



POLICY PAPER

Understanding Strategy and Effectiveness of the Sanctions Targeting Russia

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Introduction

Russia's decision to invade Ukraine has resulted in an unprecedentedly quick succession of sanctions emanating from the European Union and the United States. Ignoring previous practices that favored a linear and gradual enhancement of sanctions, the European Union has passed a series of sanctions packages in quick succession in what has become Europe's primary means of responding to Russian aggression on the continent¹. The United States and the United Kingdom have also been aggressive in imposing new sanctions on Moscow and many East Asian allies such as Taiwan, Japan and South Korea have also replicated Western restrictions.

While the focus has been on the quickness and the strength of the sanctions campaign, there has been little focus on the strategic goals of sanctions and the chances of their success. In order to properly assess the possibility of sanctions effectiveness, we must assess what sanctions effectiveness actually means in general and how it is being defined in this particular case.

Traditionally, sanctions effectiveness is defined not in terms of whether the sanctions harm the economy of the targeted state but whether they can result in behavior modification, meaning a shift to the sanctioned state's (target) policies toward the preferences of the sanctioning parties' (sender) preferences. This could result from the re-establishment of a previous status-quo ante or a negotiated settlement in which sanctions are relieved in favor of concessions². However, many sanctions scholars have identified a wide array of different potential goals for statesmen when applying sanctions such as signaling disapproval, disruption of the offending policy, depriving the target of resources, and broader containment³.

The sanctions campaign against Russia is a somewhat archetypal multilateral sanctions campaign in which many parties coordinate and impose sanctions separately from one another. Many scholars do consider this form of sanctioning to be the most effective as it limits the emergence of 'black knights' that can undermine an effort by the targeted state. However, others have argued that multilateral sanctions campaigns typically involve states with varying levels of commitment creating weaker policies, a poor enforcement environment and uneven signaling⁴.

In the context of the Russia sanctions campaign, there are already significant concerns about the "crumbling" of European and Western unity in opposition to Russia as demonstrated by the increasing complexity of sanctions-related deliberations within the European Union⁵. Many European officials

¹ Portela, C. (2022). Sanctions, conflict and democratic backsliding. June 1st. EUISS: Conflict Series. Available at: <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/sanctions-conflict-and-democratic-backsliding>

² Galtung, J. (1967). On the effects of international economic sanctions, with examples from the case of Rhodesia. *World politics*, 19(3), 378-416. Wallensteen, P. (1968). *A Study of Economic Sanctions*. Institute of Political Science, Uppsala University. Peksen, D. (2009). Better or worse? The effect of economic sanctions on human rights. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(1), 59-77. Early, B. R., and Cilizoglu, M. (2020). Economic Sanctions in Flux: Enduring Challenges, New Policies, and Defining the Future Research Agenda. *International Studies Perspectives*, 21(4), 438-477.

³ Blackwill, R. A. D., and Harris, J. M. (2018). *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (Reprint ed.). Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press 198. Pages Miller, N. L. (2014). The secret success of nonproliferation sanctions. *International Organization*, 68(4), 913-944.

⁴ Katzenstein, S. (2015). Dollar Unilateralism: The New Frontline of National Security. *Ind. LJ*, 90, 293. Drezner, D. W. (1999). *The sanctions paradox: Economic statecraft and international relations* (No. 65). Cambridge University Press. Page 312.

⁵ Reuters. (2022). EU unity on Russian sanctions "starting to crumble", German minister says. May 29. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-unity-russian-sanctions-starting-crumble-german-minister-says-2022-05-29/?taid=6293b4a7d0445e0001e0cbd1&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_

also seem to be looking at Washington for leadership but do not see a clear outline of the objectives and strategy beyond imposing more sanctions⁶. Some see a fissure between Central/Western European countries and a group composed of Washington, London and Eastern/Northern European countries, many of whom are former Soviet Republics and border Russia⁷. Ukrainian officials, meanwhile, are said to worry that the West, and especially its key partners in Washington, will grow weary of conflict and pressure Kyiv to accept a sub-optimal outcome or settlement⁸.

It is somewhat natural for countries with varying economic and security exposure to reach different conclusions about the aggressiveness of the campaign, its underlying strategy and its ultimate goals. Washington and London have relatively fewer economic entanglements with Russia and purchase little hydrocarbon from it. The former Soviet states of Eastern Europe and Poland border Russia and see the potential of Russian action against them in existential terms. By contrast, most of the rest of Europe has heavy economic and energy exposure to Russia and is in a (geographic) position to be more risk-acceptant regarding the Kremlin's ambitions. Germany, for example, could face a severe recession and gas rationing if Russian gas sales are terminated entirely, according to a German trade group⁹. The diverging geopolitical and geoeconomic circumstances naturally impact decision-making in any broad coalition.

The Russia sanctions campaign was launched as a reaction to the invasion rather than with a clear set of goals agreed upon by all actors. This is actually not unusual in the modern era of economic sanctions¹⁰. In the next section, I will examine public statements made by the leaders of the various countries involved in the sanctions campaign and draw conclusions about what their goals are. Following that, recommendations will be made to design a strategic framework for the sanctions campaign based on efficacy and the political and military circumstances. The final section will conclude.

Official Statements

Such a complicated and multi-faceted coalition does not have a unified strategy or set of goals that can be clearly delineated. As we will see, these goals can be divided into four categories: Regime change, containment, disruption and policy modification through a negotiated outcome. The four can be thought of as occupying spaces on a spectrum from more combative to most conciliatory in the order mentioned. As we will discuss further below, sanctions campaigns can have multiple goals. Hence, it is not unusual for multiple actors and officials to express positions that point to different aims.

⁶ Kazmin, A., & Schwartz, F. (2022). *What is America's end-game for the war in Ukraine?* May 29 Financial Times. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/315346dc-e1bd-485c-865b-979297f3fcf5>

⁷ Troianovski, A., Nechepurenko, I., & Safronova, V. (2022). *Shaken at First, Many Russians Now Rally Behind Putin's Invasion*. April 1. The New York Times. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/world/europe/russia-putin-support-ukraine.html>

⁸ Wintour, P. (2022). *Why the west risks condemning Ukraine to slow strangulation*. June 24. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/24/why-the-west-risks-condemning-ukraine-to-slow-strangulation?CMP=share_btn_tw

⁹ Arnold, M. (2022). *Study puts cost of halting Russian gas supply at 12% of German GDP*. May 9. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/2f860359-7fa0-4b79-aa47-f5a55606ce33>

¹⁰ Hufbauer, G. C., and Jung, E. (2020). What's new in economic sanctions?. *European Economic Review*, 130, 103572.

Regime Change

Of course, the most notable case of a Western leader calling for Vladimir Putin's overthrow came when American President Joseph Biden seemed to add a line to a scripted speech in which he stated that President Putin "cannot remain in power"¹¹. White House communications officials quickly clarified that he was only referring to Russian power projection into Ukraine and was not calling for regime change in Russia. However, it is worth adding that according to reports, President Biden later expressed dissatisfaction with his staff having done so¹².

Former Ukrainian President Victor Poroshenko, who served from after the Ukrainian uprising to 2019, said that the purpose of the global campaign needs to be to "de-Putinize Russia"¹³. A European diplomat involved in Western planning against Russia told the Washington Post that while "we don't say regime change, ... it is difficult to imagine a stable scenario with Putin acting the way he is"¹⁴.

Regime change is rarely a declared goal in a sanctions campaign as it seems to lower the legitimacy of the campaign in the opinion of would-be sanctions partners. It is, however, frequently thought of as being a potential goal. This is why hinting at regime change as being the goal is very unproductive as later denials tend to be viewed with skepticism by the target state.

Containment

Another reason prominently cited for the sanctions campaign is the perceived need by some for long-term containment of Russia. The aim of containment or regime change would mean the sanctions campaign is now one of technological and economic attrition to the sender's advantage. The purpose would be to either undermine Putin's base of support has living standards are undermined or harm the Russian economy in the long term so as to erode Russia's industrial and technological base, therefore reducing its ability to project power through military or other means while simultaneously doing significant harm to the Russian people.

This goal is most prominently mentioned by US officials. President Biden first framed the conflict as a long struggle to contain Russia by speaking about it in the context of Great Power Competition in early March during his State of the Union address, when he stated that the US and its allies "are choking off Russia's access to technology that will sap its economic strength and weaken its military for years to come"¹⁵. He reiterated that sentiment during a speech later in the month in Warsaw in which he called upon all "freedom-loving nations" to "commit now to be in this fight for the long

¹¹ Biden, J. R. (2022). Transcript: Remarks by President Biden on the United Efforts of the Free World to Support the People of Ukraine. March 26. The White House. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/03/26/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-united-efforts-of-the-free-world-to-support-the-people-of-ukraine/>

¹² Lee, C. E., Nicholas, P., Welker, K., Kube, C., Alexander, P., & Mitchell, A. (2022). Inside a Biden White House adrift. May 31. NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-white-house-adrift-rcna30121>

¹³ Brennan, D. (2022). "De-Putinize Russia": Petro Poroshenko Urges West to Take its Chance. April 20. Newsweek. Available at: <https://www.newsweek.com/de-putinize-russia-petro-poroshenko-ukraine-president-urges-west-take-chance-1699275>

¹⁴ DeYoung, K., & Birnbaum, M. (2022). U.S., allies plan for long-term isolation of Russia. Washington Post. April 17. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/04/16/us-nato-isolate-russia/>

¹⁵ Biden, J. R. (2022). Remarks of President Joe Biden – State of the Union Address As Prepared for Delivery. March 2. The White House. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/03/01/remarks-of-president-joe-biden-state-of-the-union-address-as-delivered/>

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haul. We must remain unified today and tomorrow and the day after and for the years and decades to come”¹⁶.

US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin stated that America wants “to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can’t do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine. So it has already lost a lot of military capability, and a lot of its troops, quite frankly. And we want to see them not have the capability to very quickly reproduce that capability”¹⁷. US Army General and Chairman of the US Military Joint Chiefs of Staff, while referring to the war as a “very extended conflict”, stated that “I do think this is a very protracted conflict and I think it's at least measured in years. I don't know about a decade, but at least years, for sure”¹⁸. US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan stated that the US wants to see “a weakened and isolated Russia” in addition to an independent Ukraine and a more unified West¹⁹.

Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics said that there is a “growing realization that this is a long-term situation and that a strategy of containment, a strategy of defense, is forming.” He added “[s]upport Ukraine as much as you can, sanction Russia as much as you can”²⁰. In an interview, former NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said the West should be open about its designs to weaken Russia in the long term. He stated that “[i]n Putin’s thinking it doesn’t make any difference because he would only claim that the Western policy is to weaken Russia anyway. So why not speak openly about it?”²¹

Disruption

The third goal identified is the disruption of Russia’s military campaign in Ukraine. This is not about durable containment or Great Power Competition in the long term, but rather about undermining Russia’s war-fighting capacities in order to deprive them of the means to succeed in the Ukraine campaign more specifically. Speaking to the press, the now-former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson stated that the sanctions “aim to inflict financial pain on Putin and his regime, to stymie the Russian war machine”²².

Announcing their technology export restrictions, the US Department of Commerce stated the purpose as being to cut off Russia and Belarus’ ability to “sustain their aggression, depriving their defense, aerospace, and maritime sectors of key materials”. These export restrictions would, according to the Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, now allow "Vladimir Putin ... to obtain the commodities,

¹⁶ Arnold, M. (2022). Study puts cost of halting Russian gas supply at 12% of German GDP. May 9. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/2f860359-7fa0-4b79-aa47-f5a55606ce33>

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Defense. (2022). Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. April 25. Transcript available at: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3009051/secretary-of-state-antony-j-blinken-and-secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iii/>

¹⁸ Jacob, C., Ong, C., Wilkie, C., Meredith, S., & Macias, A. (2022). Boris Johnson calls on Russians to “find the truth;” Zelensky says Russia must be brought to justice. April 6. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/04/05/russia-ukraine-live-updates.html>

¹⁹ Meet the Press. (2022). *Transcript: Meet the Press - April 10, 2022*. NBC News. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-april-10-2022-n1294221>

²⁰ DeYoung, K., & Birbaum, M. (2022b). *U.S., allies plan for long-term isolation of Russia*. April 17. Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/04/16/us-nato-isolate-russia/>

²¹ Hirsh, M. (2022). *Biden Could Turn the Ukraine War Into a Global Conflict*. April 29. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/29/russia-ukraine-war-biden-endgame/>

²² Bloom, D. (2022). *UK clarifies it is not trying to bring down Putin regime over Russia-Ukraine war*. February 28. Mirror. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/uk-clarifies-not-trying-bring-26349409>

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software, and technologies that he needs to sustain his brutal war machine”²³. According to a statement by the European Commission, the purpose of the sanctions is “weakening Russia's economic base, depriving it of critical technologies and markets, and significantly curtailing its ability to wage war”²⁴. It did not specify whether the purpose was only to stop the current hostilities or weaken Russia long-term.

In a joint press conference in March with her American counterpart, British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss was more clear in her response stating that the purpose was to “debilitate the Russian economy” and to “stop Putin being able to fund his war machine from money gained from the oil and gas industry and from the technology that he’s been able to make available”²⁵.

Policy Modification

Finally, some officials have also pointed to behavior modification as the goal of the campaign. The purpose here is to convince Moscow to change its policy by harming Russia and its economy, resulting in events, perhaps a negotiated settlement, in which Russia changes its policies in exchange for sanctions relief. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken likewise stated that America’s purpose was “to end this aggression. It’s to save lives and to prevent more ceaseless, senseless bloodshed”²⁶. This can be interpreted both as identifying the purpose of the sanctions as policy modification or as an attempt of disrupting the Russian war effort.

During an interview with Russian media, US State Department Undersecretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland stated that the sanctions would be lifted if Russia “ends this war, and helps rebuild Ukraine and reestablishes peace and recognizes that country's sovereignty”. This statement also sets out specific conditions in which sanctions would be removed but the reference to Russia helping to rebuild Ukraine implies reparations demands from Moscow which Washington must know is unlikely ever to be met²⁷. In a sanctions guidance statement provided by the UK government, the goal of the sanctions is outlined as “encouraging Russia to cease actions which destabilize Ukraine” or “undermine its territorial integrity”²⁸.

Leaders from continental Europe, especially from the West of the continent, seem more inclined toward negotiation with Russia that would imply sanctions concessions in return for Russian military concessions. This is consistent with the behavior modification approach. Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi stated that “[w]e agreed that we must continue to support Ukraine and put pressure on

²³ U.S. Department of Commerce. (2022). *Commerce Announces Addition of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland to Global Export Controls Coalition*. April 8. <https://www.commerce.gov/news/press-releases/2022/04/commerce-announces-addition-iceland-liechtenstein-norway-and-switzerland-to-global-export-controls-coalition>

²⁴ The European Commission. (2022). *Sanctions adopted following Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine*. February. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/international-relations/restrictive-measures-sanctions/sanctions-adopted-following-russias-military-aggression-against-ukraine_en

²⁵ U.S. Department of State. (2022). *Secretary Antony J. Blinken and UK Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss at a Joint Press Availability*. March 9. <https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-and-uk-foreign-secretary-elizabeth-truss-at-a-joint-press-availability/>

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ TASS. (2022). *US doesn’t want new Cold War but Russia needs to listen to world — Nuland*. March 4. https://tass.com/politics/1416831?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com

²⁸ Export Control Joint Unit. (2022). *Russia sanctions: guidance*. July 19. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/russia-sanctions-guidance/russia-sanctions-guidance>

Moscow, but also begin to ask how to build peace”²⁹. Similarly, French President Macron called for a ceasefire and negotiations that would involve providing Putin with a graceful “exit ramp” through diplomacy³⁰, while German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called for a focus on “de-escalation”³¹. All three were very careful to avoid the impression that they seek to dictate policy to Kyiv.

Recommendation

Ultimately, it does not seem to be the case the sanctions campaign was initiated with any unified set of aims or intentions. This would not exactly be out of the ordinary as sanctions campaigns are often hastily launched in an expression of outrage against a policy by the targeted state before an analysis of the strategy and win-sets are properly taken up³². Hence there are different policy goals identified by different sender countries and even inconsistency regarding the goals from the officials of individual sender countries.

As mentioned, sanctions campaigns can have multiple goals. However, not all sanctions goals are compatible with one another. For example, containment and regime change may be compatible because they both involve placing tremendous long-term pressure and if regime change is not accomplished then containment may be a satisfactory consolation prize. Likewise, disruption and containment can be compatible as they involve the same policy on varying timescales. However, policy modification, while compatible with disruption, is not compatible with the two options further to the more aggressive side of the spectrum. Policy modification implies that all or most of the sanctions will be relieved once the instigating action is rolled back or a satisfactory negotiated compromise has been achieved.

Therefore, assuming policymakers will prefer some combination of the goals identified above, we should divide the possible win-sets into four distinct categories based on compatibility:

- **Win-set 1:** Containment and regime change
- **Win-set 2:** Disruption, containment and regime change
- **Win-set 3:** Disruption and containment.
- **Win-set 4:** Disruption and policy modification.

First, win-sets 1 and 2, which include the regime change goal should be eliminated from consideration. Regime change sanctions campaigns can undermine other goals and heighten the target’s resistance. They also tend to be highly ineffective. According to scholarship on this topic, over the last century, regime change has been assessed as the goal of over 100 sanctions campaigns and has succeeded in about one-third of cases. However, these successes have come mainly against small and already unstable countries³³. If ‘maximum pressure’ campaigns cannot overthrow the

²⁹ Reuters. (2022a). *Give Ukraine peace a chance, says Italy’s Draghi*. May 11. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-russia-need-talk-see-way-out-ukraine-conflict-draghi-2022-05-11/>

³⁰ Reuters. (2022c). *Russia must not be humiliated despite Putin’s “historic” mistake, Macron says*. June 4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-must-not-be-humiliated-despite-putins-historic-mistake-macron-2022-06-04/>

³¹ Deutsche Welle. (2022). *Zelenskyy vows “two Victory Days” in Ukraine*. DW.COM. <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-zelenskyy-vows-two-victory-days-as-it-happened/a-61727432>

³² Hufbauer, C. G., Schott, J. J., Elliott, K. A., & Oegg, B. (2007). *Economic sanctions reconsidered*. Peterson Institute.

³³ Hufbauer, G. C., & Hogan, M. (2022). *How effective are sanctions against Russia?* March 16. Peterson Institute for International Economics. Available at: <https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economic-issues-watch/how-effective-are-sanctions-against-russia>

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governments of countries like Iran and Syria, it is hard to imagine them being more successful against Russia.

Additionally, some scholars consider the goal of creating triggering protests as a potential means of creating existential angst in the target state that would result in concessions to the sender(s) in hopes of soothing the economic circumstances that have led to the underlying public discontent³⁴. However, as experiences from countries like Syria and Iran have shown, while an economic deprivation campaign can trigger riots when the targeted government is forced to take certain actions like cutting subsidies, it does not lay the groundwork for a persistent public uprising. It should also be mentioned that, while not necessarily enthusiastic, the Russian public seems to be supporting President Putin and his invasion of Ukraine at least for now³⁵.

This leaves two win-sets both of which include disruption. The key difference between the win-sets is whether the sender coalition will resolve to retain the sanctions imposed, or at least the majority thereof, in the long term or whether they should be focused on bringing about a diplomatic settlement in which sanctions relief plays a central role. Win-set 3 may forswear potential opportunities for a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict while win-set 4 would undermine efforts to weaken the long-term war-making capacity of a Russian state.

This calculation would leave the Western side between two win-sets with advantages and potential drawbacks. In order to decide between these two options, one must consider the political and strategic circumstances surrounding the sanctions episode. In the early stages of the conflict, based on the vaunted reputation of the Russian land forces (and their predecessor, the Red Army), many foresaw Kyiv falling quickly³⁶.

In a much longer second phase, these early predictions were proven incorrect. The feared Russian land forces severely underperformed and the Ukrainian resistance proved stiff³⁷. In his mentioned interview, former NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen stated that the West had overestimated the strength of Russia's military. There have been many explanations offered to explain why Russian forces failed to take Kyiv. But what does seem fairly clear is that what ails the Russian military will not be quickly cured with some restructuring or another round of inventory modernization.

In this third phase, the Russian military has shifted focus to parts of eastern and southern Ukraine and has been somewhat more successful despite high costs that put the durability of the Russian campaign in question³⁸. This has created the impression that a much longer war lasting into the winter may transpire. So whether this will be a humiliating defeat that would wear away any future Russian military projection ambitions in Eastern Europe seems still an open question.

³⁴ Drezner, D. W. (2010). An analytically eclectic approach to sanctions and nonproliferation. *Sanctions, Statecraft, and Nuclear Proliferation*, 154-173.

³⁵ Troianovski, A., Nechepurenko, I., & Safronova, V. (2022). Shaken at First, Many Russians Now Rally Behind Putin's Invasion. April 1. *The New York Times*. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/world/europe/russia-putin-support-ukraine.html>

³⁶ Heinrich, J., & Sabes, A. (2022). Gen. Milley says Kyiv could fall within 72 hours if Russia decides to invade Ukraine: sources. February 6. *Fox News*. <https://www.foxnews.com/us/gen-milley-says-kyiv-could-fall-within-72-hours-if-russia-decides-to-invade-ukraine-sources>

³⁷ *The Economist*. (2022). *As Russia's invasion stalls, Ukraine's refugees return home*. May 31. <https://www.economist.com/europe/2022/05/24/as-russias-invasion-stalls-ukraines-refugees-return-home>

³⁸ *The Associated Press*. (2022). High cost of Russian gains in Ukraine may limit new advance. July 5. <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-moscow-government-and-politics-5ef5dae6aa76addea66cc24c460d2877>

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Another key factor to consider is that Russia's ability to project power in Eastern Europe is likely to decline as time goes on. Europe is reinforcing its eastern flank by utilizing both strategic and geoeconomic tools that may alter the balance of power in the immediate future. Finland and Sweden seem slated to join NATO³⁹, the EU is likely to enlarge, and European capitals are announcing historic efforts to boost military spending⁴⁰ and diversify away from Russian hydrocarbon imports⁴¹. Eastern European countries are also likely to be the recipients of a major influx of arms, particularly sophisticated anti-access and area denial weapons that would make any Russian encroachment much more expensive.

This strategic backdrop is incredibly important to how policymakers consider strategy and win-sets of sanctions campaigns. In choosing win-set 4, Putin and any potential successor are faced with a clear choice: Continue pursuing outdated ambitions of power projection or join the European community in a meaningful way. This would also reinforce Europe's position that it seeks to restore norms and sovereignty and not seek to hunker down for another Cold War. It should also be understood, that scenario 4 does not provide Russia with all that it seems to. Much experience and scholarship inform us that the negative effects of economic sanctions do not quickly dissipate once the sanctions are removed. The removal of secondary economic sanctions against Iran provided benefits but, in terms of reintegrating Iran into the global economy, it was thoroughly disappointing. In the Russian case, international investors, firms, and partners who have disconnected their relationships with Russia are not likely to stream back in quickly. Many will avoid the Russian economy in the short and medium-term due to political risk and reputational concerns especially because of the emotional reaction that the Russian invasion provoked in the West.

That being said, if the strategic and political circumstances suggest that Russia could simply regroup and engage in a more effective invasion in a few years, then crafting a strategy focused on the more conciliatory side of the goal spectrum may be an undesirable option. Doing so may constitute Europe, to paraphrase Machiavelli, deferring war to its own disadvantage. This is the single most important argument in favor of choosing win-set 3.

But this strategy comes with pitfalls as well. The longer sanctions campaigns continue the chances of effectiveness tend to diminish and the longer the conflict goes on the greater the potential of severe escalation becomes. The prospect of Russia testing NATO by deliberately targeting a member-state or even using nuclear weapons in some limited capacity is a remote possibility for now, but the chances of such events coming to fruition climb drastically over time as the conflict drags on. Countries under severe sanctions also become more risk-acceptant in security decision-making⁴². Sanctions also tend to make countries less democratic⁴³, more prone to corruption⁴⁴, and less friendly

³⁹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (2022). *Finland and Sweden complete NATO accession talks*. NATO. July 5. Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_197737.htm

⁴⁰ European Commission. (2022). *EU steps up action to strengthen EU defence capabilities, industrial and technological base: Towards an EU framework for Joint defence procurement*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3143

⁴¹ International Energy Agency. (2022). *How Europe can cut natural gas imports from Russia significantly within a year* - News. March 3. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/news/how-europe-can-cut-natural-gas-imports-from-russia-significantly-within-a-year>

⁴² Sand, E. (2020). *Desperate Measures: The Effects of Economic Isolation on Warring Powers* (Spring 2020). Texas National Security Review.

⁴³ Peksen, D., & Drury, A. C. (2010). Coercive or corrosive: The negative impact of economic sanctions on democracy. *International Interactions*, 36(3), 240-264.

⁴⁴ Andreas, P. (2005). Criminalizing consequences of sanctions: Embargo busting and its legacy. *International Studies Quarterly*, 49(2), 335-360.

to human rights⁴⁵. While there is some evidence showing that countries under sanctions do reduce their defense spending⁴⁶ to cope with domestic economic needs, this will not necessarily translate into a meaningful deterioration of Russian military capacities even in the long term.

Therefore, by choosing win-set 3, Europe would be enmeshed in a long conflict with a less democratic and more risk-acceptant power that will see gaining leverage over the continent as the key to both its foreign and domestic (sanctions relief) success. It seems self-evident that for Europe win-set 4 is the far more preferable outcome. The key issues that policymakers must consider to evaluate which of the two win-sets is most appropriate are the evaluation of Russia's power projection ambitions and capabilities regarding Eastern Europe and whether it can be stymied by the strategic and geoeconomic measures mentioned above.

Conclusion

This study examines the potential strategic options that the sender states have in regard to the sanctions campaign against Russia. It contributes to the existing debate on the issue by examining the issue through the prism of sanctions literature that is often overlooked by policymakers. The study then examined the different public pronouncements from government officials to synthesize identifiable sender goals that can be examined in the historic context of sanctions implementation. These goals were then divided into win-sets in accordance with their compatibility in order to outline a clear list of potential strategic options.

This study concludes that the two win-sets involving regime change goals should be discarded at the outset. This is due to the inherent inviability of the regime change goal as well as the fact that regime change efforts complicate the potential of reaching more moderate goals as they stiffen resistance in the target state. Among the two win-sets remaining, the disruption and containment option (win-set 3) and the disruption and policy modification option (win-set 4), the study argued that win-set 4 is far more beneficial as it holds the hope of a resolution of the conflict that would avoid decades of security deterioration for the continent. However, it is also acknowledged that should Europe interpret the threat it sees from Moscow as likely a persistent one, win-set 3 may regrettably be the more logical choice.

⁴⁵ Peksen, D. (2009). Better or worse? The effect of economic sanctions on human rights. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(1), 59-77.

⁴⁶ Dizaji, S. F., & Farzanegan, M. R. (2021). Do sanctions constrain military spending of Iran?. *Defence and Peace Economics*, 32(2), 125-150.

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