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The Lawfare of the United States Against Iran and Russia: A Comparative Study of Sanctions

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ABSTRACT

International law, as a framework that regulates relations between countries, has the mission of peacefully resolving disputes between nations. So far, many nations have successfully addressed their problems and conflicts using this principle. However, the situation has not always followed this course. In some cases, countries have abused international law, utilizing it as a tool to achieve their own goals and interests. Lawfare serves as a tool employed by powerful and resource-rich countries against weaker nations. One notable example of lawfare is the imposition of sanctions, which can damage the economy of a country and cause suffering for its people. The United States since the end of World War II has utilized this instrument in various instances against different countries, including Iran, Russia, Syria, Cuba, Iraq, and others. Beyond the economic and human rights repercussions of these sanctions, the expansion of lawfare can have significant impacts and consequences for nations. The primary question of this paper is what strategic lessons the U.S. lawfare against Iran and Russia, with a focus on sanctions, offers to both countries. Additionally, this paper examines some commonalities and differences among these sanctions. The hypothesis of this research is that while the sanctions imposed on Iran and Russia share some similarities, their effects and consequences are not the same. Additionally, given the economic capacities of the two countries, it is not possible to directly compare the sanctions imposed on them.

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Introduction

Lawfare, as an emerging concept in the realm of international relations and international law, refers to the use of legal tools to achieve political, economic, or social goals on both domestic and international levels. This concept has gained attention in recent decades, especially in contexts where traditional diplomacy and warfare are evolving. Lawfare involves the application of legal norms and regulations to exert pressure on other countries or specific groups. In other words, this form of warfare can manifest through litigation, legislative measures, and other legal avenues. The primary objective of lawfare is to achieve specific goals beyond military and economic domains.

Lawfare exhibits distinct characteristics that set it apart from other forms of warfare. First and foremost, this type of warfare is conducted in a non-military manner with political and economic aims. Moreover, various countries can refer to international institutions, such as the International Court of Justice, to defend their rights and interests. Ultimately, lawfare is often prolonged and can span many years (Abbott & Snidal, 2000). It encompasses multiple dimensions that may impact its effectiveness. One dimension is its political aspect; as a political tool, it allows countries to influence the political processes of their rivals via legal complaints. Another dimension is economic; this type of warfare can serve as an instrument in the international economic arena. The enforcement of laws and regulations may lead to increased economic pressure on countries operating within that realm. A prominent example of this is the imposition of sanctions (Majidi & Zarouni, 2022: 14). Additionally, there is a social dimension to lawfare. It can bring about changes in social and cultural behaviors within various societies; for instance, through legal pressures, countries may seek to instigate alterations in national laws.

Contemporary history has witnessed numerous examples of lawfare. A notable instance is the Islamic Republic of Iran's lawsuit against the United States regarding sanctions and political decisions in 2018, which was examined by the International Court of Justice. Simultaneously, the United States has engaged in lawfare against Iran in various domains, prominently exemplified by the imposition of sanctions. A similar strategy has been adopted toward the Russian Federation following the Ukraine crisis in 2014 and the subsequent Ukraine war after February 2022, with the United States taking measures against Russia.

While lawfare is an effective tool for achieving objectives, it also faces several challenges. One of these challenges is legal complexities. Differences in legal systems and cultural contexts can complicate the occurrence of lawfare. This strategy incurs significant financial and time costs. Such warfare requires substantial financial and temporal resources, which can be particularly challenging for small or developing countries. Additionally, the uncertainty of outcomes in lawfare is quite high. The results of legal battles may be unpredictable, which can lead to hesitation in utilizing this strategy. As an emerging phenomenon in the international arena, lawfare requires further attention and examination. Despite its specific challenges, this type of warfare can serve as an effective instrument for defending the rights and interests of countries, provided that international laws are implemented fairly and belligerent nations abide by human rights principles. Ultimately, lawfare should be recognized as a key focus in international relations, warranting greater attention from researchers and policymakers.

Sanctions are one of the key and effective tools in the foreign policy of the United States, employed to pressure target countries and alter their behaviors. These instruments may include economic, trade, and financial restrictions, and throughout history, sanctions have played a significant role in shaping international relations. The history of sanctions in the United States dates back to the founding of the country, but their use dramatically increased, particularly during the Cold War. After the Cold War in 1991, with the emergence of new

challenges such as terrorism and human rights violations, sanctions became a common tool in American diplomacy (Hufbauer et al., 2009).

In the 1960s, the United States imposed sanctions on Cuba due to the country's revolution and its close relations with the Soviet Union. In the following decades, sanctions were enacted against variant regimes, including the apartheid regime in South Africa and sanctions against Iran due to its nuclear program. Sanctions in U.S. foreign policy have been designed to achieve various objectives. They are typically imposed to compel countries to change specific policies, particularly in nuclear matters, extortion, or human rights violations. For instance, economic and financial sanctions against Iran were designed to halt the country's nuclear program. In some cases, the United States imposes sanctions based on concerns about human rights violations in certain countries. Examples include sanctions against the dictatorial governments of Venezuela and Syria. Sanctions can also serve as a tool to address security threats. Specifically, financial sanctions against terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda have been implemented to limit their financial resources.

T. Weiss (1999: 502) in his study of U.S. sanctions argues that there are typically categorized into four main types:

- **Economic Sanctions:** These sanctions include trade and financial restrictions aimed at reducing the economic capabilities of specific countries or groups. They are particularly applied in the domains of banking, exports, and imports.
- **Military Sanctions:** This type of sanction involves prohibiting the sale of weapons and military equipment to specific countries.
- **Diplomatic Sanctions:** These sanctions refer to the reduction or severance of diplomatic relations with targeted countries. The primary objective is to pressure ineffective and unjust governments.
- **Targeted Sanctions:** Also known as "smart sanctions," targeted sanctions are directed toward specific individuals, entities, or groups, aiming to minimize broader harm to the general population.

Yet despite their objectives, sanctions face numerous challenges and criticisms. Some analysts believe that sanctions are not always successful in achieving their goals and can even lead to counterproductive outcomes. In some instances, sanctions may foster internal unity within the sanctioned countries (Hufbauer et al., 2020). Economic sanctions, in particular, can lead to a failure to meet the basic needs of the population. Analysts express concerns that this issue could result in humanitarian crises in targeted countries (Rodríguez, 2023). The use of sanctions can sometimes lead to domestic and international dissatisfaction. Certain countries and international organizations have raised serious critiques of sanctions, deeming them ineffective and unjust.

Literature Review

Orde Kittrie's 2016 book, *Lawfare: Law as a Weapon of War*, offers a comprehensive exploration of lawfare, examining its definition, nature, and the diverse actors involved, including governments, organizations, and non-governmental entities. Kittrie posits that lawfare involves using legal means to weaken or destroy adversaries in pursuit of objectives typically associated with conflict and warfare. He notes that both the United States and other nations have utilized lawfare in various contexts, although unlike China, the U.S. does not have a formalized lawfare strategy. The book subtly endorses the notion of an American perspective on lawfare, distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate uses based on U.S. interests. It is often regarded as a foundational work in the field of lawfare (Kittrie, 2016).

In a related context, Juan Zarate's book discusses the U.S. government's financial policies and approaches against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The work highlights how the U.S.

Treasury served as the central hub for financial warfare against Iran, effectively replacing military actions. This approach is framed as a form of warfare, underscoring the strategic use of financial tools in international conflicts (Zarate, 2013). Rousseau's article explores the role of international law in resolving disputes and preventing hostilities. From a military perspective, it emphasizes the growing recognition of international law as a crucial component of military and security strategies. This shift reflects a broader trend where international actors increasingly rely on legal frameworks to address challenges (Rousseau, 2017).

Muñoz Mosquera and Bachmann's paper situates lawfare within the context of hybrid warfare. They argue that lawfare is a modern component of hybrid warfare, often overlooked in existing literature. This perspective highlights the diverse capabilities used in hybrid warfare, with lawfare playing a significant role alongside other tactics (Muñoz Mosquera & Bachmann, 2016). Lastly, Charles Dunlap Jr.'s work views law as a tool akin to a weapon of war, capable of being used for both positive and negative purposes. As one of the early proponents of the term "lawfare," Dunlap emphasizes the substitution of law for traditional warfare. His analysis interprets the morality of lawfare in terms of its alignment with U.S. interests, reflecting an American perspective on the subject (Dunlap, Jr., 2008).

Methodology

The type of research is qualitative and its approach is deductive. The research method will combine description and analysis according to the subject and questions. The method of collecting materials is also documentary (books, articles, resolutions, executive orders and etc.).

Conceptual Framework: Lawfare

The term "lawfare" was first used in 1975 by John Carlson and Neville Yeomans. They employed the term metaphorically rather than in the context of warfare (Carlson & Yeomans, 1975). Until 2001, the term "lawfare" was rarely used. It gained prominence following a speech by Major General Charles Dunlap at Harvard University that year. He defined lawfare as a strategy for utilizing or misusing law as an alternative to traditional military tools to achieve operational objectives (Charles, 2001: 4).

Dunlap's November 2001 article, which was the first to formally use the term "lawfare," can be seen as a reaction to an influential article written the previous year by David Rivkin and Lee Casey. In their paper, they argued that both U.S. allies and enemies had opted to use international law as a means to confront or at least contain American power. An example of this approach, according to them, is the emergence of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its capacity to prosecute American officials for violations of international law—an intention and application that remains ambiguous. The authors warned that although international law had matured in the 1990s, it could become one of the most powerful weapons wielded against the United States (Rivkin, Jr. & Casey, 2000).

The literature on lawfare has been predominantly shaped and articulated by the United States, often within the context of U.S. national security. This framework tends to rely on unilateral standards based on American interests to evaluate the morality of lawfare, effectively distinguishing between "good" lawfare—practiced by the U.S.—and "bad" lawfare—employed by its adversaries.

Lawfare can be broadly categorized into two interconnected forms: Instrumental Lawfare and Compliance-Leverage Disparity Lawfare. Instrumental Lawfare involves using legal tools to achieve effects similar to those obtained through conventional military action, leveraging the strategic use of legal mechanisms to influence adversaries (Kontorovich, 2014). Compliance-Leverage Disparity Lawfare, on the other hand, exploits the legal obligations of adversaries, particularly in the context of the law of armed conflict, to gain strategic

advantages. This form of lawfare is often utilized by actors with limited military capacity against more powerful opponents who are constrained by legal considerations (Kittrie, 2016).

Lawfare operates through a diverse array of legal and judicial mechanisms, encompassing various international laws and informal norms. Instrumental Lawfare is notable for its adaptability and creativity, allowing both state and non-state actors to employ it in diverse contexts. However, the scale and nature of lawfare can vary significantly between these actors. In contrast, Compliance-Leverage Disparity Lawfare is typically deployed by actors seeking to exploit legal frameworks against adversaries bound by legal obligations, such as powerful states. This tactic is often used by non-state actors like terrorist organizations to challenge more powerful adversaries, attracting considerable media attention.

I: Sanctions as Lawfare in U.S. Foreign Policy

Sanctions are one of the most important and powerful tools for maintaining and establishing international peace and security. Until the 1980s, however, the United Nations imposed economic sanctions on only two occasions, known as mandatory sanctions. After the Cold War, the UN's role in this regard was revitalized, and the Security Council began passing more sanction resolutions, with a significant turning point being Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Consequently, the 1990s came to be known as the "Decade of Sanctions," primarily due to UN sanctions (Cortright & Lopez, 2000).

Powerful states derive the greatest benefit from lawfare. Lawfare requires certain conditions that are not accessible to every state. It can be argued that the United States, China, and Russia are more engaged in lawfare than other countries (Goldenziel, 2020: 1). The United States employs lawfare across various arenas against other nations, including China, Russia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, North Korea, and Cuba. Proponents in the U.S. believe that lawfare should encompass both the use and misuse (positive and negative applications) of law to achieve objectives. They argue that since the United States employs this approach against its enemies, the positive aspects of using lawfare should also be included in its definition, while misuse is attributed to where the enemies of the United States employ it against the country.

The United States has demonstrated an instrumental view of international law in its legal actions, never perceiving it as an obstacle to achieving its goals. On the contrary, the U.S. envisions the enforcement of international law within the framework of national interests, and thus pursues illegitimate objectives through legal and lawful means by exploiting enforceable laws and existing gaps in international law. The alteration and manipulation of the rule of law in domestic law, and consequently in international law, have become an unwritten principle in this state's foreign policy and international behavior. The United States has launched an all-out war in the realm of lawfare against Iran. America has sought to achieve many goals that could be attainable through forceful and hostile actions via lawfare. The central role in the U.S. lawfare against Iran is based on state and local actions, pressure on companies operating in Iran, and judicial strategies.

The U.S. approach to lawfare has both offensive and defensive aspects, and if there is an alternative method to pursue traditional military objectives through legal means, it will certainly employ it. They provide several reasons for this approach. First, lawfare presents a lower casualty rate among combatants and civilians compared to conventional warfare. Second, if part of the conflict takes place in a courtroom rather than on the battlefield, it is highly beneficial for American society. If the United States possesses more advanced lethal weapons than its adversaries, its superiority in legal arsenal is even more significant and crucial (Kittrie, 2010: 400).

Lawfare in U.S. foreign policy can be divided into several main areas:

- A. Human Rights and Democracy: One of the primary focuses of U.S. lawfare is the promotion of human rights and democracy in the international arena. The United States has consistently sought to be a proponent of democratic values and human rights by utilizing international conventions and agreements. For instance, sanctions against governments that violate human rights, such as those of Venezuela and Syria, are actions taken through legal channels.
- B. Counterterrorism: Lawfare is also employed in the fight against terrorism. The U.S. engages in global counterterrorism efforts by invoking international law and the doctrine of self-defense, aiming to encourage other countries to take action as well (Lahneman & Rudolph Jr., 2023: 58).
- C. Trade Disputes: In the realm of international trade, the United States has also turned to lawfare. Filing complaints against other countries in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and insisting on the enforcement of appropriate trade rules are part of America's strategies in this area. The use of tariffs and trade investigations as tools of lawfare also fits within this framework.

The United States employs various tools and strategies to advance its lawfare agenda. The first tool is legal diplomacy, which refers to the use of international law and regulations as a means for negotiation and agreement. This type of diplomacy allows countries to resolve their disputes without military confrontation by leveraging international law. The second tool is litigation in international bodies. The U.S. frequently turns to international institutions, such as the International Court of Justice and the WTO, to file legal complaints against other nations. The third tool in its lawfare strategy is the imposition of legal sanctions. Sanctions are utilized as a legal instrument in lawfare. By enacting economic and financial sanctions against specific countries for human rights violations or support for terrorism, the United States seeks to alter the behavior of these nations (Hufbauer et al., 2009: 185).

Describing the future of U.S. foreign policy in which sanctions play no role is quite challenging, although there are many indications that the United States' freedom to impose sanctions aligns with the retaliatory and defensive capabilities of its adversaries. Even the Trump administration, initially led by a mix of top businessmen and military commanders, heavily relied on sanctions to manage various challenges, including North Korea's nuclear program and Venezuela's economic and political collapse. However, despite current satisfaction with sanctions, they have a varied legacy in U.S. history, playing critical roles in some contexts while serving as provocations in others. Furthermore, increasing limitations on the effectiveness and influence of sanctions are becoming apparent.

II: Sanctions Against Iran: America's Lawfare Against Iran

In general, the United States believes that if there are legal means to achieve traditional military objectives, it should not resort to hard military confrontation and should earnestly seek legal avenues instead. Nevertheless, this government has never entirely ruled out military options and uses them judiciously based on a cost-benefit analysis. The famous phrase "all options are on the table" reflects this policy.

Subversive actions, such as the "Stuxnet" 2010 operation against Iran and specifically against its nuclear program, possess legal dimensions that can be examined within the framework of security and cyber law, and certainly qualify as examples of lawfare. Sanctions are also a form of lawfare, as Charles Dunlap acknowledges, referring to the lawfare of which sanctions are a part as an American weapon (Charles J., 2010: 123). It is undeniable that international economic sanctions have become a contemporary routine, particularly for superpowers (economically) such as the United States and the European Union. This was recently highlighted in a case brought by the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding alleged

violations of the Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights from 1955 against the United States before the International Court of Justice. This occurrence indicates that certain actors in international relations have a specific understanding of the meaning of the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference (U.N. Doc. A/HRC/RES/24/14 (October 8, 2013), adopted by the UN Human Rights Council, para. 3).

The characteristics of sanctions against Iran involve parallel and often differing sanction regimes imposed by the United Nations, the United States, and the European Union in connection with its nuclear program and human rights violations in response to the unrest of 2011 in the country. Furthermore, differing views between the United States and the European Union regarding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) complicate the status of these sanctions (Geranmayeh, 2017). In 2002, the international community became aware that Iran was advancing its nuclear program without notifying the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in accordance with the regulations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This led to increased suspicion among other countries that Iran was seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Consequently, negotiations with Tehran began. The impasse in these talks resulted in the imposition of the first United Nations sanctions under Security Council Resolution 1737 in December 2006, which included travel bans, asset freezes, prohibitions on the sale and purchase of weapons, and restrictions on trade concerning nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

The election of Hassan Rouhani as President of Iran in 2013 opened a new phase in Iran-West relations, culminating in the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in July 2015. The JCPOA, agreed upon by the E3+3 countries and Iran, brought significant concessions for both parties (Fitzpatrick, 2017: 23). On one side, Iran agreed to undergo unannounced inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of its nuclear facilities, while on the other side, the P5+1 countries accepted that Iran could develop its nuclear program for peaceful purposes. This agreement was signed with the promise of lifting all sanctions against Iran; however, a snapback provision was included, which would allow the immediate reinstatement of all United Nations sanctions against Iran in the event of a breach of the JCPOA by Iran.

It is noteworthy that the unilateral sanctions imposed by member countries, particularly the United States, significantly influenced Iran's behavior and programs. The most notable aspect of U.S. unilateral sanctions is their imposition on non-American citizens or companies, referred to as "secondary sanctions." These secondary sanctions were enacted under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (National Defence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year of 2012, SEC. 1245. [U.S.C.8513a]) which allowed the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Treasury to terminate the trade of non-American citizens or companies if they were found to be in violation within U.S. markets. When a non-American citizen or company engages in trade with entities on the sanctions blacklist, OFAC can undertake a range of actions, from restricting their business activities to a complete ban on operations within the U.S. market. To be removed from the secondary sanctions list, the non-American citizen or company must pay substantial fines.

The imposition of U.S. sanctions against Iran, enacted through domestic laws and through influence in the Security Council and the European Union—often in creative and innovative ways—can be regarded as lawfare. These sanctions utilized legal frameworks as substitutes for traditional military tools to pursue operational objectives without military intervention (Orde F., 2007: 359). Nevertheless, the U.S. lawfare against Iran is far from over. Despite the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, numerous sanctions were imposed during the Biden administration and even in the early years of Trump's second term. Additionally, there is a significant case between Iran and the United States concerning "alleged violations of the

Treaty of Amity" pending before the International Court of Justice, with a final ruling expected in 2025. Undoubtedly, this is only the beginning, and the lawfare between Iran and the United States, particularly regarding sanctions, may intensify and expand in the future.

III: U.S. Lawfare Against Russia

The sanctions package against Russia includes unilateral sanctions from several countries, as well as some members of the European Union, imposed outside the framework of the United Nations. This means that the "necessity," "legitimacy," and "design" of the sanctions on Russia are determined without the existence of a reference framework or a formal common coordinating point. There are no resolutions in the Security Council to assess the "design," "legality," or "effectiveness" of the sanctions imposed on Russia. Moreover, there is no committee or expert panel tasked with monitoring the implementation of these sanctions.

Following Russia's military actions in early 2014 Crimea, a referendum was soon held in March of that year, resulting in the separation of the region from Ukraine and its annexation to Russia. Supporters of Ukraine argue that this referendum lacked "legitimacy" and "credibility" (U.N. Doc. A/RES/68/262 (March 27, 2014); and U.N. Doc. S/PV.7138 (March 15, 2014)) Subsequently, uprisings by pro-Russian separatists occurred in eastern Ukraine, leading to the two regions of Luhansk and Donetsk declaring themselves independent "people's republics" (Grant, 2015: 72). The conflict between pro-Russian activists in the region and Ukrainian forces peaked in the summer of 2014. Alongside these events, initiatives such as "Minsk I" and "Minsk II" proved ineffective in resolving the Ukrainian issue. As a result of these developments, the United States and the European Union proceeded to impose sanctions against Russia.

The initial steps taken by the United States primarily involved diplomatic actions, such as suspending military cooperation with Russia (News article by the US Department of Defense, "DOD Puts Military-to-military Activities With Russia on Hold" March 3, 2014). Like the European Union, the United States then enacted targeted sanctions as the first phase of sanctions. Within weeks, several individuals, including "members of the inner circle of Russian leadership," were added to the list of targeted sanctions (Executive Order 13660, "Blocking Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine," (March 6, 2014). For a detailed analysis of the Executive Orders for the sanctions against Russia, including E.O. 13660). As tensions escalated, targeted sanctions were expanded to include the two "people's republics" and their leaders and supporters, as well as Russian companies producing weapons. Their assets and interests in the United States or under the control of U.S. persons were blocked, with these assets being non-transferable, non-payable, and non-exportable (Press release, "Announcement of Treasury Sanctions on Entities Within the Financial Services and Energy Sectors of Russia, Against Arms or Related Materiel Entities, and Those Undermining Ukraine's Sovereignty," (July 16, 2014); also Executive Order 13661, "Blocking Property of Additional Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine," March 17, 2014).

While both the United States and the European Union support the imposition of strict sanctions against Russia, their sanctions differ in design and format. Several noteworthy distinctions should be mentioned. U.S. sanctions in the energy sector are aimed at both the oil and gas industries in Russia, while EU sanctions in the same sector are limited to the oil industry. Furthermore, U.S. sanctions are stricter regarding activities that occurred prior to the annexation of Crimea. Generally, U.S. sanctions do not permit the continuation of previous activities, whereas EU restrictive measures take a more lenient approach to this issue. Ultimately, while EU sanctions against Russia had a single goal—resolving the conflict concerning Ukraine—U.S. sanctions pursued multiple objectives.

IV: Comparative Study of Sanctions on Iran and Russia and Strategic Lessons

Initially, it is important to consider the balanced and coordinated composition of United Nations sanctions and unilateral sanctions against Iran. As previously discussed, UN sanctions faced severe criticism following their implementation against Iraq, leading to discussions about revising these sanctions. Such revisions redefined UN sanctions as "targeted sanctions" or "smart sanctions," which confined sanctions to specific areas and focused on designated individuals and entities. The primary aim of "targeted sanctions" was to prevent the imposition of the sanctions' effects on the general population. The humanitarian goal of "targeted sanctions" took precedence, while the effectiveness and ultimate consequences of the sanctions were of secondary importance. While "targeted sanctions" can limit the illegal activities of the targeted state, the potential for sanctions evasion may still exist, undermining their effectiveness (Cronberg, 2017: 23-26).

However, a crucial point regarding the sanctions on Iran and Russia is that some authors attempt to compare these sanctions and, consequently, their effectiveness. Although such comparisons can be helpful in many instances, the comparison of Iranian and Russian sanctions presents several fundamental flaws. The first issue is that sanctions on Iran have cast a long shadow over the country's economy for over four decades, whereas sanctions on Russia were only imposed in 2014 and intensified following the events of February 2022 and the Ukraine crisis.

The second major difference between the sanctions on the two countries is that the sanctions on Iran consist of a combination of multilateral (UN) and unilateral (primarily U.S.) measures, while Russia has never been subjected to UN and Security Council sanctions. Moreover, Russia itself is a permanent member of the Security Council.

The third distinction lies in the disparity between the economies of Iran and Russia, which are not comparable in size. The Russian economy is several times larger than the Iranian economy, leading to differing impacts from the sanctions. Notably, while sanctions on Iran have affected its entire economy, sanctions on Russia have not been applied with the same intensity and breadth. Additionally, it appears to be too early to fully assess the effects of sanctions on Russia. It may take several decades to accurately evaluate the complete and precise impact of sanctions on the Russian economy. Nevertheless, the sanctions on both countries have created opportunities for cooperation and convergence, which require planning and political will from both nations to exploit. If this occurs, the effects of the sanctions can largely be neutralized.

Conclusion

Lawfare, as a significant strategy in U.S. foreign policy, serves as a powerful tool for influencing the behavior of nations. Despite its challenges and limitations, this tool has remained one of the mainstays of American diplomacy. In today's world, where global competition and political developments are rapidly evolving, lawfare is expected to play a fundamental role in shaping international relations. However, even with the use of legal instruments, there is no guarantee of success in achieving foreign policy objectives. In many cases, countries may easily disregard the rulings of international bodies, and governments may make unpredictable decisions that can render lawfare ineffective. For example, irrational actions by a country can lead to the failure of legal efforts.

The future of sanctions in U.S. foreign policy depends on numerous factors. Some analysts believe that with global shifts and the emergence of new actors, sanctions may become ineffective tools. Conversely, others argue that sanctions will continue to be utilized as a means of addressing new global challenges such as terrorism and human rights violations. Sanctions are regarded as one of the key instruments in U.S. foreign policy, aimed at specific

objectives such as changing the behavior of nations, protecting human rights, and preventing security threats. Nevertheless, the effectiveness and human impact of these sanctions have always been subjects of debate. A more thorough examination of sanctions and their consequences requires further research to develop strategies that achieve foreign policy goals more effectively and humanely.

It is still too early to compare the sanctions imposed on Iran and Russia; time will reveal many of the consequences of these sanctions on the Russian economy. However, the economic and financial sanctions against Iran and Russia constitute a broad and systematic lawfare against both nations. This lawfare is an integral part of U.S. foreign policy, and the United States maximizes the use of this tool to advance its foreign policy and achieve its objectives. The establishment of multilateral and regional coalitions can create opportunities to neutralize these sanctions.

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