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US Sanctions Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Chairman Flake, Ranking Member Markey, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the effectiveness of targeted sanctions in Africa. I applaud you for addressing this important instrument of US and international peace and security policy, one that does not often receive adequate attention.

My comments today are based on my previous experience as Assistant Secretary of Commerce responsible for regulating dual use goods and technology, as well as more recent academic research and initiatives to strengthen the instrument of UN sanctions. The Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University has been engaged in research on UN targeted sanctions for more than 15 years, collaborating with Member States and the Secretariat to make such measures more effective. Along with colleagues at The Graduate Institute in Geneva, we formed the *Targeted Sanctions Consortium (TSC)*, an international group of scholars and practitioners conducting a comprehensive and comparative analysis of the impacts and effectiveness of UN sanctions, which resulted in publication of the book, [*Targeted Sanctions: The Impacts and Effectiveness of United Nations Action*](#) this April. In addition to developing new qualitative and quantitative databases on the universe of UN sanctions (which also resulted in an online tool, [SanctionsApp](#)), I also helped to organize with colleagues at Compliance and Capacity Skills International, the [High Level Review of UN Sanctions](#) which focused on strengthening implementation of UN sanctions. In this capacity, I've had the opportunity to engage with and international policymakers, national regulators, and civil society involved in UN and US sanctions. The views expressed today, however, are my own, and are not necessarily endorsed by any entity or colleagues with whom I am affiliated.

Due to time constraints and the wealth of experience of other witnesses, my statement will focus on the effectiveness of *UN sanctions* in addressing threats to international peace and security in Africa. I am happy to provide any additional information, including greater statistical analysis based upon our book and other initiatives addressing aspects of US sanctions.

Evolution of UN Sanctions¹

The past quarter century has witnessed a significant transformation in the use of UN targeted sanctions. Instead of comprehensive economic embargoes such as the one employed against Iraq in the early 1990s with resulting injurious humanitarian consequences, the Security Council deliberately shifted to “targeted” or “smart” sanctions as a means of focusing measures on the decision-makers and their principal supporters responsible for violations of international norms. All UN sanctions since 1994 have been targeted in some manner.

As global threats have evolved, innovation in the design and application of UN sanctions has ensued. From the original focus on primarily cross-border attacks and civil wars in Africa, the rationale for sanctions has expanded to encompass prevention of new forms of human rights violations (such as sexual and gender-based violence and recruitment of child soldiers), thwarting the development of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, stemming terrorism, countering the financing of conflict through exploitation of natural resources or criminal activities, controlling natural resources to prevent exploitation of mineral development,

¹ For more detailed discussion of the evolution of UN targeted sanctions, see “The Role of Sanctions” in [The UN Security Council in the 21st Century](#).



restoring democratically elected governments, and countering violent extremism. At the same time, UN sanctions are increasingly used along with other crisis management tools—diplomacy, mediation, peacekeeping, referrals to international judicial processes, as well as the imposition of sanctions by entities other than the UN, including regional groups as well as individual countries.

With UN sanctions targeting specific goods, services, individuals and entities, new issues have arisen over time—the need to ensure that UN sanctions are reconciled with the rule of law, particularly respect for due process and human rights; the focus on nonstate actors; new expert mechanisms to monitor implementation; and greater reliance on the private sector to implement sanctions, requiring new partnerships and strategies to ensure effectiveness. These institutional dynamics reflect the need for the Security Council, the Secretariat and UN agencies, Member States, and related international actors to adapt continually to the intricacies of new threats to international peace and security.

Objectives and Types of UN Sanctions in Africa²

Under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council imposes sanctions to maintain or restore international peace and security. Sanctions have been used for a variety of purposes, and have expanded over time as the Security Council has encountered a broader array of threats to international peace and security. Sanctions have been used to neutralize spoilers in conflict and peacekeeping contexts, and the Council has signaled its intention to sanction recruiters of child soldiers, suspected pirates, and groups using natural resources, including wildlife products, to finance conflict. Sanctions have also been focused on actors disrupting peace agreements and peacekeeping missions, those involved in unconstitutional changes of government (Côte d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Guinea Bissau). Today, the UN utilizes sanctions to address six general categories of threats to international peace and security: armed conflict (including support for peace negotiations and peace enforcement often in African countries), terrorism, WMD proliferation, unconstitutional changes of government, governance of resources, and protection of civilians.³

To address these challenges, the Security Council employs sanctions for three strategic purposes: 1) to coerce targets into changing policies or behavior (the most widely perceived goal of sanctions); 2) to constrain targets in their ability to conduct proscribed activities; and 3) to signal support for an international norm or stigmatize targets. Such purposes are not mutually exclusive, and most sanctions have multiple objectives.⁴ For example, nonproliferation sanctions against Iran and North Korea attempted to change regimes’ behavior and to stigmatize their

² See also Appendices 2 and 3 for more detail on the primary objectives of UN African sanctions and a chart on African states subject to UN and African regional sanctions.

³ Principal objectives of sanctions referred to here reflect the general categories adopted by the [Targeted Sanctions Consortium](#) to differentiate the political objectives that UN sanctions seek to achieve. Following are the categories and percentages of sanction episodes determined by the TSC: armed conflict (cease hostilities, negotiate or enforce peace agreement, support peacebuilding) 59 percent; counterterrorism 14 percent; nonproliferation 11 percent; and support democracy (restoration of an elected government) 10 percent. The remaining includes protection of civilians under the Responsibility-to-Protect, support of judicial processes, and more effective governance of natural resources. While respect and support for human rights is a frequently cited rationale for UN sanctions, human rights is rarely a primary objective of sanctions.

⁴ Notwithstanding the multiple purposes of sanctions, popular discourse remains fixated on the coercive aspect, often to the exclusion of the other purposes. Public commentary usually focuses on whether sanctions “work” in forcing a change of behavior, failing to understand and appreciate the important constraining and signaling functions of UN sanctions.



violations of nonproliferation norms, but primarily focused on constraining access to goods, technology, and finance that could assist WMD programs. All UN sanctions address threats to international peace and security and involve signaling or stigmatizing in some manner.

Sanctions are targeted in variety of ways—against individuals, corporate entities (e.g., firms, political parties, or other nonstate actors such as UNITA, al-Qaeda, ISIL), sectors of an economy (e.g., aviation or arms, financial, or commodities such as oil, diamonds, or timber); or specific regions of a country (as in Darfur in western Sudan). Targeted sanctions attempt to deny targets the means to wage conflict or otherwise threaten international peace and security, while minimizing the impact on innocent civilians and the population as a whole. Specifically, targeted measures include asset freezes, travel or visa restrictions, aviation bans, arms embargoes, and restrictions on commodities such as diamonds, timber, oil, charcoal, and luxury goods. The most frequently utilized sanctions include arms embargoes, and financial and travel measures.

Currently the UN maintains thirteen sanctions regimes, including eight country-based regimes in Africa -- Somalia/Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Libya, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, Yemen, and South Sudan.⁵ The following table provides an overview of sanctions imposed on African countries by the United Nations.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL SANCTIONS ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES (1990-2016)

CASES	Targeted								Panel of Experts
	<i>Arms</i>	<i>Financial</i>	<i>Travel</i>	<i>Aviation</i>	<i>Oil</i>	<i>Diamonds</i>	<i>Timber</i>	<i>Other</i>	
Somalia/Eritrea <i>(1992-</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓ ⁱ	✓
[Libya I] <i>(1992-2003)</i>	[✓]	[✓]		[✓]				[✓] ⁱⁱ	
Libya II <i>(2011-</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
[Liberia] <i>(1992-2016)</i>	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]			[✓]	[✓]		[✓]
[Angola (UNITA)] <i>(1993-2002)</i>	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]		[✓]	[✓]		[✓] ⁱⁱⁱ	[✓]
[Rwanda] <i>(1994-2008)</i>	[✓]								[✓] ^{iv}
[Sudan I] <i>(1996-2001)</i>			[✓]	[✓]				[✓] ^v	
Sudan II <i>(2004-</i>	✓	✓	✓						✓

⁵ The remaining regimes include sanctions against al-Qaeda/ISIL and globally affiliated terrorist groups, the Taliban, Iraq, nonproliferation sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and individuals suspected of involvement in the 2005 bombing in Beirut that killed then-Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.



[Sierra Leone] (1997-2010)	[✓]		[✓]		[✓]	[✓]			[✓]
[Eritrea/ Ethiopia] (2000-2001)	[✓]								
Democratic Republic of Congo (2003-	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
[Côte d'Ivoire] (2004-2016)	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]			[✓]			[✓]
Guinea-Bissau (2012-			✓						
Central African Republic (2013-	✓	✓	✓						✓
Yemen (2014-	✓	✓	✓						✓
South Sudan (2015-		✓	✓						✓

Brackets [] indicate UN sanctions terminated

i Charcoal exports and imports

ii Oil-related equipment

iii Sanctions against UNITA included diplomatic measures (closing of offices), a ban on the supply of aircraft, spare parts and servicing, prohibition on equipment for mining/mining services, and a transportation ban on motorized vehicles, watercraft, and ground or water-borne services to areas in Angola

iv Commission of Inquiry to collect information on the arms embargo (first expert-panel type mechanism)

v Diplomatic restrictions including reduction in the number and level of staff at Sudanese missions

While more than sixty percent (eight of thirteen) of current UN regimes remain focused on armed conflict and peacebuilding objectives in African countries, sanctions focused on the threat of terrorism (al-Qaeda, ISIL, the Taliban) and the threat of nuclear proliferation (North Korea) receive a disproportionate share of the Security Council's attention and resources.⁶

Research Results

The Targeted Sanctions Consortium adopted two distinctive conceptual innovations in assessing the impact and effectiveness of UN sanctions: first, the unit of analysis is a case episode rather than a country sanctions regime, some of which have been in existence for more than twenty years. This allows for a more detailed assessment of changes in types and purposes of targeted

⁶ While most UN sanctions are aimed at ending conflict, supporting peacebuilding, or restoring democratically elected governments in Africa (68% of TSC episodes), there is an inverse relationship between the number of sanctions regimes and the resources put at their disposal. See appendices B and C in the chapter by Alix Boucher and Katy Clement, "Coordination of UN sanctions with other actors and instruments," in *Targeted Sanctions*.



sanctions over time (as a result, the TSC database includes 23 different country regimes broken down into 63 case episodes for comparative analysis). Secondly, sanctions are assessed according to three different (and frequently simultaneous) purposes: to coerce a change in the target's behavior; to constrain a target from engaging in proscribed activity (by denying access to critical resources such as financing, technology, etc.); and to signal and/or stigmatize a target or others about the violation of an international norm.

Following are TSC findings relevant to African sanctions:

- UN sanctions in Africa constitute the majority of all UN sanctions – about 70% of the episodes. In the early days, sanctions frequently were imposed in an ad hoc manner, without a coherent coordinated strategy; rather than as part of a well-designed comprehensive approach to address conflict, sanctions were often the tool of first resort that substituted for policy. While understandable that during times of crisis, governments act quickly, the use of sanctions to demonstrate resolve without integrating them into an overall strategy is largely ineffective.

For this reason, it is important that the objectives of sanctions are clearly articulated at the outset, for the targets to understand precise actions that need to be taken for sanctions to be lifted. Too often, vague criteria and moving goalposts prolong sanctions unnecessarily. The Security Council (and even Member States) has difficulty terminating sanctions regimes once imposed (for example, in Liberia). Automatic extension of sanctions regimes diffuses signals as to expected actions, undermining their credibility.

- Targeting (the list of specific individuals and entities subject to sanctions) is important and should reflect the purposes of sanctions. Too many, or more commonly in the case of African sanctions, too few, or even wrong targets undermine credibility of sanctions.

- Different types of targeted sanctions differ in degree of discrimination.⁷ With the exception of the 2011 sanctions on Libya, most UN sanctions largely remain targeted in design. In implementation of sanctions, however, Member States or private sector actors concerned with the reputational risks if found to be noncompliant, may interpret measures in an overly broad manner, which expands the impact and unintended consequences of sanctions

Following are characteristics of effective UN sanctions:

Relationship to other policy instruments

UN sanctions do not exist in isolation, and always include the presence of other policy instrument seeking to achieve related objectives. Diplomatic negotiations occurred more than 95% of the time, and peacekeeping forces are on the ground in 62% of episodes. Some aspects of force (i.e. limited strikes and operations, robust military missions, no fly zone or naval

⁷ Degrees of Discrimination (or “comprehensiveness”) of different types of targeted sanctions include the most discriminating/targeted individual sanctions (e.g. travel ban, assets freeze, diplomatic restrictions (in which only one sector of government directly affected), to arms embargoes (which are largely limited to affecting fighting forces) and commodity sanctions (e.g. diamonds, timber, charcoal which tend to affect some regions disproportionately), to broad sectoral sanctions such as oil and financial (which affect an entire population and therefore are the least discriminating of targeted sanctions). Comprehensive sanctions are non-discriminating.



blockages) were used 52% of the time, and legal tribunals were present in 46% of the cases. Sanctions need to be part of a broader coordinated strategy. (Effective sanctions are associated with multiple (at least 3) policy instruments).

Objectives and types of sanctions

In terms of effectiveness, UN targeted sanctions are effective more than 20% of the time and are *nearly three times more effective in constraining or signaling than coercing a change in target behavior*.

Arms embargos, the most frequently imposed sanction especially in African conflicts (in 89% of episodes) are the least effective especially when applied in isolation. Arms embargoes are frequently the first type of sanction imposed.

Most targeted sanctions are employed in combination with other sanctions measures. Travel bans are the next most utilized measure (69% of cases), followed by asset freezes (66%); travel bans are frequently employed in combination with asset freezes (73% of cases).

Commodity sanctions are employed in 40% of cases, and always in situations of armed conflict in Africa (77%). Sanctions on diamonds (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Cote d'Ivoire), oil (Libya, Angola, Sierra Leone), charcoal (Somalia), timber (Liberia), when appropriate, appear highly effective, especially for purposes of constraint (69%) and signaling (76%).

Also, secondary sanctions applied to neighboring states, although applied infrequently (only two times or 6% of cases - against Liberia in the case of its support for the RUF in Sierra Leone, and against Eritrea over its arms exports to Al Shabaab in Somalia), appear to be highly effective.

Importance of regional sanctions

The past several decades have witnessed an increase in sanctions applied by regional organizations. In 74% percent of the episodes analyzed by the TSC, other regional sanctions of the European Union, the African Union⁸, or the Economic Community of West African States preceded initial imposition of UN sanctions. Often resulting from a request by a regional body that has already imposed individual sanctions (travel ban or assets freeze) on targets, UN sanctions often complement pre-existing sanctions, and effectiveness appears enhanced by regional measures.

Moreover, targeted sanctions are more complicated to design and implement than comprehensive economic measures; greater technical expertise is required to administer asset freezes, enforce travel sanctions, implement arms embargoes, and calibrate sanctions. The 2011 sanctions on Libya, while targeted on the financial and oil sectors, affected a significant volume of assets (reportedly in excess of \$160 billion) and posed significant complications for the sanctions committee and national governments. Less targeted financial measures against a central bank or economic sector such as petroleum, affect a greater portion of the population as a whole and can have the effect of making sanctions more comprehensive.

⁸ The African Union is primarily concerned with non-constitutional changes of government and routinely applies sanctions to its own members. ECOWAS has sanctioned about half of its members.



I also want to call attention to the fact that even targeted sanctions have unintended consequences. TSC research highlighted some of these effects, including increases in corruption and criminality, strengthening of authoritarian rule, and decline in legitimacy of Security Council. Additional consequences of international policies/sanctions related to countering the financing of terrorism/anti-money laundering also include “derisking” or the inability of remitters or money service businesses and charities to access financial services. These problems have been particularly acute in African countries such as Somalia, Sudan, and Angola where humanitarian assistance needs are greatest. Access by nonprofit groups to banks and international funds transfers necessary to get aid into regions of conflict is the subject of new research funded by the Gates Foundation.

Security Council sanctions have played an important role in numerous African countries, helping to end violence, promote peace agreements and transition to post-conflict societies, gain governmental control of natural resources, and support transitions to democratically-elected governments. Appendix 1 provides examples of effective African sanctions for the purposes of coercion, constraint, and signaling. Institutional learning by the Security Council and States over the past two decades implementing UN sanctions reflects undeniable progress, but challenges persist that continue to hamper more effective utilization of the sanctions instrument.

Challenges to Effective Sanctions

As the international community increasingly relies on United Nations sanctions, problems regarding implementation have become more pronounced. Weak implementation, inadequate monitoring and enforcement, and misperceptions and a lack of understanding constitute the primary obstacles to more effective UN sanctions.

Weak Implementation and Capacity

Many countries lack basic legal authority and administrative mechanisms to translate UN sanctions into domestic law and regulations, fundamental to give full force to sanctions. The ability to freeze assets without prior judicial action, exercise appropriate border and visa controls, and enforce restrictions on exports of arms and dual-use goods and technology is often limited or nonexistent. In many cases, failure to implement sanctions boils down to simple lack of capacity at the domestic level. There are no systematic UN attention, resources, and training to support national sanctions capacity building.

Inadequate Monitoring and Enforcement

Outside the work of panels of experts, there is little tracking of sanctions implementation or other means to monitor national compliance efforts. There is no enforcement mechanism or body to address sanctions violations. When no consequences result, targets come to regard the threat of coercion as empty, further eroding the credibility of sanctions.

With P5 members’ predominant focus on counterterrorism and nonproliferation issues and disproportionate attention and resources, sanctions dealing with armed conflict, especially in Africa receive far fewer resources and attention, notwithstanding the fact that they constitute the majority of UN sanctions. Distinct challenges posed by African regimes—including inconsistent



cooperation with peacekeeping operations and the failure to devote adequate attention to human rights, conflict prevention, and peace enforcement sanctions, translate into weaker enforcement than for counterterrorism and nonproliferation sanctions.

Misperceptions and Lack of Understanding

Notwithstanding the move to targeted measures and significant procedural innovations, public perception remains largely skeptical of sanctions. Many UN conflict resolution actors view sanctions as politically toxic complications for their mandates, and shy away from association, contributing to a lack of coherence and effective implementation of UN peace and security policies.

More broadly, public understanding of the purpose and effects of sanctions is extremely limited. Fears of the consequences of comprehensive economic sanctions persist, despite the fact that the last time the Security Council imposed comprehensive measures was in 1994. Policy debates remain fixated on whether they “work” in forcing a change of behavior, failing to recognize the important constraining and signaling functions of UN sanctions. Perceptions that “sanctions don’t work” especially related to Africa, contribute to a profound cynicism regarding the utility and efficacy of sanctions.

Recommendations to Strengthen UN Sanctions in Africa

P5 interests will continue to diverge, especially those related to national economic interests which loom large in Africa. Nevertheless, more can and should be done to prioritize and strengthen the implementation of UN sanctions.⁹ Recommendations for UN sanctions to be more effective instruments of international conflict resolution include:

Improve Member States and Regional Capacities to Implement Sanctions

Notwithstanding practical limitations on the adoption of new sanctions, as witnessed in the case of Syria, the Council and Member States should vigorously implement and enforce all existing UN sanctions, focusing especially on African sanctions and not just those related to nonproliferation and counterterrorism. Greater US leadership and focus on conflict-related sanctions is important for sustained credibility of sanctions. The High Level Review of UN Sanctions recommended that new measures and resources be undertaken for sanctions assistance generally, including cooperation with regional organization in strengthening and coordinating efforts to implement asset freezes, travel bans, and arms embargos. In particular, the African Union has expressed interest in such assistance previously and represents an ideal opportunity to develop new approaches to capacity-building training and services.

Enhance Sanctions Monitoring and Enforcement

More vigorous monitoring and enforcement of UN sanctions, as well as specific consequences for noncompliance, would strengthen their credibility. When the Security Council determines that a country is deliberately violating Council sanctions, consequences should result, with the Council developing a menu of secondary sanctions against UN members found to violate sanctions. Member States should revive enforcement assistance, particularly initiatives similar

⁹ The 2015 *Compendium of the High Level Review of UN Sanctions* contains a detailed discussion of these issues and related recommendations. See <http://www.hlr-unsanctions.org/>.



to the sanctions assistance missions (SAMs) deployed in the early 1990s to monitor implementation of sanctions against the former republic of Yugoslavia, expanding beyond border controls to enforcement of travel bans, financial sanctions, and arms embargoes.

Strengthen Cooperation with Regional Groups and Civil Society

Coordination of regional measures with UN and national sanctions should be strengthened, and civil society, including both the private sector and NGOs, should become more involved partners in implementing UN sanctions so as to promote enhanced effectiveness.

Develop Better Analysis and Understanding of Sanctions

Finally, the UN and Member States should promote better understanding and analysis of conditions under which more effectual sanctions are likely to result. Effective implementation of sanctions is made more difficult by the lack of accurate information and misunderstanding about the impacts and effectiveness of targeted measures. Greater understanding of the optimal conditions under which sanctions are most effective, and appreciation that sanctions have multiple and simultaneous purposes (coercion, constraint, and signaling), will result in more realistic expectations of what sanctions can reasonably be expected to achieve. Since UN targeted sanctions are nearly three times more effective in constraining and signaling targets than in coercing a change of behavior; more resources should be invested in sanctions intended to constrain/signal, given their relative effectiveness.

Conclusion

UN targeted sanctions have made important contributions in achieving US policy objectives, but to a limited degree and not without important unintended consequences. Progress has been made in recent years to enhance implementation, but more needs to be done for sanctions to be used to full effect in advancing US and international security objectives in Africa.

Notwithstanding the mixed record of effectiveness of UN sanctions, the fact remains that sanctions are one of the few tools of the international community to promote international peace and security, short of the use of force. Sanctions will continue as an essential component of US and the Security Council's response to international threats.

Concerted attention, leadership, and action by like-minded states to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of sanctions, as well as enhancing the capacity of Member States to carry out their obligations, are necessary to make sanctions an even more potent and indispensable tool of collective security in Africa.

Thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of U.S. and international sanctions as policy tools in Africa. I look forward to questions and being of assistance to the Subcommittee as you continue to address these critical foreign policy challenges.



APPENDIX 1: Examples of Effective African Sanctions¹⁰

Effective Coercion: Libya

Libya - Episode 3 (5 April 1999 – 12 September 2003)

Summary

Sanctions were suspended on 5 April 1999 once the two Lockerbie suspects were handed over to the special Scottish Court in the Netherlands (as specified in UNSCR 1192) and terminated on 12 September 2003 (UNSCR 1506) once compensation was provided and Libya renounced terrorism.

Purposes

Coerce the Government of Libya to provide compensation and renounce terrorism; and signal Libya and international community about norm against state-sponsored terrorism.

Sanction type

All sanctions (aviation ban, arms imports embargo, diplomatic sanctions, government asset freeze, and oil services equipment ban) were suspended in April 1999 (seven months after the conditions for suspension were set in UNSCR 1192) but not terminated until September 2003.

Effectiveness

Coercion (Effective)

Policy outcome: 4/5, Suspects were turned over, trials conducted, compensation provided, and terrorism renounced, but not on the precise terms of the original UNSCRs.

UN sanctions contribution: 4/5, Suspension of sanctions was significant to reinforce legal procedures underway in domestic and international courts regarding compensation.

Constrain

Policy outcome: N/A.

UN sanctions contribution: N/A.

Signaling

Policy outcome: 3/5, Norms against state-sponsored terrorism were consistently articulated in relevant UNSCRs (1192 and 1506), but Qadhafi was able to mobilize support from the AU, Arab League, Non-Aligned Movement and Organization of the Islamic Conference to limit the extent of his stigmatization.

UN sanctions contribution: 4/5, Sanctions suspension created an incentive to accept norms against state-sponsored terrorism in order for Libya to be re-legitimized and reintegrated into the international community.

¹⁰ From Targeted Sanctions Consortium database at http://graduateinstitute.ch/home/research/centresandprogrammes/international-governance/research-projects/UN_Targeted_Sanctions/targeted-sanctions-consortium-da.html.



Unintended consequences: Strengthening of authoritarian rule

Effective Constraint: Liberia

Liberia - Episode 4 (22 December 2003 – 16 June 2006)

Summary

Following the departure of Charles Taylor and progress in the peace process in Sierra Leone, a peace enforcement sanctions regime was established in Liberia to ensure compliance with the comprehensive peace agreement signed in Accra on 18 August 2003 and to support the transitional government of national unity. The Liberian ceasefire was maintained, DDR implemented, and elections were held during this episode. UNSCR 1521 lifted the previous sanctions and immediately re-imposed them in support of a new objective: peace enforcement. The Council also articulated specific criteria for lifting.

UNSCR 1532 imposed financial sanctions on Charles Taylor, his family, and other close associates for misappropriating Liberian funds and property and using them to destabilize the transitional government during the early phase of this episode. Taylor appeared before the Sierra Leone Special Court in April 2006 and was extradited to the Hague in June 2006. Elections were held in 2005 with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf taking office January 2006.

Purpose

Constrain and signal parties that might threaten the comprehensive peace agreement and the transitional government of national unity.

Sanction type

Ongoing arms imports embargo (now exempting internationally trained armed forces and police), ban on exports of rough diamonds, travel ban on individuals undermining peace and stability or supporting armed rebel groups in Liberia and the subregion (including senior members of former President Charles Taylor's Government, their spouses, and members of Liberia's former armed forces retaining links to Charles Taylor), and ban on export of timber (until certification schemes are in place). Newly imposed asset freeze on Charles Taylor, his family members, and close associates (from March 2004).

Effectiveness

Coercion (N/A)

Policy outcome: N/A.

UN sanctions contribution: N/A.

Constraint (Effective)

Policy outcome: 4/5, Panel of Experts concludes that sanctions helped to stabilize the situation in Liberia; elections were held, DDR took place, though Taylor tried to destabilize the process at the outset.

UN sanctions contribution: 3/5, Sanctions against the remnants of Taylor's regime reinforced the peacebuilding efforts of the government of Liberia, but international



tribunals (the Sierra Leone Special Court and ICC) played a major role in constraining Charles Taylor.

Signaling (Effective)

Policy outcome: 5/5, Potential spoilers were deterred from destabilizing the regime.

UN sanctions contribution: 3/5, Sanctions reinforced the peacebuilding efforts of the government of Liberia and international tribunals played a major role in constraining the remnants of Charles Taylor's regime.

Unintended consequences

Increase in international enforcement capacity in different issue domains, humanitarian consequences, widespread harmful economic consequences.

Effective Signaling: Angola

Angola - Episode 4 (12 January 1999 – 9 December 2002)

Summary

The shooting down of the second of two UN aircraft over UNITA controlled territory prompted strong reaction from UNSC (UNSCR 1221). Given the return to full-scale war, UN peacekeepers were removed in February 1999.

Canadian Ambassador Robert Fowler assumed chair of Angola Sanctions Committee in January, which sets up two expert panels in May (one on financing of UNITA and another on arms, later merged). This results in a major strengthening of the sanctions regime in terms of implementation at the UN level. The PoE "Fowler Report" is released and created a storm of protest by naming and shaming of African heads of state for their role in undermining UN sanctions. UNSC sets up a mechanism for monitoring sanctions violations (threat of secondary sanctions) in April 2000, but no secondary measures imposed.

Sanctions were continued in December 2000, and there was evidence that sanctions monitoring had disrupted UNITA's supply lines. A December 2001 offensive against UNITA ended with Savimbi (and his Vice President's) death in February 2002.

Phase out – A truce quickly followed in March, negotiations in April, and UNITA dismantled its armed wing in August. UN lifted sanctions in December 2002.

UNSCRs during the episode included UNSCR 1221 (January 1999) which expressed outrage and specifically named Savimbi and UNSCR 1237 (May 1999), which created a panels of experts. In March 2000 the "Fowler Report" S/2000/203 was released. Following this, UNSCR 1295 (April 2000), established a monitoring mechanism and UNSCR 1448 (December 2002) terminated sanctions immediately before Angola joined the UNSC.

Purposes

Coerce UNITA to cease hostilities and implement the peace agreement; constrain UNITA from being able to act autonomously; stigmatize UNITA and its supporters in other



African countries (including heads of state).

Sanction type

Ongoing arms imports embargo, petroleum and petroleum products imports ban, and aviation ban on UNITA (except through points of entry named by the Government of Angola), asset freeze on UNITA, senior UNITA officials, and their adult family members, diamond exports ban, prohibition on supply of mining and ground or waterborne transportation services and equipment into UNITA controlled areas. Travel ban on senior UNITA officials and their adult family members and visa cancelation measures were suspended in May 2002 and lifted later that year, in November. Diplomatic sanctions on UNITA in the form of limitations of diplomatic representation persisted until the end of the sanctions regime.

Effectiveness

Coercion (Ineffective)

Policy outcome: 1/5, Sanctions contributed to shifting the balance of forces, but Savimbi showed no sign of concessions before his death.

UN sanctions contribution: 2/5, Ultimately, the use of force was decisive.

Constraint (Effective)

Policy outcome: 5/5, Diplomatic sanctions terminated much of UNITA's official presence abroad; diamond sanctions weakened the prospects of UNITA's raising of funds; squeezing the financial sources led to no salt, no beer, and demoralization of Savimbi's forces.

UN sanctions contribution: 4/5, Acknowledgment by the target of the impact of sanctions.

Signaling (Effective)

Policy outcome: 5/5, Savimbi became the principal target and was thoroughly isolated by UNSCR 1221.

UN sanctions contribution: 4/5, Diplomatic pressure was also significant.

Unintended consequences

Increase in corruption and criminality, strengthening of authoritarian rule, decline in the credibility and/or legitimacy of UN Security Council, increase in international enforcement capacity in different issue domains.

APPENDIX 2: Primary objective of UN African sanctions

Primary Objective	TSC Episodes
Counterterrorism	5 Libya in the 1990s (1-3), Sudan in the 1990s (1-2)
Good governance	1 Liberia (5)
Democracy support	3 Sierra Leone (1), Côte d'Ivoire (4), Guinea-Bissau (1)



Armed conflict (cease hostilities, negotiation of settlement, peace enforcement, support peacebuilding)	32	Somalia (1-5), Liberia (1-5), Angola (1-4), Rwanda (1-2), Sierra Leone (2-5), Ethiopia-Eritrea (1), DRC (1-4), Sudan over Darfur (1-2), Côte d'Ivoire (1,2,3,5), Libya in 2011 (3), CAR (1)
Protection of civilians under R2P	2	Libya in 2011 (1-2)
Total	43	UN African episodes out of a total of 63 UN Episodes (original TSC database)

Table created Andrea Charron and Clara Portela, "The relationship between UN and regional sanctions regimes," in *Targeted Sanctions: The Impacts and Effectiveness of United Nations Action*, pg.104.

APPENDIX 3: African states sanctioned between 1990 and 2013

	UN	AU	ECOWAS	SADC
Number of African states sanctioned	13	10	7	1
Number of Member States	193 (54 African)	54	15	15
Per cent of states sanctioned	7 (24 if Africa only)	19	47	7
Which states	Angola, CAR, Côte d'Ivoire , DRC, Eritrea (twice), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau , Liberia, Libya (twice), Rwanda, Sierra Leone , Somalia, Sudan (twice)	CAR, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire , Guinea, Guinea-Bissau , Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Togo	Côte d'Ivoire , Guinea, Guinea-Bissau , Liberia, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone	Madagascar
Most sanctioned state	Sudan (twice), Libya (twice), Eritrea (twice)	Guinea-Bissau (twice), Mauritania (twice)	Guinea-Bissau (twice)	

Note: States sanctioned by three or more organizations are emboldened.

Table created by Andrea Charron and Clara Portela, as contained in "The relationship between UN and regional sanctions regimes," in *Targeted Sanctions: The Impacts and Effectiveness of United Nations Action*, pg. 106.

