

US Sanctions

Deadly, Destructive and in Violation of International Law



Protests against US sanctions on Ethiopia and Eritrea



Protests against the consequences of sanctions in Europe

Report by the SanctionsKill Campaign

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SanctionsKill Campaign

SanctionsKill.org

[*info@SanctionsKill.org*](mailto:info@SanctionsKill.org)

This report was produced by Rick Sterling, John Philpot, and David Paul with support from other members of the SanctionsKill Campaign and many individuals in sanctioned countries.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 4

Executive Summary 5

Findings 7

- * Sanctions primarily hurt civilians.
- * 70% of nations say US sanctions violate international law and the UN Charter.
- * Sanctions on Russia are hurting western economies, especially Europe.
- * Sanctions on Russia are hurting the Global South
- * western media has not reported the international condemnation or expert reports
- * US sanctions hinder the response to global pandemics such as Covid-19.
- * US sanctions have led to the imprisonment of diplomats in violation of international treaties.
- * Some US sanctions are based on bogus claims of a threat to US national security.
- * Sanctions are spurring the decline of US-dominated international finance.
- * US industries and farmers want to trade with sanctioned countries.

Conclusions 16

- * Sanctions violate human rights and undermine peaceful relations
- * The western public is unaware of the misery caused by US sanctions
- * Sanctions against Russia are backfiring on the West, especially Europe
- * Sanctions are designed to enforce US global hegemony.
- * Sanctions create potential criminal and civil liability for US authorities.

Recommendations 19

Voices from the Sanctioned 20

Impact of Sanctions on Specific Countries ... 22

Graphics and Photos 31

Sources of Information on Sanctions 37

INTRODUCTION

This is a revised and expanded version of a September 2021 report titled *We Don't Deserve This - The Impact and Consequences of US Sanctions*.

In the past 12 months, the intensity and damage caused by US sanctions have increased dramatically. The trends noted in the first report have accelerated. Extreme sanctions on Russia have boomeranged, and the economic pain is now being felt by the working and middle classes in the West. We have prepared this updated report with a new title: ***How US Sanctions are Deadly, Destructive and in Violation of International Law***.

In recent decades, the US has increasingly used sanctions as an instrument of foreign policy. Some [39 nations](#)¹ and territories are under direct or indirect sanctions. Most of these sanctions are not authorized by the UN Security Council and many of them are enacted by the US alone. They are called “unilateral coercive measures” at the UN.

There are many types of sanctions: economic or financial restrictions, trade prohibitions, and blocking or seizing assets of individuals, organizations, and countries. Greatly increasing the reach of sanctions, “[secondary sanctions](#)”² impact non-US entities which are interacting with the “primary” target.

These US decrees are sometimes “extraterritorial” because they impose regulations and penalties on non-US countries, companies, and individuals.

Due to widespread international criticism, the Biden administration launched a review of US sanctions policy when they came into power in January 2021. Ten months later, they revealed the conclusions of this review. Unfortunately, they called for no substantial change except to modernize the technology and increase the personnel involved in imposing and maintaining sanctions on companies, countries, and individuals across the globe. The review failed to explore the vital problems exposed in this report.

With the recent imposition of extreme sanctions on Russia, the US is escalating its use of sanctions as a tool of foreign policy.

Because this issue is vitally important, a coalition of non-profit and human-rights organizations called “[SanctionsKill](#)”³ prepared this report. The information and findings 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 goal of this report is to inform western readers about the real-life consequences of US imposed sanctions. The report begins with our findings, then goes on to conclusions and recommendations. After that, there are quotes from some of the people interviewed and short synopses of the impact of sanctions in Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela.

The final section includes resources which will be of interest to anyone looking further into this topic.

We invite your comments and collaboration. Contact us at info@SanctionsKill.org.

¹ <https://sanctionskill.org/2021/02/02/sanctions-fact-sheet-39-countries/>

² <https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/sanctions-by-the-numbers-u-s-secondary-sanctions>

³ <https://sanctionskill.org/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The US policy of 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 just another form of deadly aggression.

The US defends its 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.⁴

As occasionally admitted by US officials, sanctions are intended to hurt the economy of the target country and spur the population to 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.

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

These 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.

For decades there has been opposition to sanctions from US farmers, business persons, and trade unions. This opposition is rapidly rising in the wake of rising cost of living. In western Europe, the economic fallout is much worse and the opposition growing proportionally. Recently there have been massive protests in Prague⁵, Paris⁶, and London⁷.

US-driven sanctions are also backfiring by expediting the decline of US dollar dominance. They 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 also being eclipsed. Saudi Arabia is set to accept the yuan for their huge oil sales to China.

US sanctions are imposed by US Congress or by presidential decree. In the latter case, it is done claiming there is a “national emergency” and an “unusual and extraordinary threat.” Usually this is patently false as when President Obama imposed sanctions on Venezuela. The sanctions mania has also

⁴ <https://www.blackagendareport.com/former-un-rapporteur-human-rights-us-sanctions-have-killed-more-100-thousand-venezuelans>

⁵ <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/09/05/tens-of-thousands-rally-in-prague-to-protest-cost-of-living-crisis/>

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/aug/23/cost-of-living-french-popular-resistance-living-standards-uk>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOIDQRkL9t4>

resulted in violations of long-standing international treaties. For example, the sanctioned Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab has been imprisoned by the US for nearly three years. This is a clear violation of the Vienna Diplomatic Convention⁸ of which the US is a founding member.

More than two-thirds of world nations condemn and consider US sanctions (“unilateral coercive measures”) a violation of international law and the UN charter. This is largely unknown in the West because of effective censorship by western media.

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

Who is benefiting from this? The principal winners seem to be the US foreign-policy elite who ignore the UN charter and UN General Assembly, believe in US hegemony/exceptionalism, and are interconnected with the military industrial establishment.

Instead of seeking diplomatic resolution of the conflict in Ukraine and an end to anti-Russia sanctions, which are hurting many millions including in the West, the US foreign-policy establishment is escalating tensions and sanctions. It appears that European leaders are not independent and cannot act in the best interests of their citizens. The recent explosions on the Nordstream gas pipelines indicate the criminal extremes to which powerful forces are prepared to go.⁹ These policies need to be challenged and changed.

The US policy of waging economic war through sanctions and other forms of aggression may lead to legitimate claims to reparations from victim countries and criminal and civil liability for US authorities.

⁸ https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf

⁹ <https://consortiumnews.com/2022/09/28/diana-johnstone-omerta-in-the-gangster-war/>

FINDINGS

Finding 1: Sanctions primarily hurt civilians.

For at least 25 years, study after study has shown that coercive economic sanctions are hurting the most vulnerable and driving middle-class citizens into poverty.

An [article](#) at the Association of Certified Sanction Specialists acknowledges,

In Venezuela, the sanctions' regime has created a food deficit which in turn reduces the public's caloric intake and increases disease as well as mortality rates... sanctions appear to be more of a collective punishment than an attempt to modify behaviors.

A former US foreign service officer [writes](#)¹⁰, "Sanctions harm the poor and middle class the most."

As [reported](#)¹¹ by the Center for Economic and Policy Research,

Targeted countries experience economic contractions and, in many cases, are unable to import sufficient essential goods, including essential medicines, medical equipment, the infrastructure necessary for clean water, health care, and food. The effects are devastating for everyday citizens

The report titled "[Economic Sanctions as Collective Punishment: The Case of Venezuela](#)"¹² says, "We find that the sanctions have inflicted, and increasingly inflict, very serious harm to human life and health, including an estimated more than 40,000 deaths from 2017-2018."

Congressman Jim McGovern recently wrote to President Biden [saying](#)¹³, "I believe sanctions like those the previous administration imposed on Venezuela are both misguided and immoral."

The same is true of the dire suffering caused by US sanctions in the Middle East. US sanctions on the Syrian Central Bank have collapsed the currency. Products are four times as expensive as they were just one year before the imposition of these sanctions. Millions of Syrian civilians have been driven into poverty. With an Orwellian touch, the sanctions are named the [Caesar Civilian Protection Act](#)¹⁴.

Humanitarian exceptions supposedly prevent sanctions from hurting civilians. but, as noted in a Carter Center [report](#)¹⁵, "the exceptions process does not function as intended."

Finding 2: 70% of nations say US sanctions violate international law and the UN Charter.

In December 2020, the UN General Assembly passed resolution 75/181 on "[Human rights and unilateral coercive measures](#)"¹⁶. The representatives of 131 nations, including the most populous countries, approved the resolution which states,

¹⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/sanctions-harm-the-poor-and-middle-classes-the-most/2019/10/28/288c9230-f75f-11e9-b2d2-1f37c9d82dbb_story.html

¹¹ <https://cepr.net/the-case-against-economic-sanctions/>

¹² <https://cepr.net/report/economic-sanctions-as-collective-punishment-the-case-of-venezuela/>

¹³ <https://twitter.com/RepMcGovern/status/1404550214766190592?s=20>

¹⁴ https://original.antiwar.com/rick_sterling/2020/06/19/caesar-tries-to-suffocate-17-million-syrians/

¹⁵ https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/navigating-humanitarian-exceptions-in-syria-oct2020.pdf

¹⁶ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/372/60/PDF/N2037260.pdf?OpenElement>

Unilateral coercive measures and legislation are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the UN and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

Similar resolutions, also approved by a large majority of nations, have been passed for many years.

In September 2014, the UN Human Rights Council created the position of Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights. The first Special Rapporteur was [Idriss Jazairy](#)¹⁷. In 2018 Ambassador Jazairy reported that unilateral sanctions are depriving innocent people of food and medicines and should end immediately. He [said](#)¹⁸, “Unilateral sanctions that restrict nearly any financial transaction, or which seek to prevent third countries from engaging in legal trade with a country, are illegal and immoral forms of coercion.”

The current Special Rapporteur is [Alena Douhan](#)¹⁹. She has made increasingly urgent requests to end Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs). In August 2020 she [reported](#)²⁰,

Sanctions are bringing suffering and death in countries like Cuba, Iran, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen.... Sanctions that were imposed in the name of delivering human rights are in fact killing people and depriving them of fundamental rights including the rights to health, to food and to life itself.

Filipe Nyusi, president of Mozambique and chair of the Southern Africa Development Council, has [said](#),²¹

Sanctions without UN approval are a violation of our (UN) Charter and run against the spirit of multilateralism. As SADC, we reaffirm the urgency of the removal of all sanctions imposed on the Republic of Zimbabwe. The sanctions must be removed now for the good of the region and the world.

The international consensus opposing the US embargo against Cuba is overwhelming. In 2022, for the 30th year in a row, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the US to end the embargo against Cuba. The vote was 185 to 2, with only Israel and the US opposed.

Similarly, the extreme sanctions imposed on Russia are not supported beyond the West. Countries representing 84% of the world rejected the sanctions campaign.²² When Ukraine’s president held a meeting to discuss joining the sanctions against Russia, only 4 out of 55 African nation presidents attended.²³

¹⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-unilateral-coercive-measures/mr-idriss-jazairy-former-special-rapporteur-negative-impact-unilateral-coercive-measures>

¹⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2018/10/unilateral-sanctions-hurting-civilians-must-be-dropped-says-un-expert?LangID=E&NewsID=23731>

¹⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-unilateral-coercive-measures/professor-alena-douhan-special-rapporteur-negative-impact-unilateral-coercive-measures>

²⁰ [UN Experts: Sanctions proving deadly during COVID pandemic, humanitarian exemptions not working - World | Relief Web](#)

²¹ <https://www.sadc.int/news-events/news/statement-his-excellency-filipe-jacinto-nyusi-president-republic-mozambique-and-chairperson-sadc-anti-sanctions-day-25-october-c/>

²² <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/countries-have-sanctioned-russia>

²³ <https://multipolarista.com/2022/06/22/africa-zelensky-call-neutrality-ukraine/>

Finding 3: Sanctions on Russia are hurting western economies, especially in Europe.

Since the Russian intervention in Ukraine, the US and Europe have imposed massive sanctions on Russia. The sanctions include preventing trade in technology hardware and software²⁴, excluding Russia from the global messaging network for international payments (SWIFT), and blocking Russian access to their own foreign exchange reserves in western banks (some \$400 billion).

EU has drastically restricted imports of Russian gas and other fossil fuels. It has severely restricted imports of gold, steel, iron, wood, cement, and fertilizers. In late February, German authorities halted certification of the newly completed Nordstream 2 pipeline.

The EU has prohibited Russian and Belarusian road transport operators from entering the EU. The EU suspended the broadcasting of five Russian outlets including Sputnik, EU Today, and others. It terminated formal cultural cooperation with Russia. It impounded ships and excluded Russians from international sports organizations. In February 2022, the EU refused access to EU airports for Russian carriers of all kinds and banned them from overflying EU airspace.

There is now an energy crisis in Europe.²⁵ Inflation, already increasing before the conflict, has exploded. Six in 10 British factories are at a risk due to soaring energy bills.²⁶ German industrialists and trade union leaders are warning that major industries could collapse because of the shortage of natural gas and skyrocketing price increases.²⁷ French glass manufacturer Durelex has announced they are shutting down this winter due to rising energy costs.²⁸ A leading trade magazine reports that current gas and electricity prices “threaten the viability of steel-making in Europe.”²⁹

Hardship is the word in Europe for the coming winter: blackouts, rising poverty, exorbitant energy prices, deindustrialisation of Germany and other European countries, 600-euro per month electricity bills, little or no public lighting.³⁰ Royal Dutch Shell CEO Ben van Beurden warned that Europe’s crisis, including skyrocketing prices and fuel rationing, could last for years.³¹

Finding 4: Sanctions on Russia are hurting the Global South.

Even before the conflict in Ukraine, developing countries of the Global South were struggling to recover from the pandemic, and cope with rising costs of food and fuel. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated over 800 million people are facing hunger in the developing world.³²

Russia is the world’s leading exporter of wheat, fertilizer, and natural gas. western sanctions against Russia have led to shortages and dramatic price rises for all these commodities.³³ Food and fertilizer

²⁴ [International sanctions during the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine - Wikipedia](#)

²⁵ US & Europe Are Victims of Their Own Sanctions on Russia & China, with Arnaud Bertrand.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0OdWn4meUU&t=1736s>

²⁶ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-02/six-in-10-british-factories-at-risk-of-going-under-as-bills-soar>

²⁷ <https://www.businessinsider.com/germany-faces-entire-industries-collapse-russia-natural-gas-supply-cuts-2022-7>

²⁸ <https://emag.directindustry.com/2022/09/01/energy-crisis-french-glass-manufacturer-durelex-to-pause-production-this-winter/>

²⁹ <https://www.drycargomag.com/emergency-eu-measures-needed-immediately-to-protect-european-steel-industry>

³⁰ <https://youtu.be/3ME45S1J64g>

³¹ [Oil CEO Makes Grim Prediction About The Duration Of Europe’s Energy Crisis | The Daily Caller](#)

³² <https://www.blackagendareport.com/cost-ukraine-war-felt-africa-global-south>

³³ <https://mronline.org/2022/04/04/briefing-world-hunger-and-the-war-in-ukraine/>

shortages are especially ominous for the most vulnerable countries of the Global South.³⁴ Antonio Guterres, secretary general of the UN, added, “Without fertilizers, shortages will spread from corn and wheat to all staple crops, with a devastating impact on billions of people in Asia, Africa, and South America.”³⁵

Uncertainty with the scope and duration of western sanctions is making many countries block their own exports and stockpile goods for domestic use producing more shortages.³⁶

Though the US states its sanction policy allows for the imports of food and fertilizers,³⁷ the removal of Russian banks from the SWIFT international banking system, and restrictive quotas and additional duties³⁸ make it difficult for countries of global south to make payments for Russian goods.³⁹

Also, many countries and companies are reluctant⁴⁰ to trade with Russia or provide insurance for maritime transport given the risk of penalties for noncompliance with the western sanctions. western restrictions on Russian air and shipping routes and higher prices of oil, has increased the cost of importing Russian grains and fertilizers that many countries of Global South rely on.⁴¹

In July 2022, an agreement between Ukraine and Russia opened Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea for the export of grain. As of this date, only a small percentage of shipments have gone to the poorest countries.

Africa and the Middle East are most vulnerable to reduction of imports from Russia, particularly in North Africa where many economies rely heavily on cereal imports. A quarter of African states get a third of their wheat from Russia and Ukraine. Africa already has one the highest food insecurity rates in the world and any disturbance to Africa's food system threatens the well-being of millions of Africans.⁴² Most of Africa’s \$14-billion trade with Russia is in USD and euros, but sanctions on Russian banks make it difficult to facilitate payments for food.⁴³

Head of the African Union, Macky Sall, stated, “The sanctions against Russia have worsened the situation and we have no access to grain, especially wheat, and we have no access to fertilizers, creating a threat to food security in Africa.” When the SWIFT system is disrupted, it means that even if a product exists, payment becomes complicated, if not impossible.⁴⁴

Latin America is also vulnerable to the disruptions of supplies of fertilizer, especially Brazil. This top exporter of soybeans depends on a quarter of its imported fertilizer from Russia and is facing a major reduction in crop yields.⁴⁵

³⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/27/business/russia-food-crisis-sanctions.html>

³⁵ Global Food Crisis Tests western Resolve to Retain Russia Sanctions - The New York Times

³⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/27/business/russia-food-crisis-sanctions.html>

³⁷ https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/russia_fact_sheet_20220714.pdf

³⁸ https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/RussianFederation/pdf/IMPACT_OF_WESTERN_SANCTIONS_ON_GLOBAL_FOOD_C_RISIS_AND_FERTILIZER_MARKET.pdf

³⁹ <https://www.noemamag.com/the-danger-of-sanctions/>

⁴⁰ https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/RussianFederation/pdf

⁴¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/business/russia-ukraine-shipping-cargo.html>

⁴² <https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-currency-sanctions-on-russia-could-disrupt-trade-with-africa/>

⁴³ https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Russia_Sanctions_Africa_Trade.pdf

⁴⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/27/business/russia-food-crisis-sanctions.html>

⁴⁵ <https://mronline.org/2022/04/04/briefing-world-hunger-and-the-war-in-ukraine/>

Finding 5: Western media has not reported the international condemnation or expert reports on the consequences of sanctions.

At the UN, sanctions are referred to as “unilateral coercive measures.” They have been condemned for decades. Incredibly, the New York Times archives do not show a single reference to “unilateral coercive measures.”

The UN Human Rights Council has appointed a diverse array of experts to study and report on the impact of sanctions and what should be done. In 2012, the lawyer Alfred de Zayas was appointed to be Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order. Over the next seven years, he produced [reports](#)⁴⁶ documenting in detail the disastrous impact of economic sanctions in numerous countries.

The Algerian diplomat Idriss Jazairy also produced [reports](#)⁴⁷ documenting the realities faced in countries under economic assault. Belarus lawyer and author Alena Douhan was appointed as the second Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures. She researched and produced specific reports on the impact of sanctions on [Venezuela](#)⁴⁸, the [fight against COVID-19](#)⁴⁹, and a [Human Rights Guidance Note](#).⁵⁰

Western media has ignored these UN experts, their investigations, and reports. They have also ignored UN resolutions passed by the vast majority of world nations.

UN Human Rights Council Independent Expert Alfred de Zayas [summarized](#)⁵¹ the situation:

Modern-day economic sanctions and blockades are comparable with medieval sieges of towns with the intention of forcing them to surrender. Twenty-first century sanctions attempt to bring not just a town, but sovereign countries to their knees. A difference, perhaps, is that twenty-first century sanctions are accompanied by the manipulation of public opinion through ‘fake news,’ aggressive public relations and a pseudo-human rights rhetoric so as to give the impression that a human rights ‘end’ justifies the criminal means.

Western media is also failing to accurately report the causes of the current energy and economic crises. In lockstep with western leaders, they suggest that global inflation and the energy crisis in Europe have been caused by Russia when evidence indicates they have been caused by western sanctions against Russia. When the Nordstream 1 and 2 pipelines were sabotaged on 26 September 2022, media failed to report or analyze basic questions as to who would benefit and who would be hurt by the terrorist actions.

Finding 6: US sanctions hinder the response to global pandemics such as Covid-19.

In March 2020, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres [said](#).⁵² “We are at war with a virus.” He appealed for “waving sanctions that can undermine countries’ capacity to respond to the pandemic.”

⁴⁶ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1640958?ln=en>

⁴⁷ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1652290?ln=en>

⁴⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/preliminary-findings-visit-bolivarian-republic-venezuela>

⁴⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/unilateral-sanctions-make-it-harder-fight-covid-19-must-be-dropped-says-un-expert>

⁵⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/UCM/UCMCOVID19GuidanceNote.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://mronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/un-report-on-venezuela-and-ecuador-alfred-de-zayas.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/war-needs-war-time-plan-fight-it>

The Trump administration ignored these appeals and added new sanctions. In March 2020, a Venezuelan request for an emergency \$5-billion loan to fight the virus was [rejected](#)⁵³ by the International Monetary Fund. The report noted, “The US is the biggest shareholder and has a veto over major decisions.”

In April 2020, the Center for Economic and Political Research [reported](#)⁵⁴ that Iran was having difficulty obtaining “medical supplies, sanitation equipment, and other goods we now know are necessary to slow the virus’ spread.” It commented, “While the US is fighting COVID-19 here at home, US sanctions against other governments are aiding the virus’ spread abroad. They’ve already likely contributed to many unnecessary deaths in Iran.”

In October 2020, the UN Human Rights Office issued a press release saying “[Unilateral sanctions make it harder to fight COVID-19, must be dropped](#)⁵⁵.” The report by Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan notes, “Targeted countries face shortages of medications and medical equipment, including oxygen supplies and ventilators, protective kits, spare parts, software, fuel, electricity, drinking water and water for sanitation...”

Because of sanctions, Cuba has had enormous difficulty obtaining [syringes](#)⁵⁶ even as they developed their own COVID-19 vaccines.

In early June 2021, Venezuela’s payment for 11 million COVAX vaccinations was [blocked](#)⁵⁷ by the UBS Bank because of US sanctions. The funds ultimately went through, but only after a delay and international protest.

In February 2021, twenty-seven Congressional representatives and senators sent a [letter](#)⁵⁸ to President Biden encouraging the review of sanctions policy. They said existing policy has led to “catastrophic humanitarian consequences.” In March 2021, 55 human rights and religious organizations sent a [letter to President Biden](#)⁵⁹ with recommendations including the suspension of sanctions on aid necessary for the treatment of COVID-19 and all sanctions on civilian sectors.

On June 17, 2021, the US Treasury Department announced [new guidelines](#)⁶⁰ for Syria, Venezuela, and Iran. General licenses will permit “certain activities” related to COVID-19 but such exceptions to the extreme sanctions have not made a significant difference.

Finding 7: US sanctions have led to the imprisonment of diplomats and violation of international treaties.

Sanctioned non-US citizens are put at risk of arrest and extradition to the US. UN General Assembly Resolution 75/181 says these extraterritorial claims violate international law. In defiance, the US continues to assert extraterritorial jurisdiction and seeks the extradition of individual businesspersons and even diplomats.

⁵³ <https://apnews.com/article/business-health-coronavirus-pandemic-420afb1fa856dedcc4cb3eddc8ac0a2>

⁵⁴ <https://cepr.net/u-s-sanctions-in-a-time-of-coronavirus-are-morally-depraved-as-well-as-illegal-under-international-law/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26393&LangID=E>

⁵⁶ <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/u-s-deprives-cuba-of-syringes-it-needs-now/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-says-payments-covax-vaccine-system-have-been-blocked-2021-06-10/>

⁵⁸ <https://omar.house.gov/sites/omar.house.gov/files/sanctions%20letter%20final%20text%5B1%5D.pdf>

⁵⁹ https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/Sanctions%20Reveiw_Civil%20Society%20Letter%20to%20Biden_final_3_26_21.pdf

⁶⁰ <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0234>

The case of Alex Saab, a Venezuelan-appointed diplomat, is illustrative. He was travelling to Iran to acquire food, medicine, and medical equipment, much needed by the people of Venezuela. Because of his activities in support of the Venezuelan government and people, he was detained during a flight stop in Cape Verde Saab points out that⁶¹ his “illegal detention is entirely politically motivated.”

In jail, Saab was kept in the dark for 23 hours a day, lying on a concrete floor, partially losing his eyesight, and losing 55 pounds. The island nation of Cape Verde is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a union of countries similar in concept to the EU. The justice department of ECOWAS declared Saab’s detention illegal and awarded him \$200,000 in damages.

In addition, on June 8, 2021, the Human Rights Committee of the UN ordered the suspension of the extradition and access to appropriate health care for the Mr. Saab who suffers from cancer. The African Bar Association and the American Association of Jurists likewise resolved that the diplomatic envoy should not be incarcerated. Despite this, the Cape Verde supreme court, heavily influenced by the US, rejected these rulings and Saab was extradited to the US in October 2021.

The case of Alex Saab is especially significant because his detention is a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations⁶². The US and Cape Verde are signatories to this treaty which says, “The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention.”

Finding 8: US sanctions are sometimes based on false claims of a threat to US security.

Using US Code 1701⁶³, the U.S. president can authorize sanctions if there is an “unusual and extraordinary threat” to the “national security, foreign policy, or economy of the US.” Thus in March 2015, President Obama declared⁶⁴ a “national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the US posed by the situation in Venezuela.”

The claim that Venezuela posed a security threat to the US was false. On the contrary, the reverse was and is true. The US has threatened and engaged in aggression against Venezuela, including support for coup attempts in 2002 and 2019⁶⁵.

On September 9, 2022, President Biden renewed sanctions on Ethiopia invoking the “unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the US” due to the situation in Northern Ethiopia.⁶⁶ Thus the US interfered in Ethiopian internal affairs with a bogus claim of an “extraordinary threat” to US security.

In 2020 the Congressional Research Service (CRS) produced a report titled “The International Emergency Economic Powers Act: Origins, Evolution, and Use.”⁶⁷ At the end of the report, there is an eighteen page list of “National Emergencies” leading to sanctions. The sanctions sometimes go on for decades. The CRS report questions whether the “oversight provisions are robust enough.

⁶¹ <https://orinocotribune.com/alex-saab-declares-to-efe-i-would-not-collaborate-with-the-united-states/>

⁶² https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf

⁶³ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2011-title50/pdf/USCODE-2011-title50-chap35-sec1701.pdf>

⁶⁴ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/03/09/fact-sheet-venezuela-executive-order>

⁶⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Venezuelan_uprising_attempt

⁶⁶ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/09/09/notice-on-the-continuation-of-the-national-emergency-with-respect-to-ethiopia/>

⁶⁷ <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R45618.pdf>

Finding 9: Sanctions are spurring the decline of US-dominated international finance.

Sanctioned countries have a strong motivation to leave the US-dominated international economic system. In June 2021 Russian [announced](#)⁶⁸ that it was eliminating US dollars from its reserve fund. The holdings have been reduced to \$4 billion and are going to zero.

Many countries are beginning exchanges in alternative currencies. India and Russia have commenced exchanges in rubles and rupees.

The second largest holder of US bonds, China⁶⁹, intends to reduce its holdings in US securities and bonds. In September 2020 it was reported that [“China may ditch US treasuries as decoupling risk looms.”](#)⁷⁰

For decades, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) has been the primary transaction network governing transfers between banks in every country of the world. Although SWIFT is based in Belgium, the US has been able to monitor and disrupt transactions when it chooses to. This way, the US has been able to impose extraterritorial sanctions on third party countries.

Sanctions have spurred the desire for an alternative system. The EU, China, and Russia have all sponsored and launched alternatives to the SWIFT system. The EU has created the Instrument of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) which allows them to get around US unilateral sanctions against Iran. China has promoted the Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS). Russia has created yet another system dubbed SPFS. In April 2021, Russia announced that, whenever they choose, they are [“ready for disconnection from SWIFT”](#)⁷¹ In February 2022, Russia was blocked from using SWIFT.

The petro-dollar allows the US to dominate international finance by mandating oil sales in US dollars. That also is being challenged as more countries see the advantage of NOT using US dollars for oil purchases. As indicated in the article [“China Russia and EU Edge Away from Petrodollar”](#)⁷², “The petro-yuan for oil futures trading could become a tool to counter US dollar hegemony in the oil market. In a January 2021 [Overview on Economic Sanctions](#)⁷³, the Congressional Research Service wrote,

Many foreign governments targeted by US financial sanctions and their economic partners are increasingly exploring and creating ways to reduce their reliance on the US dollar. If countries pivot from the US dollar to alternative currencies, the US could face higher borrowing costs, among other economic effects.

The BRICS Forum (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is moving towards trade using a “basket of currencies” instead of the US dollar. A recent academic study finds “BRICS’ coalitional de-dollarization initiatives have established critical infrastructure for a prospective alternative non-dollar global financial system.”⁷⁴

⁶⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/russia-reserves/update-3-russian-rainy-day-fund-to-abandon-all-assets-in-u-s-dollars-idUSL5N2NL2AD>

⁶⁹ <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/markets-economy/090616/5-countries-own-most-us-debt.asp>

⁷⁰ <https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3100307/china-may-ditch-us-treasuries-decoupling-risk-looms-global>

⁷¹ <https://caspiannews.com/news-detail/russia-says-its-ready-for-disconnection-from-swift-2021-4-30-0/>

⁷² <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/China-Russia-and-EU-edge-away-from-petrodollar>

⁷³ https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/2021-01-15_IF11730_fd2be4c6e2fcf61b5d9ce988da60d2ee681e50b2.pdf

⁷⁴ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/can-brics-dedollarize-the-global-financial-system/>

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, accounting for 40% of global population and 30% of global GDP, recently announced they will be expanding trade in national currencies, NOT the US dollar.⁷⁵

Finding 10: US industries and farmers want to trade with sanctioned countries.

In November 2000 the CATO Institute published an article titled “[Going alone on economic sanctions hurts US more than foes](#)⁷⁶.” It says,

Using trade as a weapon of foreign policy has harmed America’s economic interests in the world without significantly advancing national security. The proliferation of trade sanctions in the last decade has been accompanied by their declining effectiveness. From Cuba to Iran to Burma, sanctions have failed to achieve the goal of changing the behavior or the nature of target regimes. Sanctions have, however, deprived American companies of international business opportunities, punished domestic consumers, and hurt the poor and most vulnerable in the target countries.

US*Engage is a coalition of US businesses initiated by the National Foreign Trade Council. The director of the organization [described](#)⁷⁷ their history and goals as follows,

US*Engage, was established in 1997 to address the recurring imposition of unilateral economic sanctions as a substitute for the rigors of diplomacy. A broad-based coalition of manufacturing, agricultural and services producers, US*Engage continues to advocate that the people-to-people intelligence and understanding conferred by commercial engagement trumps the demonstrable failure – witness Cuba and Iraq – of interdictions on commercial activity.

As a legislative stratagem, sanctions are in fact unfunded mandates whose costs are borne by individual enterprises and communities and whose stated goals and benefits fail to materialize. The historical record demonstrates that unilateral sanctions hurt the innocent and further empower the governing elites in the targeted country...”

US*Engage continues to advocate for the primacy of normal commercial relations among countries; for diplomacy and engagement as our primary tools of foreign policy; and for the ability of the Executive Branch to conduct foreign policy in the spirit of the late Senator Arthur Vandenberg's observation that politics stops at the water's edge, and for adherence to the rule of do no harm, when it comes to attempting economic blackmail to realize foreign policy goals.”

Millions of US farmers and workers depend on exports of their crops and commodities. They want to be able to export and trade with Cuba, Venezuela, Russia and other countries where it is prohibited or severely restricted.

⁷⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/china-led-sco-bloc-agrees-expand-trade-national-currencies-2022-09-16/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.cato.org/commentary/going-alone-economic-sanctions-hurts-us-more-foes>

⁷⁷ <http://www.usaengage.org/?id=1>

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1. Sanctions are collective punishment and undermine peaceful relations among nations.

Sanctions deprive targeted countries of revenue for essential infrastructure and public services, including schools and hospitals. They are a form of collective punishment.

The [UN Charter](#)⁷⁸ is a binding international treaty which requires non-interference in the internal affairs of nations and affirms the sovereign equality of all nations. The only potentially legitimate form of economic, trade, and financial sanctions are based on a resolution of the UN Security Council. Unilateral coercive measures amount to the use of force in international relations and violate the charter.

In January 2019 the UN Special Rapporteur Idriss Jazairy [said](#)⁷⁹, concerning Venezuela,

The use of sanctions by outside powers to overthrow an elected government is in violation of all norms of international law.... I urge all countries to avoid applying sanctions unless approved by the UN Security Council, as required by the UN Charter.

Conclusion 2. The western public is unaware of the misery abroad caused by US sanctions because western media does not report it.

Most US citizens are unaware of the severe harm and misery caused by US sanctions on countries such as Venezuela, Cuba, Syria, Iran, and Zimbabwe⁸⁰. If the media accurately showed the negative impact on everyday people in victim countries, we believe the US public would oppose this policy.

Conclusion 3: Sanctions against Russia are backfiring on the West.

Currently there is an escalating energy crisis in Europe. In a wave of sanctions against Russia, EU countries cut or severely limited their imports of cheap gas and oil from Russia. The overall shortages have raised oil and gas prices throughout the West.

Ironically, the anti-Russia sanctions have not badly damaged the Russian economy. Russia has replaced western buyers of gas, oil, and minerals with new buyers in Asia. The Russian currency has increased in value. In March, *Fortune* magazine predicted “dark days ahead for the Russian Ruble”⁸¹. Three months later, in June 2022, it was reported, “Russian ruble hits strongest level in 7 years despite sanctions.”⁸²

The West hoped for regime change in Russia. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire stated that the EU “will bring about the collapse” of the economy of Russia.⁸³ The US and EU miscalculated the

⁷⁸ <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html>

⁷⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/SP/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24131&LangID=E>

⁸⁰ For example in Cuba and Venezuela, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester_D._Mallory, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJBoe3AvSvc>

⁸¹ <https://fortune.com/2022/03/15/russian-ruble-expert-opinion-invasion-ukraine-continues/>

⁸² <https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/23/russias-ruble-is-at-strongest-level-in-7-years-despite-sanctions.html>

⁸³ <https://www.20minutes.fr/monde/3244503-20220301-guerre-ukraine-allons-provoquer-effondrement-economie-russe-assure-bruno-maire>

strength of the Russian economy⁸⁴.

There is an important debate comparing the gross domestic product (GDP) and the purchasing power parity (PPP) leading to the underestimation of Russian industrial strength. As Andrei Martyanov explains, industrial productivity must be calculated and is more important than figures based on financial operations.⁸⁵ When measuring an economy comparing commodity production vs capital, commodity production is more important.

According to the *Economist*, the sanctions war on Russia has not delivered the desired result. Furthermore, “Energy sales will generate a current-account surplus of \$265 billion this year, the world’s second-largest after China.”⁸⁶

The sanctions on Russia have backfired on the West. Large demonstrations have protested the sharply rising standard of living and factory shut-downs due to astronomical energy bills.

The extreme sanctions on Russia are also subject to misinformation. Reading the daily news and watching television in the West, one might think the energy crisis is caused by Russia rather than by the sanctions against Russia.

Conclusion 4: Sanctions are designed to maintain US global hegemony.

It is clear from observing the pattern and impact of the US/western policy of sanctions, that they are a modern form of warfare, intended to punish countries that violate one or another US determined “rule.” The overall purpose is to enforce US domination of the global political, economic, and financial systems⁸⁷. The West is using this dominance to coerce and impose its will on other countries, currently enacting over 9400 sanctions worldwide, on over 1/3 of the world’s population. The civilian death toll is often more than the toll of conventional warfare⁸⁸

The UN charter⁸⁹ after World War II established the principle of equal sovereignty among nations, but the US has violated those principles with impunity, undermining international peace, utilizing coercion, not cooperation.

The formerly colonized nations of the Global South continue to struggle to overcome the poverty and overall underdevelopment inflicted by colonialism. They have to choose between accepting the dictates of western capitalists who seek to control their resources and economy or continue with their project of sovereign development under a form of siege warfare by sanctions that inflicts immense pain upon their people.⁹⁰ Cuba was first sanctioned in 1962 after they nationalized some US corporations. Cuba remains under embargo and a host of sanctions today, over 60 years later.

⁸⁴ [The West’s self-defeating sanctions | Philip Pilkington | The Critic Magazine](#)

⁸⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miwQF8w1JU0>

⁸⁶ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2022/08/25/are-sanctions-working>. Sanctions war isn’t going as planned – The Economist

⁸⁷ <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202203/1254399.shtml>

⁸⁸ <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2022/09/sanctions-are-destructive-illegitimate-and-totally-bipartisan>

⁸⁹ <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/07/13/the-united-states-of-america-the-sanctions-system-and-anti-chinese-manoevres/>

⁹⁰ <https://developingeconomics.org/2022/09/01/sanctions-and-the-changing-world-order-some-views-from-the-global-south/>

The US uses economic coercion to punish countries that have friendly relations and trade with US deemed “adversaries.” Congress enacted the Countering Americas Adversaries through Sanctions Act.⁹¹ The Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act has a similar goal to pressure African nations to severely restrict relations with Russia. The Southern Africa Development Council has criticized the interference from Washington.⁹² The head of the African Union has spoken out in opposition calling for “respect for the independence and sovereignty of states.”⁹³

Many countries believe secondary sanctions violate their sovereignty, attempting to dictate who they can trade with. Almost all the nations of Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia reject the US/EU sanctions on Russia.

The US often claims it imposes sanctions to protect human rights, but it is clear the reality is the opposite. US foreign policy has supported coups, invasions, assassinations, and kidnappings.

The recent attacks on the Nordstream gas pipelines from Russia to Germany show the criminal extremes to which powerful forces are willing to go in order to prevent mutually beneficial energy collaboration in Europe. Only one country has the means, motive and opportunity to carry out this attack.⁹⁴

The US is facing an emerging multipolar world where other nations are asserting their independence and rejecting the coercive and destructive policy of western sanctions. Cooperation and mutual respect between nations is critical for achieving a peaceful and just world. The US continuing to insist on being the sole dominant power, free to expand its hegemony with impunity is dangerous for all⁹⁵

Conclusion 5. Sanctions create potential criminal and civil liability for US authorities.

The US and its leaders face potential criminal responsibility or civil liability at the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice or before a possible specialized *ad hoc* criminal or civil court created in the future.

US officials cannot claim they “did not know” the consequences of sanctions. The promoter of the original sanctions on Cuba was clear about US goals. On April 6, 1960, Deputy Assistant Secretary Lester Mallory wrote a [secret memo](#)⁹⁶ saying,

Most Cubans support Castro... The only possible way to make the government lose domestic support is by provoking disappointment and discouragement through economic dissatisfaction and hardships ... Every possible means should be immediately used to weaken the economic life ... denying Cuba funds and supplies to reduce nominal and real salaries with the objective of provoking hunger, desperation and the overthrow of the government.

US official’s mindset has not changed over the decades. In October 2018, William Brownfield, ex-ambassador of the US in Venezuela, [stated](#)⁹⁷ the regime change goal and knowledge that US sanctions would cause civilian suffering:

⁹¹ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/7311/text>

⁹² <https://fighting-words.net/2022/09/01/sadc-rejects-anti-russia-bill-in-u-s-congress/>

⁹³ <https://lejournaldefrique.com/en/ukraine-russie-les-etats-unis-tendent-de-mettre-lafrique-sous-pression/>

⁹⁴ <https://consortiumnews.com/2022/09/28/diana-johnstone-omerta-in-the-gangster-war/>

⁹⁵ <https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202206/06/WS629d67d0a310fd2b29e60de2.html>

⁹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester_D._Mallory

⁹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJB0e3AvSvc>

If we are going to sanction PDVSA [Venezuela state-owned oil and gas company]), this will have an impact on the entire people, on the ordinary citizen... at this moment perhaps the best solution would be to accelerate the collapse even if it produces a period of suffering of months or perhaps years.

Such unilateral coercive measures constitute crimes against humanity. Long prison terms for US authorities are possible if the criminality is substantiated by proof of intention of predictable large-scale suffering and the occurrence of such suffering.

The damages caused by illegal US sanctions can justify reparations of the order of billions of dollars. “If you hurt someone, you must pay the damages” could become the rule. These consequences can be mitigated by the abolition of the sanctions as recommended in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE US GOVERNMENT

1) Implement the [16 point plan](#)⁹⁸ proposed by UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan with the respect to the pandemic including:

Under no circumstances should trade in essential humanitarian goods and commodities, such as medicine, antivirals, medical equipment, its component parts and relevant software, and food, be subject to any form of direct or indirect unilateral economic measure or sanction.

2) Undertake a review of US sanctions policy with respect to the UN Charter regarding multilateralism and the sovereign equality of nations. Rescind all unilateral coercive measures adopted outside the UN Security Council.

3) Require Congressional oversight regarding presidential claims that there is an “extraordinary threat” to national security. The current situation, whereby the president can impose warlike sanctions on other countries based on dubious claims without any oversight, should be reformed.

TO THE EUROPEAN UNION AND EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS

1) Rescind all unilateral coercive measures (sanctions) except those approved by the UN Security Council.

2) Stand up for your political independence and sovereignty. Defend the needs of your own citizenry. Resolve the energy crisis by enabling the Nordstream pipelines, making repairs where feasible.

⁹⁸<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/covid-19-human-rights-guidance-note-covid-19-pandemic-humanitarian-concerns-and>

VOICES FROM THE SANCTIONED

Due to the lack of fuel, we are not able to generate the electrical energy that is needed. This leads to blackouts. This affects the civilian population because it can ruin the food that is refrigerated, which people have spent much work to acquire. The blackouts and starting / stopping can damage all types of electrical equipment and their replacement is very difficult given the lack of spare parts.

Rosaida, medical doctor from Cuba

One hard shock that we are confronting is the lack of antibiotics, especially the components needed to manufacture them. There have also been many difficult moments in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the lack of even simple swabs used to do the PCR test. These could be obtained easily if we were not blockaded. Even the glass materials essential for these exams are very difficult to obtain.

Norma, psychologist from Cuba

The embargo that Biden is enforcing, what we here in Cuba call the blockade, is a cruel policy designed to make our lives miserable. The US government is like a cop with its knee on our throat. "We can't breathe!" Sure, there is a lot to criticize about Cuba. It's not perfect and no one says it is. Not even the Cuban government. But those who criticize Cuba now remind me of the people who talked about George Floyd's supposed character flaws to justify a policeman slowly killing him while other police officers stood by and watched with guns drawn. A blockade is an act of war. So is it now time to analyze Cuba's problems versus its virtues. To stand by with your hands folded and watch or to do something to actually get the boot off the neck of us Cuban people?

Pablo, a North American musician/composer and resident of Havana, Cuba since 1966

The financial reserves robbed from our nation are not available for the maintenance and replacement of parts for our water system. This results sometimes in failures of the distribution of water for months, resulting in people being forced to walk long distances carrying water. This harms the health, hygiene, and economy. People who are not able to carry water, like the elderly and disabled, must pay high prices for it. Others make long lines at outdoor tanks which are not well treated, causing diarrhea illnesses and the spread of mosquitoes.

Ana from Venezuela

Water supply depends on electricity to run the water pumps. When the power comes on, we rush home and turn on the faucet to fill the bathtub with water.

Teri from Venezuela

One significant problem with sanctions is that it makes commercial bodies and investors nervous, because they don't want to break the law and are also unsure if sanctions will be tightened in future. This deters investment and makes it difficult to send money for aid projects, etc. A wider point is that sanctions do not directly affect those they are aimed at. Daniel Ortega and his family are well off, have

no need to travel to the US and are unaffected by general sanctions, and probably not greatly even by those aimed at family members directly. The same applies to big business, which has ways to circumvent sanctions. It is inevitably poor people who are most affected since sanctions affect government programs aimed at assisting them.

John, from Masaya, Nicaragua

Everything is expensive now. Before, Syria was the best country in the world. We are suffering sanctions because we are against America and the Gulf.

Elderly man selling products on street in Damascus

We hope the sanctions end The US is trying to subjugate us.

Teacher in Douma, Syria

We respect the American people, the Saudi people, even the Israeli people. We have problems with the governments of those countries. We wish to live peacefully. This is the view of the majority of Syrians.

Syrian Red Crescent staff member Suleiman in Homs, Syria

We want the American people to stand with us. We don't deserve this.

Rana in Damascus

Gasoline is often not available because the US-EU sanctions prohibit Syria from importing crude oil to refine into gasoline. A taxi ride which used to cost 100 lira now costs 1,000. People wait days in line at the gas stations to fill up their cars and the amount is rationed due to low supply. Syria had produced and refined their own oil from domestic wells. However, the largest oil field at Al Omar near Deir Ezzor is occupied by the US-backed SDF who steal the oil and have a contract with Delta Crescent Energy, a US firm.

Lilly in Latakia, Syria

THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS ON SOME INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

This section of the report focuses on some of the most severely sanctioned countries: Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe. Beyond the focus of this report are the more than 30 other countries and territories under US unilateral sanctions, which include: China, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Belarus, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Mali, Gaza and the Palestinian territories, Russia, Rwanda, Somalia, Libya, Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, and Tunisia among others.

A recent addition to the sanctioned countries is the government of Kabul, Afghanistan. In mid-August 2021, the Taliban took control of the country. The US quickly imposed [sanctions](#)⁹⁹ on the new government and blocked its access to Afghanistan's \$9.4 billion in international reserves. This led to a rapid decrease in the nation's currency value, raising prices for many goods, and preventing the new government from being able to import necessary food, medicines and other essentials. The Afghanistan peoples' suffering continues.

CUBA

Cuba has suffered a severe economic commercial and financial blockade for the past 60 years. President Trump's 240 additional coercive measures, with more added by President Biden, have resulted in a major economic crisis and widespread suffering in Cubans' daily lives. This is consistent with the US State Department's goal in a 1960 memo stating, "every means should be undertaken to weaken the economic life denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow the government."¹⁰⁰

Normal trade and financial transactions are blocked by US. sanctions. US and foreign businesses, plus shipping companies, are reluctant to trade with Cuba due to threat of severe penalties. The U.S. continues to falsely designate Cuba as a "state sponsor of terrorism." As such, even when a contract for a purchase is made, many banks and financial institutions refuse to process the monetary transactions. This forces Cuba to find distant intermediaries to purchase essential goods and spare parts which greatly increases the cost. The lack of imports cause shortages that force people to wait many hours in lines to buy the most basic goods.

Because the blockade does not allow Cuba to obtain financing by U.S. companies, Cuba has to pay for any imports with hard currency in advance. The US has also banned vessels that enter Cuba for trade from loading or unloading in the U.S. ports within 180 days after leaving Cuba, making it much more expensive to send shipments to Cuba.

The U.S. blockade has undermined Cuba's effort to control the Covid pandemic. Cuba has developed its own vaccines, which shares with other countries, but it is difficult to acquire needed reagents and materials to produce and administer them.. A US shipping company refused to transport a large order of masks, test kits, and ventilators purchased from China. A Swiss medical company stopped shipping medical supplies after being bought out by a US company¹⁰¹ Despite the obstacles, an article at the

⁹⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/21/business/afghanistan-economy.html>

¹⁰⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester_D._Mallory

¹⁰¹ <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621191/bp-cuba-blockade-women-250521-summm-en.pdf;jsessionid=DDF15A833F5949CC5038C9EB0A6F1D0D?sequence=4>

Lancet¹⁰² says, “*The Cuban Abdala protein subunit vaccine was highly effective in preventing severe illness and death from COVID-19 under real-life conditions.*”

Cuba’s healthcare system has been severely affected by sanctions. Medical suppliers in the US are often sources for spare parts for Cuba’s medical equipment and specialized medications for cancer and HIV. These suppliers have mostly refused to respond to Cuban requests. Studies have shown that the blockade has been linked to historic increases in tuberculosis deaths, diarrheal diseases, and water contamination.¹⁰³ If more than 10 percent of components in the medical equipment or medications that Cuba seeks to buy are of US origin, then Cuba is not allowed to purchase them and companies can be fined for delivering them. Cuba’s health missions have helped control Covid-19 in other countries, but due to pressure by the US, some have cancelled contracts with Cuba for this assistance.¹⁰⁴

Shipments of fuel have been blocked, causing severe shortages of gas needed for all forms of transportation and the production of electricity, vital for hospital, food preservation, water distribution and basic communications. The lack of imported fertilizers and fuel for farm equipment has undermined local food production.

The blockade has also limited the purchase of advanced technologies, restricting internet services, social media platforms, international communications, and educational exchanges.

Travel from the US to Cuba continues to be restricted, greatly affecting tourism, a vital source of revenue, and made worse during the pandemic with significant job losses in public and private sectors.

President Biden has eased some sanctions on Cuba. For example, there is increased visa services, more flights to Cuba, and easing limits on remittances. However, the bulk of the coercive measures continue to obstruct Cuba’s financial transactions needed for economic development. It is estimated that the US blockade has cost Cuba \$144 billion dollars.¹⁰⁵

ETHIOPIA

From 1991 until 2018, Ethiopia was ruled by the pro western Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). This administration was overthrown in 2018 and replaced by a coalition led by Abiy Ahmed. There were important changes: the release of political prisoners, peace with Eritrea, and a 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for Abiy Ahmed for ending the 20 year war with Eritrea.

With US support, the TPLF launched an armed uprising on November 3, 2020. The Abiy government led by the Prosperity Party won elections by a landslide in June 2021 with 410 seats in the federal parliament out of 436. A concerted effort by the Ethiopian government resulted in a military victory over the secessionist TPLF in November 2021.

The Tigray People's Liberation Front, TPLF, chased from power, has had the support of the US and Europe, which have cried genocide, adopted sanctions, and sanctions legislation. The US has imposed the following sanctions:

¹⁰² [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X\(22\)00183-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X(22)00183-1/fulltext)

¹⁰³ <https://globalhealth.washington.edu/sites/default/files/50%20yrs%20US%20Embargo%20Cuba%20Health%20Outcomes.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ <https://mronline.org/2019/12/09/u-s-and-allies-target-cubas-overseas-medical-missions/>

¹⁰⁵ https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/us-trade-embargo-causes-144-billion-losses-for-cuban-economy-120102300520_1.html

- On May 23, 2021, the State Department announced visa restrictions for Ethiopian and Eritrean government officials and members of security forces.
- Additional sanctions were imposed on September 27, 2021 with the US president claiming the situation in Ethiopia constituted an “unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the US.”
- On November 1, 2021, Biden determined that Ethiopia is out of compliance with the eligibility requirements of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) “for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” The AGOA benefits were withdrawn on January 1, 2022, with a potential loss of 200,000 jobs. The results were immediate with virtual closing of a major industrial park.

US legislation empowers the State Department to impose additional sanctions if deemed necessary to impose US’ will.¹⁰⁶ One of these is HR6600, the Ethiopian Stabilization, Peace and Democratization Act (ESPDA) as reported by the *Ethiopian Citizen*.¹⁰⁷

America’s humanitarian imperialism has always been malicious, but ESPDA stands apart from everything other than NATO’s war on Libya as being among its cruelest form. Over 110 million people will be collectively punished as part of the US’ tacit regime-change campaign against Prime Minister Abiy motivated by its desire to punish him for bravely refusing to kowtow to Washington’s pressure that he choose its side over China’s in the New Cold War.

In addition, the West is attempting to intervene in Ethiopia with the creation of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia. The latest provocation took place after the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights’ (OHCHR) International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia released a statement condemning the latest outbreak of violence in the northern part of that country and calling on the UNSC to intervene on a humanitarian pretext. This was swiftly responded to by the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry, which reminded everyone that “The Commission cannot arrogate to itself a mandate to pronounce on matters of threat to peace and security.

Sanctions, human rights, and politics are interrelated and serve to intervene in the internal affairs of Ethiopia.

IRAN

Iran has been sanctioned by the US since 1979. In 2015, the US signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with China, France, Russia, UK, and Germany abolishing most US sanctions on Iran in exchange for Iran limiting its nuclear program. On July 20, 2015, the JCPOA was adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council thereby binding all the parties. In May 2018, President Trump announced that the US would withdraw from the JCPOA and re-impose full sanctions on Iran effective November 2018. President Trump decided that anyone doing business with Iran could not do business with the US, hence: the scourge of third-party sanctions. Some 1600 sanctions have been imposed by the US and huge sums of the order of 100 billion dollars of Iranian money and assets are frozen outside Iran.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ S. 3199 To promote peace and democracy in Ethiopia, and for other purposes., and other purposes and H. R. 6600, To support stabilization, peace, and democracy efforts in Ethiopia. (Ethiopian Stabilization, Peace and Democratization Act)

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.ethiopiancitizen.com/2022/02/the-malinowski-bill-is-humanitarian-imperialism-at-its-most-malicious.html>

¹⁰⁸ <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/nov/01/explainer-iran%E2%80%99s-frozen-assets>

President Joe Biden US campaigned on the promise to return to the JCPOA¹⁰⁹, but has not done so.

Our investigations confirm the terrible and fully documented effects of these sanctions particularly with respect to the civilian population. Serious financial hardships have arisen especially outside the cities with less access to food. The price of oil has increased, and health care has suffered on a large scale. The Iranian currency was devalued by 85%.

The pandemic has been very severe in Iran, according to Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director of the World Health Organization. Iran lacked supplies of personal protective equipment from the beginning of the pandemic and remains one of the worst hit. According to Dr Ryan, Director of the Emergency Health Program, Iran struggled to obtain medical equipment such as ventilators and intensive care materials as well as medicines.

Officially, medicines are not under sanctions, but companies are not willing to deal with Iran because of the threat of sanctions. A US researcher from Virginia Tech, Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, estimated sanctions had caused an additional 30,000 Covid deaths as of October 2020.

Legally, the US sanctions on Iran are a crime against humanity because they amount to an attack causing terrible suffering for the Iranian population with the full knowledge of the US Government.

On September 12, 2022, the UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan urged the US to cease causing the state of national emergency regarding Iran.¹¹⁰ Iran made an extensive reply to her report calling on the Human Rights Council and the UN to establish an effective mechanism for compensation of victims of unilateral coercive measures.¹¹¹

NICARAGUA

The US used sanctions against Nicaragua in the 1980s along with mining the country's ports and arming and training the Contras. Nicaragua successfully acted in the International Court of Justice. When Daniel Ortega won reelection in 2006 and again in 2011, his opponents began to lobby the US to reimpose sanctions. This led in 2016 to the Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act, which was eventually [passed](#)¹¹² in December 2018. It is known as the NICA Act.

When violent protests failed to overthrow the Nicaraguan government in 2018, the US Congress passed new legislation targeting Nicaraguan government officials and requiring US officials to oppose loans to Nicaragua from international financial institutions.

[Opinion polls show](#)¹¹³ that, 85% of Nicaraguans oppose US sanctions. Even the Organization of American States described the NICA Act as “counterproductive.”

The NICA Act's targets are government ministers, but its victims are Nicaragua's poorest communities. The World Bank, having praised Nicaragua's use of international funds to relieve poverty and having financed over 100 successful projects since the Sandinistas first took power in 1979, suddenly halted funding in March 2018. It did not resume work for nearly three years, until late 2020 when the bank

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/31/us/politics/biden-iran-nuclear-deal.html>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.radio.gov.pk/12-09-2022/alena-douhan-urges-u-s-to-cease-national-emergency-regarding-iran>

¹¹¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5133add4-report-special-rapporteur-negative-impact-unilateral>

¹¹² <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1918>

¹¹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BMHe6cMayw>

responded to the pandemic and two devastating hurricanes. The Inter-American Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund similarly stopped funding large projects.

Sanctions on individual Nicaragua government leaders are based on flimsy evidence. For example, former health minister Sonia Castro was falsely accused of instructing hospitals not to treat opposition casualties during the violence in 2018. Much respected for her work in transforming the country's health services since 2007, Castro had to leave her post when sanctioned, as she could no longer handle international financial transactions.

Sanctions have hit specific projects benefiting poor communities and have also begun to impact mainstream services such as healthcare, where replacing defective equipment or obtaining supplies during the pandemic has proven to be problematic. Nicaragua is one of the few Latin American countries to receive no US vaccine donations so far; supplies have been promised but none have arrived. Gaps have been partly filled using Nicaragua's strong ties to other countries and with the Central American Integration Bank which, unlike other international financial institutions, stepped up its assistance.

The RENACER Act, short for Reinforcing Nicaragua Adherence to Conditions for Electoral Reform, was [approved](#)¹¹⁴ by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and signed into law by President Biden in November 2021.¹¹⁵ It will intensify sanctions on Nicaragua and expand the targets of personal sanctions to ordinary Sandinista party members.

In an opinion poll, 83.7% of Nicaraguans believe US sanctions are a manifestation of US intervention in Nicaragua's internal affairs.

NORTH KOREA

Trade with Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been restricted since 1950, the official beginning of the Korean War. North Koreans have lived with restrictions, embargoes, and scarcities imposed and enforced by a variety of sanctions from the US and the UN. These sanctions had targeted the military and elite, but then in 2016, sanctions became sectoral, targeting entire industries.

Since the beginning of the DPRK nuclear tests in 2003, the Bush and Obama administrations respectively lifted some sanctions to facilitate negotiations around DPRK denuclearization, and then reinstated them when the negotiations failed to produce the results desired.

On March 2, 2016, the Security Council issued Resolution 2270, draconian measures affecting weapons transactions, proliferation of nuclear activities, maritime and air transport, export control of weapons of mass destruction, foreign trade, financial transactions including the freezing of assets, banning the export of gold, vanadium, titanium, rare-earth metals, as well as coal and iron. North Korea reacted immediately rejecting the resolution and intensified nuclear tests and issuing warnings of preemptive actions. There has been a sizable decline in the DPRK's external trade.

The Trump administration elaborated on DPRK sanctions by returning the DPRK to the State Sponsors of Terrorism list, targeting the DPRK's access to international shipping, instituting a travel ban, and adding new measures targeting several DPRK industries.

¹¹⁴ <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/chair/release/committee-approves-renacer-act-to-hold-ortega-regime-accountable-for-subverting-democracy-in-nicaragua>

¹¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RENACER_Act

The administrative hurdles placed on international aid organizations and outright bans on items containing metal instituted by Obama's US and UN sanctions have had devastating effects on the DPRK agricultural, medical, and sanitation systems. In 2018, 3,968 people in the DPRK, who were mostly children under the age of 5, died because of shortages and delays to UN aid programs caused by sanctions.

On the Korean peninsula, the US polices the inter-Korean affairs of reunification through sanctions. After the Korean leaders signed the Panmunjom Declaration on April 27, 2018, the US-led UN Command which oversees the DMZ, blocked development of the inter-Korean railway.

SYRIA

Syria has been under US sanctions for many years but efforts to damage the Syrian economy reached a new level in June 2020 with the [Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act](#).¹¹⁶

The "Caesar sanctions" prohibit any US or foreign citizen from assisting in maintaining oil or gas production or any kind of construction or engineering. The sanctions allege that the Central Bank of Syria is primarily for "money laundering" and thus prohibits all interactions with the bank. The goal is to make it impossible or extremely difficult for Syria to conduct normal trade. Consequently, the Syrian pound has lost much of its value and the cost of goods has skyrocketed.

UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan has [said](#)¹¹⁷ regarding Syria:

The sanctions violate the human rights of the Syrian people, whose country has been destroyed by almost 10 years of ongoing conflict... What particularly alarms me is the way the Caesar Act runs roughshod over human rights, including the Syrian people's rights to housing, health, and an adequate standard of living and development. The US government must not put obstacles in the way of rebuilding of hospitals because lack of medical care threatens the entire population's very right to life.

Interviews with people in Syria reveal the consequences of the draconian US sanctions. A Red Crescent staff member says that before the war, Syria produced most of their own pharmaceuticals and medicines. Now, because of sanctions, they are prevented from rebuilding the factories. In those factories which were not damaged, they cannot import the raw materials to make the medicines. Thus, medicines must be imported and are 5 times as expensive.

A British journalist, who is married to a Syrian woman, says that anesthetics are almost out of stock. He had to endure leg surgery without anesthesia. Antibiotics are also in short supply, leading to infections. He knows a child who had hydrocephalus (water on the brain) who died for the lack of the correct medical device (shunt). Before the war and escalation of sanctions, Syria had one of the finest medical systems in the region.

A pharmacist explains that medicines cost vastly more now because they need to be imported and bought on the black market. Hotel staff explain that sanctions have devastated the tourist industry because Visa and other credit cards do not work in Syria.

The situation is compounded because the oil fields in eastern Syrian are controlled by US forces occupying the area and supporting a secessionist group. With Caesar sanctions targeting the energy sector and prohibiting reconstruction, electricity is in short supply. Some areas only have a few hours of

¹¹⁶ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-116s52is/pdf/BILLS-116s52is.pdf>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26630>

electricity per day; in other areas, electricity is four hours on, four hours off. In the West, we complain if the electricity is cut off for a few hours.

US sanctions prohibit any support or investment which enables Syrian government reconstruction of hospitals, schools, or residences. Even Zoom teleconference software is unavailable.

One analyst [explains](#):¹¹⁸ “The US has multiple goals. One goal is to prevent Syria from recovering. Another goal is to prolong the conflict and damage those countries, like Russia, which have assisted Syria.”

VENEZUELA

For over 20 years, the US has attempted to destabilize the Venezuelan government with hundreds of economic, commercial, and financial coercive measures, resulting in an economic crisis and widespread suffering.

The US blockade of oil exports has reduced Venezuela’s main source of revenue needed to import essential goods and provide basic services. Revenues had been reduced to just 1% of levels prior to sanctions¹¹⁹. The US has blocked loans that could have enabled Venezuela to recover from the economic crisis brought on by the drop in oil prices in 2014. The US Government Accounting Office admitted¹²⁰ that the sanctions on the state oil company in 2019 contributed to the steepest decline in the Venezuelan economy, leading to hyperinflation, low salaries, and public sector job losses.

The blocking of imports of diesel fuel and the chemicals needed to produce its own have been devastating to the whole economy because they are crucial for electrical generation, water distribution and treatment plants, agricultural machinery, crop irrigation and trucks needed to transport basic goods.

Billions of dollars of Venezuelan assets have been seized in foreign banks, including almost \$2 billion in gold in the Bank of England, and \$8 billion from the Venezuela’s Citgo refinery in the US. This has prevented the purchase of food, medicines and spare parts needed to maintain basic infrastructure, resulting in frequent power outages and water shutoffs. The threat of penalties by the US on companies and shipping firms who trade with Venezuela has forced the country to buy from distant third parties with greatly increased costs and delays.

The effect of sanctions on the health sector have been devastating, undermining the response to the pandemic and endangering the most vulnerable, women, children, the disabled, elderly and those with chronic diseases. Exemptions exist for some humanitarian aid but are ineffective and insufficient due to lengthy and costly procedures.

Vaccines, including child immunizations, from the WHO-backed COVAX program were delayed for over one year because Venezuela’s payments were blocked.¹²¹ Medications to treat severely ill Covid patients and protective equipment are very expensive due to having to purchase them from distant sources. Spare

¹¹⁸ https://original.antiwar.com/rick_sterling/2020/06/19/caesar-tries-to-suffocate-17-million-syrians/

¹¹⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2021/02/preliminary-findings-visit-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-special-rapporteur?LangID=E&NewsID=26747>

¹²⁰ <https://cepr.net/press-release/gao-report-findings-show-that-biden-administration-should-scrap-trumps-economic-sanctions-that-have-killed-tens-of-thousands-of-people-in-venezuela-cepr-co-director-says/>

¹²¹ https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/US-Blockade-Prevents-Venezuela-From-Paying-For-Vaccines-20210611-0007.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=8&fbclid=IwAR0LdyxZYA6cy8v3SLiflsYL82VMDgPKB9L2oI_AXPy3f19PAWtOZ_XBMqY

parts for specialized equipment such as ventilators, mostly originate from US companies, and are extremely hard to obtain. A report by the Center for Economic and Policy Research found that, even before Covid -19 hit, sanctions caused over 40,000 deaths in less than two years, in part due to an increase in infant and maternal mortality, lack of insulin for diabetics, and shortages of medications for heart disease and cancer.¹²² Children with leukemia¹²³ have been waiting for bone marrow transplants abroad and 14 have died when a bank in Portugal refused to release the funds for it.

The reduction of food imports has affected the 6 million Venezuelans who depend on the government subsidized CLAP food program. Obstacles to food imports have resulted in a steady increase in malnourishment and food insecurity¹²⁴

In May 2022, the US allowed Chevron to do maintenance on its facilities in Venezuela and 2 European companies to import some crude oil. But despite these small steps, the US has ignored calls by the Venezuelan Chamber of Commerce,¹²⁵ most Venezuelan opposition groups¹²⁶, and US House Democrats¹²⁷ asking to end the sanction policy because it continues to worsen the humanitarian situation and cause widespread hardships for the Venezuelan people.

ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe has been sanctioned severely by the UK and the US since 2002. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have also maintained targeted sanctions against Zimbabwe. The sanctions were in response to Zimbabwe land reform distributing land held by white British colonists. The land reform was a major issue in the independence campaign of Zimbabwe which triumphed in 1979.

In 2002–2003, the US and the EU introduced several unilateral coercive measures including blocking Zimbabwe’s access to international loans inflicting direct damage on the population. At least 140 Zimbabwean entities and individuals are on the US-targeted sanctions list which were prolonged by both Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Zimbabwe policies allegedly posed “an unusual and extraordinary threat” to US foreign policy.

Regarding healthcare, Zimbabwe was denied access to international financial relief and vaccines to fight the Covid pandemic because of sanctions. Ultimately, the Chinese government provided vaccines to Zimbabwe.¹²⁸

Major hydroelectric dam construction and repair have been delayed due to the inability to acquire international funding and balance of payment restrictions. Water purification projects as well as construction projects have been delayed by the same financial hardships. Access to water decontamination chemicals and parts and materials is limited. Agricultural fertilizers and pest control chemicals have been limited, preventing relief from drought conditions. Road construction and repair, upgrading and purchasing of public transportation vehicles have been delayed due to financial limitations. Zimbabwe’s development has certainly been curtailed by western sanctions.

¹²² <https://cepr.net/press-release/report-finds-us-sanctions-on-venezuela-are-responsible-for-tens-of-thousands-of-deaths/>

¹²³ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1096202>

¹²⁴ <https://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/15126>

¹²⁵ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-04-14/group-calls-for-u-s-venezuela-to-restart-talks-ease-sanctions#xj4y7vzkg>

¹²⁶ <https://redradiove.com/opositores-piden-al-gobierno-de-ee-uu-aliviar-sanciones-carta/>

¹²⁷ <https://thehill.com/policy/international/3487036-house-democrats-urge-biden-to-lift-venezuela-sanctions/>

¹²⁸ http://www.news.cn/english/africa/2021-12/21/c_1310384569.htm

Africa and the South African Development Community (SADC) have stood by Zimbabwe and stated the principles about development and self-determination. October 25 is now the SADC Anti-Sanctions Day. The SADC includes all African countries south from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to South Africa. In 2020, the US and the EU rejected outright the October 25 anti-sanctions campaign.

On August 12, 2022, Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan issued her report following an official visit to Zimbabwe in October 2021. She examined the impact of unilateral sanctions and concluded that sanctions and overcompliance by foreign banks and companies have had a significant negative impact on the population, exacerbating pre-existing economic and humanitarian challenges. She recommended lifting unilateral sanctions in line with the principles of international law. (A/HRC/51/33/Add.2)¹²⁹

¹²⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/report-special-rapporteur-negative-impact-unilateral-coercive-measures-enjoyment-human-rights-alena-douhan-her-visit-zimbabwe-ahrc5133add2>

GRAPHICS AND PHOTOS



Billboard showing how US sanctions boomerang on farmers and workers.



Pres Biden signs Executive Order for sanctions on Iran with bogus claim of “US national emergency”.

MEASURES AND CONSEQUENCES

THE US BLOCKADE AGAINST VENEZUELA

Oil
Measures: Oil embargo, secondary sanctions and threats
Consequences: Fall in output (1.5M bpd), loss of revenue (as much as \$30 billion per year at current prices (**))

Fuel
Measures: Ban on diluent and fuel imports, clampdown on swap deals
Consequences: Severe shortages of gasoline and diesel

Seizure of assets
Measures: Seizure of oil refinery Citgo (US) and fertilizer subsidiary Monómeros (Colombia)
Consequences: Fuel and fertilizer scarcity in agroindustry, loss of revenue (estimated \$1.5 billion a year)

Frozen assets
Measures: Gold reserves (Bank of England) and a number of bank accounts blocked
Consequences: Around \$8 billion in frozen funds, added difficulty in international transactions

Banking
Measures: Sanctions against the Central Bank and public banks
Consequences: Accounts and credit lines closed, international transactions blocked, bonds defaulted

Mining
Measures: Sanctions against state company Minerven and gold trading
Consequences: Minerals sold through back-channels or used as payment at lower value

Food imports
Measures: Oil-for-food swaps shutdown, sanctions against individuals/entities connected with CLAP food program
Consequences: Food imports drop, less subsidized items (6-7 mln. households affected)

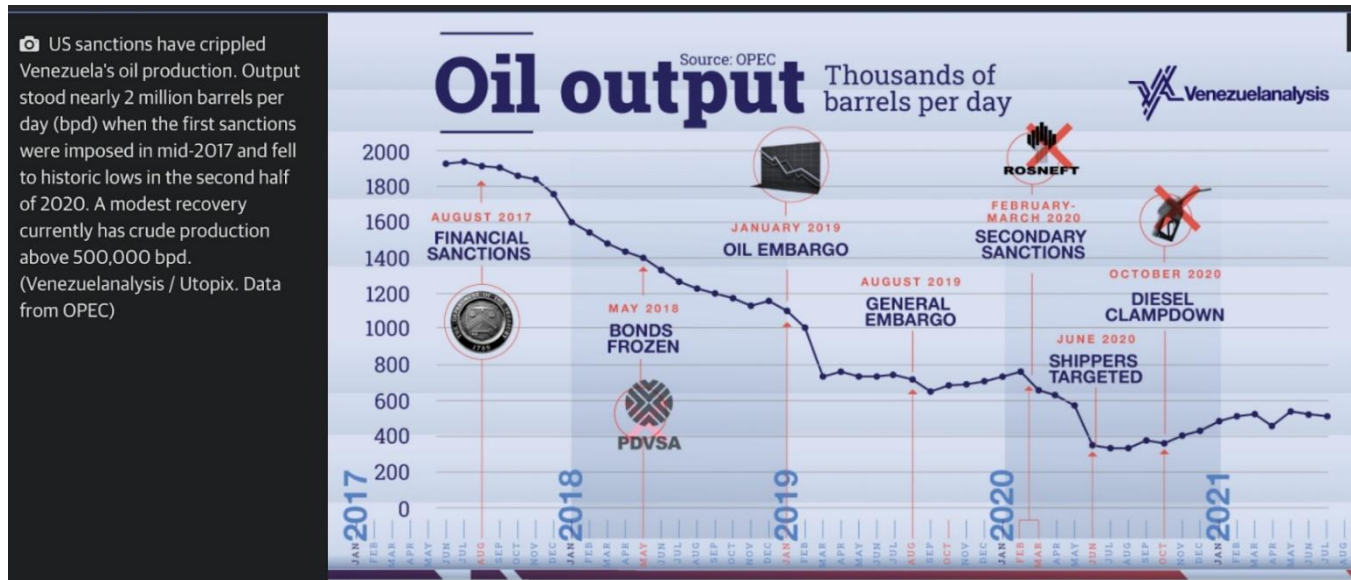
Individual sanctions
Measures: Coercive measures against high ranking officials
Consequences: Over-compliance from financial institutions

Covid-19 response
Measures: Denial of access to funds, blocked transactions to buy vaccines
Consequences: Lack of medical and testing supplies, slow vaccination rollout

#SanctionsKill

THE DEADLY IMPACT OF SANCTIONS

Coercive Economic Measures and Consequences in Venezuela



How US sanctions have impacted Venezuela oil output

THE DEADLY IMPACT OF SANCTIONS

<p>+40,000 deaths (2017 - 2018)</p> <p>22% of children under five are stunted (March 2019)</p> <p>2.500.000 food insecure</p>	<p>+300,000 chronic disease patients without access to treatment (2019)</p> <p>31.4% of population undernourished (2017 - 2019)</p>	<p>69% drop in goods and services imports (2015 - 2019)</p> <p>Outbreaks of previously controlled diseases</p>	<p>Deterioration of public services and infrastructure</p> <p>Accelerated brain drain due to migration</p>
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Sources: CEPR - GAO - FAO - BCV

Venezuelanalysis

How US sanctions are collective punishment of the Venezuelan people.



Venezuelans in long wait for gas due to severe shortages



Cubans queue for basic food items due to decrease in food imports



Searching for scarce food in Syria



Effect of fuel shortages in Syria



“We hope the sanctions end.... The US is trying to subjugate us.” Teachers in Douma (greater Damascus), Syria



83% of Nicaraguans think US sanctions are “manifestation of interventions in their internal affairs”



Sanctions on Russia have backfired. Ruble has INCREASED in value vs Euro.

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Negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

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