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Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights*

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Does economic coercion increase or decrease government respect for human rights in countries targeted with economic sanctions? If economic sanctions weaken the target regime's coercive capacity, human rights violations by the government should be less likely. If, on the contrary, sanctions fail to attenuate the coercive capacity of the target elites and create more economic difficulties and political violence among ordinary citizens, the government will likely commit more human rights violations. Focusing on competing views of why sanctions might improve or deteriorate human rights conditions, this article offers an empirical examination of the effect sanctions have on the physical integrity rights of citizens in target countries. Utilizing time-series, cross-national data for the period 1981–2000, the findings suggest that economic sanctions worsen government respect for physical integrity rights, including freedom from disappearances, extra-judicial killings, torture, and political imprisonment. The results also show that extensive sanctions are more detrimental to human rights than partial/selective sanctions. Economic coercion remains a counterproductive policy tool, even when sanctions are specifically imposed with the goal of improving human rights. Finally, multilateral sanctions have a greater overall negative impact on human rights than unilateral sanctions.

Introduction

Economic sanctions have become an increasingly common feature of international politics. Hence, the last decade has been referred to as 'the sanctions decade' (Cortright & Lopez, 2000). The ideal goal of sanctions has been to apply economic and diplomatic pressure on target countries to induce the target political leadership to comply with sender countries' demands. Economic coercion is

imposed by sender countries with a variety of foreign policy goals, ranging from preventing bloodshed between ethnic groups to punishing countries harboring terrorists, restoring democratic regimes, or ending the use of repression by the government. Beyond the intended policy goal(s), however, economic sanctions inflict significant socio-economic and political damage in target countries. In other words, economic sanctions could be a detrimental foreign policy tool, owing to the inadvertent destabilizing effects they create in target countries. Specifically, sanctions may cause disproportionate stress on ordinary citizens, while allowing the targeted regimes to avoid the cost of coercion (e.g. Cortright & Lopez, 1995; Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Gibbons, 1999).

Focusing on the possible effects sanctions have on political and economic conditions of

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¹ Throughout the article, senders or sender countries refers to the countries that impose economic sanctions, while targets or target countries refers to the countries that are subjected to economic coercion.

target countries, this article develops a theoretical framework and empirically addresses the effect economic sanctions have on the violation of physical integrity rights of citizens, including freedom from disappearances, extra-judicial killings, torture, and political imprisonment. Utilizing a timeseries, cross-national empirical analysis for the period 1981-2000, the article demonstrates that economic sanctions deteriorate citizens' physical integrity rights. The results also point out that extensive sanctions, including comprehensive trade and financial restrictions, appear to be more detrimental to human rights than partial/selective sanctions. Economic coercion is still a detrimental and counterproductive policy tool, even when sanctions are imposed with the specific goal of promoting human rights conditions. Furthermore, multilateral sanctions have a greater overall negative impact on human rights than unilateral sanctions. Finally, besides the immediate effect of ongoing sanctions, the findings on the duration of economic sanctions (number of years sanctions are in place) suggest that the longer sanctions are imposed, the greater accumulating human rights cost they will inflict on target countries.

Offering a cross-national, empirical analysis of the unintended effect sanctions have on human rights practices, the article complements and adds to the literature that explores the consequences of sanctions in target countries. The findings also speak to the research that emphasizes the importance of international factors in promoting human rights that, so far, have overlooked the role that economic coercion plays in human rights violations.

The rest of the article proceeds as follows. The next section briefly refers to the relevant literature on economic sanctions. The following section develops a theoretical framework delineating the effects of economic sanctions on human rights and derives the

general hypothesis. The next two sections present the research design and report the findings from data analysis respectively. Possible implications of the findings for policymaking and scholarly research are discussed in the conclusion.

The Relevant Literature

The research on the use and utility of economic coercion has largely focused on the fundamental question of 'do economic sanctions work?' Scholars have long claimed that economic sanctions are generally ineffective in inducing target countries to comply with the sender's demands (e.g. Galtung, 1967; Hufbauer, Schott & Elliott, 1990; Pape, 1997). A growing body of literature, on the other hand, shifted the focus to the question of consequences of economic sanctions on target countries. The extant literature on the consequences of sanctions has been largely devoted to examining the negative humanitarian effects of economic coercion. The research suggests that, owing to the disproportionate economic impact on citizens, economic coercion inadvertently worsens public health, economic conditions, the development of civil society, and education in target countries (e.g. Galtung, 1967; Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Cortright, Millar & Lopez, 2001; Lopez & Cortright, 1997; Cortright & Lopez, 1995). Focusing on the effects sanctions have on political stability of target countries, Marinov (2005) finds that economic sanctions destabilize political leaders, while Allen (2004) shows that sanctions, especially in more democratic countries, cause more political violence such as riots and demonstrations.

A few studies also focus on the effect of sanctions on human rights (Lopez & Cortright, 1997; Li & Drury, 2004; Drury & Li, 2006). For instance, Li & Drury (2004) show that the USA's threat to remove China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status

was a failed policy in promoting more respect for human rights. Contrary to expectations, they argue that the threat of coercion was counterproductive and resulted in fewer Chinese accommodations regarding the use of repression against citizens. Using UN sanctions against Iraq as a case study, Lopez & Cortright (1997), on the other hand, argue that further deterioration of human rights conditions was an unintended consequence of economic sanctions caused by disproportionate economic hardship on Iraqi civilians.

None of these studies, however, provides a cross-national, empirical examination of the extent to which economic sanctions affect government respect for human rights practices in target countries. Therefore, we are still far from understanding the effect economic sanctions have on human rights. Starting with a theoretical framework next, this study provides a thorough examination of the unintended effect sanctions have on human rights.

Sanctions-Human Rights Nexus

There are two likely outcomes regarding the impact sanctions have on human rights conditions in target countries. First, if economic sanctions weaken the target regime's coercive capacity, human rights violations by the government should be less likely. Second, and on the contrary, if sanctions fail to undermine the coercive capacity of the target elites and lead to more economic and political disorder, the government will likely employ more repression. The theoretical discussion below outlines the reasoning behind these two competing views and concludes that economic sanctions will likely worsen human rights conditions in target countries.

According to 'the naive theory of economic sanctions', economic coercion is designed to weaken the target regime by denying them necessary economic, military, and

other resources that are crucial for political elites to maintain stability and order (Galtung, 1967: 388; Kirshner, 1997: 42). Once target regimes are denied the access to external military and other resources, sanctions should harm the coercive capacity of the repressive regimes and subsequently lessen governmental repression (Blanton, 1999; Davenport, 1995a). Furthermore, because scarce economic resources have been a key tool to reward the loyalty of the regime's supporters such as those in police, military, and civil services (Wintrobe, 1990, 1998; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003), the lack of access to external economic and other essential, scarce resources should cause a loss of support among influential groups and subsequently further diminish the repressiveness of the regimes.

As a result, once the political leadership loses its coercive capacity and political support, the target regime will likely be challenged by opposition movements that will consequently lead to a power shift in favor of anti-government groups. As the anti-regime groups become more viable in domestic politics, they will have more leverage to rally support from citizens to eliminate the repressive regime and to promote more respect for human rights and political liberties. Put simply, economic sanctions are expected to improve human rights conditions by undermining target governments' coercive power and political support from elites, as well as public support.

Contrary to the expectation that sanctions improve human rights conditions suggested by the naive theory of sanctions, the alternative view emphasizes the inadvertent political and economic consequences of sanctions and maintains that economic coercion will likely increase the use of repression by the government. The underlying logic behind this argument is that foreign economic pressure unintendedly permits the targeted leadership to enhance their coercive

capacity and create more opportunities to violate the basic rights of average citizens. The following paragraphs outline four major factors to account for how sanctions contribute to the repressive capacity of the targeted elites and provide more reasons to violate human rights.

First, economic coercion enhances the repressive capacity of the regime allowing political elites to escape the cost of economic pressure and improving the ties between the political leadership and its constituency. Because the target leadership controls the supply of scarce public resources (typically made more scarce by the sanctions), political elites will divert the cost of sanctions to average citizens by unevenly using extant resources in their favor (Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Rowe, 2000; Cortright, Millar & Lopez, 2001). Political elites also avoid the cost of sanctions by generating revenues and securing the supplies of scarce resources through illegal smuggling and other underground transnational economic channels (Andreas, 2005; Selden, 1999: 75-76; Gibbons, 1999). Hence, the targeted elites likely remain unharmed by coercion, as economic sanctions disproportionately affect average citizens. Furthermore, sanctions strengthen the authoritarian regime's ties with prominent social groups because those groups are dependent on the regime's control over the distribution of scarce resources (Gibbons, 1999; Reuther, 1995).

In the case of Iraq, for instance, it is suggested that economic sanctions did not cause any major damage to the regime's stability, but instead boosted the allegiance of prominent groups (i.e. the Sunni minority, the Baath Party, and military and police forces) as Saddam's rule granted economic rents and secured access to scarce resources in return for those groups' loyalty (Reuther, 1995; Hoskins, 1997). Consequently, the sanctions against Saddam Hussein consolidated his repressive authoritarian rule by enhancing

the relationship between the regime and the key groups, allowing him to maintain a strong repressive rule against civilians. Thus, economic sanctions will likely fail to damage the coercive strength of political leadership and instead enhance the connection between authoritarian regimes and their supporters. This process results in the allocation of more power to the regime to employ repression against citizens.

Second, earlier research on the humanitarian consequences of economic coercion shows that sanctions create unintended consequences of greater poverty, higher levels of unemployment, and poor health conditions for ordinary citizens (e.g. Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Cortright, Millar & Lopez, 2001; Cortright & Lopez, 1995, 2000). As economic coercion creates more grievances among economically disadvantaged groups, the target regimes face more instability (Allen, 2004; Marinov, 2005). Increasing socio-economic need is suggested to be a major source of economic grievance and political violence (Gurr, 1968, 1970), which, in turn, increases the use of repression by governments (Henderson, 1991; Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999). Consequently, as anti-government movements rise, especially among the economically disadvantaged groups following sanctions, the target regimes will use more repression to suppress those groups to maintain the status quo.

Third, economic sanctions are also exploited by the target leadership to broaden their legitimacy and to justify repression against anti-regime movements (Galtung, 1967; Miyagawa, 1992: 84–86). Specifically, leaders often depict economic sanctions as an external threat to national integrity and unity. As sanctions are shown as a serious external threat to national unity, political elites justify their repression against anti-regime groups who are critical of the government under the guise of maintaining

domestic cohesion. In Cuba, for instance, Castro depicted US sanctions as an imperialistic attempt to infringe on the independence and integrity of the Cuban people. Sanctions, therefore, allowed Castro to divert public attention from internal problems of the communist regime to the external threat posed by sanctions. Thus, as Castro became a heroic leader fighting against the imperialist power, economic coercion made it easier for him to justify his oppressive regime (Schreiber, 1973: 404-405; Miyagawa, 1992: 84-86). To sum up, where economic sanctions are portrayed as an external threat to national sovereignty, there will be more occasions of repression, especially against antiregime groups under the justification of maintain-ing domestic cohesion to fight external challenges.

Fourth and finally, economic coercion also deteriorates human rights by isolating target countries from global economic and political influences. More specifically, sanctions - particularly comprehensive economic coercion that cuts almost all the economic and political ties between target countries and international actors - play a major role in the international isolation of target countries by discouraging international trade and investment from foreign economic agents (Hufbauer et al., 1997; Hufbauer & Oegg, 2003; Caruso, 2003; Yang et al., 2004). Economic integration through international trade and foreign investment is considered to be essential in promoting government respect for human rights (Mitchell & 1988; McCormick, Meyer, Goldstone, Bates & Epstein, 2000; Apodaca, 2001; Richards, Gelleny & Sacko, 2001; Hafner-Burton, 2005a,b). According to this line of reasoning, economic integration promotes the protection and advancement of human rights by creating economic wealth, a politically stable and strong middle class, and more respect for the basic rights of citizens. Thus, limiting the target's integration into

the global economy and thwarting the emergence of strong social groups demanding more respect for basic rights, sanctions contribute to the consolidation of target's repressive rule, while diminishing the international support for pro-human rights movements in targets.

Based on the above discussion, economic sanctions will strengthen the repressive capacity of the target regime and provide them with more opportunities to employ violent tools against citizens. I therefore hypothesize that economic coercion will likely cause the unintended consequence of more human rights violations in target countries.

Research Design

Table I reports the summary statistics from the variables used in the analysis. To test the hypothesis that sanctions are detrimental to human rights, I utilize time-series and cross-section data delineated by years and countries, respectively. The time period 1981–2000, inclusive, is determined by the availability of the physical integrity rights (available from 1981) and sanctions data (available until 2000).

Using the Threat and Implementation of Economic Sanctions (TIES) (Morgan, Krustev & Bapat, 2006) and Hufbauer, Schott & Elliott's (HSE) (1990) sanction datasets, the analysis sample is restricted to the countries that faced the threat and/or actual imposition of economic sanctions sometime during the period of the analysis. Instead of including all countries for which the data are available, the purpose of restricting the analysis sample to the countries threatened and/or imposed with sanctions is to reduce possible selection bias. Specifically, given that targets might have some systematic attributes that already cause more human rights violations, inclusion of the countries threatened with coercion in addition to those facing actual sanctions will

Table I. Summary Statistics

	Observations	Mean	Std. dev.	Min.	Max.
Disappearances	1,607	0.399	0.680	0	2
Extra-judicial killings	1,600	0.76	0.806	0	2
Political imprisonment	1,602	1.019	0.854	0	2
Torture	1,607	1.274	0.728	0	2
Physical Integrity Index	1,595	3.438	2.381	0	8
Political Terror Scale (PTS)	1,994	2.513	1.182	1	5
Economic sanctions	1,994	0.286	0.523	0	2
Human rights sanctions	1,994	0.114	0.341	0	2
Non-human-rights sanctions	1,994	0.140	0.418	0	2
Multilateral sanctions	1,994	0.074	0.299	0	2
Unilateral sanctions	1,994	0.208	0.475	0	2
Sanction years	1,994	2	5.501	0	39
GDP per capita	1,994	5,641.056	8,640.073	49.323	44,798.75
Democracy	1,994	1.291	7.471	-10	10
Civil war	1,994	0.227	0.419	0	1
Interstate war	1,994	0.043	0.202	0	1

restrict the sample to those countries with relatively similar tendency to commit human rights violations. Consequently, the restricted sample, by reducing selection bias, provides a more appropriate data analysis to capture the human rights effect of imposed sanctions on target countries.² Overall, the sample size includes 95 countries.

Dependent Variables

This study particularly focuses on the physical integrity rights of citizens, which is one of the most essential components of human rights. Four different physical integrity rights variables from the Cingranelli & Richards's (CIRI) (2004) human rights dataset are used. These variables include extrajudicial killings, disappearances, political imprisonment, and torture. Extrajudicial killings are 'killings by government officials without due process of

law. They include murders by private groups if instigated by the government. These killings may result from the deliberate, illegal, and excessive use of lethal force by the police, security forces, or other agents of the state whether against criminal suspects, detainees, prisoners, or others.' Disappearances are 'cases in which people have disappeared, political motivation appears likely, and the victims have not been found. Knowledge of the whereabouts of the disappeared is, by definition, not public knowledge. However, while there is typically no way of knowing where victims are, it is typically known by whom they were taken and under what circumstances.' Torture is 'the purposeful inflicting of extreme pain, whether mental or physical, by government officials or by private individuals at the instigation of government officials. Torture includes the use of physical and other force by police and prison guards that is cruel, inhuman, or degrading. This also includes deaths in custody due to negligence by government officials.' Political imprisonment is 'the incarceration of people by government officials because of: their speech; their

² I thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting that only countries facing the threat and/or imposition of sanctions be included to limit any possible selection bias. Although not reported here, when I used a global sample (145 countries), the results from the data analysis largely remained the same across different model specifications.

non-violent opposition to government policies or leaders; their religious beliefs; their non-violent religious practices including proselytizing; or their membership in a group, including an ethnic or racial group.'3

The data for the variables were originally gathered from the country reports of human rights abuses prepared by the US State Department and Amnesty International. Each of the four physical integrity variables is coded as an ordinal variable on a threepoint scale (0 = frequent violations [50])or more incidences], 1 = some violation [1-49], and 2 = no violations). In addition to the individual analysis of each of the four indicators, the Physical Integrity Index, composed of these four variables, is also included in the analysis. It is a nine-point scale that ranges from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 8, where 0 indicates no respect for physical integrity rights and 8 indicates full respect for those rights (Cingranelli & Richards, 2004).4 To make the interpretation easier, in this analysis all the integrity rights variables have been recoded so that higher values indicate a higher level of integrity right abuses.

To check the sensitivity of the findings to data specifications, I also use the *Political*

Terror Scales (PTS) (Gibney, 2005) as the alternative dependent variable, which is another widely used measure of physical integrity rights abuses.⁵ The PTS include only two index variables providing information regarding the magnitude and severity of integrity rights abuses, including disappearances, torture, political imprisonment, and executions. The indices range from 1 to 5, where higher scores indicate a higher level of human rights abuses (for a more detailed discussion of the PTS scale, see Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999: 297). The two indices are based on two separate data sources, including the country reports on human rights by the US State Department and Amnesty International. In this article, the State Department index was used, which covers more countries and time points to include in the analysis. The time period used in the PTS models is 1976-2000, inclusive.

Independent Variables

The data on economic sanctions were compiled from TIES (Morgan, Krustev & Bapat, 2006), HSE (1990), Hufbauer et al. (1997), Hufbauer & Oegg (2003), and the website of the Institute of International Economics.⁶ The TIES dataset covers imposed sanctions initiated between 1971 and 2000.⁷ I merged

³ The variable descriptions are as they appear in the CIRI codebook.

⁴ Some criticize the use of an index variable suggesting that incorporating different integrity rights abuses under a single variable might undermine the behavioral differences behind the use of different integrity abuses (Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; McCormick & Mitchell, 1997). Poe, Tate & Keith (1999: 298), on the other hand, note that different kinds of integrity rights are substitutable policy choices. That is, the choice to violate one type of integrity right may make unnecessary the violation of another integrity right. Fortunately, Cingranelli & Richards's (2004) dataset uniquely provides data to accommodate both of the reasonable concerns. Thus, in this study, the individual analysis of four major physical integrity rights allows examining the effect economic coercion has on each of the four integrity rights abuses, while the use of the index variable offers an analysis of how sanctions affect integrity rights abuses in general. For some of the earlier research using the Cingranelli & Richards's (2004) dataset, see, for example, Richards, Gelleny & Sacko (2001); Abouharb & Cingranelli (2006); Sobek, Abouharb & Ingram (2006).

⁵ In Gibney (2005), the data are available since 1980. Poe, Tate & Keith's (1999) data that use similar coding rules were used to include the data for the 1976–79 period. Also, following the earlier practice (e.g. Poe & Tate, 1994; Davenport & Amstrong, 2004), for the countries where the State Department data were missing but available from Amnesty International, the missing values were replaced in the State Department indicator by using the index for Amnesty International data.

⁶ The full list of the sanction cases compiled by Gary Hufbauer and his colleagues is available at http://www.iie.com/research/topics/sanctions/sanctions-timeline.htm.

⁷ The TIES dataset does not provide the actual date of imposition for the imposed sanction cases followed by a threat stage. Hence, I am unable to include those cases unless the data for the imposition date for the same episodes are available in the HSE's data. I also exclude the TIES sanction cases over environmental policy and trade practice disputes, because those cases do not lead to any substantial political and economic consequences for target countries. It is also worthwhile noting that for the

the data from Hufbauer and his colleagues for all the imposed sanction cases missing in the TIES dataset or implemented before 1971 and continued during the 1981-2000 period (e.g. sanctions against South Africa and Cuba). Economic sanctions refer to trade and financial coercion such as export restrictions, investment bans, asset freezes, reduction or suspension of military aid, restrictions on limited dual-use technologies, and travel bans on target countries' officials (HSE, 1990: 2). The data analysis focuses only on imposed economic sanctions. The compiled data include unilateral sanctions initiated by individual countries, such as the United States, as well as multilateral sanctions imposed by multiple countries under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) or regional intergovernmental organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

All the sanction variables discussed below are ordinal variables (0–2) indicating whether a country in a given year is under no sanction (0), partial sanctions (1), or extensive sanctions (2).⁸ The extensive sanctions category includes comprehensive sanctions that cut any economic and financial transactions between the sender and target countries, such as those sanctions in place against Cuba, North Korea, and Yugoslavia (Hufbauer et al., 1997).⁹ Partial sanctions, on the other hand, refer to limited trade and financial sanctions, such as investment bans or asset freezes and partial export restrictions, reduction or suspension of arms exports or limited

dual-use technologies, constraints on military and other sorts of aid, and travel restrictions.

The purpose of using an ordinal sanction variable is to account for the severity of economic sanctions. Earlier research on the humanitarian consequences of economic sanctions emphasizes that extensive economic sanctions cause more economic hardship and political strain on target regimes than partial sanctions (e.g. Weiss et al., 1997; Weiss, 1999; Cortright, Millar & Lopez, 2001). The impact of extensive sanctions is suggested to be detrimental, as illustrated by unilateral US sanctions against Cuba, as well as multilateral sanctions against Iraq and Yugoslavia. It is expected that, owing to the complete or nearly complete cut of economic ties, extensive sanctions are more detrimental to civilians and the general economic and political stability of target countries. As opposed to extensive sanctions, limited/ selective sanctions that aim at partial financial and trade restrictions are expected to be less harmful to target countries. Therefore, the expected human rights effects of sanctions should be more salient in countries under extensive sanctions, owing to their harsher political and socio-economic consequences on target countries.

The *economic sanctions* (0–2) variable includes all imposed sanctions and indicates whether or not a country is facing extensive (2), partial (1), or no sanctions in a given year.¹⁰ In addition to the sanctions variable

countries facing more than one sanction in a given year, the sanction case with more severe consequences and/or with multiple senders was taken as the basis to code the economic sanctions (all) variable.

⁸ When I use dummy variables for all sanction indicators (i.e. economic sanctions (all), extensive vs. partial sanctions, human rights vs. non-human-rights sanctions), instead of the ordinal measure, the findings largely remained significant across the models.

⁹ Extensive sanctions have become a rarer sanction type since the late 1990s, especially because the UN and EU mostly impose limited/partial sanctions.

¹⁰ Some scholars prefer dividing the list of sanctions into the categories of limited, moderate, and extensive sanctions to determine the severity of sanctions (Hufbauer et al., 1997; Hufbauer & Oegg, 2003). Yet, the data for limited and moderate sanctions are not available in the existing data sources for the sanction episodes not involving the United States and the United Nations. Furthermore, although extensive sanctions are straightforward to determine, owing to the almost complete cut of economic ties between the parties, determining the differences between limited and moderate sanctions appears to be vague. Therefore, owing to data limitations and to minimize any subjective judgment, I divide sanctions into two categories including extensive and partial sanctions (for a similar operationalization, see also Caruso, 2003; Yang et al., 2004).

including all imposed sanction episodes, utilizing the same ordinal severity scale, I also extend the analysis examining whether the objective of sanctions and number of actors involved in the imposition process have any particular impact on physical integrity right abuses in target countries. The human rights sanctions variable indicates whether a country faces extensive or partial imposed sanctions with the goal of preventing human rights violations committed by regimes, or otherwise, while the non-human rights sanctions variable takes the value of 1 (partial) or 2 (extensive) when sanctions are imposed with non-human-rights policy goals, and 0 otherwise. The data regarding the sanction objectives are taken from the HSE and TIES datasets, which provide information about the issues involved in each sanction episode. To determine the policy goal of sanction imposer(s) in each case, I also consulted the studies (Ang & Peksen, 2007; Li, 1993) that specifically investigate the role of issue types on sanction outcomes. Thus, focusing on the objectives of economic coercion allows us to examine whether economic sanctions imposed with the explicit goal of improving human rights conditions are more or less detrimental to integrity rights compared with sanctions with other objectives.

To determine whether the number of actors involved (multilateral vs. unilateral) during the imposition stage has any particular impact, the variable multilateral sanctions accounts for only extensive and partial sanctions imposed by the UN or major regional intergovernmental organizations, while unilateral sanctions includes only extensive and partial sanctions imposed by individual countries without any involvement of international organizations. It is likely that sanctions will be more harmful under multilateral sanctions. since multiple countries are putting pressure on target countries and leading to more economic damage and isolation of the target from global economic and political forces.

Finally, the natural log of the *sanction years* variable indicates how long imposed economic coercion has been in place in a given year. The log form of the variable is used to account for the data's curvilinearity. The goal of looking at the number of sanction years is to investigate to what extent economic sanctions' negative effects persist in the long term. The *sanction years* variable therefore helps empirically observe the expected negative effect of sanctions over time, in addition to the immediate effect captured by the other sanction variables discussed above.

Control Variables

I include four additional variables to control for the other independent factors on human rights suggested by the earlier research. A democracy variable is included in the models to control for the influence of the regime type on human rights abuses. Specifically, the expectation is that democratic states tend to commit fewer human rights abuses, because democratic governments are more constrained through numerous institutional mechanisms, such as removal of the government by the popular vote and the existence of an effective checks and balances system (e.g. Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Henderson, 1991; Davenport, 1995b, 1999; Poe & Tate, 1994; Krain, 1997; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Zanger, 2000). The democracy variable is taken from the Polity IV dataset (Marshall & Jaggers, 2000); each country's democracy score ranges from -10 to 10, where 10 represents the highest level of democracy. The natural log of GDP per capita income level (in 1995 constant US dollars) is used to control for the effects of developmental differences across countries. Theoretically, countries mired in poverty that lack economic resources are more likely to experience political instability and violence. To maintain stability and order, regimes in underdeveloped states more likely use repressive measures against citizens (e.g. Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Henderson, 1991; Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Zanger, 2000; Keith, 2002). The data for economic development are from the World Bank (2004).

Previous research also points out that presence of a civil war in a country will increase human right violations (e.g. Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Davenport, 1995b, 1999; Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Zanger, 2000). As governments face internal challenge from anti-government armed forces, governments become more repressive to maintain control over the society. Similarly, involvement in an interstate war has been claimed to be positively associated with greater incidences of human rights abuses (Davenport, 1995b, 1999; Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Zanger, 2000). It is expected that during international warfare, governments tend to be more repressive over their citizens to maintain domestic cohesion in the face of a foreign threat. The civil war variable is coded as 1 if a country is under a civil war with at least 25 battle-related deaths per year, and 0 otherwise. Similarly, the interstate war variable takes the value of 1 if a country is under a minor, intermediate, or extensive interstate armed conflict, and 0 otherwise. The data for civil and interstate wars are from the Armed Conflict Dataset (Strand et al., 2005) of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO). To minimize the simultaneity bias, I use a one-year lag of all independent variables.

Each model also includes the *past practice* variable, which is a one-year lag of the dependent variable to control for autocorrelation that is a common issue when cross-sectional time-series data are utilized (Beck & Katz, 1995). Theoretically, lagging the dependent variable is also suggested, to control for the assumption that the previous year's human rights practices in a country is a significant predictor of the current year's human rights

conditions, given that the change in state practices towards human rights is a slow process (e.g. Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999). Because all the dependent variables utilized in the analysis are ordinal variables with three or more categories, all the models are reported using ordered probit regression (Long, 1997). The Huber/White sandwich estimator of variance clustered on country code is included in each model in order to obtain robust standard errors, which assumes non-independence within clusters.

Findings

Table II reports the findings from the models using disappearances and extra-judicial killings as the dependent variables. Table III includes the models only for political imprisonment and torture, and Table IV contains the models for Physical Integrity Index and the Political Terror Scale indices. Four models are used for each of the dependent variables. The first model reports the findings from the ordinal economic sanctions variable as the main independent variable that merely indicates whether a country is under limited, extensive, or no economic coercion in a given year. The second model for each of the dependent variables reports the effect of sanction objectives - human rights vs. non-human-rights. The third model only includes multilateral and unilateral sanctions variables, and the fourth model examines the effect of sanction duration (number of years sanctions in place).11

The results for the *economic sanctions* (all) variable across the models suggest that economic sanctions, in general, lead to higher human rights abuses in the target

¹¹ Diagnostic tests revealed that there was no issue with multicolinearity and serial autocorrelation in any of the estimations.

countries. The suggested negative effect of sanctions is supported in the individual analysis of the each of the dependent variables in Tables II and III, as well as in the analysis of the composite indices of Physical Integrity and the PTS in Table IV. Therefore, the findings from the sanctions variable support the hypothesis that economic coercion deteriorates the respect for integrity rights in target countries. In the models examining the sanction objectives, we observe that, except for extra-judicial killing under non-human-rights sanctions and political imprisonment under human rights sanctions, sanctions with the objective of promoting human rights as well as with other policy objectives will likely deteriorate integrity rights.

In all three tables, findings on the number of actors involved in the imposition process (excluding extra-judicial killings during unilateral sanctions and political imprisonment during multilateral sanctions) demonstrate that economic sanctions imposed by both individual countries and international organizations deteriorate human rights conditions in target countries. Finally, across all of the models, the sanction years variable shows that economic coercion continues to have a negative impact in the long term. The extent of that negative impact, however, diminishes over time. Therefore, the longer the economic sanctions are in place, the more accumulating negative impact they will inflict on target countries.¹²

How large is the effect of economic sanctions in increasing the likelihood of physical integrity abuses for each of the four integrity rights abuses? In order to answer this question, using the models in Tables II and III, Table V displays estimates of how much the probability of integrity abuses would change in a country moving from being under no economic sanctions to becoming a target of either extensive or partial economic sanctions, while holding all other variables at their mean values. ¹³ In the interest of space, Table V provides the change in probabilities for the 'frequent violations' category of the dependent variables. ¹⁴

For each of the integrity rights variables, it appears that extensive coercion is more than partial sanctions. detrimental According to the results for the economic sanctions (all) variable, moving from no sanction to extensive sanctions leads to a 115% increase in the predicted probability of frequent violations of disappearances, while it becomes 50% more likely when targets are facing partial sanctions. In the case of extrajudicial killings, frequent violations become 64% and 29% more likely under extensive and partial sanctions, respectively. Similarly, moving from no sanctions to extensive sanctions increases the predicted probability of frequent integrity right abuses by 57% for political imprisonment and 61% for torture, while frequent violations become 27% more likely for political imprisonment and 30% torture under partial sanctions. Therefore, the predicted probabilities reported in Table V confirm the expectation that extensive sanctions generally trigger a

¹² I also included a squared term of sanction years in the same models with the sanction years variable to check for a possible curvilinear relationship. That is, while economic sanctions are detrimental to human rights during the early years of imposition, they might become more destabilizing for the target leadership and eventually contribute to improvement of human rights conditions in the long term. The squared term did not produce a significant relationship

with the dependent variables, confirming the absence of any strong curvilinear association between the number of sanction years and the dependent variables.

¹³ SPost (Long & Freese, 2001) is used for the postestimation interpretation of regression models for categorical outcomes.

¹⁴ In the other categories of the dependent variable, 'some violation' and 'no violation', the predicted value changes are consistent with the hypothesis. That is, economic sanctions significantly reduce the occurrence of no or some violation of integrity rights abuses, while making the emergence of frequent violations more likely.

Table II. Ordered Probit Models for the Human Rights Effects of Economic Sanctions (1981–2000)

		Disappearances	S			Extra-judicial killings	lings	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Economic sanctions (all)	0.18***	ı	ı	ı	0.16**	ı	I	I
Human rights sanctions	1	0.22** (0.11)	I	I	1	0.27*** (0.09)	I	I
Non-human-rights sanctions	I	0.17** (0.078)	I	I	I	0.14 (0.11)	I	I
Multilateral sanctions	I	ı	0.21**	I	I	I	0.26*** (0.10)	I
Unilateral sanctions	I	1	0.13†	I	I	I	0.13	I
Sanction years	I	I	. 1	0.11***	I	I	I	0.14***
GDP per capita	-0.14^{***} (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.14^{***} (0.04)	-0.14^{***} (0.04)	-0.19*** (0.04)	-0.19*** (0.04)	-0.19*** (0.04)	-0.19*** (0.04)
Democracy	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.008)	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003
Civil war	0.76***	0.76***	0.75***	0.76***	0.69***	0.69***	0.68***	0.68***
Interstate war	-0.04 (0.14)	-0.04 (0.14)	-0.009 (0.14)	-0.04 (0.14)	0.06 (0.14)	0.07 (0.14)	0.08 (0.14)	0.03 (0.14)
Past practice	0.96***	0.96***	0.96***	0.97*** (0.08)	1.09*** (0.08)	1.08*** (0.08)	1.08*** (0.08)	1.08*** (0.08)
Log-pseudo likelihood Chi-square Pseudo r ² N	-868.977 429.97 0.32 1,607	-868.735 439.51 0.32 1,607	-868.629 414.15 0.32 1,607	-868.281 400.39 0.32 1,607	-1,115.324 610.02 0.34 1,600	-1,113.674 648.88 0.34 1,600	-1,113.252 672.27 0.34 1,600	-1,110.693 611.75 0.34 1,600

White robust standard errors adjusted for clustering over country appear in parentheses. *** Significant at 1%, ** at 5%, * at 10%. All independent variables are lagged at £-1. † significant at .11%.

Table III. Ordered Probit Models for the Human Rights Effects of Economic Sanctions (1981-2000)

		Political imprisonment	nment			Torture		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Economic sanctions (all)	0.20**	I	I	I	0.28***	I	I	I
Human rights sanctions	, I	0.14	I	I	, I	0.40***	I	I
Non-human-rights sanctions	I	0.36***	I	I	I	0.26***	I	I
Multilateral sanctions	I		0.17	I	I		0.40***	I
Unilateral sanctions	I	I	0.26***	I	I	I	0.23***	I
Sanction years	I	I	ļ	0.17***	I	I	Ì	0.17***
GDP per capita	-0.11^{***} (0.04)	-0.11*** (0.04)	-0.11*** (0.04)	-0.11^{***} (0.04)	-0.15^{***} (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.14^{***} (0.04)
Democracy	-0.035*** (0.007)	-0.035*** (0.007)	-0.035*** (0.007)	-0.035*** (0.007)	0.005	005 (0.007)	-0.00 <i>5</i> (0.007)	0.006
Civil war	0.44^{***} (0.12)	0.45***	0.43***	0.42***	0.37***	0.38***	0.36^{***} (0.10)	0.38***
Interstate war	0.08	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.19 (0.19)	0.19 (0.19)	0.21	0.18 (0.19)
Past practice	1.09***	1.08***	1.08***	1.08***	1.10***	1.10***	1.10***	1.10***
Log-pseudo likelihood Chi-square Pseudo r ² N	-1,098.580 695.78 0.37 1,602	-1,094.549 692.55 0.37 1,602	-1,095.671 698.49 0.37 1,602	-1,093.267 695.21 0.37 1,602	-1,172.273 396.83 0.29 1,607	-1,171.371 401.11 0.29 1,607	-1,170.243 450.20 0.29 1,607	-1,171.811 391.03 0.29 1,607

White robust standard errors adjusted for clustering over country appear in parentheses. *** Significant at 1%, ** at 5%, * at 10%. All independent variables are lagged at t-1.

Table IV. Ordered Probit Models for the Human Rights Effects of Economic Sanctions

	Physic	Physical Integrity Index (1981–2000)	x (1981–2000)		Poli	Political Terror Scale (1976–2000)	1976–2000)	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Economic sanctions (all)	0.13***	I	I	I	0.18***	I	I	I
Human rights sanctions	, I	0.15**	1	I	, I	0.30***	1	1
Non-human-rights sanctions	I	0.15**	I	I	I	0.14^{*} (0.08)	I	I
Multilateral sanctions	I		0.23***	I	I		0.22**	I
Unilateral sanctions	I	I	0.10* (0.06)	I	I	I	0.15**	I
Sanction years	I	I	, I	0.12***	I	I) , I	0.11***
GDP per capita	-0.16** (0.03)	-0.16*** (0.03)	-0.16*** (0.03)	-0.16*** (0.03)	-0.18** (0.03)	-0.18*** (0.03)	-0.18*** (0.03)	-0.18*** (0.03)
Democracy	-0.013** (0.005)	-0.012** (0.005)	-0.013** (0.005)	-0.013** (0.005)	-0.017*** (0.005)	-0.017*** (0.005)	-0.017*** (0.005)	-0.017*** (0.005)
Civil war	0.53***	0.54***	0.53***	0.54*** (0.10)	0.56***	0.57***	0.56***	0.56***
Interstate war	0.03 (0.10)	0.03 (0.10)	0.06 (0.10)	0.02 (0.11)	0.06 (0.14)	0.09 (0.14)	0.09 (0.14)	0.06 (0.14)
Past practice	0.54***	0.54*** (0.03)	0.54***	0.53***	1.34*** (0.06)	1.34*** (0.06)	1.34*** (0.06)	1.34*** (0.06)
Log-pseudo likelihood Chi-square Pseudo r ² N	-2,457.208 906.98 0.29 1,595	-2,456.654 983.38 0.29 1,595	-2,455.224 1011.72 0.29 1,595	-2,453.388 1030.03 0.29 1,595	-1,632.678 794.89 0.47 1,994	-1,630.978 813.50 0.46 1,994	-1,632.073 803.75 0.46 1,994	-1,631.750 788.37 0.46 1,994

White robust standard errors adjusted for clustering over country appear in parentheses. *** Significant at 1%, ** at 5%, * at 10%. All independent variables are lagged at 1-1

higher probability of human rights abuses than partial sanctions.

In terms of sanction objectives, it appears that human rights sanctions increase the likelihood of violations of integrity rights abuses more than non-human-rights sanctions. For instance, in the case of disappearances, human rights sanctions lead to 151% and 62% more likely integrity rights abuses under extensive and partial sanctions, respectively. Imposing sanctions with other goals leads to a lesser negative impact: 97% under extensive sanctions and 46% under partial sanctions,. According to Table V, the findings based on the sanction objectives in the other models also consistently show that human rights sanctions lead to

less respect for human rights than nonhuman-rights sanctions. Therefore, the comparison of the substantial impacts of these two variables suggests that the negative consequence of coercion becomes more exacerbating when human rights sanctions are in place. Beyond the suggested economic and political consequences of sanctions in general, human rights sanctions could be more detrimental because the targeted regimes will perceive the demand for better human rights as a direct threat to their regime survival. They may subsequently react more furiously and commit further repression so as not to be seen conciliatory toward their domestic rivals in the face of a foreign threat.

Table V. The Impact of Sanctions Variables on the Occurrence of Frequent Violations of the Integrity Rights

	No sanction Initial value	Partial sanctions (0 to 1) New value (% change)	Extensive sanctions (0 to 2) New value (% change)
Disappearances			
Economic sanctions (all)	0.030	0.045 (50)	0.065 (115)
Human rights sanctions	0.031	0.050 (62)	0.077 (151)
Non-human-rights sanctions	0.031	0.045 (46)	0.063 (103)
Multilateral sanctions	0.031	0.049 (57)	0.074 (138)
Unilateral sanctions	0.031	0.041 (32)	0.053 (71)
Extra-judicial killings			
Economic sanctions (all)	0.107	0.139 (29)	0.176 (64)
Human rights sanctions	0.104	0.164 (58)	0.240 (130)
Multilateral sanctions	0.107	0.161 (51)	0.232 (117)
Political imprisonment			
Economic sanctions (all)	0.239	0.304 (27)	0.376 (57)
Non-human-rights sanctions	0.237	0.361 (52)	0.501 (111)
Unilateral sanctions	0.237	0.324 (37)	0.424 (79)
Torture			
Economic sanctions (all)	0.353	0.459 (30)	0.569 (61)
Human rights sanctions	0.354	0.509 (44)	0.663 (87)
Non-human-rights sanctions	0.354	0.452 (28)	0.554 (56)
Multilateral sanctions	0.356	0.512 (44)	0.667 (88)
Unilateral sanctions	0.356	0.443 (25)	0.533 (50)

The reported probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables in the models reported in Tables II and III constant at their means, while holding the ordinal sanction variables at 0. Then, the ordinal sanction variable under consideration is altered from 0 (no sanction) to 1 (partial sanctions) and from 0 to 2 (extensive sanctions) to determine the individual effect of it.

Compared with unilateral sanctions, multilateral sanctions appear to inflict much more damage on integrity rights, especially when extensive multilateral sanctions are imposed. The predicted probability of frequent violations of disappearances, for example, becomes 138% more likely when extensive multilateral sanctions are in place. The effect of the same variable on frequent violations of extra-judicial killings and torture is 117% and 88%, respectively. While partial unilateral sanctions have the lowest substantial impact, extensive unilateral coercion leads to a slightly higher likelihood of integrity rights abuses than partial multilateral sanctions. Specifically, extensive unilateral sanctions increase the probability of frequent violations by 71% for disappearances, 79% for political imprisonment, and 50% for torture incidences. To sum up, multilateral sanctions, especially when in the extensive form, cause higher integrity rights abuses than unilateral sanctions.

Before concluding the findings section, among the control variables across the models, GDP per capita, civil war, and the past practice of integrity abuses variables consistently show a significant relationship with the dependent variables in the expected directions. More specifically, higher GDP per capita and better past integrity rights practices lead to higher scores of integrity rights. Presence of a civil war, on the other hand, increases the integrity rights abuses across the models. Excluding the models for disappearances, extra-judicial killing, and torture, the democracy variable also largely confirms the expectation that the level of human rights abuses will be lower in democratic countries. However, interstate war fails to produce any significant association with the integrity rights variables. The alternative operationalization of the variable, including only major interstate wars, did not make any substantive change in the directions and levels of significance of the war variable or the main independent variables. Thus, I am unable to find robust support for the interstate war variable.

Conclusion

The underlying statement emerging from this article is that economic sanctions inadvertently cause further deterioration of human rights conditions in target countries. Moreover, extensive sanctions, especially those imposed multilaterally, appear to trigger greater integrity rights abuses than limited sanctions. In terms of sanction objectives, the empirical results demonstrate that human rights sanctions are also counterproductive leading to a higher probability of integrity rights violations. Furthermore, besides the immediate effect of sanctions, economic coercion continues to undermine human rights, the longer the sanctions stay in place. This analysis has several implications for the study of economic sanctions. First, it appears that economic sanctions not only fail frequently in achieving their intended policy goals (Hufbauer, Schott & Elliott, 1990; Pape, 1997), but also lead to the unintended negative human rights effects. In addition to the earlier case-study evidence, this study provides national, empirical evidence confirming the deleterious effect of sanctions on human rights.

Based on the research findings of this study, it is evident that the use of 'sticks', at least in the form of economic coercion as a foreign policy tool, does not contribute to the advancement of human rights. Individual countries and intergovernmental organizations imposing sanctions should be aware of the delicate balance between using economic coercion to induce targets to change a policy and the possible unintended damage of worsening human rights conditions. Specifically, policymakers should include in their cost—benefit calculations the

likely repercussions of economic coercion on human rights, even under the circumstances where economic sanctions might attain their intended policy goals.

International pressure through diplomatic and economic channels has long been suggested to be essential for improving the level of government respect for human rights. This article suggests that economic coercion, as one of the most frequently used tools of international pressure, instead leads to an increase in repression. As economic sanctions exclude the countries from the global economy and cause socio-economic hardship on civilians, while not severely affecting the target regime, ordinary citizens will likely become the victims of more human rights violations by the government.

This study particularly focuses on the effect of sanctions on human rights. Future research should further investigate whether economic sanctions become more or less deleterious for human rights when used prior to or simultaneously with other external tools, such as foreign aid and economic loans. Detailed research on such cases as Angola and Liberia, where civil war led to major human rights violations, could offer more thorough evidence as to what extent economic coercion, combined with other independent factors, contributes to ending political violence and repression by the government.

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