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## The Impact of Sanctions on the Socio-Political Rights of Somali Citizens

Sara Mousavi<sup>1</sup>   
Ali Bagheri Dolatabadi<sup>2</sup>   
Reza Eltiamina<sup>3</sup>   
Mojtaba Shariati<sup>4</sup> 

### 1-Introduction

While sanctions have been used for over a century as a tool to pursue national interests and prevent conflict, their unintended consequences on civilian populations have raised ethical concerns. The widespread use of sanctions in the 19th and 20th centuries caused the United Nations to use it as a tool to punish violators of peace and human rights and as an alternative to military action in the event of a threat to international peace and security .

The persistence of sanctions as a preferred tool of foreign policy, despite their potential harm to innocent civilians, suggests a need for greater scrutiny and evaluation of their effectiveness and ethical implications. The outdated nature of some sanction policies, which may have originated during the Cold War era, highlights the need for a reassessment of strategies in light of contemporary global challenges.

Today, the United States is at the top of the countries that have imposed the most sanctions against others by sanctioning 10,000 different individuals and organizations in the world. As one of the leading practitioners of sanctions, the United States' approach and impact on affected populations warrant critical examination to ensure that policy decisions align with humanitarian principles and international norms.

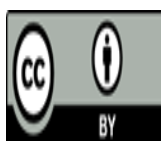
Sanctions are often imposed with the intention of pressuring governments or leaders to change their behavior or policies. However, the collateral damage of sanctions can disproportionately impact vulnerable populations,

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. in Political Science from Yasouj University, Yasouj, Iran sara.71mousavi@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Humanities, Yasouj University, Yasouj (Corresponding Author). Iran abagheri@yu.ac.ir

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Yasouj University, Yasouj, Iran R.eltyami@yu.ac.ir

<sup>4</sup> Assistant Professor , Department of Political Science, Yasouj University, Yasouj, Iran M.shariati17@gmail.com



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exacerbating existing social and economic challenges. In the case of Somalia, a country already grappling with political instability and violence, the prolonged imposition of sanctions may have further marginalized and disadvantaged ordinary citizens.

Somalia is one of the countries that has experienced the most bilateral and multilateral sanctions. This country has been involved in political instability and violence for more than three decades. The United Nations Security Council has played an active role in Somalia since the establishment of the arms embargo in 1992. The United Nations Security Council has issued various sanctions against this country in response to violence and civilians casualties, so that this country is currently experiencing one of the longest periods of multilateral sanctions in the world. The main purposes of imposing these sanctions are forcing Somali leaders to talk with their opponents, establishing political stability and good governance, ending civil war and observing the standards of human rights. These sanctions have continued for more than three decades, and no official assessment of their human rights impacts has been published. By focusing on the socio-political rights of Somali citizens, this research seeks to answer the question of how sanctions have influenced the daily lives, freedoms, and opportunities of individuals within the country? The hypothesis presented in the research is that is that "sanctions affect ordinary citizens more than the political system and leaders, so, they violate the socio-political rights of Somali citizens".

## 2-Method and Theoretical Framework

The current research has focused on the most basic social right of every citizen, including the right to life and health and the right to enjoy their chosen political system. In this regard, the right to have a suitable standard of living in article 11 and the right to health in article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the right to life in article 6 of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is clearly stated

To assess the impact of sanctions on the aforementioned rights in Somalia, a descriptive-documentary approach was employed. This method entailed referencing official reports released by the United Nations and its affiliated bodies, insights from experts and local authorities, and credible statistics from international organizations concerning Somalia's health and nutrition indicators. Additionally, to investigate the governance standards in the nation, reports on political and religious liberties, corruption levels, and the state of political parties were scrutinized. The article's theoretical framework draws



from an examination of past theories that explore the repercussions of sanctions on societies.

### **3-Discussion**

The findings of the present research can be summarized in two points:

1 .Theoretical confirmation of the destructive impact of sanctions on human rights in target countries, aligning with previous research on the subject.

2 .Empirical evidence demonstrating that the human rights situation in Somalia deteriorated during the sanctions period, contradicting expectations of improvement. The research indicates that sanctions not only fail to facilitate a peaceful transfer of power but also exacerbate civil unrest and power struggles, particularly in countries with ethnic and tribal divisions like Somalia. Over the past three decades, Somalia has experienced regression in economic, social, and political indicators, with the healthcare system suffering due to increased costs of medicine and treatment following the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre and the imposition of sanctions, so that the government was not able to support them due to the decrease in its income .

The findings suggest that the impact of sanctions on Somalia has been devastating, leading to a significant deterioration in the government's ability to provide essential services such as healthcare, resulting in a high prevalence of diseases and mortality rates among vulnerable groups like children and women. This situation represents a clear violation of the right to life and health as outlined in international human rights documents.

Moreover, politically, Somalia has not made substantial progress since the imposition of sanctions, and the country continues to struggle with issues such as corruption, lawlessness, political instability, violence, and violations of various freedoms. These challenges have further exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in Somalia and hindered the country's ability to achieve stability and development.

Overall, the study underscores the urgent need for a reevaluation of the effectiveness and impact of sanctions on Somalia, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing the well-being and rights of the population while addressing the underlying issues contributing to reduce the country's instability and suffering.

### **4- Conclusion and Suggestions**

Sanctions, whether comprehensive or specific, have not had the necessary impact on changing the political behavior of the Somali government and

instead have exposed ordinary citizens to harm. Empowering citizens to pursue their political rights and create a civil society is indeed crucial in bringing about positive change in countries affected by sanctions. By promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance, citizens can play an active role in holding their governments accountable and advocating for policies that benefit the entire population.

Also, only the sanctions that are imposed in legal and legitimate contexts and in the framework of international institutions, can be initially accepted by the world community. Unilateral, illegal, and illegitimate sanctions by certain governments, such as the United States, England, and France, are deemed unacceptable as they can exacerbate the situation and pave the way for further illegal political-military interventions.

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