the measures will all lead to an increase in Russian independence, self-sufficiency and sovereignty. Russia is self-sufficient in grains, meats, other proteins and in energy. Its trade with China, India, Brazil and Iran ensures their industry will not collapse for lack of spare parts.

The enthusiasm with which U.S. politicians and the corporate media describe their ability to cause such massive pain to millions recalls the 1990s, when U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright assured the world that the

death of a half million Iraqi children due to sanctions was “worth it” to achieve U.S. strategic aims.

With shortsighted arrogance, the U.S. cut Russia from the SWIFT banking system of payments and trade. Visa and Mastercard shut down overnight.

This did not, however, create the predicted chaos. The Central Bank of Russia and other banking and credit institutions were able to switch to the Chinese CIPS network that includes 3,000 banking institutions in 167 countries. CIPS is also able to seamlessly process credit card transactions.

While Russia was able to transition its economy, the U.S. has no immediate solution to provide essential supplies of gas and oil to Europe or grains and fertilizers to numerous countries. They have no long-term low-price solution. Despite all the predictions of collapse, even *The Economist*, May 7, announced that “Russia’s economy is back on its feet.”

Sanctions fail

Forgotten in all the congratulatory declarations was that throughout the developing economies of the world, there was no agreement on these U.S.-imposed measures.

The resistance of China, the world’s second largest economy, and rapidly rising, to U.S. demands to comply with sanctions on Russia has given other nations the confidence that they can survive U.S. demands and still have access to development funds, essential technology and trade.

There is the refusal of not only China, but also India, South Africa, Brazil — the BRICS countries — along with almost all the countries of Africa and Latin America and most Asian countries to stop trade with Russia against their own interests.

Mexico’s President Andrés Manuel López Obrador declared:

We are not going to take any sort of economic reprisal, because we want to have good relations with all the governments in the world.

Brazil’s Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, now the leading candidate for Brazil’s October 2022 presidential elections, has proposed creating a pan-Latin American currency, in order to “be freed of the dollar. . . . We are going to create a currency in Latin America, because we can’t keep depending on the

INTRODUCTION

dollar.” (popularresistance.org, May 6)

Similar statements were made by the other countries of Central and Latin America and the Caribbean. Several African countries, including Nigeria, a major economy, made note that sanctions were not passed by the United Nations Security Council and were therefore not binding.

The open defiance by so many countries and major trading blocs is a stunning confirmation of the weakening hold of U.S. economic power.

Commentators in many countries of the Global South made note of the hypocrisy of silence and lack of any condemnation at the lawless conduct of the U.S. in unleashing wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria and providing the blockade and tactical support for Saudi Arabia in Yemen. This was compared to condemnations and harsh punishment of Russia for responding to military attacks on its borders.

Within Europe, Serbia, Belarus and even Hungary — an EU and NATO member — refused to join sanctions, representing internal cracks in the sanctions’ regime. (Boston Globe, March 16)

With SWIFT bank transactions cut by U.S. sanctions, Europe was unable to pay for Russian gas and oil. This created a crisis throughout the EU. Russia’s response was to continue contracts in gas and oil at the same rates but to now demand payments in rubles, the Russian currency.

The U.S. and the EU reacted with outrage. But 10 European countries have quietly complied. It is the only way to keep their industries supplied with energy.

Accepting payments in Russian rubles and allowing countries not enforcing sanctions to pay in Chinese yuan, Indian and Pakistani rupee and other currencies meant that both the dollar and the euro were no longer the currencies for major trade transactions.

The result is that the Russian ruble has rebounded as of mid-May, while the U.S. dollar and especially the euro have been sinking.

The capital controls imposed by Russia, maintained until May 16, have turned the ruble into the world’s best performing currency this year, up more than 11% against the U.S. dollar since the start of the year. “A total of 20 European companies have opened accounts” to pay in rubles. (Bloomberg.com, May 11 and 12)

Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi said that Germany has already started paying for Russian gas in rubles. He asserted that other countries will also be able to pay for gas in rubles without breaching sanctions, dismissing the European Union's decision.

U.S. provoked proxy war

U.S. policy is to seek to grind down Russia's resources in a long and costly military onslaught. The U.S. had instigated the crisis by encircling Russia with NATO bases, organizing constant military operations and supplying heavy weapons to Ukraine to fire near Russia's borders.

Washington orchestrated a "color revolution" in Ukraine in 2004 and a far more extreme coup in 2014, using pro-fascist forces. This U.S. intervention has systematically destroyed the sovereignty of Ukraine and turned its people into a proxy force to fight Russia. Thousands of U.S./NATO military trainers, mercenaries and equipment had already destroyed Ukraine's neutrality.

By placing nuclear weapons on U.S. and NATO bases in Europe and setting up nuclear-capable weaponry near Russia's borders, NATO openly provoked Russia to strike in self-defense.

Biden threatens World War

Russia finally responded Feb. 24, as Moscow had warned for many months would happen if Ukraine's attacks continued. U.S. corporate power benefits from energy sanctions on Russia, but this comes at an aggravated price for European consumers. The sanctions will do more harm to the EU than to Russia. How did Washington force the EU to go along with sanctions against their own immediate economic interests?

Biden issued a public ultimatum Feb. 26 declaring that the only alternative to the EU joining U.S. sanctions against Russia "would be the Third World War."

"You have two options. Start a Third World War; go to war with Russia, physically. Or, two, make sure that the country that acts so contrary to international law ends up paying a price for having done it. . . . I know these sanctions are the broadest sanctions in history and economic sanctions and political sanctions." In this interview with blogger Brian Tyler Cohen, Biden further stated that his "goal from the very beginning"

INTRODUCTION

was to keep NATO and the European Union “on the same page.” (Fox News, Feb. 26)

The European Union quickly got the message. In essence, the U.S., through its command of NATO, is holding all of Europe hostage in order to reestablish its economic dominance and expand its military might on the continent.

Within a week of Russia’s intervention in Ukraine, all G7 countries had moved to freeze Russia’s foreign currency reserve assets. Switzerland joined Feb. 28. The seizure of \$500 billion dollars in Russia’s funds held in U.S. and other Western banks added to the awareness that no country’s assets were safe from seizure.

The billions seized of Iranian funds, despite every signed agreement to release the funds, and the billions seized from Venezuela had already undermined confidence in the security of Western capitalist banks.

Who pays the price inside the U.S.?

The costs of the U.S. military offensive will wipe out many of Biden’s election promises. Build Back Better infrastructure programs, COVID-19 relief and preparation for other health emergencies, student debt relief and every other promised social program have been pushed off Washington’s agenda.

The sanctions have to be reinforced with an endless war — a sure profit maker for the U.S. military-industrial complex. By April 11 Bloomberg News reported \$8 billion in additional money to military contractors for war against Russia, along with \$2.8 billion from EU countries and \$1.4 billion from EU institutions.

By April 28 President Biden enlarged the military handouts for the weapons makers to another \$33 billion and sent the package to Congress, which within days increased this to a \$40 billion package on top of funds already provided.

The Biden administration’s response, with overwhelming support of Republicans and Democrats in Congress and major banking and industrial corporations, along with the largest military machine in human history, has been to double down on rushing more and more advanced weapons, NATO troops labeled as “trainers” and escalating military maneuvers and “war games” on Russia’s borders.

Targeting China

U.S. policy is to expand NATO to China's periphery. By trying to create an Asian version of NATO, the U.S. intent is to seriously undermine economic cooperation and prosperity in Asia and bring about new divisions to the regional geopolitical and geoeconomic landscape. China's views are well-known and are the increasing target of U.S. sanctions since the Pivot to Asia in the Obama Administration.

"Developing countries should jointly fight the consequences of Western sanctions against Russia," the Chinese state publication Global Times stated May 6. (tinyurl.com/yc6x6u87) "It became clear that Western sanctions against Russia will remain a long-term negative factor for the global economy. This will also lead to the further dominance of the West in the global financial, economic and trading systems.

"Therefore, developing countries, including China, India, Indonesia, Brazil and others that have refused to take sides over Western sanctions against Russia, need to consider ways to strengthen their economic coordination to weather the consequent shocks brought about by the West.

"It is important to note that developing countries need to seek a solution through financial and trade cooperation. It's time for the BRICS to take the first step by creating their own financial coordination mechanism."

Beijing is making preparations to withstand further U.S. sanctions arising from China's refusal to adhere to U.S.-imposed sanctions on Russia. Even banks in Hong Kong, a global financial hub, and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority are making emergency plans should they be cut off from SWIFT transactions.

The Financial Times reports April 30 that China is meeting with banks to discuss protecting China's overseas assets from U.S. sanctions. An internal conference held April 22 included officials from China's central bank and finance ministry and executives from local and international banks.

Top regulators, including Yi Huiman, chairman of the China Securities Regulatory Commission, and Xiao Gang, who chaired the CSRC from 2013 to 2016, asked bankers in attendance what they could do to protect the country's external assets, especially its \$3.2 trillion foreign reserves.

China's massive dollar holdings range from more than a trillion dollars in U.S. treasuries to New York office buildings. That decoupling of Chinese and

INTRODUCTION

Western economies would have a much more severe impact than [decoupling with] “Russia, because China’s economic footprint touches every part of the world.”

The ability of Washington and its allies to freeze the Russian central bank’s dollar holdings had alerted Beijing to the danger.

On April 27 the U.S. House of Representatives passed “The Assessing Xi’s Interference and Subversion Act,” or the “AXIS Act,” requiring the U.S. State Department to submit ongoing reports to Congress on China’s support for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, initially within 30 days of the enactment of the law and every 90 days thereafter.

Even the acronym for the act spells out U.S. hostile intentions, recalling the World War II Axis alliance and the “Axis of Evil,” of George W. Bush’s propaganda attempting to justify the U.S. invasion of Iraq and other aggression.

New wars, new sanctions

A Washington think tank, Center of Strategic and International Studies, recently defined how to prepare for sweeping sanctions on China, based on sanctions on Russia.

In 2021 China’s GDP was roughly 10 times larger than Russia’s. China is the world’s top trading economy and the number-one exporter of manufactured goods.

Every U.S. plan for sanctions on China starts with a manufactured crisis over Taiwan. In violation of 40 years of past agreements with China, Washington is rapidly increasing military aid to Taiwan.

All U.S. strategists admit that sanctions and military confrontation with China will be massively disruptive on a world scale. But that prediction does nothing to slow their preparations.

The international movement opposing NATO’s current war in Ukraine needs to know what else is on the imperialist drawing boards.

There is an urgent need for a global campaign against economic sanctions — a crime against humanity.

International Action Center, May 2022

Section I

A General Understanding of Sanctions

What Are Sanctions?

Sanctions are imposed by the United States and its junior partners against countries that resist their agendas. They are a weapon of Economic War, resulting in chronic shortages of basic necessities, economic dislocation, chaotic hyperinflation, artificial famines, disease, and poverty. In every country, the poorest and the weakest – infants, children, the chronically ill and the elderly – suffer the worst impact of sanctions.

US imposed sanctions violate international law and are a tool of regime change. They impact a third of humanity in just over 40 countries. They are a crime against humanity used, like military intervention, to topple popular governments and movements. They provide economic and military support to pro-US right-wing forces.

The US economic dominance with its +800 military bases worldwide demands all other countries participate in acts of economic strangulation. They must end all normal trade relations, otherwise they risk having Wall Street's guns pointed at them. The banks and financial institutions that are responsible for the devastation of our communities at home drive the plunder of countries abroad.

Many organizations have been fighting Sanctions and Economic War for some time. NOW is an opportunity to combine efforts to raise consciousness on this crucial issue.

This founding statement of the SanctionsKill Campaign was issued in 2019, translated into 18 languages, signed by thousands of organizations and individuals and circulated widely.

This broad campaign will include protests and demonstrations, lobbying, petition drives and all forms of educational efforts.

Sanctions Kill, 2021

Sanctions Kill Toolkit

by Margaret Flowers

(You can find a link to the slideshow with the embedded images below, full sized and full color, at SanctionsKill.org/toolkit)

Sanctions Kill Presentation Sample Script

Below is a sample script to go with the powerpoint presentation, which you will find here. This script is for a basic presentation. You are welcome to modify the script to suit your goals or your audience. Check out the Resource List at the end for more information on this topic.



In this presentation I will talk about the tactic of economic warfare, commonly referred to as “sanctions,” that the United States is using around the world. I will cover what sanctions are, who they impact and how they are related to the economic war being waged against the population at home. I will conclude with actions that can be taken to end this economic war.

What are sanctions? Technically, they are commercial and financial

penalties applied by one or more countries against another government, group or individual. They can include restrictions on trade as the United States has imposed on Iran, Cuba, North Korea, Syria, Zimbabwe and 14 other countries. These trade restrictions often prohibit other countries, including non-sanctioned countries, from also trading with the targeted country, a form of secondary sanction, or risk being sanctioned themselves.

What are sanctions?

Economic or other restrictions imposed on a country, corporation or person.

- Restricted trade
- Blocked financial transactions
- Frozen assets
- Reduced foreign aid
- Travel bans and more



Sanctions can take the form of blocked financial transactions, not allowing financial institutions to process them. This prevents a government, group or individual from doing business – buying goods or services outside the country. A government can also freeze the assets of another country or entity as the United States did to Venezuela via executive order in August 2019 that read: “All property and interests in property of the Government of Venezuela that are in the United States ... are blocked and may not be transferred, paid, exported, withdrawn, or otherwise dealt in.”

A government can sanction by reducing foreign aid that is typically given as the US did to Palestine or it can block loans through US-dominated institutions such as the International Monetary Fund or World Bank. The Global Magnitsky Act of 2016 allows the US government to block travel to the United States or revoke the US visa of any person the US deems a human rights violator or corrupt. This has been used against individuals from China, Russia, Ukraine and others.

The idea of using economic sanctions against another country has been sold to the public in the United States as a more humane tactic than military invasion. This is false.

Like other forms of warfare, sanctions are used to give the US an economic advantage over other countries. An example is US sanctions that target Chinese technology firms such as Huawei.


SANCTIONS KILL

United States-imposed sanctions are economic warfare

Sanctions are proposed as a supposedly more humane act than military aggression.

They are used to

- Give the United States an economic advantage
- Effect regime change
- Retaliate



© Dan Savage

Most often the US uses sanctions as a tool to overthrow governments it doesn't support. The goal is to impose economic hardship on a country ("make the economy scream"), claim the government of that country is responsible for the hardship and encourage the population to rise up in protest against its government. The manufactured, and often US-supported, opposition is used to justify more US intervention to demand the government step down or a coup may be conducted.


Sanctions are also used as retaliation to undermine the efforts of countries to move toward more independence or develop non-capitalist economies. Sanctions were imposed on members of the International Criminal Court for proceeding with an investigation of the US' war crimes in Afghanistan.

Sanctions kill

Sanctions kill people in invisible ways.

Sanctions

- Devastate economies
- Cause disinvestment
- Destroy regional cooperation
- Impair access to basic necessities like food, water, energy and transportation



The United States uses sanctions more than any other country.

Sanctions are war. They are just as deadly as bullets and bombs, but the damage and deaths are not as visible to those outside the country.

Sanctions kill by destroying economies, causing hyperinflation and unemployment so people cannot afford basic necessities. They drive capital flight from countries as corporations and financial institutions seek to distance

PRESENTATION

themselves and avoid being targeted by the sanctions. As industries move elsewhere or can't get the materials they need, jobs are lost. Basic infrastructure may be harmed as funds and expertise are lost.

Sanctions prevent countries within the region from working together or trading. And even if the country has the funds to purchase basic goods, they are blocked from making financial transactions or importing them. One study found sanctions contributed to 40,000 deaths in Venezuela between 2017 and 2018. Another study found sanctions contributed to the deaths of 4,000 North Koreans in 2018, most of them children and pregnant women. In the early 1990's, US sanctions against Iraq led to the deaths of as many as 880,000 children under five due to malnutrition and disease.



The sanctions imposed by the United States violate international laws and the United States Constitution.

Technically, the sanctions imposed by the US are not sanctions but are unilateral coercive measures. Sanctions imply there was a legal process employed that found a country, group or individual in violation of a law and that entity was then punished using sanctions.

What the United States is doing mostly operates outside that process. The economic war is applied unilaterally. When the United States does use a legal process, such as through the United Nations, the US applies pressure on other countries to achieve its desired result.

Some impacted countries are starting to challenge the unilateral coercive measures in court. In October, 2018, Iran won a case against the United States in the United Nations' International Court of Justice over the US imposed sanctions but the US refused to comply with the ruling. The ICJ does not have an

SANCTIONS KILL

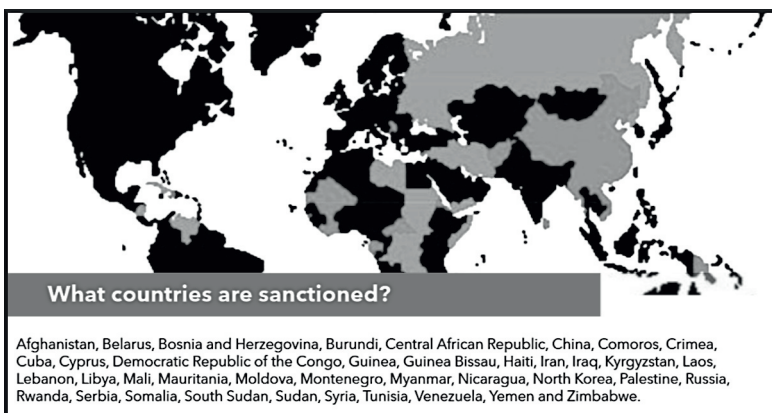
enforcement mechanism. Currently, Venezuela has a case before the International Criminal Court charging the US with crimes against humanity for the suffering and death its coercive measures have caused.

The Supremacy Clause of the US Constitution declares that international laws are to be considered equal to an act of legislature, although limits have been placed on this since its inception.



A first step in the sanctions process is often that the White House declares a country a threat to US national security or designates a foreign entity a terrorist group. There is usually no evidence to back this claim or evidence is manufactured. This triggers the International Emergency Economic Powers Act that allows the US Treasury to impose economic sanctions.

Congress and the State Department can also impose sanctions on countries, such as the recent NICA Act targeting Nicaragua, or individuals, such as travel bans that prevent United Nations diplomats from participating in UN meetings.



PRESENTATION

The United Nations Security Council has the authority to impose sanctions on countries or specific entities. The United States, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, wields tremendous power over the UN sanctions process. That power may be starting to wane. In 2020, the US attempted to extend a weapons embargo against Iran but the members of the UN Security Council voted overwhelmingly against it, arguing the US lost its standing when it pulled out of the Iran Nuclear Agreement.

The United States is currently sanctioning 44 countries representing one-third of the global population. As the list under the map demonstrates, a third of the countries are African nations. The majority of sanctioned countries are predominantly non-white and are in the Global South. In addition to countries, over 6,300 people are on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets sanctioned list.

To get the sanctions lifted, countries must agree to the United States' demands for austerity measures, elections that meet the US's approval and other economic and political concessions. This is why the sanctions are actually unilateral coercive economic measures, which are illegal.



While the United States government says that sanctions exempt necessities such as food and medicine and often claims the sanctions impact government or other officials, the reality is that it is the civilian population, especially women, children, the elderly and those who have health conditions, who are impacted the most.

As I will outline in more detail, sanctions weaken economies, cause unemployment and inflation, prevent the import of necessities such as food,

SANCTIONS KILL

medicines and equipment to keep infrastructure and industries running and prevent trade and travel.



Perhaps one of the most egregious effects of unilateral coercive measures or sanctions are on the health of the population. Even when countries have the funds to purchase medications, they are unable to make the financial transaction to pay for them. Venezuela has \$1 billion worth of gold in the Bank of London that it intends to use to purchase necessities through the United Nations, but the UK is refusing to release it. Similarly, Venezuela had a fund through its oil company Citgo that it was using to pay for its bone marrow transplant patients, primarily children, in Spain, but the United States seized Citgo. And the Venezuelan pharmaceutical industry, which was once thriving, has been decimated because Venezuela can't import the precursors it needs to manufacture medications.

Additionally, sanctioned countries are unable to import medical supplies and equipment. They are forced to reuse single-use supplies. They have shortages of fuel which prevent the transport of patients and basic infrastructure that provides power and water may not function well. Shortages of food, water and power impact the general health of the population. We know for example that more children die of infectious diseases, especially diarrheal disease, when they lack access to clean water.

And finally, sanctioned countries have more barriers to research. Their scientists can't purchase scientific books from abroad or travel to conferences. They can't collaborate with institutions in other countries. In reality, sanctions imposed on other countries impact the health of people in the United States because we don't have access to the medical innovations developed in sanctioned countries and we can't benefit from medical collaboration. For

PRESENTATION

example, Cuba sends doctors around the world to provide care and support for healthcare systems.

Sanctions cause food shortages

- Block food imports
- Impair agriculture
- Raise food prices



Another egregious impact of sanctions is a shortage of food. The most obvious reason is the inability to import food because banks won't process the financial transactions, but even if a sanctioned country makes the transaction, the food can't be transported because insurance companies won't cover the vessels that would carry it.

Sanctions also harm agricultural institutions. There are shortages of seeds and inputs for farming as well as fuel to run farm machinery and transport food. In Zimbabwe, it was when the people took action to reclaim their land, which had been promised to them, that the US imposed damaging sanctions on them.

Food shortages and the economic devastation from sanctions that creates hyperinflation raise the price of food while at the same time unemployment rises making it difficult for families to afford adequate food. Most of the food insecure nations in the world are sanctioned countries.

Water is also essential for life and sanctions have a negative impact on access to clean water resulting in hardship and disease.



Sanctions prevent access to clean water

- Block imports of equipment and parts to process and transport water.
- Raise energy prices or impair energy infrastructure needed to pump water.

SANCTIONS KILL

The major reasons sanctions prevent access to clean water are the inability of a country to import parts to keep its water infrastructure operating and shortages of fuel to power the infrastructure such as water and sewage treatment plants and pumps to deliver water into homes and other buildings.

Sanctions limit education

- Block access to basic school supplies.
- Block import of books or software.
- Limit studying abroad.
- Force students to leave education for work.



Sanctions impact education at every level from the lack of resources to keep schools open and operating to the inability to import basic school supplies such as pencils and books. Students are blocked from using online tools and computer software if they live in a sanctioned country because corporations do not want to risk penalties for potentially violating the sanctions.

Sanctions can also prevent students from attending school. They may not be allowed to study abroad, or even if they are accepted for study abroad, they are unable to pay for the education because banks won't process the transactions. The economic hardship and food shortages caused by sanctions may cause children to leave school to work or help with food production.

Sanctions have a significant negative effect on energy

- Prevent energy imports and exports.
- Prevent import of necessary equipment.



Sanctions prevent the importation of fuel and parts to run power plants as well as the importation of power from neighboring countries. Sanctions also

PRESENTATION

decrease access to parts to maintain the electrical grid.



Sanctions and transportation

- Reduce access to oil and gas.
- Prevent import of parts to maintain infrastructure.
- Limit movement of goods and people.

Even in countries with large fossil fuel resources such as Venezuela and Iran, sanctions prevent them from importing the materials and equipment necessary to keep their drilling and refinery equipment in order so they can use the fossil fuels.

Reduced access to oil and gas impacts the entire transportation infrastructure of sanctioned countries. So does the inability to import parts and tools to keep cars, trucks, buses and trains running.

In Cuba, cars are kept running for many decades using whatever is available and cars are passed down through families. In Venezuela, due to the fuel shortage, people may wait for days in line to fill their car with gas.



Sanctions and employment

- Capital flight
- Hyperinflation
- Shutting down sectors of the economy
- Decreased markets
- Decreased transport

The negative impact of sanctions on transportation have a broad effect on the ability to move people and goods around the country, which ripples out to impact farmers, manufacturers, and businesses.

Sanctions worsen unemployment in targeted countries through a variety of mechanisms. Even during the pre-sanction period, when a country is designated

SANCTIONS KILL

a national security threat, investors and corporations see what is to come and may leave the country. This capital flight causes a loss of jobs.

Hyperinflation makes the price of goods rise and decreases people's ability to purchase them, which may cause businesses to go bankrupt and shut down.

Lack of investment capital as well as the inability to import needed supplies and equipment leads industries to weaken or shut down altogether, also causing a loss of jobs.

Barriers to trade with other countries means producers of food and other goods have a smaller market to sell to, which adversely impacts them. And finally, the effects of sanctions on transportation may mean that producers cannot get their goods to the market, if it exists.



Sanctions create real hardship for people and may drive them to leave their home country.

When an economy is destroyed and people can't meet their basic needs, or unemployment is high or there is violence as a result of unrest, people often feel they have no choice but to emigrate. This can lead to a "brain drain" as those who have financial resources, and perhaps are educated in professions such as medicine or engineering, are likely to leave. This compounds the hardship as there are fewer people to provide the needed expertise to keep the country functioning.

In the spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a global call for peace and international cooperation to stop the spread of disease and ensure nations had what they needed to protect the health of their people.

There were calls from international bodies such as the United Nations to end sanctions because of their impacts on food and health. The United States rejected

PRESENTATION

this call for cooperation and instead dropped out of the World Health Organization, increased sanctions against countries such as Iran and Venezuela and continued its military aggression.



The United States also failed to provide the basics for its own people during the pandemic. It should be no surprise that a government that has no regard for the lives of people abroad would show the same disregard for its own population.



There are numerous ways the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States on countries around the world harm people in the US.

An obvious one is the restrictions on trade that prevent businesses in the US from doing business with these countries. For example, US farmers cannot export their products to sanctioned countries. They also prevent imports from sanctioned countries.

In an effort for other countries to circumvent the sanctions, they are finding new ways to do business that exclude US dollars and exclude financial institutions that are constrained by the US. This is leading to isolation of the US and de-dollarization of the global economy.

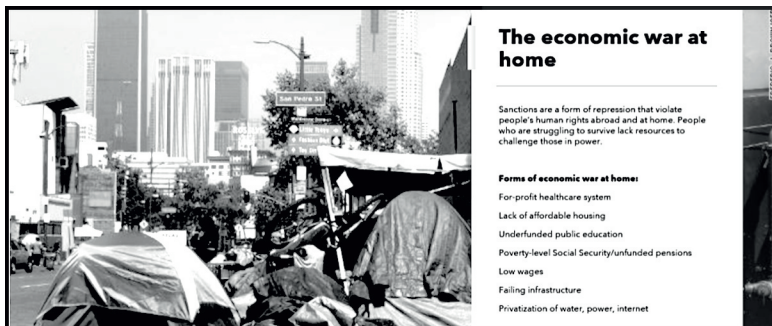
SANCTIONS KILL

Economic warfare against other countries may destabilize them, leading to violence and threats to global security. In some places, the economic measures create greater solidarity within the impacted country as the people unite to oppose a common enemy, the United States.

Restrictions on the sharing of information and collaboration with entities in other countries stifles innovation and prevents people in the US from benefiting from new technology in sanctioned countries.

Economic warfare drives migration as people seek employment and escape from instability and violence. The blame for migration is often put on the person who is migrating instead of the circumstances that forced them to flee their home country.

In the United States, migrants are often falsely blamed for the economic insecurity that people in the US experience. They become a handy scapegoat that divides the working class against each other instead of uniting against the common causes of the insecurity – an economic system that serves the wealthy and a foreign policy of domination.



The economic war that people experience in the United States is similar to what people experience in sanctioned countries. The same neoliberal economic policies that the US imposes on countries around the world are imposed on people within the US.

These take the form of a for-profit healthcare system that leaves tens of millions of people in the US without health insurance and tens of millions of people who are underinsured, meaning that despite having health insurance they still cannot afford the care they need. The United States has a severe lack of affordable housing. Public education is underfunded and higher education is not available to all who seek it. Wages are low and most people do not have a secure retirement. Infrastructure in the US is failing due to a lack of investment in its

PRESENTATION

upkeep, and this is being used as an excuse to privatize everything from public housing to the postal service to water, the internet, schools, roads, public transport, etc.

As one of the wealthiest nations in the world, the United States can afford to provide these services to its people, and indeed the government has an obligation to provide these services that it is failing to meet. It is the same ideology that drives the economic war abroad and at home. The answer is a People(s)-Centered Human Rights approach that is rooted in the self-determination of communities and struggle against the power holders who value profits over human life and a livable future.

End economic warfare at home and abroad



To end the economic war, we must build a worldwide movement for people-centered human rights.

Visit SanctionsKill.org for tools and information.

- Endorse the call.
- Sign the open letter.
- Contact your member of Congress.
- Join the actions.
- Donate.

It is time for people around the world to unite and demand an end to the economic wars being waged at home and abroad.

Join the Sanctions Kill campaign at SanctionsKill.org. You'll find resources and actions that you can take.

Endorse the call to action, which will add you to the email list so you can be notified of opportunities for action and education.

Sanctions Kill, 2020

US Sanctions: War by Other Means

By Rick Sterling, John Philpot and David Paul

The following is a summary of a 36 page report researched and written by members of the Sanctions Kill coalition. The report is available at the QR code at the bottom.

In recent decades, the US has increasingly used sanctions as an instrument of foreign policy. Dozens of countries have been targeted with sanctions, known at the United Nations as “unilateral coercive measures”.

In the wake of the 2022 conflict in Ukraine, the US and allies have escalated their efforts to isolate if not destroy the Russian economy. Although the West pretends to have widespread international support, 84% of world nations have NOT joined the sanctions campaign against Russia.¹ The campaign has boomeranged and is now causing much economic damage in the West.

This report’s findings and conclusions are the result of on-the-ground investigation in Syria plus questionnaires with citizens of some of the most severely sanctioned countries such as Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe. The report is also based on first hand information from northern Ireland, the UK, France and USA.

The following is a summary of some of the main findings and conclusions in the report.

The US foreign policy imposing economic and political sanctions on dozens of countries around the world has caused huge civilian suffering. Presented as an “alternative” to war, this policy is actually another form of deadly aggression violating sovereignty by attempting to change governments or government policy.

The US defends the widespread sanctions policy claiming there are “humanitarian exceptions” to prevent innocent deaths. Studies have repeatedly shown that the “exceptions” do not work. In Venezuela alone, it is estimated that extreme economic sanctions over the past decade have resulted in over 100,000

deaths.²

As occasionally admitted by US officials, sanctions are intended to hurt the economy of a target country and spur the population to revolt. While succeeding in hurting civilians, this policy has largely failed to foment revolt.

Since February 2022, the US and the “West” have imposed harsh sanctions on Russia - preventing or severely limiting imports and exports. According to several western leaders the goal was to weaken and undermine Russia to the point that the Putin government might be replaced.

Instead, the sanctions on Russia have boomeranged and are causing economic damage throughout the West and especially Europe. Energy costs have risen dramatically, causing inflation throughout the economy. The middle- and working-class majority is experiencing a major decline in living standard.

The sanctions imposed by the West have also hurt countries in the Global South. Russia is a major producer of grain, fertilizer, and precious metals necessary for industry. The attempted exclusion of Russia’s economy has caused shortages and price inflation in vital commodities. For example, Russian wheat could not be shipped to some countries because of sanctions on Russian ships, restrictions on air and sea ports, plus the difficulty of carrying out the financial transaction.

The Russian economy has also been damaged but apparently less and the Russian currency has even increased in value.

For decades US farmers, business persons and trade unions have opposed sanctions. This opposition is rapidly increasing in the wake of rising cost of living. In western Europe, the economic fallout is worse and the opposition growing proportionally. The sanctions on Russia are causing political turmoil as increasing numbers of citizens question the purpose and justification of the economic war on Russia. In recent weeks there have been massive protests in Prague,³ Paris,⁴ London.⁵

US-driven sanctions are also back-firing by weakening US dollar dominance. The sanctions have forced countries to develop alternatives to US-dominated systems. With the expulsion of Russia from the SWIFT system for international bank transactions, alternative systems are increasingly being used. The petrodollar, whereby oil was bought and sold only with US dollars, is in decline and may disappear. Saudi Arabia is set to accept the yuan for their huge oil sales to China.

SANCTIONS KILL

US sanctions are imposed by US Congress or by presidential decree. In the latter case, it is done claiming a “national emergency” and “unusual and extraordinary threat”. Usually this is patently false. For example, President Obama imposed sanctions on Venezuela claiming that country is an “extraordinary threat” to the US. The sanctions mania has also resulted in violations of long-standing international treaties. For example, the sanctioned Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab has been imprisoned by the US for years. This is a violation of the Vienna Diplomatic Convention⁶ which the US is a founding member of.

A UN General Assembly resolution in December 2020 confirms that 70% of world nations condemn US sanctions policy and consider this a violation of international law and the UN charter. Most of the Western public does not know this due to effective media bias and censorship. Nor do they know that only 16% of nations support the sanctions campaign against Russia.⁷

The sanctions on Russia have caused economic upheaval and damage throughout the world. In Europe, national leaders seem unable to act in the best interests of their citizens as they follow the dictates of the US and a compliant European Union, no matter the cost.

US sanctions policy has come to an inflection point. The victims of this policy are all around from Cuba to Venezuela, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, and 35 other countries. With the extreme sanctions on Russia, there are also victims in London, New York, Berlin, Paris and throughout the West.

Who is benefiting from this? The principal winners seem to be the US foreign policy elite who mock the UN charter, believe in US hegemony/supremacy, and push the world toward conflict and war. Ultimately, the US sanctions policy creates the potential for criminal and civil liability for US authorities.

Instead of seeking diplomatic resolution of the conflict in Ukraine and an end to anti-Russia sanctions, the US foreign policy is escalating tensions and sanctions, raising the risk of global war. These policies need to be challenged and changed. Based on our research, we believe it is essential to put an end to all unilateral coercive measures, respect the charter of the United Nations, and respect the sovereignty of all nations.

Sanctions Kill, 2022

Endnotes

1. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/countries-have-sanctioned-russia>
2. <https://www.blackagendareport.com/former-un-rapporteur-human-rights-us-sanctions-have-killed-more-100-thousand-venezuelans>
3. <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/09/05/tens-of-thousands-rally-in-prague-to-protest-cost-of-living-crisis/>
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/aug/23/cost-of-living-french-popular-resistance-living-standards-uk>
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QO1DQRkL9t4>
6. https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf
7. *Ibid.*, 1



Class Warfare and Socialist Resistance in Latin America

by Ajamu Baraka

One of the extreme ironies of the latest attack by the settler-colonial regime of the United States against the national democratic project of Nicaragua is that in Nicaragua, the second poorest nation in the Americas, universal healthcare and education are guaranteed to the population as a human right, while in the U.S. those kinds of basic human rights are distant dreams.

The day after the so-called progressive block of legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives surrendered to President Joe Biden and the right-wing corporate wing of the party on the Build Back Better legislation that offered some minor and temporary relief for workers and the poor, many of those same “progressives” voted for the RENACER Act¹. The RENACER Act is a vicious piece of legislation meant to undermine the ability of the Nicaragua government to protect the human rights of its people and to punish the people for having the temerity to support their government and their anti-colonial project.

Why do Nicaragua², Cuba³ and Venezuela⁴ pose such an existential threat to the U.S.? Why are they able to unite all the wings of the democrat party and the republican party against them? It boils down to two factors. First, the power of their example in attempting to build independent, self-determining projects that center the material needs and interests of the people over those of capital. Second, the class warfare politics of the U.S. state.

The reassertion of the racist Monroe Doctrine by the former US National Security Advisor John Bolton was not repudiated by the Biden administration because it is also the guiding framework for its policies. The reference to the Monroe Doctrine was nothing more than connecting that doctrine to its contemporary policy expression reflected in the doctrine of “Full Spectrum” dominance that has been bipartisan U.S. foreign policy for twenty years. The thrust of this policy is that any nation that attempts to defy the U.S. and build an independent project that threatens U.S. hegemony in any region of the world

will be destroyed.

The fact that Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela are not only attempting to build independent projects but build socialism⁵ makes their example even more of a threat.

But there is also a domestic ideological component to this as well. The very existence of these nations at this historical moment, a moment characterized by the deepening and irreversible contradictions and current crisis of the capitalist order poses a potentially serious ideological threat. If these relatively poor nations can build public housing and eliminate homelessness, offer free education and universal healthcare, guarantee that no one will be allowed to go hungry, can build democratic structures with the protected right of popular participation, the question as to why these kinds of human rights are unrealizable for the people of the U.S. is a destabilizing one that must be avoided at all costs.

For the U.S. it has never been about human rights but hegemony.

Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela are attempting to build a socialism that is committed to a framework of social justice that we refer to as People(s)-Centered Human Rights (PCHR).⁶ PCHR is informed by the theoretical social practice of the African American radical human rights tradition and have emerged as the flip side of the same coin from People(s)-centered development. Unlike the liberal, individualist, state-centric and legalistic conception of human rights, PCHR is defined as:

“Those non-oppressive rights that reflect the highest commitment to universal human dignity and social justice that individuals and collectives define and secure for themselves through social struggle.”

This approach to human rights views human rights as an arena of struggle that when grounded and informed by the needs and aspirations of the oppressed, becomes part of a unified comprehensive strategy for de-colonization and radical social change.

U.S. President Joe Biden declared that Nicaragua president Daniel Ortega was “no different from the Somoza family that Ortega and the Sandinistas fought four decades ago.”⁷ He went on to say that “the United States, in close coordination with other members of the international community, will use all diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal to support the people of Nicaragua and hold accountable the Ortega-Murillo government and those that

facilitate its abuses.”

Biden forgot to mention that the U.S. placed Somoza in power and supported him until he was overthrown by the Sandinistas in 1979.

The idea that the U.S. is concerned about democracy or human rights anywhere in the world is an insult to all thinking persons. I will not list once again the litany of crimes that support that assertion except for two. The Biden administration and their ideological lackeys in the media and even among some elements of what is referred to as a “left”, question the 65 percent turn-out for the elections in Nicaragua. But when it was objectively verified that less than one quarter of the voting population turned out for the phony election of the Clinton imposed president of Haiti, Martel Martelly, or equally phony election of Jovenel Moise with less than twenty-percent turnout, where were the questions from the New York Times, Washington Post and all the other propaganda outlets posing as news operations?

What was Joe Biden’s position in the administration when his boss President Obama gave the greenlight to overthrow the democratically elected government of Manuel Zelaya in Honduras? Did he oppose it?

Criminality is a core characteristic of all settler-colonial states because they are born out of systematic, terroristic, and genocidal violence against indigenous populations, and even more so when, as in the case of the U.S. they become global empires. Democracy and human rights are no more than ideological props to obscure the real interests and intentions of the rulers and to build domestic support for whatever criminal activity the state has embarked on.

Subversion in Haiti, sanctions and attacks on Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela and the ongoing wars launched from the over 800 U.S. military bases world-wide continues and will continue as long as the U.S. public is confused, disorganized, and diverted from understanding that the interests of the capitalist oligarchy are not their interests.

Slowly that shift in consciousness is happening in the U.S. The economic crisis of the last year and half, coming on the heels of the devastating crisis of 2008-9, has created a legitimization crisis and a new understanding of the real interests of the rulers that will not be reversed. The precarity of workers and the poor are forcing them to eliminate any and all illusions about their government and the economic system.

Debate around the Build Back Better legislation and the elimination of

provisions that could have had a material impact on the lives of workers, in particular women of color workers, exposed the legislation as a cynical public relations stunt.

Compared to the attempts by states attempting to move toward socialism, the provisions in the bill even before it was stripped of most of its progressive provisions, still did not offer a real minimum floor for the protection of the fundamental human rights to social security, the right to an adequate income, housing, education, the right to participate in governance with the right to vote as a minimum, and healthcare, to name a few of the rights denied the population in the U.S., and even more so for its racialized and colonized captives.

That is why the idea of socialism and the possibility of an alternative to the barbarity of capitalism has been attacked. The U.S. intends to turn Nicaragua into Haiti, Cuba into Honduras, and Venezuela, which is key for liberation movements in the region, into Libya – the U.S. and European latte-left is helping.

But as brother Netfa Freeman stated, Black anti-colonial revolutionaries will stand with Nicaragua and all the struggling peoples of the planet against the number one threat to international peace and human rights – the United States of America. In that position, there is no compromise and no retreat!

Black Agenda Report, November, 2021

Endnotes

1. *S.1064 - RENACER Act*, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1064>
2. *Why Black Revolutionaries Must Stand with the People of Nicaragua*, <https://hoodcommunist.org/2021/11/04/why-black-revolutionaries-must-stand-with-the-people-of-nicaragua/>
3. *A Guide to the US Blockade on Cuba*, <https://hoodcommunist.org/2021/10/07/a-guide-to-the-us-blockade-on-cuba/>
4. *Venezuela: A People's Democratic Process*, <https://hoodcommunist.org/2020/12/17/venezuela-a-peoples-democratic-process/>
5. *ABCs of Socialism*, <https://hoodcommunist.org/2020/11/19/abcs-of-socialism/>
6. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70: Time to De-Colonize Human Rights!* <https://blackallianceforpeace.com/peoples-centered-human-rights>
7. *Statement by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/11/07/statement-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr-on-nicaraguas-sham-elections/>

US Economic Terrorism Will Backfire, Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister

by Ben Norton and Max Blumenthal

The Grayzone reports from Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, which just celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution that ousted a US-backed dictatorship.

Iran's foreign minister, Javad Zarif, has just arrived here from Caracas, Venezuela, where he was attending the international summit of the new Non-Aligned Movement, where Iran, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, among other nations, were discussing ways to get around crippling US sanctions that are being imposed on all of these countries.

We asked Minister Zarif several questions about the US economic warfare and the recent seizure of several oil tankers.

Transcript

Ben Norton: Over a year ago now, the United States unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA. In your meetings with European diplomats, do you get the sense that they're actually committed to saving the deal? They say they are, but thus far they have not actually taken serious economic steps to try to work around US sanctions.

You also, minister, have just come from Caracas, where you were meeting with the Non-Aligned Movement. Are countries in the world that are suffering under unilateral US sanctions working to try to create new forms, new economic mechanisms to get around this unilateral economic warfare? And do you think that European countries are willing to be part of that, or have they subordinated their foreign policy to the United States?

Javad Zarif: I think the excessive use of economic power by the United States,

US ECONOMIC TERRORISM WILL BACKFIRE

and the excessive use of the dollar as a weapon in US economic terrorism against other countries, will backfire, sooner or later.

Countries are deciding to get away from the US dollar as a means of doing international transactions. Of course this will not happen tomorrow, but this will be a long-term process.

The INSTEX that the Europeans have created in order to conduct business with Iran may not have the desired impact for Iran, but it is in fact a very important alarm for the United States that people are getting away from focusing and using primarily the US dollars in their international transactions.

The same is happening between even US allies and US friends in our region and beyond our region.

Last year we did 35 percent of our bilateral transactions with Turkey in our own currencies. And this is happening between us and China, between us and India, between us and Russia, and between us and the countries in the region.

So it is important that we, who are subjects of US economic terrorism, so-called sanctions, understand the realities and understand our potential.

And we started yesterday in Caracas discussing these. And we are discussing the same with our Nicaraguan friends, in many areas. And I think the future is ours.

I think we want to live based on international law, the rule of law, the charter of the United Nations. And I think those who are running against these measures, those who want to revive the unilateralist measures of 20th and 19th century, are doomed to fail.

On European preparedness, I think the Europeans want to preserve JCPOA; I think the Europeans understand that they need to preserve JCPOA; I think the Europeans have realized that they cannot allow the United States to bully them.

But whether they are prepared to make the necessary investment in order to to achieve this goal is a different matter.

I have said time and again that you cannot swim without getting wet. The Europeans must be ready to invest for their own future. Not for us; we're not asking anybody to invest for us.

If the Europeans want to be able to have a voice in international relations, then they need to invest in having that voice.

Max Blumenthal: It's been widely reported, and the Spanish foreign minister has said, that the UK seized an Iranian oil tanker on orders from the United States, specifically from John Bolton. Does Iran's retaliatory measures, seizing a British tanker which apparently entered Iranian waters, signal a lack of faith in the UK, which is a signatory of the Iran deal?

And of Europe in general, that it will not honor the Iran deal, and that it is being led by what you call the B Team, of Bolton, Bibi, bin Zayed, and bin Salman? And what does this mean for the future of Iranian and European relations?

Javad Zarif: When unfortunately it was very clear from the beginning that the excuses that the United Kingdom and the Gibraltar authorities provided for the confiscation of the ship that was carrying Iranian oil — it wasn't an Iranian ship but it was a ship carrying Iranian oil — was clearly unfounded.

The EU does not apply its rules to third parties as a matter of principle. And the United Kingdom, on its way out of the EU, is becoming holier than the Pope, in doing things that the EU itself would not do, and has said publicly that it would not do.

So it was clear from the very beginning that the United Kingdom was doing the bidding for the Trump administration. This is not the first time that the United Kingdom started doing bidding for the United States administration.

As soon as President Trump got elected, and before he entered into office, the United Kingdom prevented implementation of agreements that we had reached with the previous government of the United States on behalf of President Trump. And the Iranian people have not forgotten that.

However, the measures that we took in the Strait of Hormuz against the US ship was not in retaliation, but was an implementation of international law.

What the Brits did, and what the Gibraltar authorities did, in the Strait of Gibraltar was a violation of international law, was piracy.

What we did was in order to implement the provisions of international law on safe passage. The UK ship had turned off its signalling for more than the time that it was allowed to do so; was passing through the wrong channels; endangering the safety and security of shipping and navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, for which we are responsible.

We have 1,500 miles of coastline in the Persian Gulf. We are responsible for

US ECONOMIC TERRORISM WILL BACKFIRE

the security and freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf. That is our lifeline.

And it is much, much better for the United Kingdom not to be engaged in implementing the ploys of the B Team.

The B Team is losing ground in the United States, and now they are turning their attention to the United Kingdom.

I guess the same policies that failed in the US will fail in the United Kingdom.

The Grayzone, December 2019

Pan-African and International Solidarity Will Break Sanctions

Statement by AAPRP, All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party

Not one European colonizer or settler-colonist brought land to the African continent. They stole it when they arrived. Consequently, it is not only logical but just, that Africans take the land back. Because British settlers stole Zimbabwe territory and called it “Rhodesia” as a tribute to racist Cecil Rhodes, Africans fought a long, fierce armed struggle. After seizing state power in 1980, Africans re-named the country Zimbabwe. For the next 20 years, the Zimbabwean government under the leadership of the heroic Robert Mugabe was widely praised by the west. However, all of that changed when, in the year 2000, the Zimbabwean government began a land reform program that involved reclaiming land seized by European settlers. The program gave hundreds of thousands of Zimbabwe citizens access to land, while also creating large scale farms for commercial development. Nevertheless, Mugabe was immediately and falsely branded a tyrannical terrorist and anti-white autocrat. The United Kingdom came down on the country like a ton of bricks. In 2001, the U.S. got in on the action and imposed sanctions by way of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) along with a subsequent series of executive orders.

The sanctions choked Zimbabwe’s economy nearly to death and resulted in widespread hardship for the people of that country. Imperialists exploited the hardships by fomenting political conflict and otherwise destabilizing the country through acts of harassment and disinformation. These conditions existed for years. But as a testament to the strength and resilience of Zimbabwe’s people, the country produced record corn and tobacco crops from 2017 through 2019 despite the continued strangulation of U.S. and European Union sanctions that have caused immense suffering and death.

PAN-AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Zimbabwe's land reform was a monumental step forward in the struggle against imperialism in Africa. This fact has not been missed by revolutionary forces throughout the world that have stood firm in their solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe. These forces include, among many others: Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania, Azanian People's Organization, Socialist People's Organization of Azania, The December 12th Movement, Zimbabwe-Cuba Solidarity Organization (U.S.), North Korea, China, Cuba, and of course the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP).

On August 19, 2019 the 16 member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) declared October 25 as "A Day of Solidarity to Lift the Illegal Sanctions Imposed on Zimbabwe." Historically, this kind of Pan-African and global revolutionary solidarity created the conditions for Africa's successful armed anti-colonial victories throughout the African continent. Even while Cuba was under its own imperialist embargo, that country showed unwavering Internationalist solidarity during the anti-colonial period with material aid and more than 65,000 troops. Solidarity was also shown when the African Liberation Support Committee inside the OAU was setup to aid the liberation forces throughout the continent.

The All-African People's Revolutionary Party sees working with our fellow Pan-African revolutionary formations to build an All-African Committee for Political Coordination as a priority task that will facilitate united action against all forms of imperialist attacks on Africa and Africans, including western imperialist sanctions on countries throughout Africa and the Socialist World.

Cuban Solidarity and People's Power

Cuba has been under an embargo since 1960 and a full blockade since 1962. The United States not only bars trade by U.S. companies but it also punishes other countries that trade with Cuba. How has Cuba survived the U.S. imperial blockade? By building self-reliant internal and international solidarity. In 1960 the Cuban socialist government formed two critical organizations "Committees for Defense of the Revolution (CDRs)" and "The Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)." The CDR organizations claimed membership of 8.4 million people in 2010. ICAP's people-to-people solidarity has built relationships with 2,045 Cuban solidarity organizations in 152 countries.

After Cuba lost most of their trading partners in 1991 following the breakup of the former Soviet Union, the effects of the blockade were intense. The Cuban people pulled together and not once in these lean years did the Cuban socialist

SANCTIONS KILL

system suspend free health care and education. The crises were met by the people, the Cuban Communist Party, and their friends and allies. They grew food everywhere – on porches, raised beds, parking lots and throughout the countryside.

There was also international support. IFCO Pastors for Peace challenged the U.S. blockade by taking shipments of supplies to Cuba through Mexico. IFCO continues solidarity annually with a travel challenge, coordinated with Cuba solidarity organizations Venceremos Brigade and African Awareness Association. The A-APRP is in solidarity with Cuba globally but in the U.S., the A-APRP chapters work with the National Network on Cuba, a network of more than 35 solidarity organizations in the U.S. challenging the blockade.

The 1996 revolution in Venezuela led to solidarity with Cuba and became the nucleus of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), and eventually the formation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

Venezuela's Solidarity

Venezuela demonstrated solidarity by creating Petro-Caribe to help ease the cost of fuel for Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Bermuda, Dominica, and other countries in the region. Venezuela even donated heating oil to underserved communities in New York and Baltimore. The country financed cataract surgeries for people throughout the region.

The United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) created solidarity among masses of workers and indigenous and African-descended people in Venezuela, first by using 80 percent of oil revenues for education, health care and housing. College was made available for the children of the working classes. The PSUV led a campaign to politically educate the people and they later changed their constitution to put more power in the hands of the people.

Since its unsuccessful attempt to stage an unpopular coup in 2002, imperialism has been trying to use economic sabotage against Venezuela to crush the people's revolution. The U.S. disputed the 2018 re-election of President Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela and proceeded to back the self-appointed President Juan Guaido. In the face of support by the majority of the members the Organization of American States (OAS) and many members of European Union (EU), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the ALBA countries in the Americas stood firm with President Maduro. U.S. resolutions in the United

PAN-AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Nations to invade and overturn the elections failed.

Trump's regime stepped up sanctions started by the Obama regime which declared Venezuela a security threat. The current administration has frozen Venezuela's oil assets, and those of PSUV members. As in the case of Cuba the embargo has become a blockade, and not only are U.S. companies restricted from doing business with Venezuela but other countries doing business with Venezuela are sanctioned. Venezuela's indigenous and African communities have benefited most from the revolution and they show their solidarity with PSUV. Extreme poverty was reduced by 70 percent after the party came to power and over 2.5 million houses have been built by the government.

The A-APRP stands with PSUV and the people of Venezuela.

These three countries and many others are on the frontline of struggle against imperialism and we must give them all the support and solidarity they need. The A-APRP calls on all Africans around the world to join the fight.

Hood Communist, July 2020

United States Imposed Economic Sanctions: The Big Heist

by Lauren Smith

Since the start of the great recession in 2008 the U.S. has become increasingly dependent on the use of unilateral economic sanctions to achieve its policy objectives against its declared targets. Presently, sanctions impact one-third of humanity in 39 countries. Economic sanctions not only cause untold death and devastation to a given country by denying it access to U.S.-dominated markets—which restricts its ability to generate wealth, stabilize its currency against price fluctuations and provide critical services and resources for its people — but economic sanctions also serve to justify and conceal theft, through asset freezes and seizures, at a rate only previously accomplished through invasion and occupation.

As the justification for applying economic sanctions becomes increasingly nebulous and contradictory, and more U.S. governmental entities are granted sanction making authority through a maze of acts, executive orders, and laws—rendering the navigation and analysis of economic sanctions complex at best—it becomes increasingly important to not only uncover the victims of economic sanctions but also the victors. Additionally, it is necessary to understand how economic sanctions are used to prop up an unsustainable financial house of cards through the repurchasing (repo) market, and how sanctions are critical to buttress troubled industry by engendering monopoly capitalism—via the selective approval of sanction waivers/licenses.

It is also important to note that this massive ongoing bailout does not serve U.S. businesses or its working-class, as profits are extracted and concentrated into the hands of oligarchs and are thereby not reinvested productively into the national or global economy. Inflated prices for imported commodities and raw materials, and the loss of once prospering export markets, remain in the wake of

THE BIG HEIST

sanctions. In its entirety, U.S. economic sanctions can only be understood as a street corner shell game leading up to the big heist.

Victims and victors

The victims of economic sanctions are easy to identify because they are visible—there are dead bodies and malnourished children in once-thriving communities. They constitute the underemployed and working-class and are predominately people of color.

Whereas the victors are concealed. They hide behind banks, leveraged financial institutions (hedge funds) and major industry through their controlling interest.¹ They constitute the capitalist class and are white. Within this context, economic sanctions are shown as class and race warfare cleverly and conveniently disguised as a “more friendly” way to “make the world safe for democracy.”

Impact of sanctions

As applied, economic sanctions function as undeclared war by creating severe economic disruption and hyperinflation in many countries—effects that can be illustrated by the grave economic upheavals experienced by Venezuela,² Iraq,³ Iran,⁴ and Cuba.⁵ In Cuba’s 2019 report,⁶ it is explained that the U.S. economic blockade has deprived it of \$922.6 billion (adjusted for inflation) over nearly six decades.

Further, because economic sanctions interfere with the functioning of essential infrastructure i.e. electrical grids, water treatment and distribution facilities,⁷ transportation hubs, and communication networks by blocking access to key industrial inputs,⁸ such as fuel, raw materials, and replacement parts,⁹ they lead to droughts, famines, disease, and abject poverty, which results in the death of millions.

Overall, economic sanctions deny hospitals and health care facilities¹⁰ essential supplies needed to initiate lifesaving procedures and operate machinery and equipment. Additionally, economic sanctions undermine progressive social programs that improve health, nutrition, and education in Nicaragua,¹¹ Venezuela,¹² Cuba,¹³ and Zimbabwe¹⁴ amongst other countries. Within this context, the victims of economic sanctions aren’t the white ruling elite, that can travel at will and pay inflated prices for commodities, but the indigenous people of color without sufficient means or resources due to the historic underdevelopment inherited from colonialism and prior installations of

U.S. puppet regimes.

Expansion of sanctions

Approximately 6,300 entities and individuals are on OFAC's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (an "SDN List"¹⁵). Since these entities can reside anywhere globally, even more countries than what is listed above may be indirectly sanctioned—especially if the given targets hold leadership roles in government or key industries. Entities that an SDN owns (defined as a direct or indirect ownership interest of 50 percent or more) are also blocked, regardless of whether that entity is separately named on the SDN List.

Extraterritorial sanctions are proliferating too. They apply to persons in countries not otherwise subject to sanctions. For example, while the 2012 Magnitsky Act was originally set against Russia, it has been repurposed to apply to any foreign national deemed responsible for or complicit in "human rights violations" or "corruption." U.S. captive quasi non-governmental organizations and associations such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED),¹⁶ Organization of American States (OAS),¹⁷ Amnesty International,¹⁸ Human Rights Watch¹⁹ and religious organizations,²⁰ etc. are notorious for assembling and proselytizing baseless cases against leaders that Washington targets for regime change, while ignoring the flagrant human rights abuses of military dictatorships and coups that allow the United States unfettered access to their natural resources.

Examples of frozen and seized assets

The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, claims that the U.S. simply confiscates Venezuela's money under the guise of sanctions,²¹ noting that the U.S. is experienced in such illegal affairs, giving Iraq, Libya, Iran, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Panama as examples. As can be shown below, these economic sanctions involve sizable assets. Note that the concept of "frozen" assets only applies to the sanctioned entity's access. The sanctioned capital is worked by banks and hedge funds. The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive—as it is nearly impossible to find information on frozen foreign assets in publicly released government reports, except for the OFAC Terrorist Asset Report that shows in aggregate in 2018 that Iran, Syria and North Korea had \$216 million²² in blocked funds by the OFAC. In the news media, the listing of frozen assets is either aged or incomplete.

Venezuela: In August 2019, Venezuela's foreign minister, Jorge Arreaza, stated that the sanctions the United States imposed against it had left more than \$3

THE BIG HEIST

billion²³ of its assets frozen in the global financial system. Additionally, The Bank of England blocked Venezuela's attempts to retrieve \$1.2 billion worth of gold stored as the nation's foreign reserves in Britain. By some estimates, Venezuela holds more than \$8 billion²⁴ in foreign reserves. Additionally, the U.S. froze all the assets Venezuela's state-owned oil company, PDVSA, has in the United States. While it allows PDVSA's U.S.-based subsidiary, Citgo, to operate, it confiscates the money it earns and places it in a blocked account.

Iran: Many still question what happened to an estimated \$100-120 billion in frozen Iranian assets²⁵ which were reportedly being held by banks and institutions around the world in 2015. To give some perspective on future value, consider that in interest alone, without including the opportunity cost of not being able to invest the funds productively in the Iranian economy or inflation, \$400 million in Iran's frozen assets that date back to the overthrow of the shah theoretically yield \$10 billion²⁶—taking into account the high rate of interest in the 1970s.

Iraq: In 2003, President Bush signed an order to take possession of the Iraqi government assets that were frozen in 1990, before the Persian Gulf War. As a result, seventeen of the world's biggest financial institutions were told by the Treasury Department to hand over \$1.7 billion²⁷ in frozen Iraqi assets that the U.S. government intended to place in an account at the NY Fed.

Kuwait: In 1990, President Bush froze \$30 billion²⁸ in Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets in the United States to deny Kuwait's government access to the foreign petrodollar investments, valued at close to \$100 billion.

Libya: In 2015, it was announced that \$67 billion²⁹ in Libya's assets remained frozen from 2011. In 2018, it was announced that Libya's assets had decreased to \$34 billion. The UN Libya Experts Panel is "looking for answers"³⁰ to explain the disappearance of \$33 billion in frozen assets.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York

To unearth the beneficiaries of U.S. economic sanctions, it's necessary to follow the money. Here, the trail leads to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (NY Fed)³¹. The NY Fed is the bank the United States government uses to administer approximately 250 foreign government accounts,³² according to its 2015 promotional material. A list detailing the countries and the value of their accounts is not available to the public. This is not an oversight by the Federal Reserve. At present, even the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) is

SANCTIONS KILL

prohibited by law from auditing the Federal Reserve's transactions for or with foreign central banks, the governments of foreign countries, and private international financing organizations. S. 148: Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2019³³ was proposed to correct this issue.

Foreign governments use the NY Fed to receive and make payments in U.S. dollars, for investing in and holding U.S. dollar-denominated debt securities, and for executing transactions in the foreign exchange market for the purchase and sale of non-dollar currencies. Most of the assets in foreign official accounts at the New York Fed are in the form of marketable U.S. government securities and securities of government-sponsored enterprises (federal agencies). The NY Fed is part of the federal reserve system which consists of 12 banks administered by a Board of Governors³⁴ and is directly accountable to Congress.

Within this context, the NY Fed serves as the non-black-market conduit for the transfer of wealth from targeted countries and entities into the coffers of select U.S. banks and hedge funds through the repo market, which functions as a \$1-trillion-a-day credit machine. Essentially its assets, which include ill-gotten foreign funds, end up as risk-free low-interest loans to its "dealers"³⁵ in a stopgap measure to offset the large amount of debt instruments issued by the Treasury Department. As the growing federal deficit tops one trillion dollars, and the consumer debt exceeds 14 trillion³⁶—extreme pressure is put on the NY Fed to keep interest rates artificially low in the short and medium-term via Quantitative Easing (QE)³⁷ and repo agreements.

While the NY Fed maintains \$3.3 trillion in foreign assets,³⁸ seized and frozen foreign accounts are not flagged by either the NY Fed or by OFAC (except for terrorist asset funds as detailed above). This unconscionable omission shields sanctions booty from scrutiny by U.S. elected officials and taxpayers, as well as journalists.

However, The NY Fed's Independent Auditors' Report for Years Ended December 31, 2018, and 2017, does explain that reverse repurchase agreements may also be executed with foreign official and international account holders³⁹ as part of a service offering. Also, the Federal Reserve Statistical Release H.4.,1 dated February 27, 2020, notes on line item titled "Reverse Repos" that it totals \$221 billion,⁴⁰ and that line item titled "Foreign Official and International Accounts" plus "Others" is equivalent to "Reverse Repos."

To better understand how precarious the U.S. economy is due to profiteering by the NY Fed's dealers, consider that they take between \$20 to \$30 billion in

net assets⁴¹ under management and leverage it up to \$200 billion.⁴² In 2017, the top 25 U.S. banks were reported to have \$222 trillion of exposure⁴³ to repos/derivatives.⁴⁴ When understanding that this level of exposure is approximately equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States times twelve, it is clear that the U.S.'s artificial dependence on repos undermines its economy, and that literally all the theft in the world is not enough to stave off the U.S.'s impending systemic collapse.

Another method used by the Treasury to redistribute and concentrate wealth is through the granting of exclusive monopoly style sanctions waivers/licenses in a veiled process that benefits select corporations and individuals. Through this method, the U.S. can target entire industrial sectors within countries such as the oil, pharmaceutical and agricultural industries to decimate them and force dependence on the products/services of elite U.S. corporations. Lastly, through sanctions waivers/licenses it can reward countries favorable to U.S. corporations by eliminating its global competition. Note how sanctions against Venezuela and Iran increase Saudi Arabia's oil industry market share.⁴⁵ Due to sanctions on Iran, Saudi Arabia overtook Russia⁴⁶ to become China's top oil supplier.

Also, contrived scarcity⁴⁷ conditions serve to inflate price⁴⁸ without increasing cost as is also in the case of aluminum.⁴⁹

Impact of sanctions on the U.S. economy

Sanctions cost businesses in the U.S. billions of dollars a year in lost sales and returns on investment; and by extension sanctions also cost many thousands of workers their jobs.⁵⁰ Exports lost today may mean lower exports even after sanctions are lifted because U.S. firms will not be able to supply replacement parts or related technologies. Foreign firms may also design U.S. intermediate goods and technology out of their final products for fear of one day being caught up in a U.S. sanction episode.

However, these costs are routinely overlooked or underestimated because they are not factored into any U.S. government budget table.

Within this context, the proliferation of economic sanctions can be added to the list of indicators that reveal the failing health of the U.S. economy, as plunder through economic sanctions, not productivity, is instrumental in keeping the impending "repo crisis"⁵¹ at bay. Since the 2008 great recession,⁵² it can be argued convincingly that the capitalist system is in its death throes.

Justification for economic sanctions

While unilateral coercive economic sanctions are transactional constraints imposed by the U.S. against countries, groups, entities, and individuals that resist its dictates, neoliberal policies, and regime change efforts, Washington instead markets economic sanctions to the gullible as a “smart” and “more peaceful” way to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, money laundering, and drug, weapon and human trafficking. However, these lies are sometimes too difficult for even Washington to manufacture and maintain through its captive news media,⁵³ as the United States criminal leadership in these illicit activities often gets exposed.⁵⁴

Economic sanctions are also slyly marketed by Washington, as being a means to forward its speciously defined “humanitarian” and “democratic” agenda. This sets a much lower bar with an even more subjective and easier to fake criteria; and allows the United States to implement, with impunity, economic sanctions that devastate the most vulnerable people in the countries it hypocritically claims it is seeking to protect.

Consider that Nicaragua, a tiny peaceful country the size of New York state, shares no border with the U.S. superpower; has no weapons of mass destruction; has no trafficking (unlike its neighboring countries); has no terrorist cells; and was lauded by the IMF⁵⁵ and World Bank⁵⁶ in their 2018 reports, was nonetheless called “a threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.”⁵⁷ This bold-faced lie clearly exemplifies how economic sanctions are a charade and an economic weapon used purely for regime change.

On paper, the State Department’s Bureau of Counterterrorism identifies potential targets for designation, not the CIA. But not only does it consider actual terrorist attacks that a group has carried out for this sanctionable classification, but also if a group has the “capability and intent to carry out such acts.” Thus, an entity can be sanctioned for thought crimes projected upon it by the United States government. Further, a “terrorist activity” or “terrorism” is not only defined as an imagined threat to the “national defense” of the United States but also an imagined threat to its “foreign relations and economic interests.” Often sanctions are set specifically to disrupt the trade relations of geopolitical foes like China and Russia.

Secondary sanctions

But it is not unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. alone that devastate a

THE BIG HEIST

targeted country, it is the imposition of secondary sanctions upon foreign third parties that represents the final blow to its economy and people. These measures threaten to cut off foreign countries, governments, companies, financial institutions, and individuals from the U.S. financial system if they engage in prohibited transactions with a sanctioned target—irrespective as to whether that activity impacts the United States directly.

This forces all parties worldwide to comply with U.S. dictates or risk financial penalties, criminal charges, and sanctions. This has a chilling effect on the world economy for even allied developed nations are reluctant to cross Washington to trade with sanctioned countries, as corporations and banks not on Washington's inside track suffer harsh penalties. Presently, any entity that violates U.S. unilateral sanctions risks severe penalties⁵⁸ that range from up to \$5 million for individuals, \$10 million for corporations, and up to 30 years imprisonment. With over 1,000 military bases and installations⁵⁹ in over 120 countries,⁶⁰ U.S. aggression remains an ever-present threat against noncompliance as well.

Conclusion

When analysis is done to uncover the big winners of U.S. economic sanctions it is learned that ExxonMobil and JP Morgan Chase Bank⁶¹ are often front and center; case in point, Iran,⁶² Iraq,⁶³ and Venezuela.⁶⁴

Fortunately, U.S. economic sanctions contain the seeds of their own undoing, since they engender the expansion of foreign reserve currencies at the expense of the U.S. dollar,⁶⁵ and the phasing out of the U.S. money transfer system (SWIFT)⁶⁶ to alternate foreign models such as Russia's System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS).⁶⁷

But since millions of lives are at stake now, it is imperative that secondary sanctioned countries, business owners, workers, and elected officials join together with sanctioned countries and peace activists⁶⁸ to end economic sanctions. The oligarchy must be stopped from literally stealing the wealth of the world.

MR Online, March 2020

Endnotes

1. Global Research; The Federal Reserve Cartel: The Eight Families, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-federal-reserve-cartel-the-eight-families/25080>

SANCTIONS KILL

2. *MROnline: Economic Sanctions as Collective Punishment: The Case of Venezuela*, <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/venezuela-sanctions-2019-04-1.pdf>
3. *World Finance: The impact of economic sanctions*, <https://www.worldfinance.com/special-reports/the-impact-of-economic-sanctions>
4. *Trading Economics: Iran Inflation Rate*, <https://tradingeconomics.com/iran/inflation-cpi>
5. *People's World: For 28th consecutive year, Cuba prepares to indict U.S. blockade at United Nations*, <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/for-28th-consecutive-year-cuba-indicts-u-s-blockade-at-united-nations/>
6. *MROnline: Cuba vs Bloqueo*, <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Cuba20vs20Bloqueo.pdf>
7. *ReliefWeb: Water under siege in Iraq: US/UK military forces risk committing war crimes by depriving civilians of safe water*, <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/water-under-siege-iraq-usuk-military-forces-risk-committing-war-crimes-depriving>
8. *CETIM: The effects of the US embargo against Cuba and the reasons of the urgent need to lift it*, <https://www.cetim.ch/the-effects-of-the-us-embargo-against-cuba-and-the-reasons-of-the-urgent-need-to-lift-it/>
9. *LA Times: For many Syrians, 'smart' sanctions are anything but*, <https://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-syria-sanctions-20181212-story.html>
10. *AP: Iranians say US sanctions blocking access to needed medicine*, <https://apnews.com/article/economy-health-donald-trump-financial-markets-global-trade-23327f44786845dbbecee530664ee5a6>
11. *TeleSUR: Nicaragua's Success Threatens US Stranglehold On Latin America*, <https://www.telesurenglish.net/opinion/Nicaraguas-Success-Threatens-US-Stranglehold-on-Latin-America-20180914-0011.html>
12. *TeleSUR: Venezuela: Social Program Meets Goal, Delivers 3 Million Homes*, <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Venezuela-Social-Program-Meets-Goal-Delivers-3-Million-Homes-20191227-0001.html>
13. *The Conversation: Is the Cuban healthcare system really as great as people claim*, <https://theconversation.com/is-the-cuban-healthcare-system-really-as-great-as-people-claim-69526>
14. *Socialist Worker: Zimbabwe's struggle against imperialism*, <https://socialistworker.co.uk/features/zimbabwe-s-struggle-against-imperialism/>
15. *US Treasury: SDN list by County*, <https://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/ctrylst.txt>
16. *Telesur: National Endowment for Destabilization? CIA Funds for Latin America in 2018*, <https://www.telesurenglish.net/analysis/National-Endowment-for-Destabilization-CIA-Funds-for-Latin-America-in-2018-20190403-0042.html>
17. *CommonDreams: The OAS Lied to the Public About the Bolivian Election and Coup*, <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2019/11/19/oas-lied-public-about-bolivian-election-and-coup>
18. *Nicanotes: New "Lies, Damned Lies, and Statistics" about Nicaragua from Human Rights NGOs*, <https://afgj.org/lies-about-nicaragua-amnesty-international-global-witness>
19. *The Grayzone: Human Rights Watch*, <https://thegrayzone.com/tag/human-rights-watch/>

THE BIG HEIST

20. *Tortilla con Sal: Nicaragua: Imperial snakes in holy vestments*, <https://tortillaconsal.com/tortilla/node/3169>
21. RT: 'Cynical' US sanctions meant to confiscate Venezuela's assets – Lavrov, <https://www.rt.com/news/450057-cynical-sanctions-us-lavrov-venezuela/>
22. MROnline: *Terrorist Assets Report, 2018*, <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/tar2018.pdf>
23. Agencia EFE: *Venezuela says more than \$3 bn frozen due to sanctions*, <https://www.efe.com/efe/english/business/venezuela-says-more-than-3-bn-frozen-due-to-sanctions/50000265-3462028>
24. RT: *Bank of England refused to return \$1.2bn in gold to Venezuela – reports*, <https://www.rt.com/news/449833-venezuela-gold-bank-england/>
25. *AperioIntelligence.com* (now behind a paywall)
26. Time: *Why the U.S. Owed Iran That \$400 Million*, <https://time.com/4441046/400-million-iran-hostage-history/>
27. CNN Money: *Feds order Iraqi asset transfer*, https://money.cnn.com/2003/03/21/news/frozen_assets/
28. NYT: *The Iraqi Invasion; Bush, in Freezing Assets, Bars \$30 Billion to Hussein*, <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/03/world/the-iraqi-invasion-bush-in-freezing-assets-bars-30-billion-to-hussein.html>
29. Reuters: *Libya's \$67 billion frozen funds must remain on ice says would-be investment chief*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/libya-investment/libyas-67-billion-frozen-funds-must-remain-on-ice-says-would-be-investment-chief-idUSL5N0ZX22820150717>
30. *LibyaHerald: UN Libya Experts Panel seeking to establish the true value of Libya's frozen assets*, <https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/03/un-libya-experts-panel-seeking-to-establish-the-true-value-of-libyas-frozen-assets/>
31. *Federal Reserve Statistical Release*, <https://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h41/current/h41.htm>
32. Reuters: *Special Report: How the Federal Reserve serves U.S. foreign intelligence*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-fed-accounts-intelligence-specialrepo/special-report-how-the-federal-reserve-serves-u-s-foreign-intelligence-idUSKBN19H198>
33. Congress.gov: *S.148 - Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2019*, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/148/all-actions?q=%7B%22search%22:%5B%22s148%22%5D%7D&r=1&overview=closed&s=6&KWICView=false>
34. *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*, <https://www.federalreserve.gov/aboutthefed/bios/board/powell.htm>
35. FRB-NY: *Primary Dealers*, <https://www.newyorkfed.org/markets/primarydealers>
36. *Global Research: Global Economy: Is the 'Mother of all Bubbles' About to Pop? QE on Steroids*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/mother-all-bubbles-about-pop/5694768>
37. MSG: *Quantitative Easing and Interest Rates*, <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/quantitative-easing-and-interest-rates.htm>
38. Reuters *Special Report: How the Federal Reserve serves U.S. foreign intelligence*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-fed-accounts-intelligence-specialrepo/special-report-how-the-federal-reserve-serves-u-s-foreign-intelligence-idUSKBN19H198>

39. MROnline: FRB-NY Independent Audit Report, 2017, 2018, <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Financial-Statements.pdf>
40. Federal Reserve Statistical Release: <https://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h41/current/>
41. Ibid.
42. Zero Hedge: "The Fed Was Suddenly Facing Multiple LTCMs": BIS Offers A Stunning Explanation Of What Really Happened On Repocalypse Day, <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/fed-was-suddenly-facing-multiple-ltcms-bis-offers-stunning-explanation-what-really-happened>
43. Zero Hedge: Financial Weapons Of Mass Destruction: Top 25 US Banks Have 222 Trillion Dollars Derivatives Exposure, <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-05-16/financial-weapons-mass-destruction-top-25-us-banks-have-222-trillion-dollars-derivat>
44. SSRN: Is a Repo a Derivative, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2014723
45. TeleSUR: The Spoils of Economic War: How the US, Saudis Profit From Sanctions on Venezuela and Iran, <https://www.telesurenglish.net/analysis/The-Spoils-from-Blockading-Oil-How-the-US-Profits-From-Sanctions-on-Venezuela-and-Iran-20190606-0016.html>
46. Reuters: China's Iran oil imports plunge as U.S. Sanctions bite, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-economy-trade-crude/chinas-iran-oil-imports-plunge-as-us-sanctions-bite-idUSKCN1UM0CB>
47. Oil prices expected to spike in summer as US toughens stance on Iran sanctions, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/apr/25/oil-prices-summer-us-iran-sanctions>
48. Oil Price Net: Sanctions and Oil Prices, <https://www.oil-price.net/en/articles/sanctions-and-oil-prices.php>
49. Financial Times: Aluminium rallies as US sanctions upend market, <https://www.ft.com/content/a6f637d6-3bde-11e8-b9f9-de94fa33a81e>
50. Brookings: Sanctions, Too Much of a Bad Thing, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/economic-sanctions-too-much-of-a-bad-thing/>
51. Truthdig: The Fed Protects Gamblers at the Expense of the Economy, <https://www.truthdig.com/articles/the-feds-latest-gamble-imperils-the-whole-economy/>
52. Federal Reserve History: The Great Recession, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/great-recession-of-200709>
53. Grayzone: NY Times admits it sends some stories to US government for approval before publication, <https://thegrayzone.com/2019/06/24/new-york-times-media-us-government-approval/>
54. MintPress News: Hidden in Plain Sight: The Shocking Origins of the Jeffrey Epstein Case, <https://mintpressnews.cn/shocking-origins-jeffrey-epstein-blackmail-roy-cohn/260621/>
55. IMF: Nicaragua Staff Mission Concluding Statement, <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2018/02/06/ms020618-nicaragua-staff-concluding-statement-of-an-imf-staff-visit>
56. World Bank: Nicaragua, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nicaragua>
57. File No Longer Posted, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/text-notice-continuation-national-emergency-respect-situation-nicaragua/>

THE BIG HEIST

58. *MROnline: OFAC Regulations for the Financial Community*, <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/facbk.pdf>
59. *TheNation: The US Has Military Bases in 80 Countries. All of Them Must Close*, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/the-us-has-military-bases-in-172-countries-all-of-them-must-close/>
60. *Sourcewatch: U.S. Military Bases Overseas*, https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/U.S._military_bases_overseas
61. *Global Research: The Federal Reserve Cartel: The Eight Families*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-federal-reserve-cartel-the-eight-families/25080>
62. *DailyBeast: Tillerson's Exxon Mobil worked with Iran*, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/cheats/2017/01/09/tillerson-s-exxonmobil-worked-with-iran>
63. *Reuters: Exclusive: Exxon's \$53 billion Iraq deal hit by contract snags, Iran tensions— sources*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-iraq-oil-exclusive/exclusive-exxons-53-billion-iraq-deal-hit-by-contract-snags-iran-tensions-sources-idUSKCN1TM0IZ>
64. *Canadian Dimension: Chronology of the 4th Generation War Against Venezuela*, <https://canadiandimension.com/blog/view/chronology-of-the-4th-generation-war-against-venezuela>
65. *Reuters: U.S. dollar share of global currency reserves at lowest since 2013: IMF data*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-forex-reserves/us-dollar-share-of-global-currency-reserves-at-lowest-since-2013-imf-data-idUSKBN1WF11O>
66. *Swift Homepage*, <https://www.swift.com/>
67. *RT: Russian banks join Chinese alternative to SWIFT payment system*, <https://www.rt.com/business/455121-russian-banks-chinese-swift/>
68. *Sanctions Kill*, <https://sanctionskill.org>

Recentering Internationalism: An Analysis of Economic Sanctions

by Erica Caines

As maintained in the October article, Failures of the US Left, “what should be largely understood by the ‘US left’ is that fascism and capitalism rely on and support imperialism—seeking out to exploit nations we’ve come to view as Underdeveloped for labor, benefiting only the most privileged few within the Western nation”. During this year’s African Liberation Day virtual broadcast, this point was exemplified through discussions centered on imperialist sanctions against sovereign nations like Zimbabwe, Cuba, and Venezuela, reiterating the point that “one can not be a revolutionary socialist and not also be an anti-imperialist.”

How does one come to understand anti-imperialism not just in regards to socialism but a broader material reality faced by Africans in the US enough to understand its relationship to the overall liberation of African and colonized people? Through a rejection of the socialization of wars and American patriotism, of course—through internationalism.

The dire conditions that exist in African poor working-class communities in the US, which are the result of intentional systematic neglect under a white supremacist capitalist-imperialist system, leave poor African and other colonized people without the ability to live full lives. We are systemically dehumanized. As small African children in the US, growing up under these dire conditions, you are the primary target for enlistment. African and other colonized children have been socialized into a fallacy of false choice that allows enlisting into the US military to be viewed as a chance to escape hardship despite the contradictions of contributing to the hardships and even the deaths of other colonized people. If Africans are suffering due to a lack of access to sufficient healthcare, enlisting in the military provides a solution to that problem. If poor working-class conditions

financially restrict Africans from accessing higher education, the military offers a way. Enlisting in the military also guarantees housing when a heightened housing crisis has resulted in massive displacement across the country. Poverty is, indeed, the ‘new draft’, but much of this has been made possible with the normalization of wars through video games, mainstream media, colonized education, as well as the Obama years when African communities found themselves willingly fully embracing patriotism if only because an African face represented America.

While we may hear the occasional pushback against wars, we are less likely to hear pushback against imperialist economic sanctions. Similar to wars, sanctions are equally devastating and deadly. Economic sanctions are a tactic of war targeting particular nations, strangling its economy (a tool of imperialism)—yes, even now during a global pandemic as we have seen with Iran. If that definition seems eerily similar to what the US does to African communities here, it should. Aren’t African communities in the US targeted by the state? Aren’t African communities in the US economically strangled, as well? Aren’t Africans in the US finding themselves displaced from the places they’ve called home? If US economic sanctions are essentially part of a strategy of compliance through collective punishment, what makes nations under sanctions different from the material reality of African Communities in the belly of the beast?

The effects of economic sanctions on African and other colonized children bring this point closer to home.

The 1993 study titled, “Sanctions in Haiti: Crisis in Humanitarian Action,” recognizes although international attention focused largely on killings and political terrorism in Haiti, “the human toll from the silent tragedy of humanitarian neglect has been far greater than either the violence or human rights abuses.” A reported nearly 3,000 children aged 5 or younger died in Haiti every month. According to the study, that figure increased by about 1,000 children per month. There are about a million children under the age of 5 in Haiti, which has a population of about 7 million. Sanctions directly contributed to as many as 100,000 new cases of moderate to severe malnutrition suffered by children.

The continued U.S. oppression of Haiti has most recently been demonstrated through U.S. sanctions against Venezuela which has made it impossible for Haiti to repay their loan as part of the PetroCaribe deal. This, of course, has contributed to the uprisings in Haiti¹, pre-coronavirus pandemic. Yet, during this

SANCTIONS KILL

pandemic, we don't see these tensions nor horrific conditions easing but, instead, worsening.

Recently in Venezuela, Afro-Venezuelans stopped a US multi-million dollar mercenary invasion² that was an attempt to oust the democratically elected president, Nicolas Maduro. Consequently, the continued resistance from Venezuelans has invited more sanctions on an already heavily sanctioned sovereign nation which has killed up to 40,000 Venezuelans since 2017.³ The impact these sanctions have had on children's ability to access medical needs and food has not just been severe but manipulated by US mainstream media as an implied result of Maduro's reign of "tyranny".

These are similar distortions of truths presented to Africans in the US about Africans in the US. Economic sanctions should not only be understood as a consequence faced by other colonized nations but we need to understand that we are colonized people here in the US and furthermore, domestic and global imperialism are counterparts. This is the primary contradiction that exists through present-day systemic oppression suffered by African poor working-class communities. This, of course, presents itself as economic sanctions otherwise known as welfare sanctions.

The welfare system is an oppressive political player that essentially monitors, regulates, and punishes colonized poor families, and colonized children by extension. Currently, fewer families are exempt from mandatory work requirements, and more are subjected to penalization for infractions of the rules with the loss of entire cash grants, which include Food stamps or Medicaid benefits, through federal regulations. This obviously restricts a household's ability to get its basic needs met. This restricts (majority single parent) household's ability to function day-to-day. This is not unlike the punishment thwarted at colonized nations that the US (and its allies and their lackeys) through US/ Western imperialism. This, like the economic sanctions placed on nations like Haiti and Venezuela, has the most drastic impact on the most vulnerable, the children.

It is important that revolutionary socialists continue to make these connections and push the same internationalism that was rooted in the Black radical traditions of our ancestors. Imperialism is not simply something to reiterate is "the highest stage of capitalism", but something that affects Africans EVERYWHERE.

It is important that we organize to end US imperialist sanctions both here and abroad.

Hood Communist, July 2020

Endnotes

1. Prospects for the Haitian Revolution: <https://hoodcommunist.org/2019/10/10/prospects-for-the-haitian-revolution/>

2. Mercenary Confesses Failed Plot Was to Bring President Maduro to US: <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Duque-Involved-in-Military-Incursion-President-Maduro-Holds-20200506-0013.html>

3. US Sanctions Killed Over 40,000 Venezuelans Since 2017: <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/US-Sanctions-Killed-Over-40000-Venezuelans-Since-2017-20190425-0015.html>

CEPR Sanctions Watch, July 2022

by Michael Galant

Economic sanctions have become one of the main tools of US foreign policy, despite little proof of their efficacy, and widespread evidence that they often cause harm, and deaths, among civilian populations; and that these civilian impacts may be a large part of how sanctions are intended to achieve political goals. Though now a defining feature of the global economic order, sanctions, and their human costs, receive relatively little attention in most US media outlets.

CEPR Sanctions Watch aims to help generate more awareness around sanctions by providing regular updates on US economic sanctions policy and its harmful impacts on people around the world.

Afghanistan

Since the Taliban takeover in 2021, the Biden administration has blocked Afghanistan's central bank from accessing roughly \$7 billion in its foreign reserves held in the United States. Along with sanctions on Taliban officials and a cutoff of aid, this has contributed to a collapse of Afghanistan's economy.¹

US and Afghan negotiators reportedly held productive talks toward the release of half of the Afghan central bank's \$7 billion in frozen foreign reserves in US financial institutions this month. That deliberations are ongoing is an encouraging sign, but the parties remain far from an agreement. The US delegation proposed a mechanism by which the assets would be placed in a third-party trust fund that would disburse the reserves at the discretion of an international board. However, the Afghan government, while reportedly open to independent monitoring against money laundering, insists against ceding control to a third party. This position is understandable. As CEPR's Andrés Arauz explains, allowing the reserves to be controlled, and potentially cut off, by a third party would undermine the value of the international reserves as reserves, and

therefore compromise the ability of the central bank to fulfill its essential functions.

Until an agreement is reached, however, Afghanistan's economy continues to crumble. The Wall Street Journal reports that US sanctions, beyond the frozen foreign reserves, are exacerbating the situation:

“Foreign companies and banks are widely avoiding transactions with Afghanistan for fear of running afoul of international sanctions that target the Taliban leadership.”

To make matters worse, the version of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act that passed the House this month included language that would bar the use of Pentagon resources for the transfer of aid, currency, or other items of value to Afghanistan (despite the last minute efforts of Rep. Ilhan Omar). If this language remains in the final legislation, it would significantly hamper humanitarian relief efforts, and potentially even the eventual transfer of the foreign reserves.

Cuba

The US embargo of Cuba is one of the oldest and strictest of all US sanctions regimes, prohibiting nearly all trade, travel, and financial transactions since the early 1960s. After a brief loosening under Obama, sanctions were again tightened under Trump — a policy the Biden administration has yet to fully reverse.

Over three quarters of House Democrats voted this month in support of legislation that would make it easier for US producers to export food to Cuba. Led by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, the amendment to the housing, transportation, and urban development appropriations bill would have suspended certain restrictions on food exports as Cuba faces what may be its worst economic crisis in decades. Yet despite support from US farmers — and the fact that nearly 70 percent of Cuban-Americans in Miami support selling food to the island — 55 Democrats joined nearly every Republican in voting down the measure.

Also this month, the Biden administration announced new visa restrictions on certain Cuban officials, and, on the other hand, gave American Airlines permission to resume flights to certain destinations in Cuba outside of Havana. The city of New Haven approved a resolution condemning the embargo, following a similar resolution in Boston the month before.

SANCTIONS KILL

Cubans are facing widespread blackouts amid the sweltering summer heat, as the island's weeks-long energy crisis continues. The US embargo makes it more difficult to access the parts needed to maintain a working energy grid, as well as to afford fuel amid global energy price increases driven, in part, by the war in Ukraine and by economic restrictions imposed on Russia.

Iran

US sanctions on Iran began during the 1979 hostage crisis, and currently bar US actors — plus some non-US actors — from most all trade and financial transactions with Iran. Though certain sanctions were lifted as a result of the 2015 nuclear deal, the majority have been reimposed since the US's withdrawal.

Negotiations for a return to the nuclear deal, and hopes for the easing of sanctions and a return to a less hostile relationship between the United States and Iran, remain at an impasse. One of the major remaining sticking points is, reportedly, the US refusal to remove Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) from its "foreign terrorist organization" list, a Trump-era policy that Secretary of State Blinken admits means little: "As a practical matter, the designation does not really gain you much." Despite this, President Biden explicitly said in an interview this month that he would be willing to let the agreement die altogether to maintain the designation (in the same interview, he refused to take military action off the table).

Amid the faltering talks, the Biden administration announced a fresh round of primary and secondary sanctions on individuals and firms from Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, and China for allegedly facilitating the sale of Iranian oil and oil products — a crackdown on oil exports at a time when much of the world, including US citizens, are feeling the pain of high oil prices. Iran responded with its own sanctions on dozens of former and current US officials — including John Bolton, Mike Pompeo, and 30 current members of Congress — for their alleged support of the opposition group Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK), which the Iranian government considers a terrorist organization (as did the US State Department, from 1997 to 2012).

North Korea

The US first imposed sanctions on North Korea during the Korean War in the 1950s. Following the country's 2006 nuclear test, more stringent sanctions were added, which have periodically intensified since. Sanctions now target oil imports, and cover most finance and trade and the key minerals sector.

The 69th anniversary of the Korean Armistice Agreement was met by activist calls for a peaceful end to the (technically ongoing) Korean War, as well as warnings from the North Korean government against what it sees as provocative joint military exercises between the United States and South Korea. Tensions remain high as US officials continue to caution that North Korea may be planning its seventh-ever nuclear test. Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen warned that the United States is prepared to impose fresh sanctions should the test occur.

Between existing sanctions and the continued fallout of COVID-19, new estimates released by the Bank of Korea this month report that the North Korean economy shrank for the second straight year in 2021. Despite this, and the country's difficulty in accessing medical goods, the COVID-19 outbreak that was first announced in May has reportedly subsided, with the government claiming that "99.98 percent of its 4.77 million fever patients have fully recovered." The World Health Organization, however, has previously expressed doubts about the data.

Russia

US sanctions on Russia's financial, energy, and defense sectors began after the 2014 annexation of Crimea. This regime was greatly expanded, particularly by the US, UK, and EU, in response to the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, by barring most financial transactions, oil and gas imports, and other activities.

The United States and its allies continued to attempt to navigate the tensions of economically isolating a major world power and oil and gas supplier this month. The United Kingdom announced a fresh wave of sanctions on Russian officials, while the European Union approved its seventh major sanctions package, including, among other things, an extended prohibition on the purchase of gold originating in Russia. Canada, meanwhile, was forced to waive its sanctions to allow the transportation of equipment needed to ease Germany's gas shortage. Later in the month, Russia announced that it would be cutting gas exports to Germany, sending already-high prices soaring. (Read CEPR's Kevin Cashman for more on how US sanctions on Russia and beyond have affected the global economy, and have undermined Biden's domestic agenda.)

Reports on the impacts of these sanctions remain conflicting. While one new study finds that Russia faces "economic oblivion," other assessments are more moderate. The International Monetary Fund, while warning of a global recession, revised Russia's economic outlook upward. Critically, while

discussion has focused on whether sanctions bring pain to the Russian economy, too little attention is paid to whether they succeed in actually achieving their goals (much less how this pain affects the Russian people, and nations around the world). According to Alexander Gabuev, a senior analyst at the Carnegie Moscow think tank: Russia will “definitely” face recession, but “does [sanctions policy] change the Kremlin’s calculus and create sufficient pressure for Russia to change its Ukraine policy? No.”

Venezuela

While the George W. Bush and Obama administrations sanctioned certain Venezuelan individuals, it was under Trump that these were dramatically expanded to target the entire economy, barring financing and oil trade, and transferring control of assets to the opposition. President Biden has yet to reverse these measures.

A US delegation to Venezuela failed to secure the release of detained US citizens, but did, reportedly, yield productive talks. Though limited, this continued engagement with the Venezuelan government is a hopeful sign, following the initiation of diplomatic talks earlier this year. Previous talks led, among other things, to the Biden administration green-lighting oil giant Chevron’s plans to negotiate a future contract with the government. These negotiations continued this month, with reports that an agreement may give Chevron a majority stake in production, which would lower the Venezuelan state oil company’s stake below the 50 percent threshold that allows exports to proceed without facing sanctions.

Also this month, the heads of government of the Caribbean Community called on the United States to end its sanctions on Venezuela, particularly given rising global oil prices.

Venezuela’s economy is expected to grow at its fastest rate in 15 years this year as a result of these high oil prices, recovering oil production, and growing remittances — a welcome if insufficient reprieve for a country that has been battered by sanctions for years. A new AP analysis finds that Venezuela’s vaccination rate — not only for COVID-19, but also essential infant vaccinations against polio, measles, tuberculosis, and other diseases — is among the worst in the world.

Other

US sanctions target and affect a number of countries beyond those listed

above, including but not limited to Belarus, Syria, and Zimbabwe.

The version of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act that passed the House this month includes an amendment led by Reps. Chuy García and Ilhan Omar that would require a report on the humanitarian impacts of US sanctions. Despite being a major component of US foreign policy-making, the United States does not provide Congress or the general public with an official assessment of the effectiveness, or impacts, of its sanctions policy. If included in the final legislation, this report would be a small but meaningful step toward effective oversight of US sanctions policy.

Center for Economic and Policy Research, July 2022

Endnotes

1. The killing of Ayman al-Zawahri, which occurred after the following was written, is likely to complicate prospects for negotiations.

Section II

Sanctioned Countries

Korea/DPRK: Surviving US/UN Sanctions and Military Threats

by Erica Jung

Introduction

North Koreans live under restrictions, embargoes, and scarcities imposed and enforced by a variety of sanctions from the United States and the United Nations.¹ In fact, north Korea is one of the most sanctioned countries in the world, having been subject to sanctions since its foundation in 1950. US sanctions in particular serve as imperial tools of control, seeking to undermine the existence of a socialist state that poses a direct threat to its hegemonic power. By casting north Korea as an evil and hostile threat to world peace, the US is able to justify its intervention in peninsular politics and its use of sanctions as economic warfare.

Current Events and Historical Background

The Biden administration announced on June 20, 2021 that it was extending Executive Order 13466,² a largely symbolic move that extends the national emergency over north Korea's nuclear capabilities, by another year.³ President Biden argued that north Korea's "pursuit of nuclear and missile programs... continues to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States."⁴ Furthering US hostility towards north Korea, the Biden administration later announced a series of new sanctions targeting individuals and entities in China, Russia, north Korea, Bangladesh, and Myanmar on December 10, 2021, the 73rd anniversary of Human Rights Day.

The president's first new sanctions on north Korea were imposed on Russian university European Institute Justo and its provost, Dmitriy Yurevich Soin, for allowing north Korean students to work in Russia through a student visa program. The US Treasury Department had voiced concerns that the foreign

currency earnings would go towards north Korea's "unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs."⁵ The Treasury Department also blacklisted north Korea's Central Public Prosecutors Office, along with the former minister of social security and Minister of People's Armed Forces, Ri Yong Gil.

In a clear show of hypocrisy, the US agreed "in principle" to an End-of-War Declaration three days after it announced this new round of sanctions. This declaration would bring a formal end to the Korean War, which concluded in 1953 with an armistice but not a peace treaty.⁶ While the effort was mostly led by the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the US, both parties have failed to address any of the conditions that north Korea had asked for, such as lifting certain sanctions and stopping military exercises. Meanwhile, the US continues to employ sanctions pressure and isolation tactics against north Korea, undermining the country's sovereignty.

In order to understand sanctions on north Korea today, it is important to understand why they were imposed in the first place and the motivations behind their continued use. Shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the US imposed an export ban on north Korea and forbade financial transactions by, or on behalf of, north Korea, including transactions for travel.⁷ In 2003, when north Korea began its nuclear tests, the US started to ease trade and travel sanctions under the Bush and Obama administrations to facilitate negotiations around north Korea's denuclearization. However, sanctions were reinstated "when the negotiations failed to produce the results desired by the US."⁸ Today, the threat of sanctions continues to serve as a major barrier to renewing peace talks between the two Koreas.

The events outlined above can be understood by examining the US State Department's on-again-off-again approach to including north Korea on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. In 1988, north Korea was added to the US State Department's State Sponsors of Terrorism list. 20 years later, north Korea was removed from the list in 2008 only to be re-added back in 2017 under the Trump administration.⁹ More recently, the Biden administration renewed north Korea's designation to the list.¹⁰ Described by former State Department official Joseph DeThomas as "more of an art than a science", designation to the list is a key strategy for the US to continue to justify and fully institutionalize brutal sanctions. Meanwhile, north Korea's temporary removal from the list is part of the same calculated effort towards cornering the country into negotiations

around denuclearization in exchange for the US easing their imposed sanctions.

Financial Impact of Sanctions on north Korea

The US targets north Korea with unilateral sanctions that “restrict more economic activities and target a larger list of individuals and businesses than the UN sanctions.”¹¹ Since 2008, the US has issued several executive orders that have expanded the impact and scope of its sanctions on north Korea.^{12,13} In 2016, President Obama issued Executive Order 13722, freezing any property belonging to the government of north Korea or the Workers’ Party of Korea that appears to be under the jurisdiction of the US and prohibiting the export or re-export of any goods, services, or technology from the US, or by a US person, to north Korea.¹⁴ Freezing the property of members of the Workers’ Party of Korea essentially amounts to stealing from everyday Koreans as the party’s membership stands at 6.5 million people, or a quarter of north Korea’s population.¹⁵

President Trump’s Executive Order 13810, issued in 2017, expanded the scope of US sanctions against north Korea. The order authorizes the Department of Treasury to enforce sanctions against any individual or entity that trades with north Korea,¹⁶ employing a strategy of secondary sanctions that mainly target foreign individuals and entities for participating in activities that may not be under US jurisdiction.¹⁷ This tactic is used to pressure companies worldwide into severing their ties with any businesses involving north Korea. As President Trump stated in 2017, “foreign banks will face a clear choice: Do business with the United States or facilitate trade with the lawless regime in north Korea –and they won’t have so much to trade.”¹⁸ Parties that are subject to secondary sanctions can lose access to the US market.¹⁹ As a result, north Korea becomes further impacted by overcompliance, or “the tendency of firms to avoid sanctioned countries for fear of repercussion, even when it may be within their rights to interact with the country.”²⁰ Through its use of sanctions, the US has effectively blocked north Korea from engaging in the US financial system and any dollar-based transactions.²¹

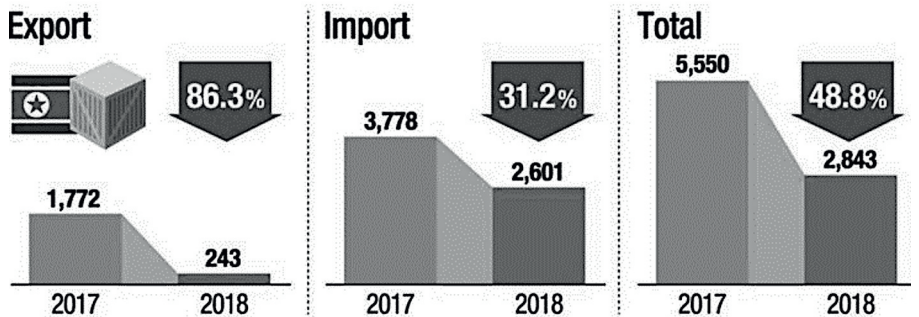
While unilateral US sanctions on north Korea date back to 1950, the UN Security Council (UNSC) has levied increasingly severe multilateral sanctions since 2006 over concerns about north Korea’s nuclear weapon program.²² The first generation of UN sanctions were “smart sanctions”, and targeted state and party leaders by restricting the supply of weapons, missile technology and material, and select luxury goods.²³ These sanctions were implemented in

response to north Korea’s first nuclear test.²⁴

The second generation of UN sanctions, created in response to the fourth north Korean nuclear test in 2016, were “sectoral sanctions.²⁵ Sectoral sanctions were applied indiscriminately towards entire sectors of north Korea’s economy, irrespective of these sectors’ ties to the nuclear program. These sanctions have had particularly devastating effects on the north Korean economy, as the UN resolutions target top export industries, preventing north Korea from bringing in external revenue that could be used for the country and its people. The list of industries directly targeted include: the mineral trade, seafood, textiles, and agricultural products, machinery and electrical equipment. In terms of imports, the resolutions significantly limit north Korea’s import of energy, ban the import of heavy machinery, industrial equipment and transportation vehicles, and forbid any joint ventures with north Korean entities, thereby blocking any foreign investment.

Through each new resolution, the UN Security Council has progressively isolated north Korea from access to international capital. Collectively, both UN sanctions and unilateral US sanctions have resulted in an “almost total ban on DPRK-related trade, investment, and financial transactions.”²⁶ North Korea’s trade was halved in 2018 as a result of UN sanctions.²⁷ As the graph below shows, north Korea’s exports plunged by 86.3 percent while imports declined by 31.2 percent. A decline in exports at such a high rate signals a downturn in the economy as national markets struggle to export goods, leading to shortages of foreign currency.²⁸

North Korea’s trade in 2018



The financial impacts of sanctions, however, go beyond the country’s economic development. By broadly impacting north Korea’s national economy,

sanctions inevitably take a humanitarian toll on the entire population by undermining their ability to survive. Humanitarian organizations – including UN agencies – face many barriers in their distribution of aid as sanctions have dissuaded banks from managing any transactions involving north Korea. North Korean state agencies are also affected by sanctions, which likewise prevent their access to many essential supplies. Some of the biggest humanitarian challenges facing the country include “chronic food insecurity; lack of access to basic health services; declining conditions in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WaSH); and high vulnerability to natural disasters.”²⁹ From hand-tools to aluminum wire, the long list of banned items affects many aspects of everyday life and presents serious challenges to social and economic development.

Humanitarian Challenges and National Resilience

From 1989 to 1991, north Korea lost 80 per cent of its foreign trade as the Soviet Union collapsed. Oil imports from Russia were stopped completely and imports from China declined significantly. Two devastating floods swept the country in 1995 and 1997, destroying entire industries as mines flooded and roads were washed away. The period of famine and suffering that resulted from these factors, otherwise known as the Arduous March, lasted about 16 years, from 1994 to the end of 2009. All of north Korea’s key industries either stopped or decreased production.

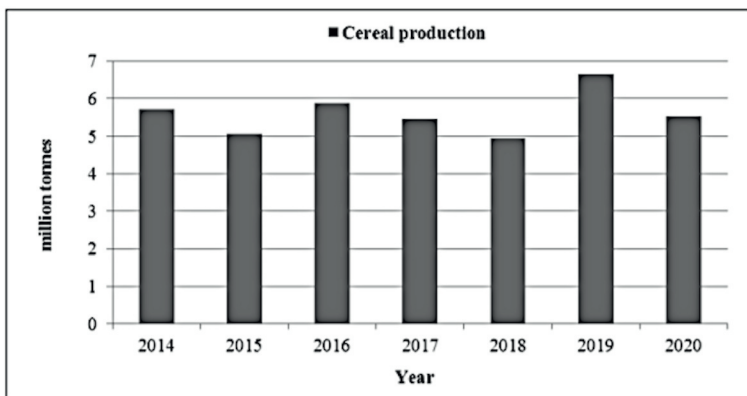
North Korea persevered through this time of hardship and has shown remarkable strength and determination in overcoming these many challenges. Since the Arduous March, the country has been gradually recovering, having developed its own technology and infrastructure to rebuild, feed, and clothe its people. Socialist development in north Korea has centered itself on *juche* ideology, which “entails a combination of self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and self-confidence.”³⁰ As such, the north Korean people continue to stay resilient and adapt to the many challenges they face through remarkable advancements in agriculture, energy, and textile and steel production.

Still, sanctions are a major impediment to recovery. UN sanctions negatively impact north Korea’s overall food production by banning seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural equipment and other types of machinery.³¹ According to the 2020 Needs and Priorities report compiled by the UN Resident Coordinator for north Korea, “around 10.1 million people, or 39.6 percent of the country’s population, are food insecure.”³² Contrary to popular narratives that claim north Korea’s government is intentionally withholding food from its population, the UN

SANCTIONS KILL

Resident Coordinator is quite clear that “food insecurity in the country is driven by a lack of access to modern agricultural equipment and techniques;³³ and is amplified by recurrent natural disasters and the impacts of climate change.”³⁴ In fact, north Korea has a public food distribution system, but is unable to access the necessary agricultural imports from the world market. Moreover, the impact of sanctions on north Korean agriculture must be considered in combination with the effects of division, as northern Korea is prevented from relying on Korea’s historic breadbasket in the south for foodstuffs.

In response to the restrictions placed on imports of petroleum and by-products of petroleum like Caprolactam, north Korea has crafted alternative means to produce fertilizer and fabric. Through livestock cooperative farms, all businesses, factories, schools, mining companies, and military units feed livestock for their own use. The animal excrement ends up being used as a raw material for organic fertilizer, allowing for a more sustainable circular production system.³⁵ Tidal flats have also been developed to obtain new farmland, with the government reclaiming up to 13,000 hectares of land in 2021.³⁶ By waging an “intensive drive for scientific farming and high yield,” north Korea was able to produce 6.65 million tons of cereal in 2019, “the highest yield during the last 10 years.”³⁷ However, due to consecutive typhoons and floods, cereal production was reduced to 5.52 million tons in 2020.



Source: The Government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

North Korea has also made significant investments in the C1 (Carbon 1) chemical industry in order to overcome its difficulties with obtaining oil, shifting away from petrochemistry.³⁸ Through this industry, “a variety of chemical products and oil can be produced from coal,” including gasoline, synthetic fiber, synthetic resins, synthetic rubber, agricultural pesticides, paints, medicines, and

chemical fertilizer.

One of the products that came out of C1 chemistry is vinalon, a synthetic fiber made with coal and limestone that was first developed in 1939. While the extraction of chemical fibers from petroleum was becoming a globalized trend, the shortage of raw materials from sanctions led to the shut down of a chemical fiber production plant in north Korea.³⁹ In shifting towards a more self-reliant economy, north Korea started industrial production of vinalon in 1961 with the establishment of the 2.8 Vinalon Joint Enterprise.⁴⁰ Otherwise known as ‘Juche fibre’, vinalon became the national fiber of North Korea and is used to produce clothing, shoes, ropes, and quilt wadding.⁴¹

While pursuing self-reliant solutions to food insecurity and commodity production-related challenges caused by sanctions, north Korea has also had to navigate the effects of sanctions on its water, sanitation, hygiene and healthcare infrastructure. According to UNICEF, over 9.75 million people do not have access to safely managed drinking water;⁴² 83.2 per cent of households do not use any water treatment method; and 36.6 per cent have contaminants⁴³ in their drinking water.⁴⁴ Moreover, “half of all schools and health facilities lack adequate water and sanitation facilities.”⁴⁵

The low quality of WaSH services adds to especially high rates of diarrhea and pneumonia; in 2015, “37 percent of deaths among children aged between 7 days and 5 years in the 12 provinces of central hospitals were caused by pneumonia, while 34 per cent died of diarrhea.”^{46,47} north Korea is also one of the 30 highest tuberculosis (TB) burdened countries, with an estimated 513 cases per 100,000 people, most of which are attributable to undernourishment.⁴⁸

These developments are especially concerning given the list of banned items that could be used to prevent and treat these health problems. Although north Korea has a more developed healthcare system relative to countries with similarly sized economies, health facilities throughout the country often face shortages in essential medical equipment and medicines, preventing them from providing quality health services. Under UN sanctions, all metal items are banned, including sterilizers for medical use; ambulances; medical appliances;⁴⁹ x-ray machines; medical, surgical, dental, or veterinary furniture (ie operating tables, hospital beds); machinery for filtering or purifying water; and metal tubes, pipes, pipe fittings, etc.⁵⁰ The shortages of medical equipment undermine north Korea’s ability to provide comprehensive healthcare for all its citizens, something guaranteed to be free in its constitution.⁵¹

SANCTIONS KILL

While there exists a UN mechanism for case-by-case humanitarian exemptions, it is “insufficient to prevent these negative impacts, given that it is of an ad hoc and corrective nature rather than a systematic and preventive one.”⁵² Applicants for exemptions, mainly international and non-governmental organizations, face significant challenges, from long wait times for review and approval of exemptions requests to unrealistic shipping requirements.⁵³ These administrative barriers to humanitarian aid have had fatal consequences. As the table below shows, delays and funding shortfalls resulted in an estimated 3,968 preventable deaths in just 2018.

Preventable deaths attributable to delays and funding shortfalls
UN agencies had to reduce their 2018 programming due to delays and funding shortfalls, resulting in an estimated 3968 deaths.

	Targeted Population	Unreached Population	Preventable Deaths			Deaths Due to delays*		
			M	F		M	F	
Severe Acute Malnutrition	60,000	5000 (8%)	1650	825	825	223	112	112
Vitamin A	1,600,000	83,565 (5%)	343	172	172	46	23	23
WASH	356,891	91,891 (26%)	703	352	352	95	48	48
Emergency Reproductive Health Kits	341,500	337,750 (99%)	1272	600	672	172	81	91
TOTAL	2,358,391	518,206	3968	1948	2020	535	264	271

*Deaths due to delays are a subset of all preventable deaths. Calculated by applying the average proportion of the year spent waiting for exemption (99.36%) to the total amount of preventable deaths, assuming a 50% reduction in operating capacity.

While advocates push for lower barriers to humanitarian aid, the deaths caused by medical shortages are a function of the presence of sanctions, rather than an absence of adequate exemptions. Despite having national public education, childcare, and healthcare programs, sanctions affect north Korea's ability to provide adequate maternal and neonatal care, sanitation infrastructure, and ultimately stop preventable deaths. Aid can help address problems in the short-term, but in the long-term, sanctions and other tools of control must be lifted to allow north Koreans the ability to live their own way by their own efforts.

Gendered Impact of Sanctions

Sanctions on north Korea have also led to particularly negative consequences for women's health, including reproductive and maternal health. While north Korea's maternal mortality rate, which stands at 89 deaths per 100,000 live births as of 2017, has “never reached the highs prevailing in low income and least developed countries and remained below world averages”⁵⁴, shortages of life-saving drugs, such as oxytocin⁵⁵ and magnesium sulfate,⁵⁶

along with poor nutrition continue to harm women's health.

Sanctions against north Korea harm women in many ways. While the state has made significant legislative achievements in order to protect and elevate women's status in society,⁵⁷ gender roles in north Korea continue to make life hard for north Korean women, who "are particularly exposed to the impact of sanctions because of the twin expectation that they be primary caretakers of their families and communities as well as workers fully integrated in the socialist economy."⁵⁸

Women make up almost half of the workforce (47.8 per cent), and yet they dominate the sectors most impacted by sanctions, such as health and welfare services, fisheries, and textiles.⁵⁹ The ban on exports of seafood and textiles negatively affects the ability of women to sustain themselves and their families. Additionally, many women are involved in market trade, which was legalized in response to the harsh economic effects of sanctions and is considered to be a primarily female occupation in north Korea. While "growing market participation could present an opening for improving women's economic and social status in north Korea," sanctions "exacerbate women's job insecurity and undermine their standing in society" by weakening trade.⁶⁰

Conclusion

In total, sanctions imposed on north Korea by the US, UN, and other countries⁶¹ target over 150 companies and 200 individuals today, the effects of which trickle down to north Korea's larger population.⁶² By hindering north Korea's economic development and the delivery of humanitarian aid, sanctions have reversed the gradual improvements that north Korea had made in recovering from the Arduous March.

While sanctions have severely restricted north Korea's ability to trade with other countries and receive humanitarian aid, north Korea has stood up to US threats and continues to maintain its independence and survive. Despite the many restrictions that have been placed on a variety of imports, one of the most important ones being oil, north Koreans have found ways to circumvent these obstacles and produce goods for their own people through the most creative and innovative means. They are adapting their lives because of sanctions, in acts of resistance and survival, as the national ideology of *juche* manifests itself in all parts of the north Korean economy.

Nonetheless, as long as north Korea exists, the US will continue to police

the country through sanctions and other tools of foreign aggression. The US claims it imposes these sanctions in the name of human rights, “yet the tremendous death toll of sanctions themselves reveal these claims to be little more than an alibi for the US’s true aims: unfettered access to global markets and resources, underpinned by planetary militarization and occupation.”⁶³ The socialist state of north Korea and everything it has achieved are a direct threat to the US-dominated imperialist system that sanctions play a role in upholding. The international community must accept the north Korean sovereignty and provide support rather than isolate, vilify, or strong-arm them. In order to move forward with reunification, we must promote peace and cooperation between the Koreas and reject US imperialism in all forms.

End the Wars at Home and Abroad, September 2022

Endnotes

1. <https://nodutdol.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sanctions-of-Empire.pdf>
2. Executive Order 13466 was first issued on June 26, 2008, in response to north_Korea’s nuclear weapons program.
3. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/21/notice-on-the-continuation-of-the-national-emergency-with-respect-to-north-korea/>
4. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/21/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-the-president-of-the-senate-on-the-continuation-of-the-national-emergency-with-respect-to-north-korea/>
5. <https://thehill.com/policy/international/585308-biden-sanctions-dozens-accused-of-human-rights-abuses-including-china>
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/13/north-south-korea-agree-in-principle-formal-end-war-us>
7. <https://nodutdol.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sanctions-of-Empire.pdf>
8. <https://nodutdol.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sanctions-of-Empire.pdf>
9. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/11/20/north-koreas-on-again-off-again-status-as-a-state-sponsor-of-terrorism/>
10. <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20211217000251325>
11. <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-know-about-sanctions-north-korea>
12. <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/sanctions-programs-and-country-information/north-korea-sanctions>
13. The six executive orders include: 13466 (2008), 13551 (2010), 13570 (2011), 13687 (2015), 13722 (2016), and 13810 (2017).
14. https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/nk_eo_20160316.pdf
15. <https://www.news1.kr/articles/?4172242>
16. <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/13810.pdf>
17. <https://www.skadden.com/insights/publications/2017/09/us-dramatically-increases-sanctions-on-north-korea>

18. <https://kr.usembassy.gov/092117-remarks-president-trump-president-moon-rok-prime-minister-abe-japan/>
19. <https://www.skadden.com/insights/publications/2017/09/us-dramatically-increases-sanctions-on-north-korea>
20. <https://nodutdol.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sanctions-of-Empire.pdf>
21. <https://fpif.org/the-problem-of-sanctions-against-north-korea/>
22. <https://koreapeacenow.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/human-costs-and-gendered-impact-of-sanctions-on-north-korea.pdf>
23. <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-know-about-sanctions-north-korea>
24. *The first generation of sanctions included the following resolutions: 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), 2094 (2013), and 2270 (2016).*
25. *The second generation of sanctions included the following resolutions: 2321 (2016), 2371 (2017), 2375 (2017), and 2397 (2017).*
26. *Ibid (p.1)*
27. https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/07/103_272576.html
28. *KPN, p.11*
29. *KPN report*
30. <https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/PB11-Famine-in-North-Korea-Christine-Ahn.pdf>
31. *Items prohibited under sectoral sanctions in UN Resolution 2397 that affect food production include: hand-tools for agriculture, blades for agricultural, horticultural or forestry machines, dryers for agricultural products, agricultural spraying machines, irrigation equipment, agricultural machinery for soil preparation, harvesting and threshing machinery, machines for cleaning and sorting grains and legumes, miscellaneous machines for industrial processing of food and drink, tractors & spare tractor parts, agricultural trailers, farm wagons & carts, prefabricated greenhouses, animal sheds, iron, steel, aluminum wire, etc.*
32. <https://dprkorea.un.org/en/42877-dpr-korea-needs-and-priorities-plan-2020-issued-april-2020>
33. *Limitations on oil imports in particular severely limit food production, as fuel is necessary to power agricultural machinery.*
34. *Ibid, p.5*
35. *NKtech.com*
36. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/282482021_VNR_Report_DPRK.pdf
37. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/282482021_VNR_Report_DPRK.pdf, p. 15
38. *CI chemistry refers to “the use of gasification of coal to produce synthetic gas with carbon monoxide and hydrogen, with the synthetic gas used as the basis for manufacturing various chemical products.”* <https://www.sustainable-carbon.org/north-korea-c1-chemical-industry/>
39. *NKTech.com*
40. http://kancc.org/bbs/board.php?bo_table=news&wr_id=23329
41. <https://www.chemeurope.com/en/encyclopedia/Vinalon.html>

SANCTIONS KILL

42. <https://www.unicef.org/dprk/reports/unicef-dpr-korea-annual-report-2018>
43. *Fecal contamination is based on the number of Thermotolerant Coliform (TTC) detected in the water.*
44. <https://www.unicef.org/dprk/reports/2017-dpr-korea-mics-survey>, p. 148, 150
45. <https://www.unicef.org/dprk/reports/unicef-dpr-korea-annual-report-2018>, p.2
46. https://dprkorea.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/2020_DPRK_Needs_and-Priorities_Plan.pdf (p. 19)
47. *Diarrhoea and pneumonia are the main causes of death among children under-five.*
48. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240013131>
49. *Medical appliances include ultrasound and cardiograph machines, syringes, needles, catheters, dental and ophthalmic equipment, etc.*
50. *These items are used for the provision of clean water.*
51. <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/socialist-constitution-2019>
52. *KPN*, p. 10
53. *The government of north Korea is also excluded from applying for these exemptions.*
54. https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/stable/44525733?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents, p. 26
55. *Used to prevent postpartum hemorrhage and control excessive bleeding.*
56. *Used to prevent seizures in women with preeclampsia*
57. *In 1946, north_Korea passed the Gender Equality Law, which declared “equal economic, cultural, social, and political rights for men and women, including the freedom of marriage and divorce.” The law was later brought up to date through the 2010 Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, which targets issues of discrimination and gender roles and stereotypes about women. The law also seeks to help women make advancements in public life, education, employment, and access to health-care (KPN).*
58. *KPN*, p. 22
59. *As noted earlier, UNSC Resolution 2371 banned the export of seafood; UNSC Resolution 2375 banned textile exports; and UNSC Resolution 2397 banned the export of food and agricultural products, machinery, electrical equipment, and certain minerals.*
60. *KPN*, p. 24
61. *Japan, South Korea, the European Union, and Australia have also imposed sanctions on North Korea.*
62. <https://www.riskadvisory.com/sanctions/north-korea-sanctions-list/>
63. <https://nodutdol.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Sanctions-of-Empire.pdf>

Sanctioning the Horn of Africa

by Ann Garrison and John Philpot

During Donald Trump's four years in office, he for the most part left the Horn of Africa alone. He just didn't seem interested, and his disengagement created enough breathing room for Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia to form a regional alliance, which the Biden Administration eventually took aim at. In fact, a longtime US client, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, commonly known as the TPLF, started a proxy civil war in Ethiopia by attacking its fellow soldiers in the Ethiopian National Defense Force on November 3, the very night Biden was elected.

The TPLF also fired rockets at Eritrea's capital Asmara,¹ and Eritrea then entered the war in its own defense and in alliance with Ethiopia.

It's difficult to imagine that no one in the US foreign policy establishment knew that the TPLF attack was coming, and TPLF's war has coincided with Biden's election and administration. Throughout the nearly two-year war, US policymakers have portrayed the TPLF as victims and condemned Ethiopia and Eritrea.

TPLF destruction and atrocities in Amhara and Afar Regional States eventually became impossible to deny, but US sympathies remained overwhelmingly with the TPLF.

The US lost its “anchor state” before the TPLF war

The TPLF had ruled Ethiopia brutally, as a US client state, from 1991 to 2018. US foreign policymakers didn't care how harshly it treated its own people so long as it served as an “anchor state,” lending its troops to US military agendas and securing US interests in the Horn. In 2006 the Ethiopian army, under TPLF command, invaded Somalia at US behest and overthrew the Islamic Courts. The Courts were religiously strict but not Islamist fanatics, and they had

SANCTIONS KILL

provided the Somali people with more stability than they had experienced in decades. Somalia has suffered the violent extremes of Al-Shabaab terrorists and US drone bombing ever since.

Between 1998 and 2000, TPLF waged an expansionist war with Eritrea. Despite a peace treaty signed in 2000, the border war continued off and on, hot and cold, for the next 18 years, until the TPLF were finally overthrown by a popular uprising in Ethiopia. Abiy Ahmed became the Interim Prime Minister chosen by Ethiopia's parliament on April 2, 2018.

Three months later, in a bilateral summit on July 8-9, he negotiated peace with Eritrea. For negotiating peace that ended the conflict, Prime Minister Abiy was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which he accepted in Oslo on October 11, 2019.²

Two months after making peace with Eritrea, on September 5, 2018, PM Abiy met with Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and then Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, aka Farmaajo, to sign the Joint Declaration of Comprehensive Cooperation between Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea.³

The Declaration brought new hope to the Horn, but it was more peace and independence than the Biden Administration could tolerate, especially because it included Eritrea, “the Cuba of Africa,” and one of two African nations, the other being Zimbabwe, who have maintained their independence from AFRICOM, the US Africa Command. The new agreement denied the US their “anchor state,” aka puppet—Ethiopia—and challenged their relentless drive for global hegemony.

US foreign policies towards nations who thwart that drive are military aggression, destabilization, and illegal sanctions, otherwise known as “unilateral coercive measures.” According to international law, only the UN Security Council has the authority to intervene militarily to stop international crimes or to impose sanctions, but the US assumes those powers as its own.

It is legal for the US, like any sovereign nation, to do what it wants with its own resources, such as food aid, military or security assistance, or trade preference. It has the right to withdraw them from another country without explanation.

However, it is illegal for the US to withdraw them or threaten to do so because another country refuses to comply with its orders. It is contrary to international law for the US to order one country not to trade with another

country or do business in another country under threat of coercive economic measures. This argument is based on the fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter, which at Article 2⁴ establishes the principle of the sovereign equality of all members of the United Nations.

This is a review of the most damaging sanctions that the US is imposing or threatening to impose on Ethiopia and Eritrea, two of the three nations who dared to sign the agreement that read:

“The Governments of Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea have reached the following agreement that reflects the aspirations of their peoples:

1. The three countries shall foster comprehensive cooperation that advances the goals of their peoples.
2. The three countries shall build close political, economic, social, cultural, and security ties.
3. The three countries shall work in coordination to promote regional peace and security.
4. The three governments hereby establish a Joint High Level Committee to coordinate their efforts in the framework of this joint declaration.”

Ethiopia, Eritrea and the TPLF

The TPLF attack on Ethiopia’s Northern Command and its eventual march toward Addis Ababa seemed to be a bid to reclaim power, which quickly proved untenable. Later the TPLF seemed vaguely inclined to secede, but Ethiopia’s constitution allows for the secession of any of its ethnically defined states by way of a referendum, not by making war on the central government.

No state on earth would sit back and tolerate an attack on its army from inside or out. However, as soon as Prime Minister Abiy sent the Ethiopian National Defense Force into Tigray Regional State to put down the TPLF attack, corporate media began reporting that he had started the war by sending troops into Tigray. Soon Western interventionist ideologues, most notably USAID Chief Samantha Power, began warning of “Tigray genocide” and accusing Abiy and the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies of atrocities. Obedient corporate media, academia, and human rights organizations followed along.

Biden invoked the National Emergencies Act, declaring the Ethiopian conflict a threat to US national security

On September 17, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14046,⁵ which invoked the National Emergencies Act and other sections of US Code to say:

“I, Joseph R. Biden Jr., President of the United States of America, find that the situation in and in relation to northern Ethiopia, which has been marked by activities that threaten the peace, security, and stability of Ethiopia and the greater Horn of Africa region—in particular, widespread violence, atrocities, and serious human rights abuse, including those involving ethnic-based violence, rape and other forms of gender-based violence, and obstruction of humanitarian operations—constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat.”

The average American might ask how a conflict in distant East Africa poses a threat to our national security, but in the minds of the US foreign policy establishment, national security is of course tantamount to global hegemony. By invoking the National Emergencies Act, Biden excused himself from congressional or regulatory oversight of any sanctions he might impose on Ethiopia or Eritrea—its ally in the Ethiopian conflict—to get them back under control. There’s no time for consulting Congress in an emergency.

The National Emergencies Act can be used to justify all sorts of horrifying authority beyond Ethiopia and beyond sanctions, as is detailed in the Brennan Center’s “Guide to Emergency Powers and Their Use,” which lists “136 statutory powers that may become available to the president upon declaration of a national emergency,”⁶ but we’re sticking to sanctions here.

Whether Biden eventually sanctioned any entity or not, he had, in Executive Order 14046, asserted unfettered executive authority to do so at any time. On September 9, 2022, he issued a “Notice on the Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Ethiopia.”⁷ This is not only notice that he’s not letting up but also that he could still impose harsher sanctions at any time.

The first entities and individuals sanctioned were all Eritrean. On November 12, 2021, the Treasury Department sanctioned:

SANCTIONING THE HORN OF AFRICA

1. the Eritrean Defense Force (EDF), Eritrea's army,
2. the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), Eritrea's one political party,
3. the Hidri Trust, which holds Eritrea's assets,
4. the Red Sea Trading Corporation, which conducts trade in accordance with Eritrea's national development strategy,
5. Abraha Kassa Nemariam, Director of the National Security Office of Eritrea, and
6. Hagos Ghebrehwet W Kidan, CEO of the Red Sea Trading Corporation and Eritrea's chief development strategist.

Ethiopia and Eritrea are fully within their sovereign rights to work together to defeat the TPLF, but the Treasury Department essentially said that the US foreign policy establishment is working hard to control the outcome of the conflict, and Eritrea's in their way.⁸

Sanctions on individuals can mean seizure of their assets abroad but neither of the sanctioned Eritrean officials have any. The only consequence to either of them seems to have been that Hagos Ghebrehwet was denied a visa to come to the annual Eritrean Festival held in Dallas in 2022.

This has, however, meant that Eritrea can't make transactions in the dollar, which is still the dominant currency of international trade, because those transactions have to go through US and European banks, which will block them. They have to figure out how to trade in other currencies, as Russia and other sanctioned countries have, and find suppliers outside the US and Europe, including suppliers for essentials like vaccines and medicines and spare parts for various kinds of infrastructure. Goods and transport insurance have both become more expensive, and it's difficult to get goods they need in time.

Not being able to use the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Transactions) system, which allows banks to rapidly relay information about financial transactions to one another, Eritrea has at times had to settle accounts over longer periods of time.

It has also become difficult and more expensive for the diaspora to send money to family in Eritrea, and some even choose to send money with other Eritrean Americans or Eritrean Europeans who are traveling to the country.

The fact that Eritrea is sanctioned by the US and EU also makes major corporations and institutions fearful of trading with the country or investing there for fear of somehow falling afoul of US sanctions. No one likes to upset

the big guy in the room, whether it's because he has the biggest guns or the greatest control of the world's financial system.

When I visited Eritrea, Hagos Ghebrehiwet told me, “We are accused of favoring China, but we do business with those who are willing to do business with us, and China is willing to do business with us.”

Eritrea has impressively high rates of vaccination and eradication of vaccine-preventable childhood diseases, but UNICEF has chartered planes to deliver vaccines when commercial carriers were afraid to deliver anything to the country.

The impact of all these sanctions is cumulative. Eritrea was already under UN sanctions from 2009 to 2018, and the pain of all these difficulties accumulated over time.

Trade Sanctions on Ethiopia

On January 1, 2022, Biden's US Trade Representative Katherine Tai imposed trade sanctions on Ethiopia by eliminating its eligibility for AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which allowed businesses manufacturing in Ethiopia to export goods to the US tariff free.⁹ This cost thousands of Ethiopians, mostly women, their jobs, in many cases their first jobs in the money economy, which illustrates the nature of most US sanctions. They're meant to make working people so miserable that they'll rise up and overthrow their government. It hasn't worked in Venezuela, Cuba, Russia, China, or Eritrea, and hopefully it won't work in Ethiopia.

The cancellation of AGOA didn't injure Eritreans, because they had never benefited from the trade advantages extended to nations eligible for AGOA.

Similarly, Eritrea will not be affected by any sanctions on loans from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, or other international funders, because they cut those umbilical cords a long time ago. As Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki says, “Aid is like a drug. Keep taking it and pretty soon you'll be addicted.”

Eritrea has already demonstrated its iron will to stand up to sanctions by standing up, from 2009 to 2018, to unjustified, US-promoted UN sanctions based on an untrue and implausible assertion that it had something to do with the Somali terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

Ethiopia and Eritrea, H.R. 6600 and S. 3199

Congress hadn't passed any bills sanctioning Ethiopia or Eritrea as of the publication of this book, but several are pending. Both have been introduced but not passed on by their committees for full votes by the House and Senate. The House Bill is H.R. 6600, the Ethiopia Stabilization, Peace, and Democracy Act,¹⁰ and the Senate Bill is S. 3199, the Ethiopia Peace and Stabilization Act of 2022.¹¹ As with most US foreign policy, both promise the exact opposite of what they would actually deliver.

The bills are almost identical, and they're both bipartisan, sponsored by Republicans and Democrats, demonstrating that imperialism is a bipartisan project, although both were introduced by Democrats. Tom Malinowski introduced H.R. 6600, and it's sponsored by one more Democrat and two Republicans. Robert Menendez, a Democrat, introduced S. 3199, and it's sponsored by two more Democrats and two Republicans.

The only significance of this is that Democrats feel more obliged to support a bill introduced by a Democrat, so if the Democrats lose in November, there may be less pressure to pass the Malinowski bill. That's not going to bring down the empire, but it could create some breathing room for those trying to stop the sanctions.

Whether the bills have passed or are still pending by the time the Sanctions Kill anthology is being read, everything said about them here will remain the same.

The bills demand that Eritrea withdraw its army from Ethiopia, but they also demand the total capitulation of the Ethiopian government. Section 7(B)(1) of H.R. 6600 says that the sanctions will be lifted only after: "(1) The Government of Ethiopia has ceased all offensive military operations associated with the civil war and other conflicts in Ethiopia."

In other words, the Government of Ethiopia and its army are supposed to surrender to the US, and the US has made it clear since the beginning of the Ethiopian conflict that it thinks the TPLF has a right to what both the US and the TPLF call Western Tigray, but Amhara Ethiopians call Wolkayit.

In April, University of Gondar researchers announced their findings about decades of TPLF massacres and atrocities committed against Amhara people there. These stories are also told in a documentary, "Tears of Wolkayit."¹²

SANCTIONS KILL

PM Abiy Ahmed no doubt knows that he cannot surrender Wolkait to Amhara without a bloodbath, but it's hard to tell how the US imagines that Wolkait could be returned to the TPLF.

Another demand in H.R. 6600, SEC. 5(b)(5) is that, once imposed, the sanctions won't be lifted until: "(5) The Government of Ethiopia has cooperated with independent investigations of credible allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights abuse carried out in the course of the civil war and other conflicts in Ethiopia." In other words, the sanctions won't be lifted until the government has surrendered to the international criminal justice system, which is largely an instrument of imperial control.

The summary of H.R. 6600 says, "Within 90 days of this bill's enactment, the State Department must report to Congress a determination of whether actions in Ethiopia by the armed forces of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Front, and other armed actors constitute genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity."

According to international law, only the UN Security Council can determine that war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide are taking place, or have taken place. They can then refer cases to the ICC for prosecution and/or organize a multilateral force to stop them, but US policymakers claim this right for themselves.

Ilhan Omar, on the House Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa, and several other Congresspersons and Senators, keep asking when the State Department will hand them a "determination" of genocide, something US policymakers use to justify anything, including even bombing campaigns, as in Libya and Syria. We can hope they won't dare go that far, but we should know that it's the worst possibility posed in these sanctions bills.

Both bills would impose arms embargoes on Ethiopia and Eritrea, which, if successfully enforced, would make it difficult for them to defend themselves. If they do pass, however, the question will be whether other nations will respect them. Russia and India are trading with one another, using ships known to transport arms, and this is just one instance in which the rest of the world is refusing to respect US sanctions.

H.R. 6600 and S. 3199 would also impose sanctions on other nations and corporations investing in Eritrea and Ethiopia. These have the potential to do serious damage because both Eritrea and Ethiopia need as much foreign

investment as they can get to develop their resources.

They need investment, not exploitation, so a big question that will outlast any sanctions is what kind of a deal African nations are going to demand; Eritrea has, as with standing up to sanctions, set a stellar example for the rest of Africa by demanding and getting unprecedented deals for resource extraction contracts.

One instance of this is the Bisha Gold Mine, which Nevsun Resources, a Canadian mining company, planned to develop with financing from a German corporation. Eritrea struck a deal for a 40% ownership share, a 38% capital gains tax, and a commitment to hire and train Eritreans in the mining project. However, the US—without any sanctions passed—bullied the German corporation into backing out. A Chinese corporation then financed the deal, and Zijin Mining Group Co. Ltd, a Chinese-based multinational traded on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, ultimately purchased the majority of Nevsun's share.

This is also an example of the world's other major industrial and military powers collaborating with less powerful states to stand up to bullying and aggression by the US. Hopefully they will refuse to respect the sanctions bills, if they're passed, as well.

Finally, and this may be the most worrisome pending sanction, the bills propose that the US work with social media giants to restrict speech in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Section 3(b)(6) of H.R. 6600 says, specifically:

“The strategy required by subsection (a) shall include a plan to implement the strategy, including—to combat hate speech and disinformation in Ethiopia, including efforts to coordinate with social media companies to mitigate the effects of social media content generated outside of the United States focused on perpetuating the civil war and other conflicts in Ethiopia, including through hate speech and language inciting violence.”

This attempt to restrict speech on social media in other nations is unprecedented, and particularly dangerous because citizens and journalists don't yet have alternative platforms the size of Twitter or Facebook. Twitter and Facebook are of course huge business empires, so the US government isn't going to shut them down, as it has some independent outlets, but we could have all the social media networks we use to communicate and organize destroyed any day or time.

SANCTIONS KILL

Several of the US founders of the #NoMore movement, including Dr. Simon Tesfamariam and Nebiyu Asfaw have already been banned from Twitter, as have @HornOfAfricaHub and several other accounts associated with the #NoMore movement and its founders. The Atlantic Council even wrote up a statement about how dangerous Dr. Tesfamariam is.

We are writing this as the midterm elections draw near, and with representatives and senators running for re-election, neither of these bills have much chance of being brought up for a vote. However, after the election, they may be brought up for a vote in their respective committees, and if they're approved there, submitted to the full House and Senate.

House Resolution 7311

On April 27, the House passed H.R. 7311, the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act,¹³ along with all the rest of the House Democrats and all but nine Republicans. H.R. 7311 directs the executive branch to bully African nations with sanctions and withdrawal of foreign aid if they get too close to Russia, and encourages it to “invest in, engage, or otherwise control strategic sectors in Africa, such as mining and other forms of natural resource exploitation.”

The House passed H.R. 7311 roughly two months after 17 African nations either abstained or did not vote on a UN resolution condemning Russia for invading Ukraine, and Eritrea dared to vote “no.” The African states who did not vote “yes” comprised just over half of the 35 UN member nations that refused to support the measure.

If passed by the Senate, H.R. 7311 will be a pathetic and no doubt failed attempt to sanction all of Africa for participating in the new multipolar world that spells the end of US global hegemony.

Black Agenda Report, September 2022

Endnotes

- 1. Rebel Tigrayans fire rockets at neighboring Eritrea in escalation of Ethiopia conflict, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/rebel-tigrayans-fire-rockets-at-neighboring-eritrea-in-escalation-of-ethiopia-conflict/2020/11/15/651855c4-273b-11eb-9c21-3cc501d0981f_story.html*
- 2. Nobel Peace Prize Goes To Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/11/769191358/nobel-peace-prize-goes-to-ethiopias-prime-minister>*

SANCTIONING THE HORN OF AFRICA

3. *Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation Between Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea*, <https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/2099>
4. *Ibid.* 1
5. *Executive Order on Imposing Sanctions on Certain Persons With Respect to the Humanitarian and Human Rights Crisis in Ethiopia*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021>
6. *A Guide to Emergency Powers and Their Use*, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/guide-emergency-powers-and-their-use>
7. *Notice on the Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Ethiopia*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/09/09/notice-on-the-continuation-of-the-national-emergency-with-respect-to-ethiopia/>
8. *Treasury Sanctions Four Entities and Two Individuals in Connection with the crisis in Ethiopia*, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0478>
9. *U.S. Cuts off Ethiopia, Mali, Guinea From Africa Duty-Free Trade Program*”, <https://money.usnews.com/investing/news/articles/2022-01-01/u-s-terminates-ethiopia-mali-and-guinea-from-agoa-trade-preference-program-ustr>
10. *H.R. 6600, the Ethiopia Stabilization, Peace, and Democracy Act*, introduced in the House 02/04/2022, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/6600>
11. *S. 3199 - Ethiopia Peace and Stabilization Act of 2022*, introduced in the Senate 11/04/2021, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3199>
12. *Tears of Wolkayit* , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQLBY32ekQk>
13. *H.R. 7311 - Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act*, “introduced 03/31/2022”, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/7311/text>

Sanctions in the New Cold War on China

by Carlos Martinez

Background

The instinctive attitude of the United States towards the Chinese Revolution was of course one of hostility. In a protracted war between progress and reaction, between the future and the past, the governments of the US and the People's Republic of China were, and are, are on opposite sides of the barricades. Hence shortly after the formation of the PRC in 1949, the US maintained a strict embargo on China.

With the move towards rapprochement in the early 1970s and a tacit agreement to 'peacefully coexist', the embargo was finally removed. Then with China's strategic shift to integrate into the global economy, the trickle of trade and investment gradually expanded into one of the largest and most important economic relationships in the world, with bilateral trade volume currently standing at just over half a trillion dollars annually. Thousands of US businesses have generated enormous profits from their investments in China and (particularly in recent years) from selling to a vast and growing Chinese market.

Ruling classes in the West were, to a considerable extent, comfortable with incorporating China into globalised capitalism, to the extent that China's role was limited to providing cheap, competent and well-educated labour. However, it was never the intention of the Chinese leadership to remain permanently at the lowest rung of the global economic ladder. China has pursued a patient strategy of welcoming foreign investment, setting up joint enterprises with Western companies, learning the latest technologies and management techniques, and building up its own advanced industry. Meanwhile it has invested very heavily in education and innovation. China's R&D spending reached 378 billion USD in 2020 - 2.4 percent of its GDP and nearly three times

the figure for the US.

As a result, China is on its way to becoming “a moderately developed socialist country by the middle of the 21st century”, as Deng Xiaoping predicted some 35 years ago.¹ China has become a world leader in network technology, in renewable energy, nuclear energy, high-speed rail, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, quantum computing, and several other important areas. It is increasingly competing with the US in spaces that the US is used to dominating, such as cloud computing and industrial automation.

The US ruling class has not responded favourably to all this. These uppity Asian communists refuse to stay in their lane! Columbia University economist Jeffrey Sachs recently described the response of US elites to China’s emergence as a science and technology powerhouse: “The basic attitude, if I could paraphrase, was: ‘how dare they do that? That’s what we do, not what they do. They’re a workshop, we’re the technology leader.’”²

The expansion of the China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) into large parts of Central Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa and further afield has also become a major source of concern for those that seek to preserve US hegemony. In the words of US ‘elder statesman’ Henry Kissinger, the practical significance of the BRI will be to “shift the world’s centre of gravity from the Atlantic to the Pacific.”³ That is, China is creating a development path that isn’t defined by the US or US-controlled institutions.

In summary, the US ruling class finds itself in a position in which its role as sole economic, political and military superpower is under threat. To make matters worse, the source of this threat is a socialist, non-white, developing country which is working in concert with other countries towards the democratisation of international relations.

This is the overall context for the New Cold War, in which the US is the principal antagonist and China is the principal target. Just like the original Cold War (waged against the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the Global South), the New Cold War is being fought on multiple fronts: political, military, ideological, propagandistic and economic.

Wave of sanctions under Trump and Biden

Then-secretary of state Hillary Clinton wrote in 2011 that “one of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will be to lock in a substantially increased investment — diplomatic, economic, strategic, and

otherwise — in the Asia-Pacific region.”⁷⁴ These words heralded the launch of the ‘Pivot to Asia’, which clearly identified China as the primary concern of US foreign policy in the modern era. But it was under the Trump administration that the New Cold War started to escalate in a serious way, with the initiation of a trade war - supposedly to put a stop to “the greatest theft ever perpetrated by anyone or any country in the history of the world.”⁷⁵ Trump imposed a wide range of tariffs, unprecedented since the lifting of the trade embargo some 50 years ago.

Alongside the tariffs, the Trump administration imposed new US sanctions against China for the first time since 1989. In 2018, two of China’s top technology companies, Huawei and ZTE, were banned from providing equipment to any federal US agency. A year later, US companies were prevented from doing business with Huawei or its subsidiaries unless they had specifically been provided with a government licence - due to Huawei allegedly violating the US’s unilateral (and illegal) sanctions against Iran.

In the summer of 2020, the Trump administration announced two new sets of sanctions against China. Under the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, several senior Chinese officials were subjected to visa restrictions and asset freezing. Under the Hong Kong Autonomy Act, a number of top Hong Kong officials (including Chief Executive Carrie Lam) plus all 14 Vice Chairpersons of the National People’s Congress were subjected to similar punishment.

Things have only got worse in the first year of the Biden administration. In June 2021, Biden signed an executive order banning US citizens from investing in Chinese companies with alleged ties to the defence or surveillance technology sectors.

The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act was signed into law on 23 December 2021. Startlingly, this Act inverts the principle of presumption of innocence, since it contains “a rebuttable presumption that goods mined, produced, or manufactured (wholly or in part) in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region are made with forced labor, where goods designated as such will be subject to an import ban into the United States.”⁷⁶ That is, there is a starting assumption that any item produced in Xinjiang incorporates forced labour. Any importer will have to provide “clear and convincing evidence” that goods have not been made with forced labour - a sufficiently high legal bar that, in practice, makes the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act a blanket ban on all goods produced in Xinjiang.

Aside from these economic sanctions, the White House announced in December that it would be conducting a ‘diplomatic boycott’ of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, in light of “China’s egregious human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang.”⁷

The State Department has also been strongly encouraging US allies to join its growing system of sanctions and boycotts. Britain, Canada and the EU imposed travel bans and asset freezes over alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang, in parallel with the US’s sanctions.⁸ Canada, Britain and the European Union have also followed the US lead in passing Magnitsky legislation, providing for sanctions against individuals alleged to have committed human rights abuses. This essentially means that under a “unified set of rules”, US-imposed sanctions on individuals are automatically applied in those countries.⁹ Meanwhile, Australia, Britain and Canada have announced their support for Biden’s ‘diplomatic boycott’ of the Olympics.¹⁰

The overall picture then is one of steadily escalating sanctions against China over the course of the last four years, with the changed occupancy of the White House not impacting this trajectory in the slightest.

Sanctions as New Cold War propaganda

The typical motivation for imperialist sanctions is to foment popular unrest by causing serious economic harm; “making the economy scream”, like the CIA did in Chile when it had the temerity to elect a Marxist government.¹¹ Sanctions against Zimbabwe, Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Iran, Syria, Belarus and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) are manifestly designed with such a purpose in mind. Needless to say, such a strategy would have no chance of success in China, which is the second largest economy in the world and which is more than capable of imposing counter-measures that would cause significant damage to US business interests.

Sanctions against Chinese individuals over alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong will have very little effect on China’s economic growth; rather, such sanctions form part of a propaganda ‘full-court press’ designed to vilify China, to cultivate broad anti-China sentiment, and to build public support for the New Cold War. This propaganda is already having an impact; in the US, it has produced “a bipartisan consensus in Washington towards getting tough with China that is now extending to the broader public.”¹²

The propaganda surrounding the treatment of the Uyghur Muslim population of Xinjiang is particularly pernicious. Space does not allow here for a debunking of this web of lies, but there is an abundance of useful material available, for example in an academic study by Eurispes,¹³ an extensive report by the International Action Center,¹⁴ and numerous investigative reports in the Grayzone.¹⁵ Suffice to note that no credible evidence whatsoever exists of genocide, cultural genocide, forced sterilisation, forced labour or concentration camps.

As such, sanctions against China over human rights abuses in Xinjiang can only be in the context of an elaborate campaign of information warfare, designed not to punish Chinese officials for misdeeds but to support an overall structure of disinformation portraying China as a malevolent force.

Trying to slow China's rise

Thanks to China's economic strength, the West can't starve the Chinese people into submission through economic warfare. However, one important motivation for the steadily escalating sanctions regime is to attempt to decelerate China's emergence as the world's pre-eminent leader in advanced technology. The authors of a recent report by Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs observe that "China's rapid rise to challenge US dominance of technology's commanding heights has captured America's attention."¹⁶ The report notes that China has already established a leading role in several key areas and, "in others, on current trajectories, it will overtake the US within the next decade."

One 'choke point' the US can leverage is its head start in the design and manufacture of semiconductors. Advances in semiconductors are driving, and will continue to drive, transformative change in a wide range of industries, from energy to medicine to space research. The Belfer Center report estimates that China is on course to become "a top-tier player in the semiconductor industry by 2030." As such, preventing (or at least slowing) China's emergence as a semiconductor superpower is a key priority for the US.

This issue goes beyond economics. If China outpaces the US in technological innovation, it will shift the entire global balance of forces; it will significantly weaken the ability of the imperialist powers to impose their will on the rest of the world; and it will showcase the fundamental validity of socialism as a means of propelling human progress.

Indeed, developments in technology in the coming decades form a crucial component of the material basis for the progression to a more advanced socialism. British researcher Keith Lamb writes: “China’s goal of building a modern socialist country by 2049 is predicated on mastering semiconductor technology which is the linchpin of the modern age, making innovations such as self-driving electric vehicles; fully-automated AI production systems, and supercomputers possible.”¹⁷

Such are the reasons for the wave of sanctions connected to the semiconductor industry. The US wants to restrict China’s ability to import semiconductors and, more importantly, to prevent China achieving self-sufficiency in semiconductor production. Blacklisting SMIC, China’s biggest manufacturer of computer chips, in December 2020, means that it is no longer able to source supplies from US companies. Chinese chip designers have been cut off from access to leading-edge chip design tools.¹⁸ Meanwhile Huawei has been prevented from importing chips, impacting its production of high-end smartphones.¹⁹ The US has been able to enforce many of these sanctions on an international scale, by virtue of its ‘long-arm jurisdiction’ — sanctioning non-US chipmakers that use US-made components. One notable absurdity here is that Taiwan, a region of China, complies with the US sanctions regime, and therefore Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) — the world’s most valuable semiconductor company — has been forced to stop its exports to the companies on the US Entity List, including Huawei.²⁰

Unfortunately for US imperialism — but thankfully for China and the peoples of the world — this campaign of economic warfare is doomed to failure. As Radhika Desai notes, “US efforts to restrict chip supply to China will only increase its resolve to develop the necessary technology to produce the chips it needs domestically.”²¹

In the meantime, while stimulating China’s fast track to semiconductor self-sufficiency, sanctions are adversely impacting technology companies outside China, which for the last two decades has been the largest market for computer chips, in addition to being the ideal hi-tech manufacturing location. In recent years, the US semiconductor industry has derived over a third of its revenues from sales to China.²² These revenues have in turn fed into the R&D cycle and contributed to an impressive pace of innovation. It seems the US has settled on a ‘lose-lose’ strategy to replace the framework of cooperation that had brought significant benefit to both sides in recent decades.

Another area in which the US is using sanctions to gain a competitive advantage is solar power. China is by far the world's largest producer of solar energy, with an installed capacity of 254 GW — more than three times that of the US, and growing fast.²³ China also produces the bulk of the global supply of polysilicon (a key material in the production of solar panels).

Unable to compete on price or productivity, the US has resorted to imposing sanctions on large parts of China's solar panel industry²⁴ — ostensibly on the basis of evidence-free and comprehensively debunked claims of the manufacturers using Uyghur forced labour.²⁵ This is profoundly irresponsible and short-sighted behaviour. The Western powers should be working closely with China and other countries on developing and deploying clean energy, rather than imposing sanctions with a view to gaining some fleeting economic advantage.

Unite to oppose hegemonism and Cold War

China is a leading voice opposing the West's illegal sanctions regime, consistently using its role in international forums (including the UN Security Council and the G20) to oppose unilateralism and bullying. China has added its voice to the global demand to end the blockade on Cuba. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian demanded last year that the US “immediately and completely lift unilateral sanctions against Cuba in compliance with the purposes of the UN Charter and basic norms governing international relations”, adding that China “resolutely rejects any external interference in other countries' internal affairs, imposition of unilateral sanctions, and attempt to gang up on other countries.”²⁶ China has consistently opposed unilateral sanctions against the DPRK,²⁷ Zimbabwe,²⁸ Eritrea,²⁹ Afghanistan,³⁰ Venezuela,³¹ Nicaragua,³² Syria,³³ Iran³⁴ and Belarus.³⁵

With its strong opposition to sanctions, war, interference and hegemonism; through its pursuit of multilateralism and its support for the principles of the UN Charter; and through its consistent engagement with the countries of the world on the basis of equality, friendship, solidarity and mutual benefit, China is an indispensable force in the development of a new, multipolar system of international relations. Such a framework is desperately needed by the peoples of the world, and those of us living in the belly of the imperialist beast should do what we can to support it.

End the Wars at Home and Abroad, September 2022

Endnotes

1. Deng, X 1987, *We Must Tell Our Young People About China's History*, Marxist Internet Archive, accessed 08 January 2022, <<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/deng-xiaoping/1987/74.htm>>.
2. Sandhu, M 2021, Jeffrey Sachs: 'I see no financial obstacles to getting to net zero by 2050', *Financial Times*, accessed 08 January 2022, <<https://www.ft.com/content/ab219fef-eece-463e-9b3c-6e4813d5effe>>.
3. Delaney, R 2017, Kissinger urges greater cooperation with China as 'the world's centre of gravity' shifts, *South China Morning Post*, accessed 09 January 2022, <<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2112957/kissinger-urges-us-boost-cooperation-beijing-massive>>.
4. Clinton, H 2011, *America's Pacific Century*, *Foreign Policy*, accessed 09 January 2022, <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/>>.
5. Feith, D 2016, *Trump Would Make China Great Again*, *Wall Street Journal*, accessed 09 January 2022, <<https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-would-make-china-great-again-1461258110>>.
6. Hansson, L 2022, *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act becomes law*, *Reed Smith*, accessed 09 January 2022, <<https://www.reedsmith.com/en/perspectives/2022/01/uyghur-forced-labor-prevention-act-becomes-law>>.
7. Madhani, A 2021, *U.S. imposes sanctions on China over human rights abuses of Uighurs*, *PBS*, accessed 09 January 2022, <<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/u-s-imposes-sanctions-on-china-over-human-rights-abuses-of-uighurs>>.
8. Wintour, P 2021, *US and Canada follow EU and UK in sanctioning Chinese officials over Xinjiang*, *The Guardian*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/22/china-responds-to-eu-uk-sanctions-over-uighurs-human-rights>>.
9. Steinhäuser, I 2021, *How human rights sanctions need to evolve for everyone's benefit*, *Thomson Reuters*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en-us/posts/news-and-media/magnitsky-act-human-rights-sanctions/>>.
10. Mather, V 2022, *The Diplomatic Boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics, Explained*, *New York Times*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://www.nytimes.com/article/diplomatic-boycott-olympics.html>>.
11. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XXI, Chile, 1969–1973 Document 93*, *Office of the Historian*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v21/d93>>.
12. Kyngé, J 2020, *US and China: edging towards a new type of cold war?*, *Financial Times*, accessed 06 June 2021, <<https://www.ft.com/content/fe59abf8-cbb8-4931-b224-56030586fb9a>>.
13. *Eurispes academic report: Xinjiang – understanding complexity, building peace*, *Friends of Socialist China*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://socialistchina.org/2021/06/03/eurispes-academic-report-xinjiang-understanding-complexity-building-peace/>>.
14. *Have you been lied to about Xinjiang, human rights – and China?*, *International Action Center*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://iacenter.org/2021/12/25/facts-on-xinjiang-%e2%88%92-exposing-u-s-anti-china-propaganda/>>.

15. Porter, G; Blumenthal, M 2021, *US State Department accusation of China 'genocide' relied on data abuse and baseless claims by far-right ideologue*, *The Grayzone*, accessed 10 January 2022, <<https://thegrayzone.com/2021/02/18/us-media-reports-chinese-genocide-relied-on-fraudulent-far-right-researcher/>>.
16. Pan, C 2021, *US-China tech war: China to overtake America in core 21st century technologies within next decade, Harvard report predicts*, *South China Morning Post*, accessed 12 January 2022, <<https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-war/article/3159107/us-china-tech-war-china-overtake-america-core-21st-century>>.
17. Lamb, K 2021, *U.S. seeks to engage in tech war by strangling China's semiconductor industry*, *CGTN*, accessed 12 January 2022, <<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-11-23/U-S-to-wage-a-tech-war-by-strangling-China-s-semiconductor-industry-15q13B7M1uE/index.html>>.
18. Schneider, J 2021, *Will China Hit Back on Chips?*, *ChinaTalk*, accessed 13 January 2022, <<https://chinatalk.substack.com/p/will-china-hit-back-on-chips>>.
19. Fried, I 2019, *Huawei's smartphone effort takes a giant hit*, *Axios*, accessed 13 January 2022, <<https://www.axios.com/huaweis-smartphone-effort-takes-a-giant-hit-03390bfc-bb30-4465-b177-2dc17d9469f1.html>>.
20. Fried, I 2019, *Huawei's smartphone effort takes a giant hit*, *Axios*, accessed 13 January 2022, <<https://www.axios.com/huaweis-smartphone-effort-takes-a-giant-hit-03390bfc-bb30-4465-b177-2dc17d9469f1.html>>.
21. Desai, R 2021, *A dangerous dialogue*, *CGTN*, accessed 13 January 2022, <<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-11-26/A-dangerous-dialogue-15v2s5XVslO/index.html>>.
22. *ibid.*
23. *Installed solar energy capacity*, *Our World In Data*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/installed-solar-pv-capacity?country=CHN~IND~USA~Europe>>.
24. Angel, R 2021, *US bans target Chinese solar panel industry over Xinjiang forced labor concerns*, *The Guardian*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/25/us-bans-target-chinese-solar-panel-industry-over-xinjiang-forced-labor-concerns>>.
25. *Rumors of 'forced labor' in Xinjiang refuted*, *Global Times*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1182815.shtml>>.
26. O'Connor, T 2021, *China Backs Cuba in Saying US Should Apply Sanctions To Itself*, *Newsweek*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.newsweek.com/china-backs-cuba-saying-us-should-apply-sanctions-itself-1612735>>.
27. *China opposes 'unhelpful' unilateral U.S. sanctions on DPRK*, *CGTN*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-01-13/DPRK-is-sanctioned-by-Biden-for-first-time-after-missile-tests-16MqSSqFanK/index.html>>.
28. Liu, C 2021, *China, African countries call on US to remove illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe*, *Global Times*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202110/1237275.shtml>>.
29. *China stands against any unilateral sanctions on Eritrea: Chinese FM*, *Global Times*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202201/1245253.shtml>>.
30. *Chinese top diplomat calls on US, other Western countries to lift sanctions on*

SANCTIONS IN THE NEW COLD WAR ON CHINA

- Afghanistan*, TASS, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://tass.com/world/1354583>>.
31. *China Ratifies Its Rejection of US Sanctions Against Venezuela*, Telesur, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/China-Ratifies-Its-Rejection-of-US-Sanctions-Against-Venezuela-20210927-0007.html>>.
32. *Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on January 12, 2022*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, accessed 14 January 2022, <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202201/t20220112_10481428.html>.
33. Zhou, L 2021, *China says Syria needs end to US sanctions, not a colour revolution*, *South China Morning Post*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3142089/china-says-syria-needs-end-us-sanctions-not-colour-revolution>>.
34. *Reuters Staff* 2021, *U.S. should lift Iran sanctions, including on China -Chinese envoy*, *Reuters*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.reuters.com/article/iran-nuclear-china-idUKL1N2SK2OY>>.
35. Majeed, Z 2021, *Belarus Strengthens Ties With 'ironclad Friend' China As West Slaps Sanctions On Regime*, *Republic World*, accessed 14 January 2022, <<https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/europe/belarus-strengthens-ties-with-ironclad-friend-china-as-west-slaps-sanctions-on-regime.html>>.

U.S. Sanctions Will Make China Stronger

by Lee Siu Hin 李小轩,

China-U.S. Solidarity Network 中美民间交流协会, August 2022

For the past five years, with the rapid decline of the U.S. empire and the peaceful rise of China, the U.S. has rapidly developed a baffling policy of anti-China hysteria. From Trump to Biden, Republicans and Democrats, neo-cons and “progressives,” are all now focused entirely on a racist cold war of China-bashing and Russophobia, rather than doing anything constructive for the people of the United States and global society.

From a never-ending trade war, financial war, sanctions and the war against Huawei they turned to spreading unfounded stories of Chinese communist “high-tech” spies in the U.S., and a “Wuhan man-made” virus hoax. They play at “gunboat diplomacy” by sending aircraft carriers to the South and East China Seas in an effort to intimidate China, while they provoke ethnic and social tensions by playing their “Taiwan card,” their “Hong Kong card” and their “Xinjiang card”. The U.S. has failed to harm China with these actions, while they actually undermine their domestic security. But this doesn’t seem to stop them. Now their latest initiative is the CHIPS Act.

What is the CHIPS Act?

When I first heard this alphabet soup of a title in the media, I thought it was referring to “CHiPs,” the 1977 hit TV series about the California Highway Patrol. Instead it’s just another one of the fast-food type legislative bills in D.C., written by Beltway insider elites for their own cynical agenda, packed like hipster-telemarketing hype with lots of sugar coating and racist hatred fomenting fear mongering, but no actual substance and no mechanism to guarantee it will ever be implemented.

U.S. SANCTIONS WILL MAKE CHINA STRONGER

The CHIPS Act received bi-partisan approval in Congress and was signed at light-speed by President Biden on August 9th. It is a gigantic \$280 billion law that includes \$24 billion in tax breaks and \$200 billion in new spending for unspecified future R&D as well as \$100 million funding annually over five years for the State Department. It has designated \$52.7 billion (19% of the overall budget) to bring semiconductor chip manufacturing to the U.S. and, as the media says, away from the current production hubs in East Asia. Just like any other bill from D.C. that sounds “too good to be true,” beneath the hype, there are many money-making opportunities for “Big Tech.”

To be fair, it will be good news for the U.S. if this bill can truly help the commercial chip manufacturing industry restart and bring back some high-paying, skilled jobs to U.S. communities, since chip manufacturing has now mostly left the U.S. for Asia. However, this is motivated by pure cold-war, zero-sum thinking. The White House says that by signing the CHIPS Act, the U.S. will be able to lower costs, create jobs, and strengthen supply chains. At the same time, it aims to “Counter China.”

The White House press release points out that the primary goal is to advance “U.S. global leadership” in technology. It is a meme to remind the world that no other country may rise above the U.S.¹ The key provision of the bill forces chip manufacturing companies that accept funding from the U.S., or do business with U.S., to stop doing business with China. China is labeled as “evil” because they are catching up.

This toxic rationalization is enhanced by the right-wing and left-liberal media and think-tanks. On August 12th NPR interviewed Sourabh Gupta from the Institute for China America Studies (ICAS), a Washington-based think-tank. Gupta’s speech was full of MAGA-type “America first” rhetoric. He said that we just need to manufacture a certain amount of chips here so the U.S. will not be vulnerable to blackmail, or be in peril if there is a war in East Asia, or if there are other general supply chain snafus. The key provision of the bill forces chip manufacturing companies who want to do business with U.S. companies or accept funding from the U.S. to stop doing business with China.

With this expression of economic imperialism in the de facto form of sanctions, the U.S. uses “carrot and stick” policies to effectively block China from acquiring the latest chip manufacturing technologies or products from the U.S. “It absolutely does [shore up the U.S.’s position]” in global chip leadership, says ICAS’s Gupta. It forces East Asian manufacturers who currently have good

business relationships with China, to fearfully ask the U.S. government for permission to continue to produce legacy chips in China while they produce cutting edge chips at home, or in the U.S., only for U.S. use. This way the technology which goes into cutting-edge chips “does not bleed into China and enhance China's productive capabilities in any way,” Gupta concluded.²

This is a very racist statement because, the underlying rationale is ONLY “white America ” has the right to own the crème de la crème, no one else should even dare to think about it! The best outcome for other countries (including China) is to be the loyal assistant for their white masters.

More than money is at stake here. The U.S. fears losing their power to use technology to spy on and control the world. That’s the fundamental reason the U.S. is freaking out about the rise of Huawei and is carrying out, on all fronts a dirty war against the Chinese technology giant. The U.S. is also carrying out a war against China’s popular TikTok, that is becoming more powerful than Facebook and YouTube around the world. Former President Trump almost succeeded in forcing China to sell the platform to the U.S. Beyond that, if China will soon be able to manufacture top-level chips, the U.S. will no longer be able to control the devices that people around the world use every day. So, there is a desperate need to use any despicable means to counter China’s unstoppable technological rise.

As Edward Snowden has exposed, the U.S. has been systematically using technology to spy on everyone in the U.S. and around the world. Every U.S.-made device has a “loophole” to allow the CIA/NSA to break into phones in order to spy on and track the user. U.S. software has a “backdoor” that allows the government to enter private accounts, read personal files and private messages, or easily break into operating systems to install spyware to manipulate or paralyze equipment. U.S. agencies can use their internet power to launch information wars and color revolutions through U.S. social networking sites anywhere around the world.

All these U.S. imperialist opportunities will be gone if China can offer alternative high-tech products. China has different technology standards than the U.S. which make it extremely difficult for them to hack into the systems. The U.S. will no longer be able to be the “Peeping Tom” of the world, nor able to use technology to control and blackmail anyone anywhere. This is what the U.S. fears.

The U.S. cannot afford to carry out a Chip War against China

Soon after Biden signed the CHIPS act, China's Foreign Ministry issued a statement firmly opposing it, saying it will "disrupt international trade and distort global semiconductor supply chains."

The bill is supposed to boost U.S. semiconductor manufacturing; however, many experts and industry figures are not too optimistic about the law. Instead of letting business, scientific and expert communities develop workable solutions, with international cooperation, it contains many extremely limiting stipulations.

The essence of the CHIPS Act is that it provides government incentives for bringing semiconductor production back to the U.S. Currently almost all U.S. chip makers, including Intel, Micron, Texas Instruments and other major global chip makers, like South Korea's Samsung and China Taiwan's TSMC, own or operate as joint ventures with manufacturing operations in China and/or Southeast Asia. This accounts for 70% global capacity.

However, the main problem with the Act is that public investment can only be obtained under one condition: companies must choose the U.S. over China. They will not be allowed to expand their production in China over the next decade. According to China's National Business Daily³, the Act added additional China-related provisions to hinder the development of China's advanced manufacturing processes. To maintain U.S. so called technological leadership and supply chain security, recipients of financial assistance are required to agree to a prohibition of substantial expansion of semiconductor manufacturing in China. The restrictions will apply to any new factory unless the factory mainly produces "legacy semiconductors" for the U.S.

In a nutshell, it's an either/or clause that prohibits companies that receive federal funding from significantly increasing production of advanced process chips in China for ten years.

There's no doubt the CHIPS Act is just another political stunt. After a failing trade war, a spy war, a cold war, a color revolution and hostilities in the South China Sea, the U.S. intends to start yet another expensive chip war against China. They want to use "carrots" (money) and "sticks" (sanctions) to force U.S. companies and those in other countries to erect a technological "iron curtain" around China to effectively split the current global supply chain into two (U.S./ world vs. China).

Yet, it is questionable whether the U.S. has the ability to pull the whole world into its "chip war." More importantly, the US may want to curb the development of China's semiconductor sector by imposing various restrictions, but "this may only lead to more supply chain disruptions. As the US becomes increasingly accustomed to abusing various export controls and restrictions, it is actually sabotaging its own supply chain by inviting more risks," China's Global Times said.⁴

Another problem with the CHIPS Act is the U.S. declining production capacity. The U.S. remains a major supplier of key technologies for chip manufacturing, including electronic design automation tools (EDA Tools), many advanced designs and their intellectual property patents. Yet most final products are not made in the U.S. which produces only 10% of global market share. Over the years, China has penetrated the global supply chain so deeply that nearly all chipmakers package and test their products in China.

The CHIPS Act does not solve the fundamental problem of the decline of wafer manufacture in the U.S. This is one of the key processes in chip manufacturing. With the provisions in the Chip Act, the U.S. is likely to have shot itself in the foot, according to the recent report by China's National Business Daily (NBD).⁵ The NBD argues that by subsidizing U.S. local wafer factories and restricting advanced Chinese processes, the bill may miss its goal. In advanced chip manufacturing processing, the real rivals are South Korea and the Taiwan Province of China, while the Chinese Mainland is thriving on the manufacture of mature chip technologies.

China is the largest market for the global semiconductor industry and has a well-developed manufacturing environment, including many highly skilled workers, research facilities and investment capital. All of this allows China enough room to develop its own indigenous chip technologies and to pursue cooperation with global players who opt to take China's side, in spite of Washington's hegemonic obstruction. "China doesn't have to follow the same path of chip development as the U.S." concluded another Global Times article last year "any attempt to remove China from the value chain will hit a dead end".⁶

China imports nearly \$400 billion worth of chips each year, more than crude oil imports. There are good reasons for U.S. manufacturers to shift final production of their products to China. According to Russia's Sputnik analysis, no matter what means the U.S. uses to curb the development of China's

technology industry, it will directly harm the interests of American companies. Back in 2019, when the U.S. first imposed restrictions on Huawei, Qualcomm, Intel, Micron Technology and others lost \$10 billion in revenue — the amount Chinese companies spend on electronic components each year.

Wall Street does not regard the CHIPS Act as a "good" bill. The stock prices of U.S. chip companies did not rise but fell. On August 9th, the day when Biden signed the bill, PHLX Semiconductor Index (composed of the 30 largest companies primarily involved in the design, distribution, manufacture, and sale of semiconductors) closed at 2866.90 points, down 4.57%, Qualcomm fell 3.59%, Broadcom fell 2.33%, Micron fell 3.74% and Intel dropped 2.43%, according to the National Business Daily (NBD).⁷

There are many indications that the bill will do nothing but waste lots of money, and do more harm than good to the U.S. semiconductor industry and supply chain. It will not be able to defeat China in the long run. So why is the U.S. so desperately pushing it? No doubt it's for the upcoming election. The CHIPS Bill will enable many politicians and investors in corporate America to make some quick and easy money.

Corruption, lies and video tapes

According to Russia's Sputnik news agency,⁸ tech giants such as Intel or Texas Instruments seem to be the main beneficiaries of the new law. They have ample opportunity to attract public funding over the next five years — an extremely rare situation in capitalist America, where the U.S. is constantly waving the "free trade" banner to keep other countries from subsidizing their businesses for export production (witness the long U.S. war against Europe's subsidy for Airbus).

Besides the business community, U.S. politicians will also benefit from the bill; one of them is Nancy Pelosi, No. 3 in the U.S. government and one of the most powerful political oligarchs in Washington, D.C. Her recent provocative trip on August 2nd-3rd to visit China's Taiwan Province resulted in a major condemnation by China. Pelosi, known for several decades for her strong, hawkish and hysterical anti-communist/anti-China stands, made her last political trip before the mid-term elections to Asia, in a move that was intended to break the U.S. "One China Policy" promise which could change the entire future direction of China-U.S. relations, possibly sparking major military tensions with China.

SANCTIONS KILL

But behind the anti-China political hype, her political trip was exposed later by a few in the U.S. and foreign media: She's using public resources to help her son's private business interests.

According to a report in the Global Times August 13th, during her high-profile Asia trip, the U.S. media was initially (and intentionally) silent about the photos/videos from her trip which clearly showed there was a shadow member of the delegation, Paul Pelosi Jr, Nancy Pelosi's only son who has no government post, nor is he a political consultant of Pelosi's. He was not on the official list of Pelosi's team to Asia, prompting political figures and netizens on the (Taiwan) island to suspect whether he has a secret mission that cannot be exposed, such as pursuing business interests for his family.

Chiu Yi, a former politician from Taiwan, told the Global Times that American politicians always come to the island of Taiwan for one of two purposes: to get Taiwan's financial support, or to promote procurement. Pelosi's visit exposed a third— filling pockets via financial and stock market manipulation.

According to Chiu, Paul Pelosi Jr's most important role was to connect Pelosi and her husband in the U.S. "Asian, U.S. and European stocks were all affected by Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. Her son who has basically followed his father into the finance business managing financial operations, mergers and acquisitions. So there was obviously a high degree of insider stock trading suspicion. The husband runs the business in the U.S.; Pelosi is in charge of causing trouble, and the son worked as an aide to Pelosi," on the trip, the expert explained to the Global Times.

It is pretty certain that Pelosi's son talked about some deal with TSMC (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, Limited) after being introduced to TSMC Chairman Mark Liu on August 3rd. The deal would have been either "related to TSMC's investment in the U.S. or the purchase of TSMC chips" he concluded. In addition, Chinese media reported that Pelosi's Asia trip in Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea also provided him an opportunity to secure some chip-related business deals — just a few days before Biden signed the CHIPS Act.

However, Pelosi's biggest fortune has come from mainland China! It sounds too crazy to be true. But while she's shouting anti-China rhetoric, her husband Paul Pelosi and her son openly and frequently have traveled to China since 1990s, and have made lots of money. According to the latest report their China

U.S. SANCTIONS WILL MAKE CHINA STRONGER

investment fund in Hong Kong had reached \$17.4 billion. Many of his investments in China are in state-owned enterprises and the largest IT companies such as Alibaba, Meituan, Tencent, Postal Savings Bank of China, Pinduoduo, etc.

He has holdings in corporations such as Slack, Tesla, Disney, Visa, Salesforce, PayPal, Alphabet, Facebook, and Netflix — companies that together spend tens of millions of dollars each year lobbying the federal government. In addition, according to the “Insider,” stock trades Paul Pelosi has made since 2021 include U.S. semi-conductor companies Micron and NVIDIA, companies which will surely benefit from the recent CHIPS Act.

Why the CHIPS Act will fail – and at taxpayers expense

The U.S. accounted for more than 37 percent of the world's semiconductor production in 1990. Today, the high-end semiconductors produced in the US account for about 12 percent of the global semiconductor production, with Asian economies including China claiming larger shares of the market, according to the China Daily.⁹ Many experts had pointed out that while the CHIPS Act acts as a de facto “chip sanction” against China, it’ll affect China in the short run (it needs some time to develop its own cutting-edge semiconductor supply chain to catch-up); but for the long-run, the U.S. will have shot itself in the foot.

Because U.S. intentions are not principled, every elite investor inside the Beltway and on Wall Street is paying lip-service to the “anti-China” cause for their own gain. Just think about this as sanctions on steroids (lots of money will pour in) that will only look good for the U.S. in the very short term, maybe up to the 2022 mid-term election or 2024 presidential election (if it still has funding). But just like Biden's massive \$2 trillion infrastructure plan last November, which has ended up going nowhere, the CHIPS Act will meet the same fate: soon after the money runs out, the hype will run out too.

Popular Resistance, September 2022

Endnotes

1. White House Press Release : <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/09/fact-sheet-chips-and-science-act-will-lower-costs-create-jobs-strengthen-supply-chains-and-counter-china/>

2. NPR “Why Biden's plan to boost semiconductor chip manufacturing in the U.S. is so critical”: <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/12/1116798029/semiconductor-china-biden-law-manufacturing-supply-chain-trade-war-technology>

SANCTIONS KILL

3. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/g-syCS6CV1lwM1VmiyCUw>, 8/15/2022
4. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202208/1272946.shtml>, 8/14/2022
5. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/g-syCS6CV1lwM1VmiyCUw>, 8/15/2022
6. *GT Voice: China won't be coerced by US's 'chip war' hype*, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202104/1220372.shtml>, 4/6/2021
7. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/g-syCS6CV1lwM1VmiyCUw>, 8/15/2022
8. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Tv2J-eIM2V2Qonhif7F9nw>, 8/12/2022
9. *Washington's bid for bigger chip pie share will hurt itself*, <https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202208/15/WS62f98783a310fd2b29e72183.html>, 8/15/2022

World condemns U.S. blockade of Cuba

by Monica Moorehead

For the 30th time since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly 185-2 on Nov. 3 to end the criminal U.S. blockade of Cuba. This historic vote was virtually absent from the big bourgeois media reporting, such as the New York Times and Washington Post.

The blockade, first implemented by the Kennedy administration on Feb. 2, 1962, has banned U.S. trade and financial transactions with the Cuban people, including medicines and other essential goods, since that date.

The blockade is the U.S. punishment of Cuba for carrying out a socialist revolution — led by the July 26th Movement — on Jan. 1, 1959, with the defeat of the U.S. puppet regime of military dictator Fulgencio Batista.

The U.N. vote is symbolic and nonbinding, since only the U.S. Congress can overturn the blockade. The vote does signal the deepening isolation of the U.S. from the rest of the world.

Not surprisingly, the only two countries who voted no against resolution A/76/405 — entitled “Necessity of putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” — were the United States and its staunch ally, the racist Israeli settler regime. Two abstentions came from Ukraine and the fascistic Jair Bolsonaro government in Brazil, recently defeated in national elections there.

Representatives from different countries spoke on Nov. 2 and Nov. 3 to express their support for ending the blockade, a human rights violation which runs counter to a number of U.N. declarations, including the right to national sovereignty.

Those speaking from around the globe expressed their appreciation toward Cuba for the almost 60 health brigades the country has sent to over 40 countries, especially during the pandemic. Cuba has carried out these and many other acts of solidarity, despite the hardships the blockade has imposed on the Cuban

people. There was also a call to remove Cuba from the U.S. state terrorist list.

Devastating impact of blockade

On Nov. 3, Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, presented a 25-minute report before the U.N. General Assembly outlining the historic and present-day impact of the blockade. He received much applause from the delegates on his report. According to Granma,

the report stated that only between August 2021 and February 2022, that unilateral policy caused Cuba losses in the order of \$3,806.5 [over \$3.8 billion] million. The figure is 49% higher than that reported between January and July 2021 and a record in just seven months.

At current prices, the accumulated damages during six decades of the blockade amount to \$150,410.8 million [over \$1.5 trillion], with a great weight on sectors such as health and education, in addition to the damage to the national economy and the quality of life of Cuban families.

In the first 14 months of the Biden administration alone, the losses caused by the blockade amounted to \$6,364 million [over \$6.3 billion], which is equivalent to an impact of more than \$454 million a month and more than \$15 million a day, according to the document. (Nov. 3)

U.S. human rights violations

When U.S. Political Counselor, John Kelley, attacked Cuba for "human rights violations" following the vote, Cuba's representative to the U.N., Yuri Gala, offered a powerful rebuttal.

Gala stated, "Cuba does not need lessons on democracy and human rights, much less from the United States. If the United States government was really interested in the welfare, human rights and self-determination of Cubans, it could lift the blockade." (Reuters, Nov. 3)

Gala then cited U.S. human rights violations, using vital statistics in the areas of mass incarceration, including disproportionately those who are African Americans, migrants and minors, as well as police killings of people of color.

Washington Humiliated, Cuba Lifted Up, by 2022 UNGA Vote

by Ike Nahem

For the 30th consecutive time, dating back to 1992, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has overwhelmingly voted in favor of a Cuban-sponsored Resolution on the “Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial, and Financial Embargo by the United States of America Against Cuba” [N2263517.pdf]. It was accompanied by a thorough, country-by-country damning official report by the UN Secretary General [N2128802.pdf].

International moral and political shield

This 30th consecutive UNGA vote is obviously “non-binding.” That is, it carries no punitive measures of enforcement against the US government and has no counter-measures to deter or block the implementation of the illegal – by the UN’s own unenforced standards – extraterritorial US blockade measures. Nonetheless – within the framework of the heroic resistance of the Cuban people, state, and government plus the work of international Cuba solidarity forces – the annual UN action is an important part of the international moral and political shield that is a key obstacle to direct US aggression and military intervention.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 saw – to the disgust of the entire world – the deepening of the US anti-Cuba blockade under the Republican Trump and Democratic Biden Administrations that has carried on from 2017 to the present day.

Utter Washington isolation as brutal blockade carries on

Washington has long since abandoned any pretense of trying to win over or convince anyone of its position or rationalizations for its punitive anti-Cuba campaign. Its UN spokesperson went through the motions of “explaining” the

SANCTIONS KILL

US vote with a stew of lies and half-truths, dripping with sophistry.

The handful of nations that vote with Washington (only Israel in the last two votes) or abstain (Ukraine and Brazil this year) never take the floor in solidarity with Washington or utter a peep.

There has been a common anti-Cuba perspective and policy continuity from Trump to Biden. Both are animated by the prospect of using the deepening of the blockade – in the face of the pandemic! – to asphyxiate the Cuban nation-state (which happens to be a socialist-workers state). The aim of successive US Administrations from Dwight Eisenhower to Joseph Biden – with a brief pause and some limited advances toward normalization in 2015-16 under Barack Obama’s White House and State Department – and bipartisan Congresses for over six decades now – has been to create the conditions for social and economic collapse in Cuba and expedite the installation of a neo-colonial government subservient to US imperialism.

Excerpted from the article of the same name appearing on International US-Cuba Normalization Committee Coalition website at <https://www.us-cubanormalization.org/viva-cuba/the-emperor-has-no-clothes/>

US-Cuba Normalization Committee Coalition, November 2022

Lessons Learnt – Iran

by Hamid Shahrabi

Rather than detailing crimes committed by illegitimate sanctions, the purpose of this modest contribution is to draw attention on lessons learnt, with emphasis on how to effectively confront such criminal policy. But before that, considering my Iranian nationality, let us have a look at the case of Iran.

Iran Sanctions

After the overthrow of Shah's regime, a dictatorship installed and fully backed by the government of US, Iran has been a main target of imperialist sanctions. Although sanctions took place as a tool among a broader agenda of US aggressions against Iran — including but not limited to attempt on direct military intervention through Operation Tabas on 24 April 1980, support for military aggression of Iraq (1980-88) and providing support to terrorist acts through which thousands of innocent people were killed — however, sanctions have been used for more than 4 decades to bring immense suffering on the entire nation.

A 98 page report by “Congressional Research Service” (CRS), updated on 6 April 2021, details the account of Iran sanctions. In the report, we read:

During 2011-2015, in implementation of deliberate U.S. policy, global economic sanctions contributed to the shrinking of Iran's economy as its crude oil exports fell by more than 50% and it could not access its foreign exchange assets abroad.

Summary of CRS report that provides the long list of sanctions on Iran, continues:

Trump Administration policy to apply ‘maximum pressure’ on Iran...caused Iran's economy to fall into significant recession as a result, in part, of reduced sales of oil and isolation from

the international financial system.

Another report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) dated 29 October 2019 recounts effects of sanctions on the health of Iranian people:

The consequences of redoubled US sanctions...pose a serious threat to Iranians' right to health and access to essential medicines—and has almost certainly contributed to documented shortages—ranging from a lack of critical drugs for epilepsy patients to limited chemotherapy medications for Iranians with cancer.

As a result, Iranians' access to essential medicine and their right to health is being negatively impacted, and may well worsen if the situation remains unchanged, thereby threatening the health of millions of Iranians.

The extent of suffering of Iranian people from “the highest sanctions ever imposed on a country,” as proudly labeled by President Trump, is of course not limited to what was hinted in the above-mentioned documents. While depriving Iran from 100s of billions of dollars of its income through free access to international trade, economic sanctions, along with banking and financial sanctions have contributed to high rates of unemployment and inflation that have in turn resulted to the deaths of thousands and impoverishment of 10s of millions of not only Iranian working class but also lower and middle classes as well.

A third of humanity suffers from US sanctions

Iran is just one of the 39 countries, encompassing a third of humanity, which are currently impacted by illegitimate and inhumane imperialist sanctions. The human casualties of sanctions are yet to be appreciated. The mass scale of genocide committed through sanctions will be better understood when you consider the deaths of millions of those who died during the past decades in countries such as Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Venezuela, the former Yugoslavia, Zimbabwe and Congo, among the other sanctioned countries.

If there is need for an example of mass murder by sanctions, here is one: The New York Times issue dated 1 Dec. 1995 reports “as many as 576,000 Iraqi children may have died since the end of the Persian Gulf war because of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council, according to two

scientists who surveyed the country for the Food and Agriculture Organization.” The reader may note that Food and Agriculture Organization is affiliated with the UN. It is also noted that such barbaric sanctions were imposed by not only US and its European allies but also backed by the Security Council of the UN, the main international body which according to its charter and declarations is supposed to safeguard peace and the right of people to life! And how do the imperialists view such atrocities? Madeleine Albright the former Secretary of State of the US replies: “It was worth it”! Quite clear: The mentality of arrogant imperialists on the value of human life versus their hegemonic interest could not be expressed better than that.

Yet, there remains the question that how can the hegemonic powers get away with genocidal sanctions? Answering that question provides the first lesson learnt in confronting sanctions.

Lesson 1 – Lies and Deception and the need to Bring the Truth Out

Imperialist sanctions stem from and serve the hegemonic interests. To preserve their status for protection of their material interests, the imperialists cannot tolerate movements that resist and challenge their domination. Nations daring to do so are destined to be punished severely and ruthlessly. And the main two tools used for such punishments are wars and sanctions, which often complement each other.

Obviously, to carry out sanctions they cannot present the truth i.e. that they make hundreds of millions of people suffer, only to maintain and expand their hegemony. So, they utilize their powerful corporate media to spread lies and to deceive public opinion. In such a scenario, the governments of sanctioned countries, whose unforgivable crime is disobeying imperialist dictates, are demonized, are pictured as violators of human rights and opponents of democracy. They, those who have on their record numerous mass killings through wars and sanctions, engineering of 10s of military coups to overthrow elected governments and training of torturers and death squads, such merciless creatures are shameless enough to lecture us about democracy and human rights and justify their crimes under precious slogans such as democracy and human rights!

Therefore, to expose imperialists’ lies and deception there remains the one and the only tool and that is: to bring the truth out. To that end, we need to support, strengthen and expand the alternative media, to further utilize social media, to publish books and pamphlets and organize meetings, forums and

SANCTIONS KILL

seminars. We have to be constantly engaged in the “battle of ideas” as Fidel Castro, one of the greatest liberators of our era, used to characterize the main endeavor of freedom-fighters challenging the monstrous empire.

It is in that light that the launch of the Sanctions Kill campaign, as an ongoing activity to bring consciousness on sanctions and the need to stand up against it, is appreciated.

Lesson 2 – Broadest United Actions

United actions are indispensable in standing up against sanctions. There is no need for ideological or programmatic agreements on every issue among the forces which could join in united actions against sanctions. On the contrary, such actions that could take place in the forms of signing petitions or street demonstrations shall be all inclusive, as long as the participants agree on the single issue of “Stop Sanctions”. In that sense, it is to the advantage of an effective campaign on sanctions to be heterogeneous rather than being homogeneous.

United actions in the imperialist countries, and especially the US, are of high importance, because it is the governments of such countries that are responsible for imposition of illegitimate sanctions. Hence, arises the urgency to mobilize public opinion in the United States and its European allies. Actions of that type have shown their effectiveness in the past but there is a greater potential and capacity in that regard that need yet to be utilized.

Taking into view the humanitarian, socioeconomic, political, environmental, psychological and cultural impacts of sanctions, a wide range of people and movements with a variety of motives and interests could join united actions on sanctions.

Lesson 3 – Sectarianism and factionalism, diseases that harm the fight against sanctions

It is really unfortunate to see that there are forces that would not join a united action on sanctions only because they are not the one who has initiated or is organizing that action. Such behavior should definitely be avoided, because it is quite harmful to any struggle, including the fight against sanctions.

Lesson 4 – Negotiations between the oppressed and oppressor

To press their victims of sanctions to give in to imperialist demands and submit to hegemonic objectives, the imperialists also use diplomacy or better

said “gunboat” or “shotgun” diplomacy. The European imperialists used those tactics during the second half of the eighteenth through the end of the nineteenth century, and the US has been using the same during the process and ever since it became the dominant world power. That is how the imperialists, as oppressors, use negotiations as a tool to facilitate their domination of the oppressed nations. There are many historical examples which could be cited on that account and a more recent one is the negotiations with Iran on Iran’s nuclear program.

Although it is the absolute right of sanctioned nations to enter negotiations with their adversaries in order to protect their rights and pursue their demand for lifting sanctions, and it is also up to them to decide whether to give any concessions during the course of negotiations to secure their broader national interests, those who are witness to such negotiations should not only take sides with the sanctioned nation, but should also stand against any pressure that aims to gain further concessions from the victim of sanctions.

The slogan that shall be raised by peace activists in such circumstances is clear: stop sanctions immediately and unconditionally.

Lesson 5 – The wrong policy of passivity and least resistance

Then, there are others, even some with progressive political backgrounds who advocate the policy of least resistance. Their basic argument is that considering the “power theory” —a thesis highly praised in academic circles under the influence of capitalism— there shall be a limit to challenging the world hegemonic system! And what is that limit? They respond: Do not question the foundation of such a system and do not provide active support to liberation movements. Despite rhetoric, their remedy is simple: bring down the tensions— as if resistance movements have been the cause of or the source of those tensions, as if it is not the imperialist system that has constantly imposed all sorts of tensions on human society. They have other solutions as well among the same line of passivity: retreat wherever and whenever the imperialist pressures are dangerously high. The advocators of such policy totally ignore the fatality of trusting and retreating against imperialist aggressions. They prefer not to look at the recent experiences in Iraq, Libya or Egypt when the governments in those countries put their trust in imperialists and retreated under their undue pressures.

To be sure, passivity and least resistance pave the way for futility of just movements, including the fight against sanctions.

Lesson 6 – Support of the masses in the sanctioned countries

It is not a secret that imperialist sanctions are meant to bring mass unrest among the masses of people in the sanctioned countries, with the ultimate aim to overthrow the governments of such nations. That has been admitted on several occasions by US government officials from both Democrat as well as Republican parties. With that fact on the ground, the most sure path to confront sanctions is to strengthen ties among the government and people in the sanctioned country.

Once again, it is important to note that sanctions cause economic hardships and because of that create dissatisfaction among the masses of people. Facing such an unfavorable situation, the sanctioned governments cannot afford losing the trust of their people. If that happens as an ongoing dominant pattern, there remains no possibility to successfully challenge imperialist sanctions. Then, the downfall of the sanctioned government eventually becomes inevitable. With the same logic, the only effective way to deal with sanctions is to alleviate as much as possible the immense difficulties that people face in their daily lives because of sanctions. Securing basic social services for the people, like access to food, drinkable water, employment and a shelter for living, despite all inevitable shortages due to sanctions, becomes essential. That requires in turn, in regard to internal policies, the utmost economic planning, heavy reliance on the capacities of native economies, recognizing and encouraging mass organizations, and in regard to external policies, it demands expanding cooperation and economic ties with the countries that are more or less independent from imperialism.

Sanctions Kill! The World Stands Up to Sanctions!

Therefore, taking tangible measures to preserve the well-being of people, controlling the capitalist class which in its upper levels works hand in hand with imperialists and acts as their agent, fighting corruption that totally destroys the trust of people, and in a word, putting full trust and relying on the power and capabilities of masses of people is the only safe path to battle successfully imperialist hegemonic policies in general and the inhumane sanctions policy in particular. That, together with an effective public diplomacy at an international level—like the one exemplified by the Cuban government— shall be the model of how to stand up against sanctions.

Lesson 7 – Cooperation among the sanctioned countries

From a practical point of view, it is highly important to extend broadest

cooperation in different fields of economy among the sanctioned countries. Realization of such perspective through an alliance between the sanctioned countries has been advocated since some time ago by the House of Latin America (HOLA) and we are extremely glad to witness that concrete measures have been taken in that line of action.

Recent cooperation between Iran and Venezuela through the shipment of fuel and oil diluents despite unlawful sanctions on both countries, which was furiously watched by the US, has shown the way forward. Likewise, the shipment of oil from Iran to Lebanon through Syria, another sanctioned country urgently in need of fuel was a bold action demonstrating the will of sanctioned countries to expand economic cooperation to the benefit of their peoples. Such actions which could be expanded exponentially by encompassing further and broader cooperation among all sanctioned countries would certainly decrease the destructive effects of imperialist sanctions. The inclusion of countries like Russia and the decisive support of powerful China for such cooperation would bring a real breakthrough, signaling the light at the end of the dark tunnel of imperialist sanctions.

Our mission meanwhile: do everything in our capacity to oppose sanctions.

End the Wars at Home and Abroad, September 2022

Let Afghanistan Live!

by Zach Kerner

Contrary to the narrative of U.S. politicians and journalists, the August 2021 withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan did not mark the end of the United States' so-called "forever war" but rather a shift in U.S. policy — from direct military intervention and occupation to one based on economic sanctions and indirect political subversion. Although the tactics change, the goal is the same: the accumulation of wealth and power through class warfare against the Afghan people.

Just days after Kabul fell to the Taliban on Aug. 15, Washington took measures to turn off the flow of funds to the new government and paralyze the Afghan banking system. The Treasury Department quickly issued a freeze order on nearly \$9.5 billion of the Afghan Central Bank's assets held in U.S. financial institutions, including the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

Although the Taliban was entitled to receive over \$460 million from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in currency reserves known as Special Drawing Rights, or SDRs, the U.S. ensured that those funds would be blocked. Notably, these punitive measures are in addition to the economic sanctions that the U.S. imposed on the Taliban following the 9/11 attack.

Horrific consequences of sanctions

As reported in *Workers World* at the time: "Seizing the central bank's money and cutting all international aid, in a poor country where three-quarters of public spending is financed by grants, gives Washington powerful leverage. U.S. strategists understand the impact of freezing funds and can calibrate this tactic to inflict maximum pain."

The horrific and totally foreseeable consequences of these sanctions have, so far, been well documented by international humanitarian organizations, even if they are reluctant to depict the United States as culpable.

On Oct. 25, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and the U.N. World

Food Program published a report urging humanitarian assistance, warning that Afghanistan is on a “countdown to catastrophe.” According to the report, over 50% of Afghans will face “crisis” or “emergency” levels of acute food insecurity, including over 3 million children under the age of five.

On Nov. 22, the United Nations Development Program published a report warning that Afghanistan’s financial and bank payment systems are “in disarray” and on the verge of collapse. The UNDP report, citing the IMF, predicts the Afghan economy could contract by 30% for 2021-2022.

On Dec. 6, the International Crisis Group issued a more scathing report, warning that the “hunger and destitution” caused by “economic strangulation,” imposed by the West in response to the Taliban takeover, could “kill more Afghans than all the bombs and bullets of the past two decades.”

In other words, U.S. policy of intentionally starving the Afghan people through economic sanctions on Afghanistan is going as planned. As many predicted, blocking funds from the Taliban and curtailing foreign aid and assistance would lead to a rapid financial meltdown and exacerbate the ongoing famine plaguing Afghanistan.

Despite the Taliban’s success in forcing the U.S. government to the negotiating table in Doha and then ousting the U.S. military from Afghanistan, Washington has made it clear that it has no plans to respect Afghanistan’s sovereignty. Indeed, the Biden administration’s response to pleas that the asset freeze be lifted demonstrates the hypocrisy and callousness of U.S. foreign policy.

The Taliban’s November 2021 letter to the U.S. Congress correctly noted that “the fundamental challenge of our people is financial security, and the roots of this concern lead back to the freezing of assets of our people by the American government.”

U.S. retaliates for Taliban’s military success

The U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West, rejected the Taliban’s request in a series of revealing tweets. West’s remarks effectively confirmed that the United States was preventing “critical” international aid from reaching Afghanistan as retribution for the Taliban’s military success, while recognizing that Afghanistan’s “economy [is] enormously dependent on aid, including for basic services.”

SANCTIONS KILL

Further, in typical bourgeois fashion, West condescendingly lectured the Taliban that “[l]egitimacy and support must be earned” and confirmed that the United States would consider lifting the murderous sanctions if the Taliban only learned to “respect the rights of minorities, women and girls.”

The irony was not lost on Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, who questioned the tortured logic: “The U.S. froze our assets and then told us that it will provide us humanitarian aid. What does it mean?” Muttaqi reiterated the demand to release Afghanistan’s assets: “The assets should be freed immediately. The Americans don’t have any military front with us now. What is the reason for freezing the assets? The assets don’t belong to the Mujahideen (Islamic Emirate) but to the people of Afghanistan.”

The Biden administration has shown no signs of easing the sanctions. In fact, the Biden administration is reportedly entertaining the idea of permanently depriving the Afghan people of the funds needed to combat the current humanitarian crisis, by transferring those funds instead to U.S. plaintiffs with outstanding default judgments against the Taliban. That is what two groups of judgment creditors are arguing to U.S. federal judges.

Although its formal statement is not due until the end of January 2022, the Biden administration seems willing to go along with the plan — the only apparent obstacle is how to seize the Afghan funds without recognizing the Taliban as the legitimate Afghan government.

Following its imperial playbook, the U.S. sanctions imposed on Afghanistan — like the sanctions imposed on Venezuela, Cuba, Iran and many others — are having their intended effect, which is to punish the whole population of Afghanistan for the Taliban’s refusal to surrender the country’s resources and sovereignty to the demands of U.S. and European capital.

The intended consequence is the destabilization of Afghan civil society, making daily life so unbearable that the Afghan people eventually blame the Taliban for their misery and providing the United States and its proxies an opening to enact regime change.

We must demand: U.S. out of Afghanistan — totally out, and end the U.S.-imposed sanctions. Let Afghanistan live!

Workers World, December 2021

China Rescues Myanmar From Dangerous Dollar-Dominated Waters

by Brian Berletic

For nearly a year now the Southeast Asian nation of Myanmar has been racked by US-sponsored terrorism¹ attempting to reinstall Washington's client regime of choice headed by Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD) party.

Compounding the daily violence carried out by the US-sponsored opposition, are growing sanctions leveled by the US and other nations pressured to follow suit targeting Myanmar's economy externally as US-sponsored terrorists target daily economic activity domestically.

To circumvent the growing number of sanctions attempting to suffocate Myanmar, Myanmar is now using the Chinese Yuan to trade with its neighbor to the north.

Chinese state media's Global Times in an article titled, "Myanmar accepts yuan as official settlement currency for border trade with China," would report:

Myanmar has accepted the Chinese yuan as an official settlement currency for border trade with China, in a move that aims to address its shortage of US dollars and other foreign currencies, as the Southeast Asian country faces economic challenges amid political instability, sources close to the matter told the Global Times on Wednesday.²

China is by far Myanmar's largest trading partner. According to Harvard University's Atlas of Economic Complexity, over 33% of Myanmar's exports go to China and over 45% of all imports come from China. China is followed by neighboring Thailand which accounts for 16% of Myanmar's exports and nearly 16% of its imports.³

The ability for Myanmar to sidestep transactions using Western-controlled currencies and networks will mean finding a financial lifeline throughout the duration of the crisis no matter how hard Washington attempts to pressure Myanmar's economy from here on in.

The Global Times would also note:

The yuan's use in trade settlements will be a pilot program involving border trade at the initial stage, focusing on transactions of small commodities and daily necessities, which the locals call "small trade."

In the future, the yuan's settlement could expand to cover what is called "big trade," which refers mainly to containerships carrying big commodities, marine products, machines and equipment, one source noted.

The article also noted how the US has weaponized its control over global finances and how China is offering targeted nations a defense against this:

The US has been abusing the dollar's dominant status to impose arbitrary sanctions on other countries, and the yuan's further expansion in Myanmar's trade settlements may provide a shield against such a potential weapon, analysts said.

The US has claimed it is placing sanctions on Myanmar in order to "restore democracy" and address "human rights abuses." However, the US-backed opposition was practically run out of Washington and by foreigners. Aung San Suu Kyi had a collection of advisers ranging from British to Australian nationals handling policy regarding the most sensitive aspects of Myanmar's internal political affairs including amendments to the nation's constitution.

The apparent "success" of the opposition and its "civil disobedience movement" is betrayed by the opposition's own admissions that officials are resigning and economic activity grinding to a halt because of death threats made by armed and eager terrorists who have killed anyone refusing to join the opposition including teachers and red cross workers.

Myanmar Now, an opposition paper funded by the US government through the National Endowment for Democracy (according to Columbia Journalism Review), has recently reported that administrators from Kayan Township in the Yangon region have resigned in mass not out of solidarity with the opposition — but out of fear of being murdered by the opposition's roving death squads referred to by the Western media as "people's defense forces" or "PDFs."⁴

Myanmar Now in its article, “Kayan Township hit by wave of resignations, as junta struggles to retain control,” would report:

In an interview with Myanmar Now, the leader of PDF-Kayan said that virtually every ward and village administrator in the township had quit by the deadline.

According to the Kayan Channel, a Facebook page created to track developments in the township, some 60 administrators have quit so far, roughly half of them citing death threats as their reason for leaving.⁵

This helps illustrate that China’s desire to help Myanmar overcome US pressure through sanctions is not an attempt to aid and abet “abuses” carried out by Myanmar’s government, but to help Myanmar survive yet another cynical and deliberately engineered armed crisis used by Washington to redraw the map of entire regions of the planet in its favor.

The pilot project between Myanmar and China will not only open the door to wider financial cooperation between Myanmar and China but also help set a precedent and streamline the process for other nations looking to follow suit for a variety of reasons. The trend of targeted nations switching to the Chinese Yuan from a wider perspective, means ultimately undermining the strength and hegemony of the US Dollar.

Washington’s uncompromising foreign policy of coercing and crushing nations rather than allowing nations to enjoy constructive ties between both East and West has gone from protecting nearly a century of US global domination to a process of the US’s own self-isolation.

Should Myanmar’s crisis subside and stability be restored specifically because of China’s economic rather than political or military intervention, a strong signal will be sent to the rest of Southeast Asia targeted by US interference and facing similar choices of either tolerating US interference because of the financial stranglehold the US still has over the region and the world – or adopting alternatives that undercut and eliminate that stranglehold.

New Eastern Outlook, November 2021

Endnotes

1. <https://journal-neo.org/2021/03/31/myanmar-libya-and-syria-dangerous-parallels/>
2. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202112/1241577.shtml>

SANCTIONS KILL

3. [https://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/explore?
country=143&product=undefined&year=2019&productClass=HS&target=Partner&pa
rtner=undefined&startYear=undefined](https://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/explore?country=143&product=undefined&year=2019&productClass=HS&target=Partner&partner=undefined&startYear=undefined)
4. https://www.cjr.org/special_report/myanmars-other-reporters.php
5. [https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/kayan-township-hit-by-wave-of-resignations-as-
junta-struggles-to-retain-control](https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/kayan-township-hit-by-wave-of-resignations-as-junta-struggles-to-retain-control)

Deadly New Sanctions on Syria

by Judy Bello

On May 20, President Trump signed into law the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. Embedded in this bill, a housekeeping bill of sorts where yearly “defense” appropriations and priorities are spelled out, was the basic text of the 2019 Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act. Perhaps they were buried here because they didn’t have bipartisan support, but there is certainly no reason to think that is the case. The war on Syria has had bipartisan support for the duration. Perhaps they were just embarrassed by the title, as the bill is named after a presentation that was a fraud.

The Caesar photos, which first emerged in January of 2014, were claimed to be 55,000 photos of people tortured to death by the Syrian government brought out by a military defector. The subsequent research was paid for by the Qatari government and overseen by a law firm, Carter Ruck, which had previously worked for Turkish President Erdogan. The photos are real but who are the subjects? Nearly 2 years later, Human Rights Watch published an article that was light on analysis and made many baseless claims about the data. A few months after that in March of 2016, Rick Sterling published a detailed analysis of the Caesar photos and the context in which they were published.¹ On reviewing the photos, Rick says that they appear to be record keeping photos from the morgue of a hospital in a war zone, and included the dead from both sides.

“In summary” Rick says in his pdf research document

the photos and the deceased are real. But how they died and the circumstances are unclear. There is strong evidence some died in conflict. Others died in the hospital. Others died and their bodies were decomposing before they were picked up. The photographs seem to document a war time situation where

SANCTIONS KILL

many combatants and civilians are killed. It seems the military hospital was doing what it had always done: maintaining a photographic and documentary record of the deceased. Bodies were picked up by different military or intelligence branches. While some may have died in detention, the big majority probably died in the conflict zones. The accusation by ‘Caesar’, the Carter Ruck Report and HRW that these are really victims of “death in detention” or “death by torture” or death in “government custody” are almost certainly false.²

The Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act doubles down on secondary sanctions which punish those who would have any economic exchange with Syria including aid. Though technically made anonymous, it was not killed, but rather hidden in the 2020 NDAA. Even the name didn’t really die. It just became a meme which refers to the most severe sanctions on the Syrian people and attempts to justify them. But why, 6 years after the Caesar files appeared, and 3 years after the claims that the photos of Syrian government victims were debunked, why secretly enact these sanctions now?

This set of sanctions are an attempt to land a death blow on the Syrian government while the world is focused on other problems. The US has lost the hot war. They have been unable to poison the world against Syria beyond their close allies. The Assad government has restored order to the most populated areas of the country and also houses at least half of the displaced persons from other areas. As long as Syria is still intact, the war against them will be escalated on some front. Regardless of the term ‘regime change’, the war is a hybrid war against the people of Syria. The demand is that they change their identity and their way of life along with their leadership.

Syria has suffered under increasing US sanctions for decades. After the beginning of the war in Syria, the sanctions were hardened and deepened with increased third party sanctions to include other countries in the sanctions. Either they abide by our sanctions against Syria or suffer sanctions and economic penalties themselves. The Caesar Act sanctions have completely isolated the Central Bank of Syria. They impose secondary sanctions on any country or corporation that trades with Syria or even provides aid to Syria. They attack Lebanese banks that have so far supported Syrian trade, causing economic mayhem in that small and largely impoverished country. Only the biggest and boldest of their allies can take the risk of any kind of economic engagement with

Syria.

The dollar value of the Syrian Lira has plummeted to 1800:1 from 47:1 before the war. There are rumors of capital flight through Idlib, the last enclave of Al Qaeda in Syria and other armed groups who are funded by US dollars. According to the Guardian, the Lebanese currency is falling as well because Lebanon and Syria are traditional trading partners. According to SANA, US Envoy James Jeffrey claimed that the collapse of the Syrian currency is due to US policies. In northern Syria, Turkish backed militants are moving capital out of the country, while Erdogan is enforcing the use of Turkish currency in the areas where his people have control.

People can't get basic necessities of food and medicine. The war has devastated Syria's independent manufacturing sector. Mercenaries paid by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey deliberately dismantled factories over the last decade, looting the machinery or destroying it before laying waste to the buildings that housed them. Earlier US sanctions have denied Syria the most basic ingredients of pharmaceutical manufacturing. Tom Duggan and Mark Taliano detail the list of imports forbidden to Syria in their recent article "Western Governments Collectively Punishing Syrian Civilians with Criminal Economic Embargoes."³

The US is occupying 1/2 of Syrian oil and gas fields forcing Syria to import these fossil fuels. It is occupying their wheat fields as well. Earlier this year, US troops burned Syrian wheat fields in the areas they occupied. This week Global Research published Arabi Souri's article and video "Hearing Is Not Like Seeing: NATO's Terrorists Burning Syrian Wheat Crops"⁴ documenting Turkish backed militants burning crops in northern Syria.

Syria has gone off the radar for activists, but not for the relentless US imperialist war mongers. They have upped the ante once again, on a country suffering from more than ten years of war. And so you hear that in Syria, 'rebuilding' is being undermined by the economic sanctions, but you don't hear that even people who had food and medicine through the war now can't get it. They can't get oil and gas for cooking and heating. Their money is worthless and even the government is struggling to provide basic services to them because THEIR MONEY is WORTHLESSin an international context.

This is siege warfare. The people cannot feed their children. There are no resources for the sick and elderly. While the rest of the world is busy fighting COVID-19, Syrians are finally starving. It is hard, I think, to imagine this kind of cruelty even as vindictiveness. Even if the government of Syria were run by a

SANCTIONS KILL

cold blooded serial killer and a pack of hyenas, which it is not, the sanctions target the people of Syria, the victims of a terrible war instigated and perpetuated, armed and funded by the United States and its allies.

The “Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act” sanctions should be renamed the “Caesar Syrian Civilian Genocide Act”. And yet, with the COVID-19 pandemic going on; with the dysfunction of our own economy leaving hundreds of thousands unemployed and food insecure, without medical insurance and on the brink of eviction; with gunboats off the coast of Venezuela and nukes moving to the Russian border in Poland, there is silence around Syria. And, isn’t that convenient. The new sanctions on Syria are like the knee of Derek Chauvin on George Floyd’s neck. But the video isn’t playing on YouTube.

When will this end? How can we put an end to it?

UNAC Blog/End the Wars at Home and Abroad, June 2020

Endnotes

1. *The Caesar Photo Fraud that Undermined Syrian Negotiations*, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2016/03/04/the-caesar-photo-fraud-that-undermined-syrian-negotiations/>

2. *The Caesar Photo Fraud that Undermined Syrian Negotiations*, https://www.syriasolidaritymovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/CaesarPhotoFraudReport_v6.compressed.pdf

3. *Western Governments Collectively Punishing Syrian Civilians with Criminal Economic Embargoes*, <https://unac.notowar.net/2020/06/07/western-governments-collectively-punishing-syrian-civilians-with-criminal-economic-embargoes/>

4. *Hearing is not Like Seeing: NATO’s Terrorists Burn Syrian Wheat Crops*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/video-nato-terrorists-burning-syrian-wheat-crops/5715759>

Evaluating Biden’s Yemen Policy: Bait and Switch

by Sara Flounders

President Joe Biden seemed to announce an end to Washington’s complete support for Saudi Arabia’s war on Yemen last week, reversing Trump’s and even the Obama/Biden administration’s public policy. He called the war a “humanitarian and strategic catastrophe.”

In his first presidential foreign policy speech on Feb. 4, Biden said, “We are ending all [U.S.] support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arms sales.” ([whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov)) But he quickly added that Washington will continue to help Saudi Arabia to “defend its sovereignty and territory,” including selling the Saudis massive new high-tech weapons, for “defensive” purposes.

On Jan. 25, over 300 antiwar and humanitarian organizations worldwide called for an end to the Saudi war and highlighted the Western countries’ role as enablers of Saudi crimes in Yemen. “The war is only possible because Western countries — and the United States and Britain in particular — continue to arm Saudi Arabia and provide military, political and logistical support for the war. The Western powers are active participants and have the power to stop the world’s most acute human crisis.” ([actionnetwork.org](https://www.actionnetwork.org))

What does Biden’s announcement mean for Yemen and for other countries in the Pentagon’s crosshairs, who are struggling to survive U.S. economic strangulation via sanctions?

Biden seems anxious to change the perception of its role in the war in Yemen and disguise Washington’s strategy of using the reactionary Saudi monarchy to counter and attack the Iranian government. A look behind this maneuvering should ensure that no section of the antiwar movement, despite

enthusiastic media and congressional applause, is taken in by Biden's announcement.

Washington led the war

According to the Feb. 5 NY Times, "When Saudi F-15 warplanes took off from an air base in southern Saudi Arabia for a bombing run over Yemen, it was not just a plane and bombs that were American. American mechanics serviced the jet and carried out repairs on the ground. American technicians upgraded the targeting software and other classified technology, which Saudis were not allowed to touch. The pilot was likely to have been trained by the United States Air Force.

At a flight operations room in the capital, Riyadh, Saudi commanders sat near American military officials who provided intelligence and tactical advice, mainly aimed at stopping the Saudis from killing Yemeni civilians.

So, in reality the U.S. military directly collaborated in the many horrendous massacres Saudi Arabia's armed forces committed during its ongoing war in Yemen. Every bombing run used targeting software, intelligence and tactical advice, which the Saudis were not even allowed to "touch."

The attacks included the publicized and universally condemned bombings of schools, school buses, hospitals, U.N. Aid Agencies and wedding parties. The bombing of Yemen's civilian centers led to a cholera epidemic and famine.

Biden's announcement of U.S. support for the war in Yemen positions U.S. imperialism for continuing the war with protracted rounds of "negotiations." Taking part in these negotiations would be Washington's client regime in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf monarchies who backed this criminal war all along.

Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution broke a major pillar of U.S. domination of the region, only Saudi Arabia and Israel remain to uphold U.S. corporate power. Despite differences in how to proceed, Biden has no intention in letting U.S. support for the brutal Saudi regime slip.

Yemen – a strategic crossroads

Saudi Arabia's neighbor Yemen has a strategic location on the Bab el-Mandeb, the narrow strait linking the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Ships carrying fossil fuels must pass this choke point between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula to travel between the Persian/Arabian Gulf and the

Mediterranean Sea through the Suez Canal to the SUMED pipeline. (tinyurl.com/y5zlnutr)

Both Washington strategists and the totally corrupt Saudi royal family live in fear that a Yemeni government based on a popular nationalist movement could threaten Bab el-Mandeb and their domination.

Despite six years of relentless bombing, use of antipersonnel bombs, U.S. naval blockade, economic sanctions and drone attacks, the U.S.-Saudi alliance has utterly failed to defeat the popularly based Ansarullah movement, also called the Houthis. As the Feb. 5 NY Times noted, "about 80% of Yemen's population of 30 million people live in areas under Houthi control."

The Ansarullah movement

The Ansarullah movement manages to administer a large area of Yemen, including the capital city, Sana'a and most population centers. The movement has grown and matured, from a radical uprising that began in northern Yemen against corruption, through numerous alliances, into a national insurrection demanding economic development and a democratic and nonsectarian government.

In the 1990s, a mass resistance movement for change arose in opposition to Saudi Arabia's intentionally divisive, sectarian influence in the region. Yemen has both Sunni and Shia Muslim population.

Ansarullah was led by a political, religious leader, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, a member of Yemen's Zaidi Shias, who make up about one-third of the population. Western forces named the movement after this leader, calling it the Houthis. Al-Houthi's 2004 death did not lead to the movement's defeat; his brother, Abdul Malik, remains a leader.

This radical uprising, originally based in the Shia Muslim community of Yemen, gained broad support from the Sunni Muslim population. People saw Ansarullah as a popularly based movement against corruption and feudal reaction.

In 2014, national anger erupted over an International Monetary Fund demand on the Yemeni government to implement an austerity plan and remove fuel subsidies, which raised the prices of food, water and mass transit. Mass protests overwhelmed the government in September 2014. The ranks of the military refused to act against the popular movement.

SANCTIONS KILL

In January 2015, a shaky coalition government collapsed when faced with the popular demand for a new constitution. A Revolutionary Council was declared. Then a National Salvation Government was more firmly established.

In this period the two sides of the war in Yemen were formed. On one side, the Saudis, the monarchies and U.S. imperialism backed the unpopular regime headed by Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. In the U.S., British and EU media, this grouping was called the “internationally recognized government.” The “Republic of Yemen Government” had its base in Saudi Arabia.

The ROYG is unable to govern any area of Yemen or hold any territory securely. Its rotating cabinet has had numerous splits, changes and assassinations. There have been divisions between northern Yemeni commanders and the South Yemen Southern Transitional Force, who hold the port of Aden and have shifted alliances back and forth. Fighters aligned with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Islamic State group, who have often received U.S. and Saudi support in Syria and Iraq, have now moved into areas of South Yemen.

In an effort to prop up and give legitimacy to the Hadi “government in exile,” multiparty negotiations were held in Stockholm, Sweden, and Geneva, Switzerland.

Arrogant miscalculations

On March 25, 2015, Saudi Arabia announced the beginning of military operations in Yemen to restore the overthrown Hadi government. The Saudi-U.S. strategists expected the operation to win quickly, lasting one month at most.

A war coalition of more than 10 countries was hastily cobbled together by Saudi Arabia with full U.S. support. It included the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Pakistan, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan and Jordan.

Two years into the quagmire, this reactionary coalition of monarchies and military dictatorships completely collapsed amid competing interests, infighting, backing different forces in Yemen and suffering humiliating defeats. Country after country withdrew their military forces.

The war has turned into a disaster for Saudi Arabia and the U.S. They are hopelessly bogged down in an unwinnable war and faced with a dilemma.

Airstrikes alone are incapable of defeating the Ansarullah armed insurrectionary movement. Sending ground troops into the north Yemeni highlands could lead to mutiny and collapse of the Saudi military. On the other

hand, a complete Saudi withdrawal and victory of a radical uprising on the Saudi border could be a dangerous humiliation and highly contagious.

In September 2019, missiles struck Saudi Arabia's eastern oil fields of Abqaiq and Khurais, disrupting nearly half of Saudi oil production. The resistance movement openly claimed responsibility. Saudi Arabia and Washington refuse to acknowledge Ansarullah's capacity to strike such a devastating blow. Instead, they have accused Iran of carrying out the attacks.

And they blame Iran for supporting the Ansarullah insurrection, although Yemen is under complete naval blockade and has no common border with Iran.

Lessons of Syria and Afghanistan

Washington during the Obama/Biden Administration played a similar role in Syria. In 2011, a small uprising instigated by Washington received immediate support.

There was great confidence that the Syrian government would not survive a month. A complete collapse was predicted. U.S. imperialist allies and corrupt Gulf monarchies signed on to an all-out effort to pull the Assad government down. Negotiations involving an appointed government in exile took place for years in London, Geneva, Paris.

The Syrian people rallied to oppose this imperialist takeover. More than 100,000 well-armed and financed mercenary and reactionary fighters were imported into Syria. From 2014, U.S. bombardment and U.S. bases and U.S. sanctions have continued the efforts. During the entire war, Washington's politicians and other imperialist forces have claimed they are seeking a peace accord.

In Afghanistan where U.S. war has ground on for 20 years, at every step the U.S. has promised a withdrawal — as soon as a stable government is in place or a negotiated peace agreement.

Washington's involvement in negotiations has never meant an end to war. It is just another form of continuing the war.

Yemen's Response to Biden

“We consider any move that does not end the siege and aggression against Yemen as just a formality and do not pay any attention to it,” Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, a member of Yemen's Supreme Political Council said in a post

published on his official Twitter page early on Feb. 6.

The U.S. decision to end its involvement [in the war] and command of the aggressor states is not enough. . . . Washington's allies must also commit themselves to compensate victims, enact a package of measures to guarantee the sovereignty of Yemen, recognize its independence and legitimate right to self-defense, and consider any military action either by Arab or foreign states as a criminal act.

Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, another member of Yemen's Supreme Political Council, told Al Mayadeen TV news on Feb. 5 that "The war in Yemen ends once all airstrikes stop and foreign forces leave the country. . . . The United States may reduce its support for aggressor states without stopping it altogether."

Saudi Arabia – new U.S. bases

U.S. Navy Capt. Bill Urban, a spokesman for Central Command, said U.S. evaluation of a Red Sea port in Saudi Arabia and an additional two airfields began following the 2019 missile attack against the state-owned Saudi Aramco oil processing facilities at Abqaiq, which was blamed on Iran.

Currently, some 2,500 American soldiers maintain fighter jets and Patriot missile batteries at Prince Sultan Air Base southeast of Riyadh. Saudi Arabia and the U.S. have continued joint military exercises in a show of force over the past six weeks.

Biden said the purpose of his Feb. 4 remarks was to "send a clear message to the world: America is back" and that Washington will continue to help Saudi Arabia defend its sovereignty and territory.

This may well mean far greater involvement, not less.

International Action Center, February 2021

Solidarity on Ending Illegal Sanctions on Zimbabwe

by Amadi Ajamu

On Aug. 18, the 39th Southern African Development Community Summit of the Heads of State and Government held in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, declared Oct. 25, A Day of Solidarity to Lift the Illegal Sanctions Imposed on Zimbabwe. The 16-member states of SADC have resolved to conduct actions in their countries to vigorously work toward that objective.

The SADC Secretariat is reaching out to the African Union chairperson, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, to push the African Union to support the anti-sanctions issue and for it to be discussed at the 74th United Nations General Assembly in September. As Executive Director Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax stated at the summit:

The embargo is militating against economic growth in both Zimbabwe and the region.

Omowale Clay, spokesman of the December 12th International Secretariat based in New York, told this reporter,

We are clear that this powerful show of solidarity and action by SADC helps to expose the lie that sanctions on Zimbabwe only targeted individuals rather than their real purpose to crash their economy in the hopes of fostering 'regime change'.

These sanctions have challenged the economic growth of Zimbabwe by cutting off its foreign trade, and as a result, created a shortage of foreign currency which compromises government's ability to acquire life-sustaining necessities such as medicines, water purification equipment, heavy industrial equipment, fuel and many other necessities — sanctions kill!

Clay went on to say,

After the fight for independence from the British (Rhodesian) colonizers in 1980, over 80 percent of the arable land was still held by settlers who were less than 5 percent of the population. In 1998, Zimbabwe enacted its land reform program and the land was finally returned to indigenous Zimbabweans who fought and died for it.

The ZDERA [Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act] sanctions implemented by the U.S. violate international laws protecting national sovereignty. ZDERA falsely states that the small, landlocked nation of Zimbabwe is a ‘threat to the national security of the United States.’ The U.S. sanctions must end now. It is a matter of life and death.

This bold and united action by SADC on Oct. 25 will help mobilize Africa and the Pan-African community against the criminal intent of sanctions — a Western weapon against the self-determination of developing countries and further expose Western efforts at recolonization,” Clay concluded.

Incoming SADC Chair, Tanzanian President Dr. John Magufuli, stated in his closing remarks to the summit,

We are all aware, this brotherly and sisterly country has been on sanctions for a long time. These sanctions have not only affected the people of Zimbabwe and their government but our entire region. (thezimbabwedaily.com, Aug. 17)

On Sept. 21, the December 12th Movement will lead a march and rally at 12 noon to End the Sanctions in Zimbabwe at the 74th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in Dag Hammarskjold Plaza on 47th Street and First Avenue in New York City.

All 193 member states of the United Nations are represented in this unique forum to discuss and work together on international issues covered by the U.N. Charter, such as development, peace and security, international law, etc.

UNAC Blog/End the Wars at Home and Abroad, August 2019

Famine in Africa: The Role of Sanctions

by Greg Dunkel

Chad, in the middle of Africa, is a landlocked country with 16 million people. It is one of the three poorest countries in the world according to the U.N., with the lowest life expectancy (54 years).

With nearly half a million refugees living within its borders, Chad passed a 2021 law granting all these refugees the right to work, to move freely in the country and to access health care, education and justice. Chad was implementing its pledge at the Global Refugee Forum, held by the U.N. in December 2019.

As a point of comparison, the U.S. admitted slightly over 11,000 refugees in fiscal year 2021, with none of the above rights guaranteed.

Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger make up the G5 Sahel, a group which France set up in 2014 to disguise and justify its military intervention in West Africa and to hide how France intended to maintain its hold on these former colonies.

Currently, hunger in the Sahel is overshadowing the military priorities that France and its ally, the United States, want to impose there. The U.S. has set up the world's largest drone base in Niger.

Over 18 million people in the Sahel are facing starvation. A third of Chad's people are in urgent need of food aid.

The government of Chad officially declared a "food emergency" June 1. The head of the ruling Transitional Military Council, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, called on "all national and international partners to help the people" and cited "constant deterioration of the food and nutritional situation and a growing risk" of food scarcity.¹

The big business press in the European Union, the U.S. and England tries to

present the growing threat of an African famine — defined as people other than infants dying from hunger — as resulting solely from Russia’s actions in the Ukraine conflict. The African press points instead to the effects of local insurgencies, the devastating drought, reinforced by global warming, and COVID-19.

The U.N.’s Food and Agriculture Organization has held to its position that global production of wheat will be slightly higher in 2022 than last year. The majority of the traditional wheat supply for West and North Africa comes from Ukraine and Russia. This trade has been seriously disrupted by the war. The question is who is behind the disruption.

Leaders of African Union meet with Putin

At a high-level meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 3 were Macky Sall, chair of the African Union and president of Senegal, along with Moussa Faki Mahamat, chair of the AU Commission, a former prime minister of Chad.

Sall and Mahamat both appealed to Putin to release the Ukrainian grain that is held up by a blockade Russia has established on Ukraine’s Black Sea ports. Mahamat released a tweet saying:

We appealed for the suspension of sanctions against cereals & other key commodities, the need for their safe sea passage to mitigate the devastating economic & socio-economic effects of a growing food & energy crisis.

“President Putin has expressed to us his willingness to facilitate the export of Ukrainian cereals,” Sall tweeted. He added, “Russia was also ready to ensure the export of its own wheat and fertilizer.”

However, Russia lifting its blockade, which Putin appears willing to do, will not by itself get the grain-loaded ships moving out of Ukrainian ports. The government of Ukraine would still need to give permission for the ships to sail, and that same government would have to remove the mines it has placed to block ship movement on its southern coast.

The most deadly factor working against African Union appeals for help against the famine is the fact that the U.S. has actually placed sanctions on Russia to keep it from shipping the wheat and fertilizer it normally supplies to West Africa. The U.S. is charging Russia with stealing “Ukrainian” grain, even

though the ownership status of the millions of tons of grain stored in southern and eastern Ukraine is unclear.

The U.S. and European bourgeoisie — who are cooperating to a degree in the sanctions directed against Russia — pretend that the impact of sanctions is limited to Russia alone. But many countries throughout the world are severely injured by the imposition of U.S. sanctions, including those against Russia.

The millions facing a shortage of wheat and starvation in Chad are among those suffering. In the current proxy war by the U.S., these millions are simply “collateral damage” in its drive for economic and military domination. If the food needed to avert famine starts to flow from Russia to West Africa, the U.S. campaign against Russia will lose a big propaganda point.

Workers World, June 2022

Endnotes

1. Africa News, June 3, <https://www.africanews.com/>

Venezuela Seeks Investigation by International Criminal Court (ICC) as to Whether U.S. Sanctions Constitute Crimes Against Humanity

By Ryan Swan

Economic coercive measures, commonly known as economic sanctions, are a means of coercive pressure through disruption of trade relations and economic isolation. The use of sanctions under international law is governed chiefly by Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, providing that the Security Council may decide to enact a “complete or partial interruption of economic relations” in order to restore international peace and security.

Measures not authorized by the Security Council, or “unilateral coercive measures” (UCM), have become an increasingly common coercive tactic of the United States, which presently imposes sanctions on approximately one-third of the global population.

Since 2010, the United States has also been enforcing select secondary sanctions¹ against international actors that maintain economic relations with sanctioned states. The adverse effects of these measures on civilian populations of targeted countries—“especially severe for vulnerable groups,” including “women and children”—have been repeatedly and unequivocally documented.²

Issues surrounding the legality of UCM have largely centered around the question of compatibility with the United Nations Charter. One primary concern has been the claimed illegitimacy of sanctions measures not authorized in multilateral fashion by the Security Council. Others³ allude to the problems raised by UCM in both the context of state sovereignty (principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states) and international humanitarian law (right to life, health and medical care set forth in the International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

The United Nations General Assembly has also voiced regular concerns about UCM. A resolution⁴ overwhelmingly passed 29 years in a row calling for the cessation of the United States's "economic blockade" on Cuba is illustrative.

On February 13, 2020, the government of Venezuela submitted a referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC) requesting an investigation into another possible legal frailty of the United States UCM—namely, whether such measures can constitute crimes against humanity pursuant to Article 7 of the Rome Statute.⁵ As recourse to economic warfare ramps up further amidst an intensifying new Cold War, pressure mounts surrounding the Court's eventual decision.

Case Background

Venezuela has a population of more than 28 million. Since the 1930s, it has been a significant oil-producing state and is considered to preside over the world's largest oil reserves.⁶

Under President Hugo Chávez (1998-2013), a new national constitution⁷ was adopted which provided for the use of national oil revenues to improve social conditions. The United States responded to this shift in policy with an attempted, but ultimately foiled, coup d'état⁸ in 2002. Despite hostile relations with the United States and a series of anti-terrorism and anti-drug trafficking-related sanctions, the Chávez social programs achieved impressive results⁹ in improving the standard of living for the Venezuelan population. Poverty and unemployment rates dropped markedly and education standards and literacy rates steadily increased.

Following the death of President Chávez and the election of Nicolás Maduro, the United States intensified its economic coercion. In March 2015, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13692,¹⁰ declaring Venezuela an "unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" and providing for the blocking of Venezuelan assets.

The Trump administration ramped up the financial pressure with Executive Order 13808¹¹ in August 2017, denying the Venezuelan government, including the state-owned oil company, PDVSA, access to United States financial markets. Executive Orders 13827¹² and 13835¹³ followed in spring 2018, prohibiting transactions involving the Venezuelan government's issuance of digital currency

and transactions related to the purchase of Venezuelan debt, respectively.

President Trump issued Executive Order 13850¹⁴ in November 2018 setting forth a framework to block the assets of, and restrict certain transactions with, any person deemed by the Treasury Department to be engaging in transactions with the Venezuelan government that advance its “corrupt purposes.” In January 2019, the United States, in a display of open contempt for democracy, ceased to recognize the government of President Maduro, instead acknowledging¹⁵ Juan Guaidó as interim President.

Strangulation of the Venezuelan economy escalated further in August 2019 with Executive Order 13884,¹⁶ freezing property interests of the Venezuelan government in the United States, prohibiting U.S. citizens from engaging in transactions with the Venezuelan government and authorizing financial sanctions and visa restrictions on non-U.S. citizens who assist or support the Venezuelan government.

Effect of United States UCM

All of the above-enumerated measures were enacted unilaterally by the United States government and have had a catastrophic impact on the Venezuelan economy,¹⁷ which has in turn precipitated a humanitarian crisis for the Venezuelan population.

In February 2021, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures, Elena Douhan, released preliminary findings¹⁸ on the impact of United States UCM on the enjoyment of basic human rights in Venezuela. Ms. Douhan notes¹⁹ that, before the imposition of UCM, Venezuela was committing 76% of its national oil revenues to the advancement of social programs. As a result of the monumental UCM-related drop in oil revenue (e.g., from \$42 billion in 2013 to just \$4 billion in 2018), the government is now unable to commit even one percent to the social programs.

The loss of these resources has led to a “devastating impact on the whole population of Venezuela” with basic human rights directly affected. These include the:

- Right to food—more than 50% of food consumption has been impacted by United States UCM, which led to one-third of the Venezuelan population becoming acutely food insecure;
- Right to water—water-related services have been significantly disrupted by United States UCM such that the average Venezuelan household has access to running water for only a couple of hours

sporadically throughout a given week;

- Right to health—access to quality healthcare has been significantly disrupted by United States UCM, resulting in extreme shortages of medical staff and equipment; maternal and infant mortality rates have increased, as well as mortality rates from various diseases; and
- Right to education—United States UCM have resulted in a massive decrease in government funding for education, frustrating the ability of schools to procure staff and basic necessities, including meals for students; the situation has been further exacerbated by regular electrical and internet outages.

The severely beleaguered financial condition of the Venezuelan government has also inhibited its ability to provide basic health services amid the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to its unwillingness to unfreeze Venezuelan assets to enable the purchase of Covid vaccines, the United States has also declined²⁰ to donate vaccinations to Venezuela, citing concerns over a lack of Venezuelan “transparency.”

Claim

The Venezuelan referral²¹ claims that United States UCM constitute crimes against humanity under Article 7 of the Rome Statute. Specifically, the claim asserts that the United States UCM represent a widespread or systematic attack directed against the civilian population of Venezuela; that this effect is known to the United States; and that these UCM manifest themselves in punishable acts enumerated in Article 7—in particular, murder (Art. 7(1)(a)), extermination (Art. 7(1)(b)), deportation (Art. 7(1)(d)), persecution (Art. 7(1)(h)), and other inhumane acts (Art. 7(1)(k)).

The referral is novel in multiple respects. First, UCM have not previously been challenged on grounds that they violate international criminal law. Claims abound that UCM are inconsistent with the United Nations Charter, with principles of state sovereignty and with international humanitarian law, but their possible criminality has not been investigated.

Second, the ICC has not previously investigated a case alleging crimes against humanity emanating from policies enacted in one state, but executed on the territory of another. The referral advances the argument that it is accepted in ICC case law that “non-state actors” can commit crimes against humanity even where they do not control the territory in which they are operating. As such, there is no principled reason why “states” cannot commit crimes against humanity in territory which they do not control—i.e., the United States can

commit crimes against humanity on the territory of Venezuela.

Third, the referral also raises a jurisdictional oddity. While Article 12 of the Rome Statute clearly provides jurisdiction over qualifying crimes committed on the territory of a member state party, the question arises where precisely the alleged crimes against humanity flowing from United States UCM occur. The referral acknowledges that the actual decisions to impose the UCM in question occurred outside the territory of Venezuela, but argues that the clear intent of the decisions was to have effects within its territory. Thus, the question of whether the ICC can exercise territorial jurisdiction over actions by a non-Rome Statute member state directed against the territory of a Rome Statute member state must be addressed by the Court and further raises the stakes in connection with potential implications of the referral.

Assessment of Venezuela's Challenge

In addition to raising serious international legal concerns under, *inter alia*, the United Nations Charter and international humanitarian law, UCM cause significant and well-documented suffering among innocent civilian populations and are ripe for investigation under international criminal law.

The Venezuelan referral advances sound arguments that United States UCM can constitute crimes against humanity. It appears unequivocal that the United States imposes these measures, which appear to satisfy the criteria set forth in Article 7 of the Rome Statute, knowing full well their effects on the Venezuelan population.

Despite calls²² for the investigation of others when politically expedient, the United States has hidden itself behind its non-party status to the Rome Statute to avoid investigation of its own actions and has a history of unprecedented hostility toward the ICC.

In 2002, the United States enacted the American Servicemembers Protection Act²³ “to protect United States military personnel and other elected and appointed officials...against criminal prosecution by an international criminal court to which the United States is not party.” The Act authorizes the president to use “all means necessary and appropriate”—including conceivably force—to bring about the release of United States personnel detained by the ICC.

In June 2020, President Trump issued Executive Order 13928,²⁴ taking the extraordinary step of declaring the Court's pending investigation into United States crimes in Afghanistan an “unusual and extraordinary threat to the national

security and foreign policy of the United States” and authorizing the freezing of assets of ICC personnel and placement of restrictions on their ability to travel to the United States.

The ICC has displayed a distinct wariness of confrontation with the United States, giving rise to credible concerns surrounding its impartiality. Upon taking office in 2021, the new Chief Prosecutor, Karim Khan, immediately brought controversy and renewed doubts of credibility²⁵ on the Court with his arbitrary decision to “deprioritize” inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by United States military and intelligence personnel in Afghanistan under the Bush administration and to, instead, focus selectively on infractions of the Taliban.

The Court may well be tempted to skirt Venezuela’s requested investigation of the United States on technical jurisdictional grounds, but yet another dismissal of a sound case against the United States, all the while vigorously launching²⁶ a new probe into Russian crimes in Ukraine, could further tarnish the ICC’s already suspect reputation.

Though the referral has unsurprisingly received little coverage in the United States, the stakes are indeed high. A decision to exercise jurisdiction and to proceed with investigation would set an unwelcome precedent for the United States—even if the chances of U.S. leaders actually standing trial is all but non-existent.

An investigation, and ultimate finding, by the ICC would cast concrete doubt on already dubious United States UCM and could possibly prompt a United Nations General Assembly request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the broader legality of UCM. At a time when its economic coercive tactics are coming to seriously jeopardize the global economy—and, accordingly, raise critical eyebrows around the world—the United States can ill afford an adverse ICC ruling. For the ICC, on the other hand, the referral presents an opportunity to show its courage and prove its impartial commitment to global justice.

CovertAction Magazine, April 2022

Endnotes

1. Sanctions by the Numbers: U.S. Secondary Sanctions, <https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/sanctions-by-the-numbers-u-s-secondary-sanctions>

2. *Unilateral sanctions particularly harmful to women, children, other vulnerable groups*, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/12/1107492>
3. *Unilateral Sanctions and International Law*, <https://popularresistance.org/alfred-dezayas-human-rights-corner/>
4. *UN General Assembly calls for US to end Cuba embargo for 29th consecutive year*, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094612>
5. *The Rome Statute of the International Court*, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/RS-Eng.pdf>
6. *Top ten countries with the world's largest oil reserves in 2019*, <https://www.nsenergybusiness.com/features/newstop-ten-countries-with-worlds-largest-oil-reserves-5793487/>
7. *Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic)'s Constitution of 1999 with Amendments through 2009*, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Venezuela_2009.pdf
8. *Venezuela Coup Linked to Bush Team*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/apr/21/usa.venezuela>
9. *How did Venezuela Change under Hugo Chavez?* <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/oct/04/venezuela-hugo-chavez-election-data>
10. *Title 3, The President*, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2016-title3-vol1/pdf/CFR-2016-title3-vol1-eo13692.pdf>
11. *Authorizing Transactions Related to Dealings in Certain Securities*, https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/venezuela_gl9e.pdf
12. *Executive Order 13827—Taking Additional Steps To Address the Situation in Venezuela*, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/DCPD-201800171/pdf/DCPD-201800171.pdf>
13. *Prohibiting Certain Additional Transactions With Respect to Venezuela*, https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/venezuela_eo_13835.pdf
14. *Blocking Property of Additional Persons Contributing to the Situation in Venezuela*, https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/venezuela_eo_13850.pdf
15. *Recognition of Juan Guaido as Venezuela's Interim President*, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/recognition-of-juan-guaido-as-venezuelas-interim-president/index.html>
16. *Blocking Property of the Government of Venezuela*, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/08/07/2019-17052/blocking-property-of-the-government-of-venezuela>
17. *The Impact of Financial and Oil Sanctions on the Venezuelan Economy*, <https://www.wola.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Oliveros-report-summary-ENG.pdf>
18. *Preliminary findings of the visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights*, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2021/02/preliminary-findings-visit-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-special-rapporteur?LangID=E&NewsID=26747>
19. *UN expert details crushing human toll of US sanctions on Venezuela*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INzVRiN_ga8&t=3s
20. *US will not donate COVID vaccines to Venezuela*, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/us-will-not-donate-covid-vaccines-to-venezuela/2263435>
21. *Venezuela II*, <https://www.aba-icc.org/situations/venezuela-ii/>

VENEZUELA SEEKS INVESTIGATION BY ICC

22. *U.S. lawmakers join calls for war crimes probe of Russia*, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-lawmakers-join-calls-war-crimes-probe-russia-2022-03-02/>
23. *22 U.S. Code Subchapter II - AMERICAN SERVICEMEMBERS' PROTECTION*, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/22/chapter-81/subchapter-II>
24. *Blocking Property of Certain Persons Associated With the International Criminal Court*, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/06/15/2020-12953/blocking-property-of-certain-persons-associated-with-the-international-criminal-court>
25. *EUIdeas: Evidence-driven contributions on social, political, legal, and economic issues*, <https://euideas.eui.eu/2021/10/11/pragmatism-and-power-at-the-icc-us-crimes-not-a-priority/>
26. *ICC to begin investigation into possible war crimes in Ukraine*, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/2/icc-to-begin-investigation-into-possible-war-crimes-in-ukraine>

Venezuelan Diplomat Alex Saab Imprisoned for Circumventing US Sanctions

by Roger D. Harris

Some people are behind bars for doing something wrong. Alex Saab is imprisoned for doing something right. A year ago, October 16, the long arm of US extra-territorial judicial overreach abducted Alex Saab and threw him into prison in Miami, where he has languished ever since.

The official US narrative is that Saab had bilked the Venezuelans in a “vast corruption network” and the US as the world’s self-appointed cop was simply enforcing virtuous business practices. However, commentary by Washington insiders corroborates that Saab’s real “crime” was trying to obtain humanitarian supplies in legal international trade but in circumvention of the illegal US sanctions on Venezuela.

Cabo Verde captivity

Back on June 12, 2020, Mr. Saab was on a humanitarian mission to procure needed food, fuel, and medicine for the people of Venezuela who had been suffering from an unconscionable blockade of their country. The US had imposed unilateral coercive measures – a form of collective punishment and illegal under international law – on Venezuela explicitly to make conditions so unbearable that the people would turn against their democratically elected government, which had fallen into disfavor with Washington.

Alex Saab’s flight from Caracas to Tehran was diverted to Cabo Verde off the coast of west Africa for a fuel stop. He was seized and has been imprisoned ever since.

Not only had the US-initiated Interpol “red alert” warrant been issued a day after the arrest, but as a credentialed special envoy and deputy ambassador to the African Union, Mr. Saab had protection from apprehension. Under the Vienna

Convention on Diplomatic Relations, he was supposed to be immune from arrest and detention, even in the time of war. The US is a party to the Vienna Convention.

Alex Saab was imprisoned under squalid conditions, including torture. Cabo Verde, under pressure from the US, twice disregarded orders from the regional Economic Community of West African States Court of Justice to free the diplomat, even though it was supposedly bound by the court's jurisdiction. Likewise, appeals from the United Nations Committee on Human Rights to free him were ignored.

Then a year ago, the diplomat was again kidnapped from where he was held captive and flown to Miami, without notifying his legal team or family. Cabo Verde did not have an extradition treaty with the US and Alex Saab had not exhausted his legal appeals to the country's courts.

While the US initially charged Mr. Saab with seven counts of money laundering, these were dropped. Switzerland, where the crime was allegedly perpetrated, found no evidence of wrongdoing after an exhaustive three-year investigation. The nebulous and hard to disprove "conspiracy" to money launder is the one remaining charge.

Washington insiders reveal the back story on the US prosecution of Saab

Speakers at a forum held six months before Saab was abducted to the US revealed why the diplomat was such a high value target. Michael Nadler, a former US federal prosecutor with the Department of Justice who had signed the July 2019 indictment in the Saab case, told the forum: "I would tell you at the beginning, we didn't have any idea just how big Alex Saab was going to become and has become."

In a clear admission that the US was behind Saab's detention in Cabo Verde, Nadler recalled: "Alex Saab's flight to Iran was a last-minute discovery. And a lot of pieces fell into place perfectly to be able to stop him and have him arrested."

Ryan Berg, the other main speaker at the forum, is a specialist on Latin America with the rightwing American Enterprise Institute. He explained why the US targeted Alex Saab: "The strong US interest in his extradition from Cape Verde to the US is that he knows a lot." Berg elaborated: "He's involved in a lot of these transactions to skirt US sanctions and US sanctions architecture. And therefore, the US has a strong interest in him because of everything that he

knows.”

Role of sanctions in the US hybrid war against Venezuela

In short, Saab facilitated the “Maduro regime’s attempts to circumvent US sanctions,” according to no more authoritative source than former US Treasury Secretary Mnuchin. Further, Saab had close working relations with Russia, Iran, and China, which are states, Nadler acknowledged, that “... remain critical in their support for the [Venezuela] regime as well as their ability to skirt US sanctions.”

The sanctions are a form of hybrid warfare. Nadler explained how this warfare is conducted:

Most banks have correspondent relationships because they do deal in dollars and then they send money throughout the world. Even if you have a local bank in Columbia, what they will essentially do if you become a designated or sanctioned individual is they will cut you a check for the full amount in your bank account, but you'll never be able to cash that check because almost now every bank or financial institution in the world is connected to the US financial institution. And nobody wants to risk being sanctioned because the sanctions can be significant based on each and every dollar transaction or each and every financial transaction that's conducted.

Nadler continued on the impact of US sanctions: “Many actors in the region consider and quite frankly fear, the unilateral or asymmetric ability of the US government to sanction them...something that's seriously circumscribes their ability to maneuver. And so, it is something that...a country like Venezuela fear[s].”

He concluded that sanctions are “...the main tool of the US government in bringing pressure against the Maduro regime,” which is why Saab has been so central.” Sanctions, he spelled out, are “the primary driver or the primary tool of the US government to limit the room for operations from the Venezuelan regime.”

Alex Saab – the jewel of negotiations with the US

The US is now negotiating with Venezuela through backdoor channels over easing oil sanctions and possibly prisoner exchanges. According to the opposition aligned El Diario de las Americas: “Alex Saab is the jewel of negotiations with the US.”

ALEX SAAB IMPRISONED BY U.S.

Former US Defense Secretary Mark Esper wrote that Saab is a key asset: “It was important to get custody of him. This could provide a real roadmap for the US government to unravel the Venezuelan government’s illicit plans and bring them to justice.”

Prisoner-exchange negotiations between the US and Venezuela have been taking place behind the scenes. Although freeing political prisoner Alex Saab is a national priority for Venezuela and a key point in its negotiations with the US, he was not included in an exchange, which took place on October 1.

Saab’s trial begins in Miami in December, where he will argue that as a diplomat he ought to be freed. And as a person who brought humanitarian aid to Venezuela at a time of extreme need, he must be freed. As his wife Camila Fabri Saab explains: “The kidnapping of Alex Saab is part of an attack against Venezuela and seeks to teach a lesson against anyone who has the courage to defend their country’s sovereignty.”

International Action Center, December 2022

Sanctions in Gaza

by Pippa Bartolotti

The hardships in Gaza are well known, but the human implications of the blockade are rarely documented in the Western press. This is because the interests of Israel, the U.S. and other nations supporting these sanctions would not be well served by the truth.

Let us be clear, these are Israel's sanctions imposed as an occupying power, but this form of collective punishment upon an already impoverished civilian population is heavily backed by the U.S. through unstinting political support and billions of dollars in economic and military aid sent annually from the U.S. to the Israeli government.

Gaza is a distinct area of isolated land bordering the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Egypt to the south, and Israel to the east and north. It is roughly the size of Detroit. Most entry points are permanently closed, and it is almost impossible for residents to leave. Lord Patten, former chair of the British Conservative Party, said Gaza was “an open-air prison encircled by an apartheid wall.”

But it is worse than that. I have been there. Gaza City, with 4,000 years of torrid history behind it, is home to about half a million people. In the saturation bombing of Gaza City by Israel in 2008/9, more than half the city was utterly destroyed. An estimated 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis died in the conflict. The net result is dire overcrowding in the buildings left standing. Rebuilding is impossible as building materials are banned.

The sanctions imposed on the people living on this small strip of land are cruel and inhumane, as are all sanctions designed to bring an entire people to its knees for the sake of political disruption. Among the many hundreds of items banned from Gaza are coriander, sewing thread, spare parts for tractors, fishing rods, steel and concrete, some medicines as well as paper, pens and chocolate.

I brought a couple of bars of chocolate with me when I eventually made it through the Rafah Gate, and one of the most moving sights I have seen in my life was that of a woman slowly unwrapping the chocolate and holding it to her mouth. She didn't eat it, she just smelt it, and savored the thought of it, and put it in quietly in her bag. She had not tasted chocolate for more than 20 years.

Sanctions cause hygiene and food problems

Due to the banning of building materials, Gaza has never been able to rebuild its sewerage plant, which was bombed to smithereens in 2009. I experienced the raw sewerage of some 2 million people gushing untreated into the Mediterranean Sea.

This is not just a hygiene problem; it is a food supply problem as well. Gaza fishermen in their little boats are constantly being harassed and shot at by Israeli warships. Forced back from their legal fishing zone of 20 nautical miles (Oslo Accords) to just a few hundred yards from shore means they have to fish in virtually undiluted sewerage. Fresh fish is one of the few sources of protein for Gazans as meat, lentils, seeds and nuts are banned.

The World Bank estimated in 2015 that [Gaza's gross domestic product] losses caused by the blockade since 2007 were above 50 percent and entailed large welfare losses. Gaza's manufacturing sector, once significant, shrunk by as much as 60 percent in real terms due to the wars in the past 20 years and the blockade.

Gaza's exports have virtually disappeared since the imposition of the 2007 blockade. The World Bank stated that "solutions have to be found to enable faster inflow of construction materials into Gaza," while taking into account "legitimate security concerns of neighboring countries."

Three out of four people in Gaza are refugees. Unsafe drinking water has led to a worsening health crisis. Gazan children suffer from diarrhea, kidney disease, stunted growth and impaired IQ. Twenty years ago, 85 percent of Gaza's drinking wells were too contaminated for human consumption. Today, that figure is 97 percent.

The underground aquifer was never going to be enough to supply the quadrupling of the population when refugees flooded into Gaza in 1948 in fear for their lives. The water now is basically poison.

Food, fuel and water are meted out by the Israeli government as they see fit.

SANCTIONS KILL

An Israeli official has stated that the objective of these sanctions is to “put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger.”

When I was there, the fuel had run out, and there was certainly not enough food for visitors. I was given a small bottle of water. I had the feeling that this generosity would lead to someone else going without.

Power off 20 hours a day

The power is shut off for 20 hours a day, sometimes more. With daily armed drone patrols overhead, gunboat patrols in the sea and a fortified land border where indiscriminate shootings of children, donkeys and old people are a weekly occurrence, daily life in Gaza is an unimaginable torment. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights keep an account of the weekly death toll. These are rarely reported in the world press as they conflict with Western propaganda efforts.

Sanctions affect the health of all, but children suffer most. Undernourished, traumatized by constant bombings and with death and destruction a daily event, they will grow up in deformity, despair and hopelessness. They will also know who the perpetrators of their misery are.

There is broad consensus among human rights organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as U.N. offices such as the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), that the siege of Gaza is illegal and exists in flagrant disregard for the democratically elected government of Gaza.

The most important thing to recognize about sanctions is that they don't work. Worse, they are counterproductive in that they manufacture the conditions for hate and revenge. This is a psychological cost which no side can afford if normalized relations are the ultimate goal.

International Action Center, February 2020

Section III

Campaigns Against Sanctions

Founding Statement for Sanctions Kill Campaign

The original 2019 Call to Action (below) was translated into 18 languages and spread throughout the globe by organizations and individuals. Thousands, including the partial listing at the end of the Call, endorsed.

Sanctions are imposed by the United States and its junior partners against countries that resist their agendas. They are a weapon of Economic War, resulting in chronic shortages of basic necessities, economic dislocation, chaotic hyperinflation, artificial famines, disease, and poverty. In every country, the poorest and the weakest – infants, children, the chronically ill and the elderly – suffer the worst impact of sanctions.

US imposed sanctions, violate international law and are a tool of regime change. They impact a third of humanity in 39 countries. They are a crime against humanity used, like military intervention, to topple popular governments and movements. They provide economic and military support to pro-US right-wing forces.

The US economic dominance and its +800 military bases worldwide demands all other countries participate in acts of economic strangulation. They must end all normal trade relations, otherwise they risk having Wall Street's guns pointed at them. The banks and financial institutions that are responsible for the devastation of our communities at home drive the plunder of countries abroad.

Many organizations have been fighting Sanctions and Economic War for some time. NOW is an opportunity to combine efforts to raise consciousness on this crucial issue.

This broad campaign will include protests and demonstrations, lobbying, petition drives and all forms of educational efforts.

Sanctions Kill! * Sanctions are War! *** End Sanctions Now!**

Some Top Endorsers

Abdolhamid Shahrabi – House of Latin America (HOLA) – Tehran
Adela Brent – Australia Solidarity with Latin America – Australia
Ajamu Baraka – Black Alliance for Peace
Alimamy Bakarr Sankoh – People’s Democratic League (PDL) –
Sierra Leone
Akubundu Amazu – All-African People’s Revolutionary Party – San
Jose, CA
Alexandra Reyes – Accion Revolucion Ecuador NY
Al Marder – U.S. Peace Council,
Amir Mortasawi – Hands Off Iran – Germany
ANSWER Coalition – San Francisco, CA
Anti-War Western Sydney – Sydney, Australia
Angela Castelo – Accion Revolucion Ecuador
Bahman Azad – U.S. Peace Council
Bazlur Rashid Firoz – Socialist Party of Bangladesh (spb) – Dhaka,
Bangladesh
Benjamin Ramos – The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign – USA
Bill Sacks – Venceremos Brigade
CIVG (Initiative Center for Truth and Justice) – Italy
Charlotte Kates – Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
– Vancouver, BC
Chuck Kaufman – Alliance For Global Justice
Cindy Sheehan – March on the Pentagon
COLECTIVO por el derecho a la paz – Guadalajara, Mexico
Cy Gonick - Canadian Dimension – Winnipeg
Daniel Pace - DSA Anti-Imperialist Network – Oakland, CA
Ed Ortiz – Call to Action on Puerto Rico
Edgar Göll – Network Cuba – Berlin
Efia Nwangaza – Malcolm X Center for Self Determination –
Greenville, SC
Emily Thomas – IFCO Pastors for Peace
Enaam Nayouf – Banias – Syrian institution for care of widows and
orphans rights (IC.W.O.SY) – Syrian Arab Republic
Eric Omaña – Colectivo Profesores Ucevistas PROYECTO
SOCIALISTA – Caracas
Fabian Velez – Colombia Humana
Foad Izadi – Center for Peace and Justice Studies – Tehran
Frank Velgara – Ministry of Solidarity with the Peoples at Holyrood
Church
Frente Unido America Latina – Berlin, Germany
Gabriela Oakland – Oakland, CA
Gerald Hassett – Veterans For Peace NY
Gerald Horne – Author/Historian

SANCTIONS KILL

Gerry Condon – Veterans For Peace
Hands Off Venezuela Portland – Portland, OR
Ingrid Schanche – Norge for fred – Tromsø, Norway
Jack Herbert - Portland Central America Solidarity Committee
(PCASC) – Portland, OR
Jacqueline DiSalvo – US Peace Council
Jersey City Peace Movement – Jersey City
Jesse Heiwa – Queer Folx Against War
Joe Lombardo – United National Antiwar Coalition
Juyeon Rhee – Nodutdol for Korean Comm. Dev. – NYC
Kazem Azin – SI Solidarity Iran
Kevin Zeese – Popular Resistance
Larry Adams – People’s Organization for Progress
Louis Wolf – CovertAction Magazine – Washington, DC
Madeleine Klinkhamer – Hands Off Venezuela Netherlands –
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Malcolm Sacks – Venceremos Brigade – NYC
Malem Ningthouja – Campaign for Peace & Democracy (Manipur) –
Imphal, India
Manik Mukherjee – Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist) –
Kolkata, India
Manny Ness – NY Peace Council
Manuel Pardo – Frente Antiimperialista Internacionalista – Madrid
Margaret Flowers – Popular Resistance
Mark Apollo – OWS Special Projects Affinity Group – NYC
Marty Goodman – Socialist Action – NYC
Medea Benjamin – Codepink – Washington, DC
Mick Kelly – Freedom Road Socialist Organization – Minneapolis,
MN
Miguel Figueroa – Canadian Peace Congress – Toronto
Monica Moorehead – USA – Workers World Party
Monika-Margita Gottwald – Cuba Si – Gera, Germany
Nathaniel Chase – International Action Center
National Lawyers Guild
Niall Farrell – galway alliance against war – Galway, Ireland
Nina Macapinlac – International League of Peoples Struggle
Omowale Clay – December 12th Movement
오산이주노동자센터 (Osan Migrant Worker Center) – 창원 장 – 오산시
(Republic of Korea)
Pam Africa – International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia
Abu-Jamal – Philadelphia, PA
Paul Dijkstra – Worldpeace.nl – Netherlands
Peter Bautsch – Attac-AG Globalisierung und Krieg Frankfurt am
Main – Frankfurt
Peter Betscher – Arbeiterfotografie e.V – Darmstadt, GER

SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Peter Sigrist – Suiza-Cuba – Basel, Switzerland
Pippa Bartolotti – Extinction Rebellion – Albany
Radhames Morales – Ministry of Solidarity with the Peoples at Holyrood Church
Rainer Hauser – Fundación Progresá – Santiago, Chile
Raphael Agosto Miranda – NY Boricua Resistance
Rhonda Ramiro – BAYAN USA
Robert Navan – Venezuela Ireland Network – Dublin, Ireland
Roger Harris – Task Force on the Americas – Corte Madera, CA
Roland Sidler – AlbaSuiza – Biel/Bienne, Switzerland
Samuel Albert – DB Cargo AG – Weinheim, GER
Sara Flounders – International Action Center
Sergio Ortiz – Partido de la Liberación (PL) de Argentina – Córdoba, Argentina
Siu Hin Lee – National Immigrant Solidarity Network – Los Angeles
Stansfield Smith – Chicago ALBA Solidarity – Chicago
Susan Lagos – Friends of the ATC – Darlo, Nicaragua
Suzanne Adely – International Association of Democratic Lawyers
Suzanne Ross – International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal – NYC
Terri Mattson – CODEPINK
Tlaxcala Network – Tunis, Tunisia
Vincenzo Brandi – No War Roma, NO NATO LIST – Rome
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom – US (WILPF-US) – National Board

www.SanctionsKill.org

email: Info@SanctionsKill.org

Tell the Biden Administration to End Economic Sanctions in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic

During the Winter of 2021 this letter (translated into eight languages and spread around the globe) was signed by over 4,000 organizations and individuals.

To: President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and all Members of the U.S. Congress

We write to you because we are deeply concerned about the impact of U.S. sanctions on many countries that are suffering the dire consequences of COVID-19.

The global COVID-19 pandemic and global economic crash challenge all humanity. Scientific and technological cooperation and global solidarity are desperate needs. Instead, the Trump Administration escalated economic warfare (“sanctions”) against many countries around the globe.

We ask you to begin a new era in U.S. relations with the world by lifting all U.S. economic sanctions.

U.S. economic sanctions impact one-third of the world’s population in 39 countries.

These sanctions block shipments and purchases of essential medicines, testing equipment, PPE, vaccines and even basic food. Sanctions also cause chronic shortages of basic necessities, economic dislocation, chaotic hyperinflation, artificial famines, disease, and poverty, leading to tens of thousands of deaths. It is always the poorest and the weakest – infants, children, the chronically ill and the elderly – who suffer the worst impact of sanctions.

Sanctions are illegal. They are a violation of international law and the

SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

United Nations Charter. They are a crime against humanity used, like military intervention, to topple popular governments and movements.

The United States uses its military and economic dominance to pressure governments, institutions and corporations to end all normal trade relations with targeted nations, lest they risk asset seizures and even military action.

The first step toward change must be an end to the U.S.'s policies of economic war. We urge you to end these illegal sanctions on all countries immediately and to reset the U.S.'s relations with the world.

The United States is Doubling Down on Deadly Sanctions

A Statement from the Sanctions Kill Coalition

New Treasury Report Ordered by President Biden Shows US is Intensifying its Economic Warfare Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Washington, DC – The 2021 Sanctions Review Report released by the United States Department of the Treasury on October 18 is an ominous warning. This unsigned report should set off international alarm bells among human rights organizations, international health agencies and peace, justice, and community groups, impacted countries and most countries in the United Nations.

One of President Biden’s first actions in office was to call for a review of existing US and multilateral financial and economic sanctions to evaluate whether they are “unduly hindering” targeted countries’ responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ten months after that January 21 National Security Memorandum, the resulting review from the US Treasury Department makes no mention of COVID-19 or its catastrophic toll on human lives over the past 18 months. How to provide international relief, cooperation and assistance during a deadly pandemic is not on the agenda of the Biden Administration.

Instead, the report laments the ability of impacted countries to work around the US’s illegal economic blockades through, for example, alternative payment systems and promises “more investments in Treasury’s sanctions workforce and operational capabilities...” The United States intends to expand and “modernize” its sanctions regime despite knowing that sanctions have failed to advance the US’s foreign policy interests by isolating the US from the international market, strengthening resistance to the United States in impacted countries and not resulting in the overthrow of targeted governments.

SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The Treasury's Sanctions Review includes a chilling chart that shows a 903% increase (from 912 "OFAC Sanctions Designations" in 2000 to 9,421 Designations in 2021) in Washington's use of sanctions as "a tool of first resort." The Review claims to have met with "hundreds of stakeholders;" however, there isn't any evidence of meetings with the millions of people facing acute shortages, the chaos of hyperinflation and the deadly threat of unavailable essential medicines.

US sanctions, which are technically unilateral coercive measures and violate international laws, have caused tremendous suffering and death as documented in the recent Sanctions Kill report, "The Impact and Consequences of US Sanctions." Direct economic warfare is being waged against 39 countries representing one third of the world population and secondary sanctions negatively impact more countries, some of which are US allies. The US Treasury Department Report was released at a time when over half the countries of the United Nations have denounced the US's use of unilateral economic measures.

The United Nations General Assembly, most governments in the world, human rights organizations, impacted countries and legal organizations in the US and around the world have called for an end to these illegal sanctions. Pope Francis, on October 16, appealed to "powerful countries to stop aggression, blockades and unilateral sanctions against any country anywhere on earth...." "No to neo-colonialism."

While the United States pledges to double down on its economic warfare, people inside the US are becoming more aware that this weapon is cruel and counterproductive. Millions of people globally who are impacted by this deadly policy are building a growing wave of resistance across international borders. As the Sanctions Kill report predicts, the United States will be held liable one day for its crimes against humanity. Social movements demand an end to them now.

End All Warfare! No to Sanctions!

A Statement from the Sanctions Kill Coalition

The Sanctions Kill Campaign is a broad coalition of social justice, solidarity, and peace forces focused on exposing the devastating impact of US sanctions on civilian populations globally.

Sanctions are not a substitute for war

The current regime of sanctions against Russia is not a substitute for war, but a form of warfare. Sanctions kill many thousands just as bombs do. Sanctions create hyperinflation, artificial famines, social upheavals, and health crises that punish civilian populations. As US President Biden said, the sanctions are intended “to inflict further pain.”

Sanctions are collective punishment and illegal under international law.

Nor are the sanctions by the US and its allies against Russia a deterrent to war. They will not reduce hostilities, but are an escalation of the current conflict.

Sanctions consolidate US dominance in Europe

Sanctions are being used to consolidate US dominance in the region, even though it is counter to the material interests of the European Union (EU) and the UK to cut economic ties with Moscow.

The growth in EU trade with Russia and China threatens the domination of US corporate power in Europe. The EU is the biggest investor in Russia. While the US is the largest exporter of methane gas, the EU purchases substantial gas from Russia at much lower prices, and also oil and wheat.

With the EU and especially Germany unwilling to impose sanctions, which would break all relations with Russia, Biden threatened the US allies that the only alternative to going along with the US would be nuclear war. The US president said: “You have two options. Start a Third World War ... or two, make

sure that the country that acts so contrary to international law ends up paying a price.” Biden said the US “goal from the very beginning” was to keep NATO and the EU “on the same page.”

Using the dominant role of the dollar in the world economy, Washington has unilaterally imposed over 5,500 sanctions on Russia, making it the most sanctioned target of US aggressive policies.

US sanctions dragging the whole world into the conflict

Unfortunately, Russia is not the only victim of these unilateral coercive measures. Over 40 countries, comprising a third of humanity, are so targeted by the US. These include Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, China, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Third countries trading with targets of US sanctions also face heavy fines. This deadly form of economic warfare destroys regional development.

Further, the US is compelling other countries to execute these extreme economic penalties. We note, with grave concern, that these sanctions imposed on Russia are dragging the whole world into a conflict which has a high potential of spiraling out of control.

The United Nations did not approve the US-instigated sanctions. Many countries now refuse to join with the US/EU sanctions imposed on Russia. To date India, Pakistan, Indonesia, South Africa, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and other countries with smaller economies have refused to comply with the US measures. In fact, almost all of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa, and most of Asia reject the sanctions.

Sanctions are a crime against humanity

Such sanctions would damage these countries’ own trade relations. Supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures from the US-led sanctions are already disproportionately impacting poor and working people globally due to shortages and higher prices for food, fuel, and basic commodities. Especially impacted are people in the developing world.

As over 60 years of US sanctions against the Cuban Revolution prove, sanctions meant to achieve the regime change the US wants to impose have, in fact, resulted in raining misery upon the targeted people. These sanctions serve as a cautionary lesson to any nation that wishes to exercise its sovereignty under the globally inflicted Pax Americana. It is a crime against humanity.

Ending the Ukraine War

This devastating war started with the US-orchestrated coup in 2014, overthrowing the democratically elected government in Ukraine. Although Ukraine is not a formal NATO member, the US has since dumped mountains of lethal arms and deployed US military “advisors” into Ukraine.

Ukraine is a pawn in Washington’s strategy against Russia. Since the coup, Ukraine has been reduced to the poorest country in Europe with the highest rate of migration. Kiev’s continuing aggression against its eastern provinces and mass privatizations of socially owned property have furthered the economic ruin.

Sanctions Kill Campaign calls on all sides to end hostilities and for the US to employ diplomacy; not weapons, sanctions and war!

Letter in Support of the Syrian People

Letter Condemning US Attacks on Syria and in the Middle East

United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC)

As the Biden Administration took office in the U.S., one of their first actions was to increase US troop levels in the northeastern region of Syria currently occupied by the United States and its proxies. Shortly thereafter, the United States bombed a Syrian town on the eastern border killing as many as 30 Syrians, purportedly to target hostile “Iraqi militiamen” or to “send a message” to Iran. US proxies are selling Syrian grain in Turkey and a Hayt al Tahrir, a terrorist organization, now operates a refinery in the Syrian territory occupied by US troops and proxies.

Last year, Congress passed the Caesar Sanctions as an amendment to the massive Defense Appropriations Bill. These sanctions cause the Syrian people to go without the basic necessities such as food, energy and medicine. They have destroyed the Syrian currency and are literally causing starvation. At this time, it is impossible, even for the United Nations, to bring aid into Syria.

Moreover, these sanctions block reconstruction and the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees from impoverished camps in surrounding states. Syrians can’t return if there is no potable water, food or housing for their families. Meanwhile, the only Syrians who can receive international aid are those in U.S. occupied territories and those in areas controlled by the US ally, Al Nusra/Al Qaeda.

There has been a recent swell of anti-Syria propaganda, supported by prominent activists on the “left.” This has included attacks on the majority of the US antiwar movement, which has focused on opposing US and outside aggression against Syria, and which supports the right of Syria to defend its

SANCTIONS KILL

national sovereignty against this outside aggression. The clear fact is that the US government, along with its allies in NATO, Israel and other reactionary Middle Eastern states, is the primary cause of the current devastation of the Syrian people. The US and its allies have facilitated the entry into Syria of tens of thousands of foreign fighters to support their regime change agenda.

As with the lies about Weapons of Mass destruction that led to the US invasion and occupation of Iraq, the U.S. and its allies have put forth accusations about Syria using chemical weapons and terror against its own people, which have now been totally discredited and disproven.

Therefore:

- **We condemn** the illegal occupation of Syrian territory by US forces and their proxies, and their illegal and unprovoked military attacks on Syrian soil and Syrian people.
- **We condemn** the ongoing theft of Syrian oil and Syrian grain by US proxies, resources desperately needed by the Syrian people.
- **We condemn** the so-called Caesar Sanctions as illegal, immoral unilateral coercive measures.
- **We condemn** the US war on the Syrian Republic and the callous violation of Syrian Sovereignty.
- **We demand** the withdrawal of ALL U.S. troops and U.S. funding of foreign mercenary forces, U.S. funding of armed internal opposition forces from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and a lifting of the U.S. Naval blockade of Yemen.
- **We demand an end to illegal U.S. Sanctions on Syria**

***Organizational Signatories:** United National Antiwar Coalition, Syria Solidarity Movement, Hands Off Syria Coalition, Hands off Syria Coalition – Australia, Black Alliance for Peace, U.S. Peace Council, International Action Center, Arab Americans for Syria, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, Popular Resistance, Hamilton Coalition to Stop the Wars, Alliance for Global Justice, Youth Against Empire, Veterans For Peace, BAYAN USA, Socialist Action, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, Committee for International Solidarity and Peace (COSI) Venezuela, Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign/ Poor People's Army, Coop-Anti-War-Café Berlin, Ban Killer Drones, Ann Wright, Cindy Sheehan, Alfred Marder, Omowale Clay, Matthew Hoh, Brian S. Wilson and many more organizations and individuals*

UNAC Blog/End the Wars at Home and Abroad, April 2021



December 12th Movement International Secretariat
456 Nostrand Avenue -
Brooklyn, NY 11216 -
(718) 398-1766
e-mail: D12m@aol.com
Website: www.D12M.com

February 1, 2021

Congressman Gregory Meeks
Chairman of the
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Congresswoman Karen Bass
Chairwoman of the
Subcommittee on Africa,
Global Health and Global Human Rights

Congresswoman Joyce Betty
Chairwoman of the
Congressional Black Caucus

Re: Lift United States Sanctions on Zimbabwe

Dear Congressional Leaders,

The December 12th Movement International Secretariat once again calls on congressional Black leadership to advance the cause of global health, human rights and self-determination by lifting United States sanctions placed on the Republic of Zimbabwe for over two decades.

The COVID-19 global pandemic is accelerating its reach across the African continent, compounded by the inadequate resources and organization of health delivery systems. A reality making hundreds of millions of African people particularly vulnerable. Therefore, the two decades of sanctions that western countries have utilized toward regime change in Zimbabwe has only magnified the impact of the current pandemic on this small landlocked country.

SANCTIONS KILL

Now, with the change in Washington D.C. leadership putting Democrats in control of the executive and legislative branches of government, you are in a unique position to be a leading voice in toning down the political hyperbole that the Republic of Zimbabwe and its people are a threat to the national security of the United States. A basis for the “Zimbabwe Economic and Democracy Recovery Act.” A fundamentally flawed law and executive order premised on an untruth and constructed on the kith and kean relationship between United States and Great Britain, Zimbabwe’s former colonizer. A threat that is grounded in the premise that former Western colonies do not have a right to self-determination.

Given Black peoples decisive role in President Biden’s electoral victory and his victory speech pronouncement that he would “always have our [Black peoples] back,” we would expect that commitment be extended to our brothers and sisters on the African continent.

President Biden’s NATIONAL SECURITY DIRECTIVE – 1 states, “My Administration will treat epidemic and pandemic preparedness, health security, and global health as top national security priorities, and will work with other nations to combat COVID-19 and seek to create a world that is safe and secure from biological threats.” A commitment that he goes on to emphasize in “Section 2, sub-section (c) COVID-19 Sanctions Relief. The Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of HHS and the Administrator of USAID, shall promptly review existing United States and multilateral financial and economic sanctions to evaluate whether they are unduly hindering responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide recommendations to the President, through the APNSA and the COVID-19 Response Coordinator, for any changes in approach.”

We hope this re-evaluation of sanctions impact on a country’s ability to fight the COVID-19 pandemic would create an opening for the lifting of Sanctions placed on Zimbabwe.

A call that was advanced by Congressional members Karen Bass and Barbara Lee in a letter sent to then Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin, May 22, 2020, in which it was stated, “We write to urge the United States to ease sanctions on African nations in a manner designed to permit them to more adequately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States should take immediate action to temporarily ease sanctions on Sudan and Zimbabwe and expand licensing of sanctions-exempt items to ensure that these countries can access essential humanitarian resources during the pandemic...” and went on to

SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

say, “Over the past few weeks, my office has received reports that highlight the impact of sanctions on access to essential medicines and equipment, such as respirators and personal protective equipment for healthcare workers. As the world attempts to contain the spread of the new coronavirus, it is critical to ensure that countries are in the best position to tackle the impact of the virus on their populations, healthcare workers, and healthcare and public health

One should make note that this letter to the former Secretary of the Treasury was nine months ago and underlines the urgency of lifting sanctions for a crisis that has expanded daily and which sanctions has only exacerbated. We call on your leadership in the congress and commitment to genuine human rights in protecting the health and safety of the people of Zimbabwe.

Attorney, Roger Wareham and Viola Plummer

For the December 12th Movement International Secretariat

Oppose U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela, Illegal and Criminal Interference

Statement by the Chicago Antiwar Coalition (CWAC)

This Statement is part of a series by the Chicago Anti-War Coalition (CAWC) updating the latest on the U.S. government's brutal and illegal sanctions and attacks on various countries. It is meant to help us build our opposition, and further join in the International Campaign Against U.S. Sanctions.

This Statement mainly focuses on the U.S. sanctions attacks on Venezuela — which have the aim of making Venezuela open to U.S. domination. We also bring out how we are inspired to further action by the fight back of the Venezuelan people and government.

As many people know, the U.S. government has been very rough with Venezuela—with attempted coups, stealing billions, sabotage, threatening military intervention, and sanctions. But obviously not rough enough as shown by the resilience of the Venezuelan people.

The Venezuelan people have not buckled and allowed a renewal of U.S. government domination.

They have not allowed further theft of their oil and gold by the U.S., or the dismantlement of their social programs or the political structure, which includes participatory democracy of self-determination in local areas, or giving up their alliance with other countries in Latin America opposing U.S. imperialism, such as Cuba or Nicaragua.

Because of this staunch stand of the Venezuelans and their government, both Trump and Biden have promised to continue U.S. sanctions and other attacks on the Venezuelan people and government and to work for a pro-U.S.

regime change. Ditto Mike Pence and Kamala Harris.

Though people may have decided to vote for one or another of the presidential candidates for various reasons, they need to be clear there is no significant difference between the Trump and Biden tickets on the goal for the U.S. government to impose a governmental change in Venezuela that will be pro-U.S., as we spell out below.

Now to give some more details about the brutal and unjust and illegal sanctions and other attacks on Venezuela by the U.S. ruling class, and their serious impact on Venezuela, as well as the fight back. This leads to the question of what can we do to oppose this and to support the strong resistance of the Venezuelan people and their government.

(1) First, a rundown on U.S. sanctions and other attacks on Venezuela and their impact.

Under orders from the U.S. government some \$5.4 billion of Venezuelan money is frozen in 50 banks, including 31 tons of gold that the Bank of England has refused to release to the Venezuelan government. The U.S. government seized \$18 billion in assets and dividends of the CITGO oil and gasoline company.

U.S. sanctions were imposed on Venezuela first by President Obama in 2015 with the ridiculous statement that it was an “unusual and extraordinary threat to the security of the United States.” Sanctions have been expanded since from targeting individuals in the Venezuelan government to companies doing business with Venezuela. The U.S. has threatened international shippers and purchasers of Venezuelan oil. Because of this and the U.S. effort to undercut the value of the bolivar, Venezuela has lost some \$169 billion. (See Pasqualina Curcio in *Orinoco Tribune*, 7/17/20)

The oil industry has generated 95% of Venezuela foreign currency revenue from exports. A decrease in these exports to a 77 year low because of the U.S. threats on shippers and recipients of the oil has affected revenues available to the Venezuelan people. There has also been a blockage of imports of needed supplies for the oil industry, including machinery and spare parts. As a result, production of oil has decreased 64%, making for a tighter squeeze on funding social programs.

This year, the U.S. government further hit Venezuela’s oil sector by imposing secondary sanctions against two subsidiaries of Rosneft, a Russian

SANCTIONS KILL

energy giant. It had been carrying a large portion of Venezuela's output before rerouting it to various destinations. Because of U.S. action, it closed its Venezuela operations, further hitting the Venezuelan income.

Venezuela's own fleet of oil carriers has also been hard hit by U.S. sanctions. For example, insurer Standard Club revoked protection and indemnity insurance for the Venezuela's supertankers and their cargo, making it difficult for them to carry out international business. One ship has been seized as a U.S. glassmaker tries to gain more money through a U.S.-dominated World Bank court (the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes) from the nationalization of two of its factories in 2010.

U.S. sanctions are a violation of international law as stated in the United Nations Charter, which the U.S. has signed. The Charter states, "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state...."(Section 2, Article 4) The illegality of U.S. sanctions is also spelled out in Section 7 of the UN Charter, which reserves the sole right to impose country sanctions to the UN Security Council and denies that right to individual countries, including the U.S.

The sanctions are a form of collective punishment that is the complete opposite of the basic principles of justice and human rights, including the right to life, and adequate food and health care.

The U.S. government attack on the currency, the bolivar, has made matters even worse for the Venezuelan people. As a Republican politician, Richard Black, has analyzed it, the U.S. government "demonetized their currency and, through the international banking system, made the Venezuelan currency worthless and then we go and say: 'Look how bad this government is, your currency is worthless.' Well, it wasn't them, it was us who made their currency useless." (Orinoco Tribune, 12/24/19) The attack on the bolivar has produced hyperinflation and the consequent loss of purchasing power for the working class, and loss of much national production.

In recent months the U.S. government has been further doubling down, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In April and May, the U.S. began cracking down on swap deals that provide Venezuela with food, fuel and other vital imports in exchange for crude oil. For example, the Mexican company Libre Abordo was to provide hundreds of water trucks to Venezuela in exchange for 30 million barrels of Venezuelan crude oil. In late May the Mexican

government began taking steps with the U.S. to sabotage this. The U.S. has acted similarly against other companies bartering goods for oil. This has included companies bartering goods for Venezuela's subsidized food program known as CLAP.

To summarize, with the \$169 billion lost through U.S. attacks, Venezuela could have paid its entire external debt of \$110 billion. Or had enough resources to import food and medicine for 45 years, and not have suffered the loss of 40,000 lives from lack of health care supplies. But the aim of the U.S. has been, in the words of former U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela, William Brownfield, to "accelerate collapse" of the Venezuelan government (He said this on Voice of America 10/18/18 reports TeleSUR).

But there are concerns that the U.S. government thinks that even this is not working well enough. There has been talk citing evidence that the U.S. may be having troops from Colombia and other countries massing for an invasion of Venezuela. The Venezuelan Ambassador to the UN, Samuel Moncada, has, for one, been sounding an alert for this possibility.

(2) How have the working class Venezuelan people and their allies in Venezuela been handling these attacks?

The Venezuelan people and their government have been very active in resisting the impacts of the U.S. sanctions, and in gaining international support.

On the agricultural front, the people have been actively growing food where they live so they do not suffer from the shortages and high prices of imported food. "We're doing this to combat the economic warfare so that they can't have us on our knees again," 69 year old Luisiana Galvis from Caracas is reported to have said. She and 17 other people cultivate vegetables on shared land.

The Bolivarian Revolution has plenty of examples of communities organizing to take control of their own destiny, with President Nicolás Maduro calling for food sovereignty. A Ministry of Urban Agriculture has worked to send seeds, equipment and educational projects to the communities. The government has urged citizens to plant in every available space — private terraces, communal areas, jails and schools among other sites as they say properly planting one square yard can yield nearly 45 pounds of fruits and vegetables.

And the government has ensured widespread distribution of subsidized food in a program known as CLAP (The Local Committees for Supply and

SANCTIONS KILL

Production; Spanish: Comité Local de Abastecimiento y Producción, CLAP; are food distribution committees in which the communities supply and distribute food through a house-to-house delivery method.)

Venezuela has also been fighting possible malnutrition with 3,000 “Food Houses.” Around 1.7 million Venezuelans are working in the provision of essential services during the pandemic. Over the last decade, Venezuela has reduced the malnutrition rate from 13.5 percent to 2.5 percent. This achievement was possible thanks to the participation of “The Cooks of the Homeland,” a group of women who dedicate an hour of their daily work to activities carried out in a network of 3,117 restaurants feeding vulnerable communities. The current goal is to consolidate some 6,000 food houses linked to home grown food. Each Food House can provide lunch to hundreds of people with children, adolescents, the elderly, and people with physical disabilities or in situations of social vulnerability receiving priority attention.

Also the State sends food to homes every two weeks with each basket containing 24 pounds of products. This is the CLAP program which benefits over six million Venezuelan families, despite efforts by U.S. sanctions to sabotage it.

Projects such as the ‘Pueblo a Pueblo’ initiative has linked organized rural and urban communities. They have been solving the problem of locally produced seeds and organic fertilizer.

It’s important for us to see what the Venezuelan government is doing in terms of food sovereignty in the middle of this economic warfare on the country. The Venezuelan people are definitely resisting in this way the problem of imports caused by U.S. sanctions and activities.

And they are also ready to fight militarily in defense of their Bolivarian Revolution.

Venezuela’s Civilian Militia has grown to 3.7 million men and women volunteers, according to President Maduro in January, and the aim is to provide each of them with a weapon as soon as possible. They all go to an Anti-Imperialist School for training.

The militia is to be incorporated into the Armed Forces as a “combat unit.”

President Maduro, speaking recently before 30,000 militia members brought out that 2020’s goal is to have four million members.

SANCTIONS KILL CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Last month, 6,950 militiamen and women were deployed to safeguard electrical installations following government claims of sabotage. The militia members were also charged with cleaning, maintenance, and forest fire prevention in areas around the installations as Venezuela entered its dry season.

The millions of militia members will be supplementing the regular armed forces of 1.5 million.

The Venezuelan armed forces stopped an armed mercenary incursion on May 3. Venezuelan police and military foiled an attempt by armed men to disembark in Macuto, La Guaira, 20 miles from the capital Caracas. In the clashes, eight mercenaries were killed and weapons were seized, both from speedboats and stored on land.

As part of its resistance and defense preparations, Venezuela has obtained ground to air missiles from Russia, China, and Iran.

Venezuela has been bringing out the illegality of what the U.S. has been doing in international courts.

On another front of resistance to U.S. sanctions, Iran has helped. It sent commercial airliners to Venezuela airlifting technical components and personnel to revive its oil refineries. In return, Caracas paid in its own gold bars. In May, Iranian oil tankers delivered fuel to Venezuelan ports in a move that defied U.S. sanctions against Caracas. The Iranians also ferried food supplies to Venezuela in June to support an Iranian-established supermarket in the country. These recent actions follow many years of close relations between the Islamic Republic and the Bolivarian government.

We here in the U.S. should offer support, and do this mainly by strengthening our opposition to U.S. imperialism. This would be the best support for Venezuelan sovereignty and self-determination. This needs to include opposition to the Democratic and Republican actions of illegal and unjust interference in Venezuelan affairs, including the economic warfare of sanctions.

(3) The Democratic and Republican parties are united on illegal and unjust sanctions and other interference with Venezuela, and attempts to not allow self-determination and to overthrow its elected government.

When it comes to Venezuela, policies of regime change and sanctions, Biden and Trump are basically the same. Biden, like Trump, and the entire U.S. ruling class, is very worried about an independent Venezuela. They use lies to try

SANCTIONS KILL

to persuade the American people to support their agenda for a supposed “democracy” for Venezuela.

As Biden lied in March (to the Americas Quarterly), Venezuela’s elected President Maduro “is a dictator, plain and simple.” But he did not lie when he said that “the overriding goal in Venezuela must be to press for a democratic outcome through free and fair elections, and to help the Venezuelan people rebuild their country.” A supposedly democratic outcome, which will be domination by the U.S. government.

Biden is also very worried about the competition between the U.S. banks and corporations and China and Russia. “Pulling back from Latin America will lead to gains in the region for Russia, China and others.” He tries to veil over those fears with the following pseudo-democratic boilerplate drivel. He calls to envision a hemisphere that is “secure, middle class and democratic, from the northern reaches of Canada to the southern tip of Chile.... It is vital that we maintain our leadership role in the region.”

Biden goes on to say it is “not because we fear competition, but because U.S. leadership is indispensable to addressing the persistent challenges that prevent our region from realizing its fullest potential. China and Russia seek economic and diplomatic benefits but do not invest in democratic institutions or good governance. We do, because we benefit from the success of our neighbors and we are impacted by their struggles... U.S. leadership is needed more than ever.... [needed are] intensified sanctions on Venezuela...”

Trump said in his 2020 State of the Union address, also lying about Venezuela, that “Maduro is an illegitimate ruler, a tyrant who brutalizes his people, but Maduro’s grip on tyranny will be smashed and broken.” Trump said in his speech, “Here this evening is a very brave man who carries with him the hopes, dreams and aspirations of all Venezuelans. Joining us in the gallery is the true and legitimate president of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó” (who was hand chosen by the U.S. government and has little support in Venezuela).

Very telling for our point about the similarity of Democrats and Republicans on Venezuela, Trump’s remarks gained a standing ovation by the entire Congress. As National Public Rado (NPR) reported, “It was one of the few times that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Democrats stood to applaud during Trump’s speech.”

Even though we have focused on the similarity of Democrats and

Republicans on this aspect of U.S. foreign policy, we should make it clear that the Chicago Anti-War Coalition does not advocate that its readers approach the upcoming election in one way or another.

(4) What is needed?

To conclude, we think this all shows U.S. imperialism, its real nature. This is capitalist rule by banks and corporations. The ruling class runs the U.S. government. This means that for us to oppose the criminal U.S. interference in Venezuela, we need to unite to oppose and get rid of U.S. imperialism and establish a government of peace and justice. Chicago Anti-War Coalition (CAWC) hopes you will join in alongside us to work for this.

UNAC Blog/End the Wars at Home and Abroad

Joint Statement Against Canadian Sanctions

*by the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War &
le Mouvement Québécois pour la Paix*

One year ago, following the declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed to G-20 leaders to lift all of their economic sanctions against the poorest countries of the world for the duration of the pandemic. Guterres noted, “Let us remember that we are only as strong as the weakest health system in our interconnected world.”¹

Not a single G-20 leader complied. Some, like Trump, actually increased their coercive economic measures against countries such as Venezuela and Iran, hoping that the combination of economic sanctions and pandemic would lead to regime change in those countries.

Here in Canada, two peace organizations, one each from the two main language groups in the country, united to amplify the Secretary-General’s appeal to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau by organizing an open letter² from 100 prominent Canadians on April 13, 2020, asking Trudeau to lift Canada’s economic sanctions³ against 20 countries of the world, 9 of which are in Africa. Regrettably, the PM did not even bother to reply to the substance of the open letter.

In response, the two organizations organized both a Change.org petition to the PM with the same demands. When that too failed to elicit a response, they also initiated parliamentary petition e-2630,⁴ sponsored by NDP MP Scott Duvall. The parliamentary petition did finally get a response from MP Rob Oliphant, Parliamentary-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁵ However, that response found little favour with the two peace groups.

Below is a rebuttal of the government’s position, as stated by Parliamentary-Secretary Rob Oliphant:⁶

1) The government of Canada must respect the rule of international law. The UN Charter recognizes that economic sanctions are an act of war that often kill more people than bullets and bombs and therefore reserves the right to level these coercive economic measures solely for the Security Council. Canada's economic sanctions against 19 countries of the world are unilateral, i.e., they don't have the approval of the UNSC. Therefore, they are illegal. Moreover, they constitute meddling in the internal affairs of other sovereign countries, which is also illegal under the UN Charter and many centuries of international law. Canada needs to stop applying unilateral coercive economic measures.

2) Human rights have been weaponized by many western governments, including Canada's. Alleged human rights violations, which are cherry-picked unilaterally by these governments, have been used respectively to invoke the doctrines of humanitarian interventionism and the responsibility to protect (R2P) against countries, such as the former Yugoslavia and Libya, to destroy entire states and turn large populations into refugees. Human rights violations are never used as excuses to intervene or level sanctions in major human-rights-violating countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or the apartheid State of Israel, because these states are within the sphere of influence of the main imperial power, the USA.

3) We take exception to the Parliament-Secretary's characterization of Canada's sanctions as "appl(ying) a targeted approach and rigorous analysis to minimize adverse consequences for the civilian population, including vulnerable groups... such as women and children." In fact, Canada's sanctions on Syria and Venezuela, for example, have caused widespread unemployment, devaluation of currencies, loss of life-savings, fuel and food shortages, lack of medications, homelessness, increases in crime, and death. Furthermore, these adverse consequences of economic sanctions disproportionately affect marginal groups, such as women and children. In Venezuela, for example, 40,000 people are estimated to have perished⁷ due to sanctions organized by the Lima Group, of which the Trudeau government of Canada is a founding member. In Syria, combined with the incursions of proxy armies of mercenaries sponsored by the US Coalition, of which the Harper government of Canada was a founding member, coercive economic measures contributed to turning nearly 5.5 million Syrians into refugees.⁸ The well-to-do in both countries have the resources to ride out the economic sanctions. It is the poor and marginalized who suffer most or flee. In the context of hybrid war and widespread poverty, human trafficking has risen in both countries, affecting especially women and girls, who are

supposed to be the beneficiaries of Trudeau's allegedly feminist foreign policy.

4) It is fallacious for Mr. Oliphant to state his government "ensure(s) sanctions regimes do not present an unintended barrier that would hinder the humanitarian response to the pandemic." In fact, the US government has forced other countries to obey its sanctions regime (in which the Government of Canada is a partner) against targeted states through the use of extraterritoriality, that is, by penalizing foreign corporations which dare to trade with countries which the USA has sanctioned. This extraterritoriality is deterrent enough in practice for virtually every financial institution in the world NOT to provide the necessary funding and paperwork to facilitate the transfer of food and medical supplies to sanctioned countries. For example, Iran was unable to receive doses of Covid-19 vaccines⁹ from COVAX although the vaccines were offered to that country.

5) Finally, the Trudeau Government of Canada would do well to look into the mirror. Rather than looking abroad for the "gross human rights violations, significant corruption, or behaviour that flouts the rule of law and threatens global peace and security," which Parliamentary-Secretary Oliphant notes are the *raison d'être* of Canada's coercive economic measures, the federal government ought to focus on eliminating systemic discrimination that results in dozens of native communities still lacking potable water¹⁰ as well as adequate medical and educational facilities. It also resulted in RCMP killings of alarming numbers of native persons last year¹¹ as well as thousands of murdered and missing native women.¹² These "gross human rights violations", a term used by Oliphant in his response, are on top of the residential schools,¹³ the forced sterilization of native and Metis women,¹⁴ the Chinese Head Tax,¹⁵ the wartime internment of Japanese-Canadians,¹⁶ the refusal to allow Jewish refugees of Nazism¹⁷ to land in Canada, the deportation of would-be Sikh immigrants,¹⁸ and many other national disgraces. Canada also suffers from corruption of which the SNC Lavelin affair¹⁹ and the We Charity were recent examples. As for upholding the international rule of law, the parliamentary-secretary should blush at his government's kidnapping of Meng Wanzhou,²⁰ its growing sales of arms to Saudi Arabia²¹ for its illegal war on Yemen, and its continued support for the juntas in Haiti and Ukraine, which were put into power respectively by Canadian-backed coups in 2004²² and 2014.²³

People in glass houses should not throw stones.

Conclusion

On this first-year anniversary of Secretary-General Guterres' call for G-20 countries to lift all their economic sanctions for the duration of the pandemic, Prime Minister Trudeau ought immediately to drop all of Canada's sanctions against twenty countries of the world – permanently.

Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War, April 2021

Endnotes

1. *United Nations; Note to Correspondents: Letter from the Secretary-General to G-20 Members*, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2020-03-24/note-correspondents-letter-the-secretary-general-g-20-members>
2. *Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War: 100 Prominent Canadians Ask Trudeau to Lift Sanctions Now!*, <https://hamiltoncoalitiontostopthewar.ca/2020/04/14/100-prominent-canadians-ask-trudeau-to-lift-sanctions-now/>
3. *The Government of Canada: Current sanctions imposed by Canada*, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/sanctions/current-actuelles.aspx?lang=eng
4. *House of Commons, Canada: Petition to the Government of Canada*, <https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-2630>
5. *Ibid.*
6. *The Independent: US sanctions on Venezuela responsible for 'tens of thousands' of deaths, claims new report*, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/venezuela-sanctions-us-excess-death-toll-economy-oil-trump-maduro-juan-guaido-jeffrey-sachs-a8888516.html>
7. *UNHCR: SYRIA REFUGEE CRISIS*, <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria/>
8. *The Washington Post: U.S. sanctions could impede Iran's access to coronavirus vaccines, experts say*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iran-covax-coronavirus-vaccine-sanctions/2020/12/07/61a721f8-3632-11eb-9699-00d311f13d2d_story.html
9. *The Government of Canada: Ending long-term drinking water advisories*, <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1506514143353/1533317130660>
10. *CTV News: Why are Indigenous people in Canada so much more likely to be shot and killed by police?*, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/why-are-indigenous-people-in-canada-so-much-more-likely-to-be-shot-and-killed-by-police-1.4989864>
11. *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>
12. *Indigenous Foundations: The Residential School System*, https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/
13. *Toronto Star: Coerced and forced sterilization of Indigenous women and girls: This is what genocide looks like in Canada*, <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2021/03/08/coerced-and-forced-sterilization-of-indigenous-women-and-girls-this-is-what-genocide-looks-like-in-canada.html>

SANCTIONS KILL

14. *The Canadian Encyclopedia: The Chinese Head Tax in Canada*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/chinese-head-tax-in-canada>
15. *Ibid: Japanese Canadian Internment: Prisoners in their own Country*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/japanese-internment-banished-and-beyond-tears-feature>
16. *Ibid: MS St. Louis*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ms-st-louis>
17. *Ibid: Komagata Maru*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/komagata-maru>
18. *CBC News: What you need to know about the SNC-Lavalin affair*, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-wilson-raybould-attorney-general-snc-lavalin-1.5014271>
19. *Asia Times: Why Canada must release Meng Wanzhou*, <https://asiatimes.com/2020/10/why-canada-must-release-meng-wanzhou/>
20. *The Guardian: This article is more than 2 years old*
21. *Canada doubles weapons sales to Saudi Arabia despite moratorium*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/09/canada-doubles-weapons-sales-to-saudi-arabia-despite-moratorium>
22. *Canadian Dimension: Canada must stop propping up a repressive and corrupt dictatorship in Haiti*, <https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/canada-must-stop-propping-up-a-repressive-and-corrupt-dictatorship-in-haiti>
23. *CBC News: Canadian embassy used as safe haven during Ukraine uprising, investigation finds*, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-embassy-used-as-safe-haven-during-ukraine-uprising-investigation-finds-1.3148719>

What You Can Do – Taking Action

by James Wallace, Labor and Antiwar Activist

1. Hopefully you're outraged at the insidious, illegal use of US-imposed sanctions & determined to do something about it.
2. Continue to educate yourself. Start with some basics, like the TOOLKIT, FACTSHEET, REPORT and Webinars available from sanctionskill.org. There's a wealth of information at <https://sanctionskill.org/resources-2/>.
3. Educate others. Spread the word, through your own networks and contacts or when you participate in any "make a difference" activities.
4. Join with others. Doing something is more important than what you do. Some may focus on legislative actions, others work in academia. Most of the groups working directly with the SanctionsKill Coalition are more activist: sponsoring webinars, solidarity trips, car caravans, letter writing, petitions. To find a group, see the "Activist Groups" listed below or <https://sanctionskill.org/what-you-can-do/>.
5. Don't get discouraged! Question ALL US propaganda. The US government, media, educational system, and cultural norms do everything possible to spread disinformation, and, most importantly, the idea that it's useless to "fight back."
6. Keep the focus on what US imperialism is doing. We in the SK Coalition are careful to always narrow the target at the role of the US (and junior partners). We don't get into debates RE: the internal situation in any country. Fighting sanctions on a country does not mean you support its government. The same applies to working with people and groups you may or may not agree with: Unite and Act on what you can agree on, and agree to "let go" of what don't.
7. Be sure to listen to what sanctioned countries are saying best supports them.
8. Make the connections to struggles here in the "belly of the beast." As Martin Luther King said "Bombs falling in Vietnam explode in Harlem."
9. Again, most importantly, turn into action whatever anger you have over the

SANCTIONS KILL

use of these weapons of mass destruction. The sanctioned countries are not only surviving, but also creating new innovative relationships and creative solutions to deal with sanctions. A new world is in the making! We hope you want to be part of it!

For more information: info@sanctionskill.org.

Activist groups to potentially hook up with

Activist groups involved with the SanctionsKill campaign and bringing the question of sanctions into the political movement. (Of course there are many, many wonderful groups working at the local, national and/or international level. If you hook up with any of these, bring the question of sanctions into them.)

Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle of New York: <https://bolivariannyc.wordpress.com/>
Alliance For Global Justice: <https://afgj.org/>
BAYAN USA: <https://www.bayanusa.org/>
Black Agenda Report: <https://www.blackagendareport.com/>
Black Alliance for Peace: <https://blackallianceforpeace.com/>
Chicago Alba Solidarity: <https://chicagoalbasolidarity.org/>
CODEPINK: <https://www.codepink.org/>
December 12th Movement: <http://d12m.com/>
Ethiopian American Civic Council: <http://sr168.org>
IFCO Pastors for Peace: <https://ifconews.org/>
International Action Center: <https://iacenter.org/>
International League of Peoples Struggle: <https://ilps.info/en/about-us/>
Nicagua Network: <http://www.nicanet.org/>
Nodutdol for Korean Comm. Dev. – NYC: <https://nodutdol.org>
Popular Resistance: <https://popularresistance.org/>
Samidoun – Palestine Prisoner Solidarity Network: <https://samidoun.net/>
SI Solidarity Iran: <https://ar-ar.facebook.com/groups/solidarityiran/>
United National Antiwar Coalition: <https://www.unacepeace.org/>
US-Cuba Normalization: <https://www.us-cubanormalization.org/viva-cuba/>
U.S. Peace Council: <https://uspeacecouncil.org/>
Veterans For Peace: <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/>

Sanctions Kill, 2019

A Brief List of Webinars that Explain Sanctions

The World Stands Up to Sanctions

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBAt4tIHFHw>>

Sanctions have been imposed on over 40 countries by the United States in order to help create dissent to push for regime change. These sanctions primarily hurt the people of the sanctioned countries. This is especially true during the COVID pandemic as the US denies countries vaccines and medical equipment.

But sanctioned countries are now working together and finding ways around these sanctions. Learn what is happening as the World Stands Up to Sanctions.

Francisco Campbell: Nicaraguan Ambassador to the US

Carlos Ron: Venezuela's vice minister of Foreign Affairs for North America

Deacon Yoseph Teferi: Chairman of Ethiopian American Civic Council

Foad Izaadi: Assoc. Prof. , University of Tehran

Erica Jung: Nodutdol: Korean grassroots org.

Elias Amare: Eritrean AmAmerican Journalist

Dr. Kee B. Park: Harvard Medical School Neurosurgeon who volunteers in DPRK

Sanctioned Countries Denounce US's New Military Threats

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNihW8XcV-Y>>

Hear Speakers on Impact of U.S. sanctions and military threats on several countries. Speakers are:

Dr. Medhat Abbas: Director of Primary Care, speaking from Gaza

Dr. Yahyia Mohammed Saleh Murshed: Union of Arab Academics, speaking from Sana'a University, Yemen

Carlos Ron: Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking from Venezuela

Sayed Hosein Mousavian: Retired Iranian Ambassador, now teaching at Princeton University

The Ultimate Guide on Sanctions Against Venezuela

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wZILPASxwI>>

Produced by: Venezuelanalysis.com

After cycling through different options to oust the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, the US settled on a weapon of choice: economic sanctions (aka unilateral coercive measures).

What are sanctions? How do they work? What has their impact been? In our latest joint production with Tatum Tv, we go deep into Washington's collective punishment of Venezuelans as well as the surrounding corporate media coverage.

The US Government is Mongering War on Ethiopia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g72Izax4d_I>

OBN Oromiyaa (Oromia Broadcasting Network) hosts speaker:

Ajamu Baraka of the Black Alliance for Peace

Sanctioned Countries Speak Out on COVID-19

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kW894e6zMg>>

Produced by: Popular Resistance

Ana Silvia Rodriguez: Cuban Ambassador to the UN

Francisco O. Campbell: Nicaraguan Ambassador to the US

Carlos Ron: Venezuela's Vice Minister for North America

Bashar Ja'afari: Syrian Ambassador to the UN

Omowale Clay: December 12th Movement, on behalf of Zimbabwe

Introducers and other participants: Gail Walker (IFCO Pastors for Peace); Gerry Condon (Veterans For Peace); Teri Mattson (CODE PINK); Bahman Azad (U.S. Peace Council); Margaret Flowers (Popular Resistance); Emily Thomas (IFCO Pastors for Peace); Joe Lombardo (UNAC); Sara Flounders (IAC); Jim Wallace (Sanctions Kill Coalition)

Sanctions, a Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g72Izax4d_I>

Produced by: United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC)

Sanctions, the illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed on a third of humanity by the US and its allies, are a form of warfare and an ever more contested means of enforcing the dominance of the west on the majority of the world's peoples. In fact, sanctions are boomeranging on the US bloc with inflation causing hardship at home and US dollar dominance is being challenged. However, by far the greatest burden is borne by some 40 countries targeted by the lethal sanctions, with the impacts ever more punishing. This webinar, presented in December 2022, launched the new SanctionsKill book and featured speakers on the latest developments in key regions of the world.

Sara Flounders, International Action Center

Ajamu Baraka, Black Alliance for Peace

Carlos Martinez, International Manifesto Group

Lee Siu Hin, China-US Solidarity Network

Judy Bello, United National Antiwar Coalition, Syria Solidarity Movement

Erica Jung - Nodutdol Korean Community Development

Ann Garrison, Pacifica Radio Reporter and Black Agenda Report

Rick Sterling, Task Force on the Americas

Sources

- Ajamu, A.** *Solidarity on Ending Illegal Sanctions on Zimbabwe.* (UNAC Blog, 2019) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2019/10/10/solidarity-on-ending-illegal-sanctions-on-zimbabwe/>>
- All-African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP).** *Pan-African and International Solidarity will Break Sanctions.* (Hood Communist, 2020) <<https://hoodcommunist.org/2020/07/16/pan-african-and-international-solidarity-will-break-sanctions/>>
- Baraka, A.** *Class Warfare and Socialist Resistance in Latin America.* (Hood Communist, 2021) <<https://hoodcommunist.org/2021/11/11/nicaragua-cuba-and-venezuela-class-warfare-and-socialist-resistance/>>
- Bartolotti, P.** *Sanctions in Gaza.* (International Action Center, 2020) <<https://iacenter.org/2020/02/21/sanctions-in-gaza/>>
- Bello, J.** *Deadly New Sanctions on Syria.* (UNAC Blog, 2020) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2020/06/12/deadly-new-sanctions-on-syria/>>
- Berletic, B.** *China Rescues Myanmar From Dangerous Dollar-Dominated Waters.* (New Eastern Outlook, 2021) <<https://journal-neo.org/2021/12/17/china-rescues-myanmar-from-dangerous-dollar-dominated-waters/>>
- Caines, E.** *Recentering Internationalism: An Analysis of Economic Sanctions.* (Hood Communist, 2020) <<https://hoodcommunist.org/2020/05/28/recentering-internationalism-an-analysis-of-economic-sanctions/>>
- Chicago Antiwar Coalition (CWAC).** *Oppose U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela, Illegal and Criminal Interference.* (UNAC Blog, 2020) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2020/08/24/oppose-u-s-sanctions-on-venezuela-illegal-and-criminal-interference/>>
- Dunkel, G.** *Famine in Africa: The Role of Sanctions.* (Workers World, 2022) <<https://www.workers.org/2022/06/64708/>>
- Flounders, S.** *Evaluating Biden's Yemen Policy: Bait and Switch.* (International Action Center, 2021) <<https://iacenter.org/2021/02/12/evaluating-bidens-yemen-policy-bait-and-switch/>>
- Flounders, S.** *Sanctions-A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy.* (International Action Center, 2022) <<https://iacenter.org/2022/05/27/sanctions-wrecking-ball-in-a-global-economy/>>
- Flowers, M.** *Sanctions Kill Toolkit.* (Sanctions Kill, 2021) <<https://sanctionskill.org/toolkit/>>
- Galant, M.** *CEPR Sanctions Watch July 2022.* (CEPR, 2022) <<https://cepr.net/cepr-sanctions-watch-july-2022/>>
- Garrison, A. and Philpot, J.** *Sanctioning the Horn of Africa.* (Black Agenda Report, 2022) <<https://blackagendareport.com/sanctioning-horn-africa>>

-Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War and le Mouvement Québécois pour la Paix. *Joint Statement Against Canadian Sanctions.* (Hamilton Coalition to End the War, 2021) <<http://hamiltoncoalitiontostopthewar.ca/joint-statement-against-canadas-economic-sanctions/>>

-Harris, R. *Venezuelan Diplomat Alex Saab Imprisoned for Circumventing US Sanctions.* (International Action Center, 2022) <<https://iacenter.org/2022/12/11/venezuelan-diplomat-alex-saab-imprisoned-for-circumventing-us-sanctions/>>

-Jung, E. *Korea/DPRK: Surviving US/ UN Sanctions and Military Threats.* (UNAC Blog, 2022) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2022/09/30/korea-dprk-surviving-us-un-sanctions-and-military-threats/>>

-Kerner, Z. *Let Afghanistan live!* (Workers World, 2021) <<https://www.workers.org/2021/12/60695/>>

-Lee Siu Hin 李小軒. *U.S. Sanctions Will Make China Stronger.* (Popular Resistance, 2022) <<https://popularresistance.org/us-sanctions-will-make-china-stronger/>>

-Martinez, C. *Sanctions in the New Cold War on China.* (UNAC Blog, 2022) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2022/09/30/sanctions-and-the-new-cold-war-on-china/>>

-Moorehead, M. *World Condemns U.S. Blockade of Cuba* <Workers World, 2022) <https://www.workers.org/2022/>>

-Nahem, I. *Washington Humiliated, Cuba Lifted Up, by 2022 UNGA Vote* (International US-Cuba Normalization Committee Coalition, 2022) <<https://www.us-cubanormalization.org/viva-cuba/the-emperor-has-no-clothes/>>

-Norton, B. and Blumenthal, M. *US Economic Terrorism will Backfire, Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister* (The Grayzone, 2019) <<https://thegrayzone.com/2019/07/22/us-economic-terrorism-iranian-foreign-minister-zarif-nicaragua/>>

-Shahrabi, H. *Lessons Learnt – Iran.* (UNAC Blog, 2022) <<https://unac.notowar.net/2022/10/03/lessons-learnt-in-iran/>>

-Smith, L. *United States Imposed Economic Sanctions: The Big Heist.* (MR Online, 2020) <<https://mronline.org/2020/03/10/united-states-imposed-economic-sanctions-the-big-heist/>>

-Sterling, R., Philpot, J, Paul, D. *US Sanctions: War by Other Means.* (Sanctions Kill, 2022) <<https://sanctionskill.org/2022/10/02/oct2022-sanctions-report-summary/>>

-Swan, R. *Venezuela Seeks Investigation by International Criminal Court (ICC) as to Whether U.S. Sanctions Constitute Crimes Against Humanity.* (Covert Action Magazine, 2022) <<https://covertactionmagazine.com/2022/04/11/venezuela-seeks-investigation-by-international-criminal-court-icc-as-to-whether-u-s-sanctions-constitute-crimes-against-humanity/>>

-United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC). *Letter in Support of the Syrian*

People. Letter Condemning US Attacks on Syria and in the Middle East. (UNAC Blog, 2021) <<https://unac.notowar.net/statement-of-solidarity-with-the-syrian-people/>>

-Wallace, J. *What You Can Do - Taking Action. (Sanctions Kill, 2020) <<https://sanctionskill.org/what-you-can-do/>>*

-Wareham, R. and Plummer, V. *December 12th Letter to Congressional Leaders: Lift United States Sanctions on Zimbabwe. (Sanctions Kill, 2021) <https://sanctionskill.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/1612114314064_COVID-19-LTR-to-Black-Congressional-Leadership-1.pdf>*

Sanctions Kill Campaign:

-Sanctions Kill Campaign. *End All Warfare! No to Sanctions! (Sanctions Kill, 2022). <<https://sanctionskill.org/2022/03/17/ukraine-2022-end-all-warfare-no-sanctions>>*

-Sanctions Kill Campaign. *Founding Statement: What are Sanctions? (Sanctions Kill, 2019). <<https://sanctionskill.org/english/>>*

-Sanctions Kill Campaign. *Tell the Biden Administration to End Economic Sanctions in the Face of the COVID 19 Pandemic (Sanctions Kill, 2021). <<https://sanctionskill.org/petition/>>*

-Sanctions Kill Campaign. *The United States is Doubling Down on Deadly Sanctions (Popular Resistance, 2021). <<https://popularresistance.org/the-united-states-is-doubling-down-on-deadly-sanctions/>>*

Webinars:

-Sanctions, a Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy <https://youtu.be/6_ro7VTvOc8>

-Sanctioned Countries Denounce US's New Military Threats. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNihW8XcV-Y>>

-Sanctioned Countries Speak Out on COVID-19. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kW894e6zMg>>

-The Ultimate Guide on Sanctions Against Venezuela <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wZILPASxwI>>

-The U.S. Government is Warmongering in Ethiopia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g72Izax4d_I>

-The World Stands Up to Sanctions (2022). Youtube. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lBA4t1HFFHw>>

Acclaim for the book

What people are saying about: *Sanctions, A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy* –

Sanctions -A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy is a critical analysis of an often ignored aspect of U.S. and Western wars: sanctions. It is a must-read for anyone who wants genuine peace in our time. - **Danny Haiphong, *The Left Lens and Friends of Socialist China***

I commend this book. It is a great organizing and political education tool for our work. This will be especially helpful to young people as they join and swell the ranks of our anti-imperialist movement. Sanctions are acts of war and must be treated as such; they cause tremendous, needless suffering. We must study this book carefully and share its analysis and recommendations. I look forward to it being translated into other languages.... - **Asantewaa Nkrumah-Ture, *Black Alliance for Peace and Green Party - Philadelphia Chapters***

In these topsy turvy times, the world's leading capitalist power constrains international trade rather than promotes "free trade." The SanctionsKill book explains this paradox with incisive case studies from some of the one-third of humanity that has endured and resisted Washington's unilateral coercive measures, which weaponize access to the basic necessities of life. - **Roger D. Harris, *Task Force on the Americas***

"... A landmark in progressive political publications. ...The United States and its allies use unilateral coercive measures to attempt to impose an economic and political agenda.... used extensively since the United States is militarily quite weak and has no moral authority to use military violence to impose its will." – **John Philpot, a Quebec-based international criminal defense lawyer and a former judge at the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal**

Scott Ritter, Political and Military Analyst, Former U.S. Marine Officer and United Nations Weapons Inspector, said the following about

"Sanctions, a Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy":

I observed first-hand, from 1991-2002, the inhumanity and ineffectiveness of US-led sanctions targeting Iraq.

*I can say without fear of contradiction that the publication of *Sanctions—A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy* provides a much-needed source of historical and current information about the nefarious reality of America's go-to policy of choice—sanctions.*

With US-led sanctions on Russia boomeranging back to harm the sanctioning parties more than the sanctioned, it is critical that the public at large get involved in the kind of informed debate, discussion, and dialogue necessary to effect change on the part of those who continue to view sanctions as a viable policy option.

This book serves as an invaluable resource in that effort. —W. Scott Ritter, December 20, 2022

SANCTIONS

A WRECKING BALL IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY

AN ANTHOLOGY BY SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS

- U.S. sanctions are powerful weapons of compliance that operate in the shadows.
- The impact of sanctions on more than 40 developing and formerly colonized countries, one third of the world's population, was barely discussed in mainstream media for decades.
- The vibrations of hyperinflation, chronic shortages, and economic dislocation on surrounding countries were ignored.
- The sanctions on Russia and China boomeranged. Supply chain chaos, shortages leading to famines, inflation, and energy instability have shaken the global economy.
- Most countries of the Global South have refused to respect U.S. and EU legislation that damages their access to essential grains and energy.
- The U.S. dollar is now challenged as the currency of global trade. New forms of currency exchange using ruble, yuan, rupee are a growing option.
- Despite the intense pressure of economic shortages, countries have survived. What measures have they used?
- What new forms of trade threaten U.S. global hegemony and a unipolar world?

This compilation is a rich source of information of the impact of U.S. sanctions on individual countries and a global upheaval.

A Project of the SanctionsKill Campaign

The SanctionsKill Campaign is an activist project. Using petitions, actions, webinars, fact sheets and reports, the campaign exposes the human cost of sanctions. The campaign has developed multi-media teaching tools that are included in this book.

Published by
WORLD VIEW FORUM
New York, NY



ISBN 978-0-895 67-204-9 \$20.00
5 2000 >



9 780895 672049