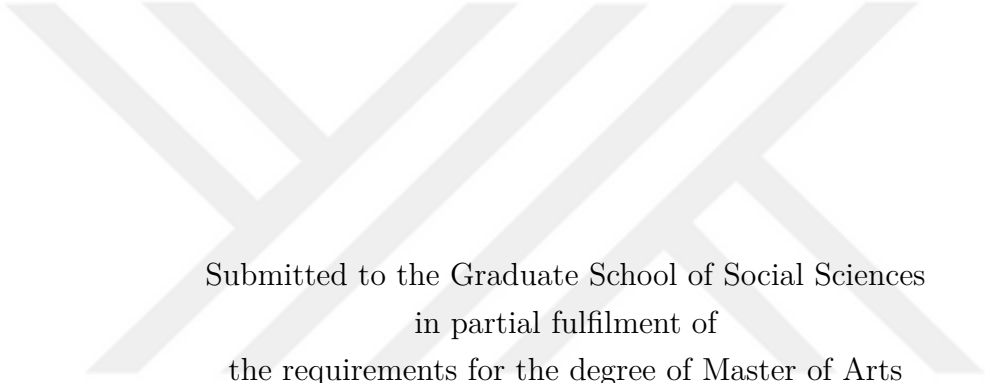


**STRATEGIES OF SELF-DETERMINATION GROUPS AND  
ECONOMIC SANCTIONS**

by  
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## ABSTRACT

### STRATEGIES OF SELF-DETERMINATION GROUPS AND ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

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POLITICAL SCIENCE M.A. THESIS, JULY 2021

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Keywords: economic sanctions, self-determination groups, Crimean Tatars

While a significant body of literature has accumulated on the intentional and unintended consequences of economic sanctions, little is known about how sanctions affect various audiences in the target states. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating how the application of this foreign policy tool influences the tactical choices of self-determination groups over the variety of nonviolent and violent tactics to achieve their intended goals. It is argued that apart from economic costs levied by the sanctions, the enforcement of sanctions sends strong signals to domestic audiences of the target. The imposition of economic sanctions is an indicator of credible international pressure on governments, which conditions expectations and behaviours of self-determination groups. For the groups in pursuit of greater self-rule, international legitimacy and recognition, foreign economic coercion increases in-group incentives to use nonviolent means of resistance. International sanctions signal that, along with the economic costs, target governments suffer reputational damage. Moreover, since peaceful tactics are considered more legitimate in the eyes of the international community, groups adjust their behavior and use nonviolent strategies after deployment of economic sanctions. The Crimean Tatar self-determination case informs our theoretical expectations. The findings drawn from large-N analysis (1960-2004) suggest that imposition of economic sanctions is associated with an increased likelihood of employing nonviolent tactics by self-determination groups. On the other hand, the imposed economic sanctions reduce the likelihood of using peaceful tactics by groups demanding complete independence.

## ÖZET

### KENDİ KADERİNİ TAYİN ETME HAKKINI TALEP EDEN GRUPLARI VE EKONOMİK YAPTIRIMLAR

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SİYASET BİLİMİ YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, TEMMUZ 2021

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Anahtar Kelimeler: ekonomik yaptırımlar, kendi kaderini tayin etme hakkını talep eden gruplar, Kırım Tatarları

Ekonomik yaptırımların amaçlanan ve istenmeyen sonuçları hakkında önemli bir literatür geliştirilmiş olmasına rağmen, yaptırımların hedef devletlerdeki çeşitli seyircileri nasıl etkilediği hakkında pek fazla şey bilinmemektedir. Bu araştırma, dışsal ekonomik zorlamanın uygulanmasının, kendi kaderini tayin etme hakkını talep eden grupların amaçlanan hedeflerine ulaşmak için şiddet içermeyen ve şiddet içeren çeşitli taktikler üzerindeki taktik seçimlerini nasıl etkilediğini araştırarak bu açığı kapatmayı amaçlamaktadır. Yaptırımların getirdiği ekonomik maliyetin yanı sıra, yaptırımların uygulanması ile hedefin yerli seyircilerine güçlü sinyaller gönderildiği iddia edilir. Ekonomik yaptırımın uygulanması hükümetler üzerinde güvenilir bir uluslararası baskının göstergesi olduğundan kendi kaderini tayin eden gruplarının beklenti ve davranışlarını koşullandırır. Daha fazla öz-yönetim, uluslararası meşruiyet ve tanınma peşinde olan gruplar için, dış ekonomik zorlama şiddet içermeyen direniş araçlarını kullanmak adına grup içi teşvikleri artırır. Uluslararası yaptırımlar, ekonomik maliyete ek olarak hedef hükümetlerin itibarlarının zarar gördüğüne işaret eder. Ayrıca, uluslararası toplum nezdinde barışçıl taktikler daha meşru görüldüğünden, kendi kaderini tayin etme hakkını talep eden gruplar ekonomik yaptırımların olduğu zamanlarda davranışlarını ayarlamakta ve diğer alternatiflere kıyasla şiddet içermeyen stratejiler kullanmaktadır. Keşifsel vaka olarak Kırım Tatarlarının kendi kaderini tayin etme mücadelesi teorik beklentilerimizi şekillendiriyor. Büyük-N analizinden (1960-2004) elde edilen bulgular, ekonomik yaptırımların uygulanmasının, kendi kaderini tayin eden gruplar tarafından şiddet içermeyen taktikler kullanma eğiliminin artması ile ilişkili olduğunu göstermektedir. Diğer taraftan, uygulanan ekonomik yaptırımlar tam bağımsızlık talep eden grupların barışçıl taktikler kullanma olasılığını azaltmaktadır.

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*To my Mother, Sabriye*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>EU</b> European Union .....	13
<b>IIA</b> independence of irrelevant alternatives .....	39
<b>SDG</b> self-determination group .....	1
<b>SDR</b> self-determination right .....	5
<b>UN</b> United Nations .....	5
<b>UNSC</b> United Nations Security Council .....	20

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The notion of self-determination marks its entrance to global politics with the prominent Wilsonian Fourteen Points and the ideals of the French and American Revolutions. Most importantly, the world has seen the major impact of the self-determination principle mobilizing a number of ethnic groups in their liberation struggles against colonization. While a major manifestation of self-determination was seen during the decolonization period, normative as well as political aspects of this principle raise a number of controversies today. Today, the international community cannot effectively respond to self-determination disputes outside the colonial context, because they challenge the territorial sovereignty of states that do not have an internationally recognized mechanism for resolving them.

One of the most acute issues surrounding the right to self-determination is the absence of precise universal definition and absence of binding international law guiding the governments' approach to self-determination disputes. It is the matter of central governments to choose whether to acquiesce to the claims of the groups or not. Self-determination grievances are rarely accommodated by central governments in the original scope of the demand. Between 1956 and 2002, out of 146 self-determination cases more than half did not render any concession by the states, and only around 1% attained full independence (Walter 2006).

On many occasions, claims to self-determination are interpreted as separatist attempts that threaten territorial integrity of the state, thus becoming a national security issue and inducing violent responses to maintain territorial integrity and deter future challengers (Walter 2006). However, as discussed below, not all self-determination groups (SDG) pursue full independence. They may seek broader political, economic and social rights within the confines of the host states. By examining the self-determination groups with different degrees of challenge they pose to the central governments, this study avoids focusing only on one type of SDGs (i.e. secessionist groups), and enlarges the scope to groups having different expressions of what constitutes the realization of self-determination right (i.e. cultural autonomy,

greater linguistic rights, political representation, full independence etc.). Similar to the demands of SDGs, the tactics that self-determination groups use for their struggle varies. In the universe of more than 1200 self-determination organizations between 1960-2005, we observe that the variety of nonviolent and violent tactics, and their mixture are used by SDGs to attain their demands (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020).

Given the prominence of self-determination disputes today, the line of literature developed in regards to group-related determinants of tactical choices. Works of Cunningham (2013); Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé (2017, 2020); Sambanis and Zinn (2006) are the one of the first extensive studies on the actors pursuing the exercise of the self-determination right.

However, not much has been said specifically about the impact of the foreign policy tools on the dynamics of the self-determination disputes. Although this principle is endorsed by the UN Charter and UN Conventions<sup>1</sup>, oftentimes the international community's ability to respond to such conflicts is constrained. Public diplomacy, military interventions and economic sanctions are used by policymakers to regulate conflicts with varying degrees of success. These foreign policy tools are widely used by international actors for regulating interstate relations. Although they may not be applied to settle the self-determination disputes per se, unintentionally they may change the relative perceived balance of power between the targeted state and its domestic public.

Economic sanctions remain one of the most controversial foreign policies today for rendering the alteration of states' unwanted policies. While the intended goals of sanctions had been rarely accomplished, the policy-makers continue implementing economic coercion as the best alternative to the use of force in their efforts to modify undesirable domestic policies of targeted governments (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014). Being an often-used foreign policy tool, especially in the aftermath of the Cold War, a debate surrounding this policy had occurred about the adverse impact on human life in the targeted states. It was the first time when comprehensive economic sanctions had been heavily criticized in the aftermath of large humanitarian devastation in Iraq and Haiti following the policy (Lopez and Cortright 1997). That, in turn, brought new "smart" or narrowly targeted sanctions to the international fore which aimed at mitigating massive civilian harm caused by economic coercion (Drezner 2011).

Targeted economic sanctions may not always be effective in rendering immediate

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<sup>1</sup>UN Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries (1960) and UN Declaration on Friendly Relations (1970)

change in the target's behavior, but they may impact the targets' populations in their ability to signal sender state's disapproval. Following the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the US and the EU together with other countries imposed sanctions against Russia targeting the key officials, banking, defense and energy sectors (Moret et al. 2016). The goal of these restrictions was to reverse the regional crisis and punish the target state for the violation of territorial integrity of Ukraine. While applied economic measures were not successful at achieving the intended goal, the policy was effective in its signaling objective (Giumelli 2011; Moret et al. 2016). The applied sanctions expressed disapproval of the foreign policy Russia led in the Eastern Europe leading to international isolation of the target. However, research points to public rating of President Putin of Russia reaching unprecedented numbers due to the Crimean campaign, and increase in anti-Western sentiments among the citizenry and impacted firms due to economic sanctions levied on Russia (Golikova and Kuznetsov 2017; *Levada: Putin's Rating Skyrocketed Due to the Crimean Campaign* 2014; Radikov 2019).

Although sociological research indicates the strengthening of rallying around the government at the time and in the aftermath of sanctions in Russia, some groups expressed resistance and supported sanctions policy. The groups pursuing greater political, economic and cultural rights, residing in Crimea, the Crimean Tatars expressed support for the previous status quo and favored sanctions policy. The leader of the Crimean Tatar self-determination movement, the Soviet dissident, Mustafa Dzhemilev, insisted on strengthening of sanctions policy, claiming that the imposed sanctions were "insufficient" (*Leader of the Crimean Tatars Dzhemilev: We Will not Leave Yet* 2014). He further contended that more decisive sanctions should have been applied to render the changes in target's policies.

In the light of the contrasting attitudes towards sanctions within the domestic audience of the target state, it is important to examine how imposition of sanctions affect actions of the groups that hold grievances against the targeted governments. This thesis investigates whether imposition of economic sanctions impact the strategic choices of the self-determination groups residing in the sanctioned states.

One of the goals of theory building in this study is to establish whether SDGs give importance to sanctions and, if they do, how sanctions are perceived and shape their incentives to use nonviolence. To explore this, I turn to Crimean Tatar self-determination case. Following personal communication with one of the prominent figures in Crimean Tatar national movement, Shevket Kaibulla<sup>2</sup>, and reported media

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<sup>2</sup>Shevket Kaibulla is a prominent figure in Crimean Tatar self-determination movement. From 1991 to 1996 he served as a chairman of Simferopol regional Mejlis, the self-governing body of Crimean Tatars that was recently prohibited in Russia. Since 1992, Shevket Kaibulla has been an editor-in-chief of the historical-

sources, I further inform my hypothesis. As a result of the literature survey and the informative case, I argue that in parallel to its coercive and punishment logic, the imposition of economic sanctions have a signaling impact. The theoretical framework posits that apart from the resource-based explanation present in the literature, we need to consider what audiences sanctions speak to, and what needs these groups have. I hypothesize that self-determination groups' need for international legitimacy increases incentives to maintain their struggle for self-determination through peaceful means, specifically nonviolent tactics, in times of economic sanctions. Imposition of sanctions serves as a credible signal of support for opposition actors, changing the balance of power between the SD groups and the state, and to the extent that it weakens its international reputation, sanctions may signal that the targeted regime's position may be further challenged.

The findings show that imposition of economic sanctions increases the likelihood of observing exclusively nonviolent tactics by the self-determination groups. On the other hand, the effect of sanctions is different for the groups that pursue full independence claims. For the groups that have secessionist demands, the applied economic sanctions decrease the probability of observing nonviolent tactics, while increasing the probability of employing violent means. Moreover, the longer sanctions policy is associated with higher probability of employing nonviolent tactics relative to no activity and violence after economic sanctions' imposition. Furthermore, the size of SDG also matters for their tactical choices. For the larger groups, we observe higher probabilities of using peaceful tactics at times of enforced economic sanctions. On the other hand, as the group population increases in size, the probability of observing violent tactics decreases.

The chapters are organized as follows. The first chapter conceptualizes self-determination groups and determinants of their tactical choices. It is followed by the theoretical framework that presents the literature on economic sanctions and their signaling effects. Then, I present the illustrative case of Crimean Tatar self-determination case to inform my theoretical expectations. Finally, the relationship between sanctions and strategic choices of SDGs is examined by large-N statistical analysis, followed by discussion and concluding remarks.

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ethnographic journal "Kasevet", since 1999 led the Department of Public Relations in the executive self-governing body of Crimean Tatars. He is a chief editor of the newspaper "Avdet".



## 2. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE SELF-DETERMINATION GROUPS

### 2.1 Self-Determination or Secession: Conceptual Differences

Before entering the discussion on what constitutes a self-determination group, this chapter first contextualizes historical and conceptual development of the principle of self-determination. Furthermore, it addresses the definitional differences and similarities between secession and right to self-determination in light of international legal debates.

Although some scholars use the secessionist demands and right for self-determination interchangeably, the concepts are not direct synonyms of each other. By referring to secessionist demands scholars usually imply external self-determination, while others refer to internal self-determination. Differences between two sides of the self-determination right (from here on, SDR) provide with clarification of what constitutes secession and its relation to territoriality of states. The external SDR refers to “international status of a people” which incorporates the separation of a claimed territory from a host state (Senese 1989, 19). On the other hand, the internal SDR is associated with “right of a people to freely choose their own political, economic and social system” which can incorporate territorial demands but rather requests milder demands for autonomy and changes in domestic law favoring that right (Senese 1989, 19). As it is seen, both concepts are interrelated in a sense as they address the collective rights of groups, which incorporate the concept of territoriality to a different extent. The Article 1, paragraph 2 and the Article 55 of the UN Charter (1945), the UN General Assembly Resolutions 1514, 2625 as well as International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (1966); Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) emphasize the presence of the rights and freedoms of the people to determine their own status across political, economic, social, and cultural lines.

Secessionist claims by substate groups are manifestations of external SDR which

directly challenge an older principle of territorial integrity of sovereign states. The end of the imperial period and rise of nationalism in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries led to the formation of an international system with nation-states at the center. Collapse of the major empires brought about formation of new states around the principle of popular sovereignty and right to a self-rule. During that time, self-determination right had a strong ethnic component (Moore 1998). Being ethnically and culturally different from the metropolitan states, former colonies had seen secession as the only remedy for the years of oppression and exploitation by the colonists (Griffiths 2014). At the time two main UN Declarations (1960, 1970)<sup>1</sup> showcased the principle of self-determination as a manifestation of the right that the colonized legitimately exercised against the colonizers (Griffiths 2014). However, the recent case of Kosovo's unilateral secession demonstrated that the cases of realization of self-determination rights out of the context of decolonization have raised concerns of the international community. In its non-binding advisory opinion to the UN General Assembly, the International Court of Justice commented that the case of Kosovo and its declaration of independence had not violated the international general law (*Latest Developments: Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo: International Court of Justice* 2010).

Similar to struggles against imperial domination in previous decades, starting from 1980s global politics have seen another trend, where “ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural minorities aspired to become states” (Archibugi 2003). The lack of global legal institutions that would be authorized to resolve the existing self-determination disputes, as well as presence of an enormous variation on the part of public law across states to grant political, economic, and social rights to its minorities explain a rising number of substate groups appealing to the principle of self-determination even to this day (Archibugi 2003).

Since the end of World War II and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world map has been redrawn many times, and it appeared that the secessionist process has slowed down if not become almost negligible. One, on the contrary, may argue that dozens of states still host a number of minority groups which seek to exercise their self-determination right which eventually is likely to increase internal tensions as time passes. Self-determination as many other socio-political phenomena cannot occur in the vacuum. Any minority group is by definition a part of an internationally recognized sovereign state. Since secession comprise a “formal demand for independence”, whereby “a formal withdrawal from an established, internationally

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<sup>1</sup>UN Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries (1960) and UN Declaration on Friendly Relations (1970)

recognized state by a constituent unit to create a sovereign state” all discussions on external SD automatically address the challenges to territoriality of nation-states and legitimacy of the minority claims (Griffiths 2014, 459). In other words, each ethnic minority existing in the state by definition may constitute a potential challenger to its unified territoriality.

However, the prevailing expectation that ethnic minorities are a source of instability and conflict may seem unhealthy, as it can provoke politicians into more violent and repressive policies. It also carries with it a distorted understanding that automatically views all demands for self-determination as demands for secession and territorial division. This point of view has many supporters, and they are partially justified, since they refer to external self-determination, according to which self-government comes with the formation of internationally recognized states and is of a separatist nature. This concrete external expression of the SD principle takes the form of sovereignty referendums, which some self-determination groups use as a tool to legitimize their own interests. (Kelle and Sienknecht 2020).

Nevertheless, groups do not often hold their ultimate goal as separation from the mother state. A fraction of SD groups stands for internal SDR. In other words, they demand changes in the domestic legal system, more autonomous exercise of political, economic, and social rights within the confines of the state in which they reside, rather than contest the territorial sovereignty of the states (Moore, 1998). Indeed, the international legal framework failed to incorporate a variety of collective demands stretching from change of domestic policies to full territorial demands in the vocabulary on self-determination (Brilmayer 1991).

Although international law established the right for self-determination as an essential component of a global liberal order, it did not outline a manual on how to achieve that principle on the ground. The means and effectiveness of a substate group in its demands for greater autonomy is contingent upon the willingness of the state and presence of domestic rather international institutions to accommodate contentious demands. Presence of conventional means within the states are diverse and prospects of accommodation is dependent on the myriad of factors, such as regime type, number of the substate groups and the character of the demands among others (Cunningham 2013). In multi-ethnic states accommodation of minorities, granting the rights to all distinct groups are obscured by state willingness to prevent a threat of secession. That, in turn, is likely to wipe away prospects of the individual group demands’ realization, paving a way for continuation of self-determination dispute. Yet, the moderate claims such as education in the mother tongue, right to political say over own affairs in social and cultural domains, and taxation-related grievances

have more prospects to be accommodated by central governments when one compares them to inflexible territorial concessions from state.

## 2.2 Understanding the Features of Self-Determination Groups

How do we understand whether a group wishes to determine its own political, cultural, and social fate within a state in which it resides? Besides a long-standing debate on the indeterminacy of what constitutes “people” holding a right to exercise the principle of SD, the main characteristics of the groups engaged in claims-making present in contemporary literature should be identified (Moore 1998).

A large body of the literature uncovered determinants of tactical behaviors of the contending substate actors such as ethnic groups, self-determination movements, and insurgency groups. The central focus has been given to the dynamics of violence. Given violent dissent is materially costlier and can develop into protracted civil wars, a wide strand of literature has developed on the determinants affecting the onset of violence within the repression and dissent nexus. For instance, Lichbach (1987) and White (1989) contend that state repression has a positive effect on the use of violence by domestic dissidents. Regime type (Hegre 2001), poverty and state instability (Fearon and Laitin 2003), as well as economic inequalities (Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011), tend to favor insurgency and to expand dissident behavior. Apart from an extensive literature built with regards to determinants, onset, and dynamics of civil wars, terrorism, there has been a recent shift in the studies towards nonviolent types of action. Chenoweth, Stephan, and Stephan (2011), Gleditsch and Rivera (2017) are among scholars focusing on nonviolent campaigns. Since the current literature on anti-governmental dissent put a significant emphasis on the categorization of contending groups based on types of strategies used to pursue the objectives, we observe a scholarly divorce across the studies about nonviolent and violent dissent. Despite a close relation of these two blocks of literature, not many studies incorporated both.

When assessing the contending groups’ characteristics, scholars tend to investigate the demands that groups make vis-à-vis the host state. As it was mentioned in the previous part of the chapter, there is a degree of challenge that these demands pose to the sovereignty of the central authority. Groups that pursue self-determination seem to have greater attachment to the territory they inhabit, thus their bid for greater self-rule is by definition attached to challenging the sovereignty of the state (Kelle 2017). The claims may range from acquisition of partial autonomy in decision-

making pertaining to linguistic and cultural rights to the most challenging demand which is secessionist claims for full political and economic independence.

By looking at the claims that domestic factions make we can identify the self-determination groups among other actors. Ethnicity and minority status are indispensable traits of the self-determination group. However, SDGs is a much broader category which encompasses actors which share certain identity markers along some religious, ethnic, or linguistic lines.<sup>2</sup> Members of the group may operate in similar networks and share interactions, have common history and 'chosen traumas' that help capitalize on these bonds (Volkan 2001). Utilizing the concept of SDG does not only indicate the common identity among the members, but also highlights groups' shared perceptions of their common future life.

We distinguish self-determination groups from movements, whereby the latter refers to a collective of a variety of groups that function with the same goal of extending exercise of one's own fate.<sup>3</sup> Recent scholarship accounts for the variation within the SD movements. Cunningham (2013) in her book on SD politics, highlights how different groups may exist under the same self-determination movement, and argues that the internal dynamics of the movement and competition among these groups may impact the strategic choices employed by the various flanks aiming at the same bigger goals shared by the movement. Focusing on the group level opens a door for a more disaggregated picture on the dynamics across substate opposition groups (Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012).

Scholarship agrees that self-determination groups should have "an organized effort to enhance a group's power by controlling the central government, or by attaining greater administrative and legislative freedom or even independence" (Sambanis and Zinn 2006). Self-determination movements may hold a variety of goals, each of which usually revolve around the attainment of "self-rule" and self-governance (Cunningham 2013).<sup>4</sup> As a result, the demands challenge the central authority, and in absence of institutional opportunities for realization of the grievances or limited accommodation by state, SDGs may adopt alternative means to pursue their goals. These include nontraditional means of violent and nonviolent conduct.

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<sup>2</sup>SDGs and ethnic groups are not mutually exclusive terms. This definitional detail is essential in differentiating contending actors not on the basis of their origin (ethnicity, language, geography) and not on the strategies (i.e. insurgency, terrorism, protest, etc.), but, rather on the ultimate goal of attaining a legitimate or *de facto* rule over the decision making that pertains to political, economic and social aspects of groups' life. Usage of the umbrella term allows for examining the variation of tactics and strategies of the contending groups.

<sup>3</sup>Although the groups within the same movement may have similar claims, they would differ in the means of pursuing 'self-rule', as well as may disagree on what constitutes 'self-rule'.

<sup>4</sup>The referendums may be used by these movements to elevate the support from domestic and international audiences. See, Kelle and Sienknecht (2020).

Tactical choices are categorized based on the work by Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé (2017) and recent dataset on self-determination organizations (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020). Nonviolent tactics comprise categories of resistance such as protests and demonstrations, boycotts, sit-ins, strikes and tax refusals, hunger strikes and boycotts of elections. Violence consists of cases where SDG utilized violence against the state (government, police or military forces). We use the same definition of violence against the state as in the SRDP dataset (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020). It stands for a case where there is a fight, attack (Strategies of Resistance Project Data Appendix, 2020).

That brings us to categorizing SDGs on a basis of their tactics and strategies employed in pursuance of demands. Institutional, nonviolent, and violent means of conduct are three main categories which characterize SDGs. The disaggregation of their tactics serves an essential venue in our attempt to further the understanding on the effectiveness of tactics, when and why the groups choose to use the specific tactic, and when the transition to violence is likely to take place. Previous scholarship studies secessionist groups, rebellion and protesting groups separately (Collier and Hoeffler 2011; Fjelde and Nilsson 2012; Ishiyama and Batta 2011; Saideman 1997). Instead of defining groups by their tactics, in this research groups are assessed on the main premise, the willingness to rule over one's own political and socio-cultural future. That, in turn, allows us to account for a larger variation of self-determination disputes.

Among myriad groups, the self-determination groups render additional attention since they tend to turn into violent and protracted conflicts between state and contending groups (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010; Gurr 2000). Sambanis and Zinn (2006) identify more than 300 SD movements that existed since the end of the second World War. About one third of all SD movements have at least once resorted to violence during their history, however more than a half of the movements utilized nonviolent means alone or in conjunction with violent tactics. The variety of strategies utilized by the self-determination movements requires more detailed account of determinants of the tactical choices.

In a more recent article by Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé (2017), the authors disaggregate SD movements to a group level, identifying more than thousand SD groups or organizations. In their data spanning from 1960 to 2005, authors give a detailed account for nonviolent tactics, the distribution of which depicts the prevalence of protest and demonstration among other strategies. The authors focused on unpacking the interdependencies among nonviolent types of resistance. Their data also

show the prominence of violence<sup>5</sup> and conventional politics.<sup>6</sup> Incorporation of these means of action, such as employment of violence against the state, or nonviolent strategies brought up by this line of literature is a cornerstone of this work. Although the scholarship does not provide a clear typology on SDGs apart from their strategies, in this work we will hold on to the similar variation of the means of resistance.

### 2.3 Determinants of Tactical Choices

Tactics comprise short-term goals that groups pursuing self-determination try to advance vis-à-vis the state. The objectives of SD groups may range. However, they all end up positioning themselves in a bargaining game with the official state powers. To reach their aims groups may use as many conventional channels as unconventional ones depending on the strategic environment opened for them.

Capacity to mobilize can be affected by the position that the SD group takes in the state, but most importantly, by the potential costs associated with violent or nonviolent strategies employed by groups. If there is no institutional outlet to voice and realize demands, SD groups advance strategies contingent upon the internal and structural factors. For the major group-related variables affecting mobilization are the size of the group, their spatial concentration relative to the state, and variability of the demands by SD groups, which may range from secessionist claims to cultural rights (Cunningham 2013; Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2017; Toft 2012). For the structural determinants, we observe salience of the variables such as the regime type, degree of political exclusion and economic discrimination as well as the occurrence of violence in the past relations with the state.

What matters when we conceive the SD groups as a part of a bargaining over the public good, and the tactics they choose to advance the objectives, are the dynamics of organizations within the same SD movement. Their potential internal interdependencies may lead to spread or diversification of the tactics employed (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2017). Apart from the conduct of violence, the main tactical categories outlined by the literature comprise social, economic, and polit-

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<sup>5</sup>Moreover, acknowledging that disaggregation of violence by the type of tactics such as terror attack, kidnapping, bombings is necessary, no such data exist on the SDGs. Therefore, we will take violence against state as a uniform category per Cunningham et al. (2017) where the authors identify at least one case of violence against state in a year as evidence for SD employment of that tactic.

<sup>6</sup>Institutional action stands for the existing domestic channels for self-determination groups in the institutional design of state, i.e. representative bodies in government, political parties, etc.

ical non-cooperation, nonviolent intervention, protest, and demonstrations. The interdependence of these tactical choices, diffusion, and dispersion mechanisms are essential to understand how the resources needed for a tactic affect the actions by SD groups since the groups are rarely homogeneous and consist of many organizations within the movement, being in a rivalry over harnessing the supporters within the movement (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2017).

Some SD organizations either learn from other organizations or initiate a tactic which they deem as cost-effective. In time, that process is followed by a learning curve that is largely affected by the internal structure of the group and the way the group can update information pertaining to the position of the group vis-à-vis state. That, in turn, influences the decisions of the subsequent continuity or diversification of the strategies by SD organizations. In this thesis, our focus is directed at exogenous developments that may impact the groups' actions.

Although initial works examined the effect of international sanctions on the success of nonviolent and violent campaigns, they lacked precise and solid theoretical framework on how the decisions over the tactical choices are influenced by external pressure (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010; Chenoweth, Stephan, and Stephan 2011). This dissertation, on the other hand, investigates the impact of economic sanctions on the tactical choices by certain types of actors, the self-determination groups.



### **3. ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Economic Sanctions as a Foreign Policy Instrument**

Although this thesis focuses on the effects of economic sanctions on the behavioral dynamics within the disputes on self-determination, it is essential to place this particular type of intervention within the spectrum of other types of foreign policy tools. The menu of interventions varies and inevitably transforms the conflict processes. Foreign policy instruments known to us today comprise diplomatic, economic, or military means such as public statements by state officials, mediation, foreign aid, economic sanctions, and military interventions (Regan and Aydin 2006). Even invitation to membership (for instance, in case of the EU) can be classified as a foreign policy instrument, the primary goal of which is to render desirable changes in behavior of other subjects of international politics (Fraczek et al. 2014). Given the position of economic sanctions within other foreign policy instruments, they can be categorized as a hard (coercive) power tool. Sanctioning policy is a reactionary course of action that is negative by nature (a stick rather than a carrot). It can be utilized for a variety of political objectives (for instance, humanitarian and non-humanitarian goals) and can be levied unilaterally or in a concert with other states and institutions.

Similar to the international realm, internal dynamics between the target governments and substate groups matter and can be affected by the developments on the interstate level. Given that they have limited resources such as time, human resources, funds, international support, self-determination groups are not only driven by internal but also by exogenous developments such as the imposition of economic sanctions. The sanctioning policy represents an opening of a window of political opportunity, rendering material and non-material impact on capacity and incentives of the groups to mobilize. Although the impact of third parties on tactical choices by

SDGs is largely uncovered by the previous literature, scholarly research on economic sanctions suggests an association of this policy with the socio-political dynamics and outcomes within the targeted states. In this thesis, I argue that tactical choices of SD groups are sensitive to international developments that affect their host states. Being often used as a foreign policy tool since the end of the Cold War, economic sanctions constitute an international factor that is likely to affect the calculus of the SD groups as they make their tactical choices.

Current scholarship identifies economic sanctions as foreign policy tool consisting of trade and financial restrictions which are imposed by sender states, international or regional organizations to extract a desired policy change in the targeted state (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990; Hufbauer et al. 2007). Levying sanctions, as the conventional literature entails, signals the foreign state's resolve to incur the material cost on the sanctioned state for changing its morally or politically inappropriate behavior (Galtung 1967; Hufbauer et al. 2007; Lindsay 1986; Tsebelis 1990).

The sanctions levied on the target convey information or signals on two essential moments. First of all, the imposition of economic sanctions shows the level of senders' resoluteness and credibility of their intentions in changing the undesirable behavior of the target. The second point is related to the imposition of sanctions as an outcome in itself. The use of sanctions is a vivid illustration that the reason for imposing the measure, or the issue at stake, is salient enough for the sender that is ready to suffer the cost of imposition. In other words, the mere imposition of sanctions is the signal of commitment and active involvement of the sender to the issue. Therefore, in this thesis we argue that in parallel to its intended economic consequences, economic sanctions bring social repercussions and international isolation to the target states.

Sanctions are "politically motivated penalties imposed as a declared consequence of the target's failure to observe international standards or obligations" (Giumelli 2011). The goals of the sender states may range from ending an oppressive human rights action, destabilizing the regime, to restraining military actions or deterring arms proliferation (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014). In this thesis, we focus on economic sanctions as an instrument that incorporates export and import restrictions, asset freezes, total and partial economic embargoes as per *Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions* dataset (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014). We also include cessation of economic transactions and agreements to the same group and treat them as a uniform category.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In this thesis economic sanctions are considered as one category, although we acknowledge that the variance

While the debate on the effectiveness of sanctions has developed with no resolution, application of this policy incorporates more than one purpose in it (Drezner 1999; Hufbauer and Schott 1985; Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990; Hufbauer et al. 2007; Pape 1997, 1998). The initial rationale of policymakers behind sanctioning was to extract political concessions by instigating economic suffering, through the so-called instrumental logic of sanctions (Giumelli 2011; Hufbauer et al. 2007). Policymakers impose sanctions because they believe that the policy would instigate economic pain that, in turn, would mobilize domestic political opposition to pressure the governments for desired concessions. The anticipated “naive” mechanism does not usually work in the expected way and does not lead to immediate concessions by the target state (Allen 2008; Galtung 1967). So far there is no scholarly consensus on the precise interplay between economic pain and political gains associated with the policy. Moreover, targeted governments acquire a myriad of ways of dealing with the exerted pressure, whereby the “rally around the flag” effect and import substitutions play to the advantage of the incumbent governments, which further complicates the attempts to discern the net effects of sanctions (Galtung 1967; Lektzian and Souva 2007; Peksen 2009). Also, “black nights” or sanction busting may help the target to offset the negative economic impact of sanctions by continuing trade (Early 2009, 2011; Early and Spice 2015).

Although the contrasting findings in sanctions literature drive the indeterminacy about their effectiveness, they contribute to our understanding of this complex phenomenon. Previous studies demonstrate that sanctions render partial targets’ concessions 34 percent of times (Hufbauer et al. 2007). Other studies report a 37.5 percent success rate of imposed sanctions to induce desirable alterations of targets’ actions (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014). However, the complexities associated with a variety of senders’ goals, as well as no standardized criteria for conceptualizing and measuring the success of sanctions, impede scholarly consensus on when and how this foreign policy tool works. Keeping these limitations in mind, researchers identify some characteristics of sanctions imposition that are likely to attain the in-

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within the types of sanctions may affect targets’ acquiescence to senders’ demands in a different way. We use economic sanctions as one large umbrella term because all subcategories that we utilize in the data analysis reflect two important types of costs. First, as conventional logic entails, economic sanctions stand for certain economic costs incurred by the sender states. Second, economic sanctions, together with economic costs, bring reputational damage for the targeted states making them internationally isolated and labelled. This combination, as discussed below, influences domestic audiences, as targeted governments face tangible consequences on the international front. Although travel bans on the key state officials, according to our theoretical framework, do not normally account for large material cost on the target, they still incur a reputational damage to the sanctioned state.

We also argue that any imposition of economic sanctions notifies that the issue matters for the sender, and the type of sanctions imposed is the product of the calculated decision-making by the policymakers. The subtypes of economic sanctions (import or export restriction, halt of financial flows or travel bans) share commonalities. One way or another economic sanctions stand for economic losses to the sender states, and the subtype of sanctions issued depends on their understanding of what would work. Thus, in this thesis any imposition notifies that the issue matters for the sender and economic sanctions are examined as one category.

tended goals. Sanctions successfully modify targets' behavior, when the policy aims at moderate changes in target's behavior, incurs high costs on the economy and is multilateral in its nature (Drury 1998; Early and Spice 2015; Hufbauer et al. 2007; Lindsay 1986; Peksen 2019).

### 3.2 Sanctions and Signaling

As the conventional logic of sanctions dictates, the economic pain incurred by the policy encourages mobilization of political opposition within the target state against the incumbent regime. That, in turn, paves the way to an internal pressure which, as classic explanations contend, would result in behavioral changes of the targeted government. These theoretical expectations, also known as the sanctions-as-punishment hypothesis have been contested (Baldwin and Pape 1998; Nossal 1989). Senders keep imposing sanctions inflicting low economic pain, which is rarely painful enough to mobilize the opposition and citizens in the target states. That is where, in addition to the instrumental logic of sanctions, we need to consider its *symbolic* and *signaling* utility (Giumelli 2011; Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017).

In this line of thought, sanctions may impact states' population, but we need to disentangle the actors. The political opposition is only one group within the state that may be affected by sanctions. They may have a certain level of dissatisfaction and desire for changes in the status quo politics exercised by the incumbent governments. Various strata of citizens, interest groups, business and minorities may also be dissatisfied by the state of affairs and hold a variety of unmet grievances. Self-determination groups, who pursue a greater self-rule within the confines of the host states, also have unmet demands from the state and may be affected by the imposition of sanctions. However, the impact of sanctions on SDG groups and their tactical choices have not been systematically examined.

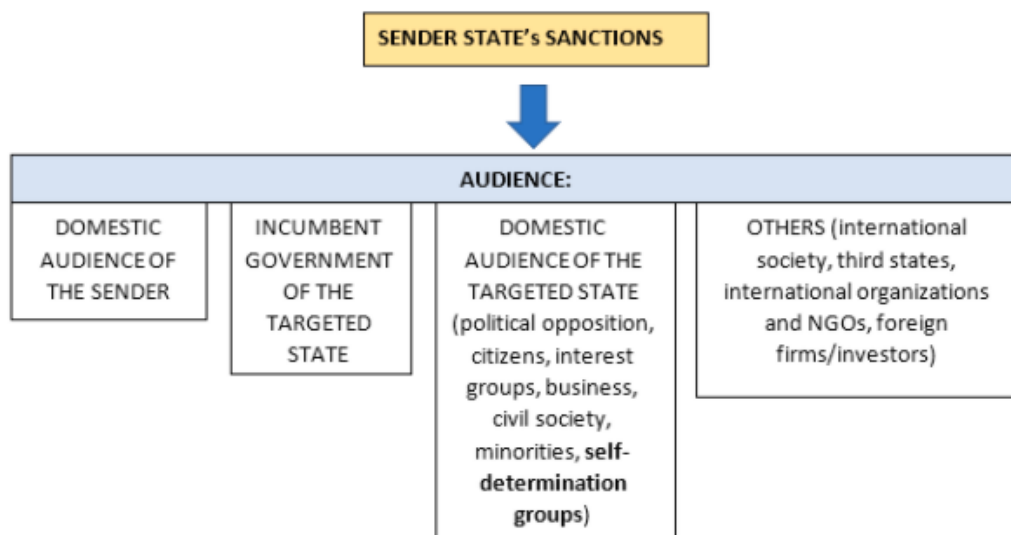
The theoretical framework posits that apart from the resource-based explanation present in the literature, we need to consider what audiences sanctions speak to, and what needs these groups have. The needs of self-determination groups to be domestically and internationally legitimized set the basis for sanctions shaping the preferences of SDGs over the variety of available methods. This research postulates that incentives of both state and contending groups may not only shift towards more cost-effective strategies when economically coerced, but also affected by the legitimacy-needs of self-determination groups. Building a good reputation abroad is a matter of concern for the SDGs. Therefore, to garner international support,

they maintain their communication and actions in accordance with the globally recognized values of human rights and democracy (Kelle and Sienknecht 2020).

The use of sanctions is the “form of international condemnation” that distances the target governments from the rest of international society (Grauvogel and Attia 2020, 14). Sanctions may not always harm target economies extensively, but they may label and stigmatize the targeted regimes for their wrongdoings. Thus, economic sanctions may not only hurt states’ economies but also bring reputational damages. Moving away from an explanation of sanctions as a coercive and constraining tool, our theory underlines the signaling function of sanctions (Giumelli 2011; Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017).

The imposition of economic sanctions is expected to influence not only the domestic audience of sender states, external actors, but also the target governments and their domestic audiences, namely the groups pursuing self-determination. The imposition of sanctions comprises certain means of communication between the sender states, target states and the population residing in target states. It is not only about forcing governments out of unwanted course of behavior, but also about communicating to various audiences that the sender states are willing to credibly commit by paying the costs of coercion. Figure 3.1 depicts the variety of audiences exposed to the signaling effect of sanctions policy.

Figure 3.1 Audiences exposed to the signaling effect of sanctions’ imposition



First of all, the policy plays an essential signaling role for domestic and foreign audiences (Giumelli 2011). Sanctions show that the international community is paying

attention to developments in the target state (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017). For the international audience, which mainly comprises the international organization and the third countries, sanctions reveal information about the preferences of the senders and showcase their commitment to attain the policy change in the target states. By committing to sanctions sender governments send a message about the non-acceptance of certain types of actions to them and depict that it would have economic and political repercussions. Actors, such as international firms and NGOs are also exposed to the signals sent by the imposition of sanctions (Barry and Kleinberg 2015; Hanks 2011). Firms activities and relationships with other actors are extensively based on future expectations of profitability, thus, they may relocate their activities, production or services based on the information revealed by sanctions.

Secondly, for the domestic audience of the sender state, issuing sanctions affects the reputation of the government at home. Previous literature identifies that sanctions may produce political advantages to the sender governments (Eland 2018; Galtung 1967; Whang 2011). Even if the policy does not bring the intended results, it may increase domestic approval ratings of the incumbent and its survival, as well as mobilize citizens around the leaders of the sender states (Whang 2011).

Thirdly, the imposition of economic sanctions may impact the public in the target states. Specifically, the policy may alter the calculus over the expected cost and benefits of the self-determination groups' tactical choices (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017; Lindsay 1986; Whang and Kim 2015). Grievances of self-determination groups rarely get accommodated by national governments in an immediate and satisfying fashion. Desirable state concessions comprise rather a limited outcome that may take years to achieve. Due to the absence of necessary concessions from the national governments, self-determination groups strive for international recognition of their causes. This need for attaining legitimacy is essential for achieving SDGs' ultimate goals (Cunningham 2013; Sambanis, Germann, and Schädel 2018). At times when the door of governmental support is closed, the door of international support serves their purposes. In turn, imposition of sanctions informs SDGs that the door for international support is available. Such international signals of support may also enable opposition groups to mobilize because they indicate that there is a "potential ally" (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017, 87).

Previous literature indicates that even the threat of sanctions is enough to render behavioral change of people residing in the target states. Sanctions threats boost dissent as they show a creation of "perceived opportunity" for the substate actors (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017, 87). In the life cycle of sanctions, the stage

when the sender only threatens to impose sanctions is an essential part of voicing discontent about the target state's actions. However, it is not always that threats transform into the real policy, and not all cases of sanctions follow immediately after the sender has issued threats. Therefore, many factors complicate the issue of differentiating the threat and imposition stages of sanctions in their signaling capability. In this thesis, we focus on the imposition of sanctions, acknowledging that the threat stage is an important part of the study that would complement this one (Afesorgbor 2019; Clay 2018; Walentek et al. 2021; Whang, McLean, and Kuberski 2013). Last but not the least, this research postulates that imposition of sanctions is a more credible source of commitment exerted by the sender states in changing the behavior of the target governments when compared to voicing the threats of sanctions. In other words, signals spread by the implemented sanctions, rather than threats, comprise stronger, more credible messages and filter out the "cheap talk" for the SDGs (Farrell and Rabin 1996).

### **3.3 Compromising Legitimacy-Needs of SDGs and Economic Sanctions**

The foreign state applying economic sanctions on the target state may not hurt the SDG economic well-being per se, however, the policy may send a strong message and shape their tactics. The imposition of sanctions may empower the SDGs, not necessarily because it indicates that third parties would engage in more direct intervention on their behalf but because it leads opposition groups to perceive their choice of activity as useful (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017, 87). The involvement of foreign financial or trade restrictions may add to the motivation of SD groups to maintain their nonviolent strategies and intensify nonviolent campaigns by two interrelated mechanisms.

Economic coercion may help relax the uncertainty associated with the future of the SD groups' demands when a strong international actor is adopting sanctions against the target government. As was previously discussed, economic sanctions are an indication of a credible international pressure on the governments as the sender states willingly incur an economic cost associated with the policy. Thus, it is essential for the SDGs whether a sender state is powerful enough to destabilize and weaken the target state. SDGs would perceive international exposure of their governments disapproved by the strong international actor unlike any other as a stronger signal. For instance, the sanctions imposed by the US carry a more significant economic cost and have a greater signaling effect, compared to any other third party state.

Not only because it is economically more powerful but also because it is difficult to overcome economic interdependence to the US - the centrality of the US in the global economy and financial markets (Farrell and Newman 2019).

Moreover, the US does not only use sanctions directly to restrict economic relations between itself and the target states but can potentially impose sanctions on third states that have economic relations with the target state. Known as secondary sanctions, the US is increasingly willing to use them against those that violate its primary sanctions and engage with the targeted state. The risk of adopting additional sanctions for noncompliance with the current sanctions regime can change the calculation of those individuals and entities that work with the sanctioned state (Meagher 2020).

Similar to the US ability to politically and economically influence domestic politics and actors through its sanctions policy, the logic of stronger signaling is also applicable to multilateral sanctions applied by the United Nations. The Security Council is the organ that is responsible for international peace and security. Its resolutions are binding for all member states. In order for the UN Security Council to adopt a sanctions resolution, the majority of the fifteen members must approve it. Additionally, none of the five permanent members (the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom) should veto it. Once the resolution is adopted, all members of the UN must follow up and join the effort for the target's isolation. Because the UN does not have its own instruments to enforce its decisions, it is up to member states to ensure compliance. Often the terms of the adopted resolutions on sanctions stand for the minimum common denominator that UNSC members are ready to agree on.

Moreover, in many cases of the UN sanctions, the EU and the US play a significant role in shaping the discussions and resolutions on sanctions imposition in the Security Council. In fact, even if the UNSC mandates sanctions policy, 56% of times *additional measures* are imposed by the individual powers, such as the US and the EU (Brzoska 2015). This is the case because actors deem the UN sanctions insufficient to pressure the target's behavioral change. Adoption of the overlapping sanctions, in turn, makes it difficult to differentiate the impact of the UN sanctions and additionally applied measures by the individual states. In our effective sample, sanctions mandated by the UNSC and the ones adopted by the US overlap in 94% (109 impositions) of all cases. Due to a small number of cases of exclusive UN (1.13%) and EU (3.65%) sanctions, in the empirical analysis, we focus on the imposition of economic sanctions where the US adopted measures unilaterally or as a primary sender in the joint effort with other states (14.9%, 1313 impositions).



The restrictions placed by the UNSC has a strong signal of international disapproval of the targeted government action to audiences. According to the evaluation of sanctions effectiveness, 27% of all cases of sanctions applied by the UN were successful at signaling disapproval of targets' actions (Brzoska 2015). Moreover, by infusion of norms of peaceful dispute resolution, the UN-led sanctions may be an indirect promise of gaining international legitimacy for accommodating SDGs' claims. Similar to the argument on the effect of norms diffusion of peaceful conflict resolution on the SD movements of the Global South, the economic sanctions levied by the UN serve as a projection of an alternative strategy to the use of force in international politics (Sändig and Granzow 2018). In other words, it signals that nonviolent means are preferable in world affairs. Thus, together with its multilateral effort, the UN's norm-spreading function may frame the tactical preferences of the self-determination groups towards nonviolent struggle widely recognized as legitimate. Kelle and Sienknecht (2020) emphasize that interaction between SD groups and the international community in the form of diplomatic relations (e.g., overseas representation) is critical, as they help to gain international legitimacy and put more pressure on national governments.

At times of intensified economic hardships imposed by the powerful third parties, chiefly the US, and the UN, both the expected long-term benefits of nonviolent strategies and the opportunity cost for using violence are expected to rise. Exogenous restraints may condition SDGs' preferences towards tactics which are more legitimate in the eyes of the sender states and the broader international community. For instance, nonviolent struggles of Mahatma Gandhi for Indian liberation and Martin Luther King Jr. for the civil rights of the Black Americans were considered as largely legitimate and justified by the international society.

Moreover, the outcome of self-determination disputes can be contingent on the options that external actors are willing to support. On the one hand, the weight that the international community gives to nonviolent struggles and peaceful conflict resolution shapes their perception of the SD cause to be a legitimate and just endeavor. On the other hand, the SD group may perceive the third parties' involvement as a signal of their preference towards more peaceful resistance options and as such, the SD group may strategically adopt nonviolent tactics because it increases the likelihood of the successful outcome of self-determination. As one of the members of the Crimean Tatar self-determination movement stated about international sanctions:

“In addition to resolutions and public statements by foreign state officials, sanctions are one of the important tools that increase that feeling of hope, boost expectations, as they show the supportive position of in-

ternational society to restore the integrity, but also to incorporate the needs of self-determination groups.”(Kaibulla 2021).

### **3.4 The Crimean Tatars Self-Determination Dispute and Sanctions against Russia**

The first goal before we proceed with the large-N analysis is to establish whether SDGs give importance to sanctions and, if they do, how sanctions are perceived and shape their incentives to use nonviolence. To explore this, I turned to Crimean Tatar self-determination case. The case may have more insights than large-N statistical analysis, however, it does not serve a purpose to validate or disapprove the statistical findings, rather it helps to explore the relationship of interest prior and throughout the analysis. The case was selected to be one of the contemporary cases and it plays a theory-informing role. Similarly to what Levy (2008) noted, this study uses Crimean Tatar case to “contribute to the process of theory construction rather than to theory itself.” (Levy 2008, 5).

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There is a set of reasons why this particular case of Crimean Tatars in Crimea was selected. First of all, one can trace the beginning of the sanctions’ policy by the external actors on the target, the Russian Federation. This temporal clarity also helps identify the continuity and discontinuity of the SD group’s tactical choices.

Moreover, this case reflects the fact that the use of economic sanctions can affect the target population in different ways. Despite reports of increased approval ratings for the Russian president and a rise in anti-Western sentiment among citizens, the SD group perceived the sanctions differently. The information obtained during an interview with one of the prominent members of the group as well as reported state-

ments of the SDGs' representatives showed that members of the self-determination group were sensitive to economic sanctions in the first place.

The Crimean Tatars are to a certain extent represented at the institutional level, while the movement projects nonviolent types of resistance on the peninsula. The legacy of Crimean Tatars' nonviolent resistance limits the ability to draw conclusions about how the use of sanctions may change the incentives for tactical change. However, in addition to intra-group characteristics, what is happening on the international stage is also noticeable for these groups, especially when the sanctions concern the state with which they dispute. The case of the Crimean Tatars helps to explore the complex relationship.

The Crimean Tatar National Movement has a decades-long history of peaceful resistance for its self-determination against various central governments. The rule over Crimea had changed many times during the past century. Starting with the invasion of Bolsheviks in the beginning of the 20th century and the dismantlement of Crimean People's Republic with the leadership of Noman Çelebicihan, the Soviet Union, Ukraine, and Russian Federation were in control over Crimea. The region had remained an entity attracting various powers to tighten the control over the territory. Until 1944, the presence of one group within the peninsula had remained more or less unchanged, the local indigenous population, the Crimean Tatars.<sup>2</sup>

Period since 1944, when Crimean Tatars were forcefully deported *en masse* to the Central Asian Soviet Republics marks the start of the movement for a return to Crimea, and struggle against physical, legal restrictions and discrimination based on the status of deportees proclaimed by the Soviet authorities. The presence of history for self-determination struggle long before the crisis of 2014 gives an opportunity for tracing the disruptions and continuities in the tactics used throughout the history of movement and recent developments. Unfortunately, the dataset used in the empirical part of this study does not fully account for the dynamics of the conflict for the greater self-rule in the case of the Crimean Tatars. The time span of reported observations ranges from 1991 to 2004. Given such empirical limitation, this illustrative case also serves as an endeavor to examine Crimean Tatar self-determination struggle, and factors that have been formulating their activities till today.

The main limitation of the case is the problem of generalization, since we do not observe large numbers of self-determination disputes under annexation. The second

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<sup>2</sup>See Williams, B. G. (2016), *The Crimean Tatars: From Soviet Genocide to Putin's Conquest*; Muratova, E. (2019), "The Transformation of the Crimean Tatars' Institutions and Discourses After 2014."; Buhari-Gulmez, D. (2018). "Crisis" and Crimean Tatars: Discourses of Self-determination in flux, for more on Crimean Tatar history and tradition of peaceful resistance.

limitation is about differentiating the effect of the annexation with the net impact of the international sanctions on tactical choices.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, we inform our theoretical expectations between sanctions policy and SDGs with caution, giving more importance to what in-group members of SDG have to say about the dynamics of the dispute.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.4.1 Anti-Russian Sanctions in the Aftermath of Crimean Annexation and Conflict in Ukraine

In March 2014, as a result of political destabilization in Ukraine, and the presidential victory of Western-oriented candidate, Petro Poroshenko, control over Crimea was taken by Russia. Following the all-Crimean referendum, condemned by Ukraine and the international public for not meeting international standards, Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation by an enacted law on March 21, 2014.<sup>5</sup> The Crimean crisis has shown that the international community was highly disturbed by the violation of the principle of territorial sovereignty and international law. Immediate condemnation and threats of sanctions followed from the West; however, they have not rendered concessions from the Kremlin and have not deterred annexation of Crimea. For the Kremlin, the referendum in Crimea was an exercise of the self-determination right of people inhabiting Crimea (Sengupta 2014).

The main bulk of imposed restrictions come right after the annexation of Crimea. Initially, Russia was suspended from the G8 summit. As the conflict in eastern Ukraine unfolded, the US and the EU imposed multiple sanctions on Russia. Sanctioning policy consisted of measures targeting key officials as well as defense, energy, and finance sectors in Russia (Moret et al. 2016). Conflict in eastern Ukraine brought more restrictions and international isolation for the target state. For Ukraine-related sanctions, the US put restrictive measures on more than 735 individuals, several executive orders targeting key sectors in Russia (*U.S. Sanctions on Russia: An Overview* 2021).

The sanctions levied in the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis comprised three main

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<sup>3</sup>What matters to our theoretical framework is how SDGs see the sanctions policy overall. Being applied for a variety of reasons, economic sanctions render a reputational cost to a target, thus signaling effects to the self-determination groups should remain intact.

<sup>4</sup>For instance, in the first half of 2020, the leader of the Crimean Tatar representative body called for the march that was going to cross the border on the very north of Crimean Peninsula, scheduled on May, 2020 (Laptiev 2020). That particular statement was interpreted as a call for violence by the out-group actors, while for the in-group members of SDG it seemed as a continuation of their nonviolent strategy.

<sup>5</sup>For more see, The legal act on admitting Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, <http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/20625>

objectives. Firstly, they aimed at constraining the target's policies. The second aspect was to restore the status quo in the region, and make Russia abandon its interventionist politics in Eastern Europe. Last but not the least, sanctions were imposed to condemn and undermine the target's reputation due to its aggressive activity in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea. The economic measures sent a strong signal that violation of international norms is unacceptable and would be firmly confronted by the Western powers (*Ukraine and Russia Sanctions - United States Department of State* 2021). As mentioned by the US Department of State, imposition of sanctions "send a strong message to the Russian government that there are consequences for their actions that threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine." (*Ukraine and Russia Sanctions - United States Department of State* 2021).

**Types of sanctions levied on Russia since March, 2014 due to Crimean and Ukrainian Crisis by the US and EU (*Timeline of the Imposition of Sanctions and Russia's Response in 2014-2015* 2020).**

- Travel bans on high-ranking officials
- Asset freeze
- Visa restrictions
- Arms exports ban
- Banking sector
- Energy sector
- Defense and raw materials sector

Different sources provide disparate evaluations of the economic and political impact of Western sanctions on Russia after their inception in 2014. On the one hand, targeted sanctions have affected the economy overall, accounting for an annual decrease in GDP by 1 percent and decline of domestic production by 5 percent over the one-year period starting from mid-2014 (Moret et al. 2016). While personal sanctions froze the assets and imposed entry bans on key Russian officials, the main bulk of the adverse impact was caused by sectoral and financial sanctions. They have resulted in significant reduction in investment and restricted the ability of Russian banks to raise funds and credits in the US and European Union.

On the other hand, the target has been resilient in the face of sanctions both economically and politically. The Kremlin had issued counter-sanctions in retaliation, and turned to developing its domestic production (*Indicators Characterizing Import*

*Substitution in Russia* 2021). The Federal State Statistic Service of Russian Federation, for example, reported significant increases in import substitution of dairy products and meat production. However, the government could not offset the negative impact on its financial health and ruble depreciation, given falling energy prices and ongoing recession in the country at that time (Rutland 2014).

Unlike sanctions-induced economic repercussions, the adverse social impact of anti-Russian sanctions has not been given much attention. Although in March 2014, large anti-war protests unfolded in Moscow, it was shortly cut by the police forces. Despite initial resistance by some layers of population in Russia against its regional foreign policy, survey studies reported an increase in overall public ratings of Putin in the aftermath of 2014 crisis (*Levada: Putin's Rating Skyrocketed Due to the Crimean Campaign* 2014). As Galtung (1967) once predicted, sanctions can lead to a strengthening of “rally around the flag” effect in the target states. Likewise, Russia was successful at elevating anti-Western sentiments among its citizens. While some layers of society remained indifferent to the sanctions policy, sanctions prompted an overarching sense of unity and resistance to the alleged Western attempts to weaken the state through sanctions policies (Radikov 2019).

Nevertheless, there were high ratings of citizens' fear of the adverse impact that sanctions could exert on Russian economy. However, as indicated, the initial sense of fear among the populace saw a gradual decrease in 2015-2017 (*Attitudes Towards Countries and Sanctions* 2021). The Russian polling research organization, the Levada Center's director Denis Volkov indicated that fears of sanctions had seen a significant drop among the public. The citizens could not in fact differentiate the impact of anti-Russian sanctions from the effect of Russian counter sanctions against the West, adding to routinization of life under sanctions. “If in 2014-2015 sanctions caused concern for 50-52%, today this figure is already 25%. That is, time passes, anxiety decreases, they (citizens) get used to sanctions.” (*The Head of the Levada Center: The General Attitude of Russians to Sanctions - the West is Against Us* 2021). On the other hand, sociological research indicated the increase in the number of citizens (56%) who had perceived strong international isolation of Russia in the context of Western sanctions (*The Number of Russians who Recognize the Country's International Isolation Has Reached the Maximum* 2018 (Accessed May 29, 2021)).

So far scholars agree that the effectiveness of anti-Russian sanctions is doubted. Evaluating the sanctions regime following Crimean annexation and conflict in Ukraine through their ability to constrain and coerce the target state, it can be stated that the applied pressure have not rendered tangible concessions. Similarly,

the ambitious objective of status quo restoration has not been realized. On the other hand, the deepening confrontation between the West and Russia with continual tightening of sanctions had been successful at signaling to the audiences that violation of international law and norms leads to international isolation and reputational damages (Moret et al. 2016).

In line with our theory, self-determination groups residing in the target state may also receive the signals from economic sanctions. Below we discuss the impact of economic sanctions from the angle of Crimean Tatar self-determination case.

### **3.4.2 Crimean Tatars Self-Determination Struggle: History and Tactics**

The Crimean Tatars are Turkic Muslim population “ethnic origins went back to the eleventh-century Kipchaks and beyond to earlier south Crimean peoples, such as the Medieval Goths, Greeks, and Italians” (Williams 2016, xiii). Their struggle for self-determination can be traced back to the aftermath of 1944, May 18th, when the Crimean Tatar population was forcefully exiled to Central Asia by the Soviet regime for allegedly collaborating with Nazi Germany.

The self-determination history of the Crimean Tatars can be traced to the 1950s. The first generation of deportation survivors led a nonviolent struggle against the Soviet authorities for their return to Crimea. The Soviet regime prohibited their attempts to migrate to the peninsula, paving a way to sporadic protests and hunger strikes by young Crimean Tatar students (Williams 2016). Starting from the 1970s, the Crimean Tatar national movement saw higher levels of mobilization with the formation of three key groups in the places of deportation, mainly Uzbekistan. Each group had its own in-group ideology and, thus, differed in the methods of resistance. On the one hand, group members of pro-Communist groups (the Loyalists and the Orthodox Communists) sent letters and petitions to the Soviet authorities believing that institutional means should be used for attaining a full rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars’ rights (Kaibulla 2021). On the other hand, one group stood out in its anti-communist sentiments and usage of extra-institutional means of resistance. The tactics comprised appeals to international organizations and courts, protests, strikes, and *samizdat*.

Three branches can be identified around the 1970s (Kaibulla 2021). They differed in ideology and, thus, the tactics employed for the goal:

- 1.1 The Loyalists. The main assumption of the group – “The Communist party was mistaken when they decided to deport Crimean Tatars, we need to help

them understand their mistake.” The tactics that were employed comprise the letters and petitions to the state authorities.

1.2 The Orthodox Communists. The main assumption of the group – “It is imperialist agents within Communist party who are to be blamed for the deportation, instigating conflict and putting nations against each other.” The means of resistance were largely institutional, such as letters to state authorities.

1.3 The Anti-Communists. The main assumption of the group – “It is exactly the Communists who are to blame for deportation and massive casualties. The Communist party continues the repressive politics of Imperial Russia” Extra-institutional means of resistance were utilized, appeals to international organizations, courts, and international society.

In the 1990s, after the dismantlement of the Soviet Union, Crimean Tatars started to massively return to Crimean peninsula marking a new period in Crimean Tatar self-determination history. The movement had become more public and official in shape, and continued its activities in Crimea in two forms, the National Movement of Crimean Tatars (NMCT) and the Organization of Crimean Tatars’ National Movement (OCNM). Moreover, in 1991 SDGs created the Crimean Tatar Assembly, representative and decision-making body, *Qurultay*, and its executive body, *Mejlis*. These structures of representation were not recognized as legal entities by Ukraine at the time but were crucial for being a forum on internal affairs of the indigenous people. The structure of Qurultay followed the principles of nonviolence and was key at formulating the goals of attaining repatriation, a larger political representation and cultural rights in Crimea. After the massive migration of Crimean Tatars, the local government could not regulate the issues of repatriation of Tatars, and was not effective at meeting the grievances of the SDG. The main tactics used by the Crimean Tatar repatriates were protests and demonstrations, and voluntary seizure of empty land for housing, so-called, *samostry*, or *samozahvat*.

In the interview with one of the prominent figures in Crimean Tatar self-determination movement, Shevket Kaibulla, the interviewee emphasized an important factor shaping the Crimean Tatar strategies of resistance. He stated that continuity of principles of nonviolent struggle matters in history of SDG:

“We were taught by the previous generation, who went through the deportation, to be and set an example, since our behaviour would be judged by others, whatever we do. Thus we would not let others use our anger and aggression against ourselves and others” (Kaibulla 2021).



Although after 2014 the political landscape in Crimea had changed, the SDGs goal of attaining greater self-rule saw two main complications. First of all, after the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the self-determination group had to negotiate not only with Kyiv, but with the Kremlin. The majority of Crimean Tatars, having shown support for the integrity of Ukraine in 2014, also understood that their self-determination claims may be accommodated with lesser friction under democratizing and Western oriented Ukraine. After 2014, the state with which Tatars needed to continue their struggle for self-determination turned out to be more autocratic and restrictive. Given the history of stricter policies on its minorities in Russia and Crimean Tatars' boycott of the referendum in 2014 for joining Russia, many among the SD movement saw less chances of attaining political and cultural concessions from Kremlin and the new Crimean authorities.

Secondly, the annexation of Crimea complicated the self-determination dispute as it became a part of the interstate territorial conflict between Ukraine and Russia. The representative body of the Crimean Tatars, Mejlis, the main actor in pushing for the greater self-rule, was outlawed and announced an extremist organization on the territory of Russia immediately after the crisis. Other SD members grouped around supporting Russian annexation of Crimea and increasing appeals to achieve self-determination through available institutional means. There was also another line of the SD movement that comprised individual-level activists and continued their activities in Crimea despite the risks of the targeted repression.

Nevertheless, the issues that concerned Crimean Tatars before 2014 remained largely the same after the annexation of the peninsula. Low political representation in the local government, as well as problems of language and cultural revival of Crimean Tatars are still on the table. According to the last census in 2001, Crimean Tatars comprised 12% of the overall population in the peninsula, whereas Russians made 60% and Ukrainians 24% (*National Composition of Population 2001*). Although Crimean Tatar language has been acknowledged as the one of the official languages in the peninsula, the level of education in the mother tongue continues to remain limited, which further endangers its usage and revival fuelling the demands of SDGs.

In the years after the annexation it became apparent that reaching pre-2014 status quo is unrealistic, thus many among Crimean Tatars had to move to the continental Ukraine either due to the increased risks of persecution or for individual reasons. Among the remaining Crimean Tatars, who make up the majority of the overall population and principally decided to stay in Crimea, individual level activists continue to use either existing institutional means under the new realities, continue nonviolent tactics or decide to remain dormant. The commemorative ceremonies in May

that mark the anniversary of Crimean Tatar's deportation were restricted not long after the annexation (*Crimea: One Year on From Annexation; Critics Harassed, Attacked and Silenced* 2015).

With the annexation there was an increase in reported state repression, for instance “the Crimean Tatar mosques and cultural centers have become targets of police raids in search for evidence of extremism” (Buhari-Gulmez 2018, 211). Despite the intensification of repression, there was no transition to violent tactics on the part of the Crimean Tatars. The members of the group adhered to the principles of nonviolence as their historical legacy, but also because of the legitimacy that nonviolent resistance brings.

International attention in the form of economic sanctions and the absence of other forms of interference, such as military operation or arms transfers, can also condition tactics. The commitment of international players to nonviolent peaceful methods of conflict resolution, their support for multilateral diplomacy and economic sanctions to resolve the Crimean crisis could have different impacts on SDG tactics if there were a stronger military response from Ukraine or the West.

Nevertheless, it is important to have a deeper understanding of how Crimean Tatars populating Crimea perceive the international developments and how they shape SDGs' expectations and behavior. In April 2021, I had a personal communication with one of the prominent figures in the Crimean Tatar National Movement, currently the editor-in-chief of the Crimean Tatar newspaper “Avdet”, Mr. Shevket Kaibulla. Overall, the interviewee believed that external actors do play a role in shaping hopes on the realization of the SD goal. Importantly, among Crimean Tatars there is still an ongoing discussion on what form the maximal goal should take, or more specifically, its practical realization.

The interviewee also discussed the previous goal of SDG during the Soviet era, when Crimean Tatars struggled to return to Crimea from Central Asia and Ural, where they were deported in 1944 due to alleged collaboration with Nazi Germany during the second World War. He also highlighted that continuity of principles of peaceful conflict resolution and nonviolent struggle is an essential determinant of the tactics that SDG have been using since the Soviet period. For the interviewee it was largely elites, influential public figures and activists, who determined this continuity. This traditional continuum of peaceful means of conflict resolution that precludes and rejects any form of violence is the group-related factor that cannot be ignored when discussing the effect of exogenous developments on self-determination disputes.

International attention in the form of applied measures, as the interviewee men-

tioned, “increase that feeling of hope, boost expectations” as “the needs of self-determination groups” can be heard and incorporated (Kaibulla 2021). He also emphasized that one of the problems of the status of SDG grievances seems to be “buried under bilateral issues” which may postpone concessions for an unforeseeable future (Kaibulla 2021).

### 3.5 Hypothesis

The application of economic sanctions, along with their material restrictions, also has a signaling value, which is observed in relation to self-determination groups living in the target states. The use of sanctions can influence and shape the preference for the SDGs over the use of peaceful strategies to achieve the goal of greater self-determination precisely because policies respond to the needs of self-determination groups seeking international legitimacy and approval.

The imposition of economic sanctions indicates the commitment and determination of the senders to change the target’s behavior (as opposed to the threat of sanctions, the imposed sanctions are not “cheap talk” (Farrell and Rabin 1996). In addition, the policy can cause not only material damage, but also politically damage the reputation of targeted governments, i.e. isolating, labeling and stigmatizing governments for wrongdoing (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017; Grauvogel and Attia 2020).

The Crimean Tatars case showed that while intra-group traditions of peaceful tactics play a large role, the group is sensitive to what happens on the international arena. The self-determination group places importance to how their tactics are perceived.

As the theoretical framework posits, economic sanctions may enhance the expected political advantage of the groups. By inflicting reputational damage on the target states, the application of economic sanctions can strengthen the position of the group in relation to the target. This can increase the likelihood of a successful outcome of self-determination by legitimizing their peaceful struggle, since the introduction of economic restrictions indicates the presence of a “potential ally” of opposition groups (Grauvogel, Licht, and von Soest 2017, 87).

In the light of the previous discussion, I hypothesize that self-determination groups’ need for international legitimacy increases incentives to opt for peaceful means, specifically nonviolent tactics, in their struggle for self-determination at times of economic sanctions. Imposition of sanctions serves as a credible signal of support for opposition actors, changing the balance of power between the SD groups and the

state, and to the extent that it weakens its international reputation, sanctions may signal that the targeted regime's position can be further challenged.

*Hypothesis:* The imposition of economic sanctions increases the likelihood of employing nonviolent tactics by self-determination groups, while decreasing the likelihood of violent tactics being used.



## 4. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Research Design

The primary objective of this study is to uncover the importance of third-party actions, specifically, the imposition of economic sanctions, on the likelihood of employing certain tactics by SD groups. In this dissertation, I approach the proposed research questions with the assistance of statistical analysis. The statistical tests run on time-series cross-sectional data help gauge the impact of international coercion on the dynamics of self-determination disputes. Non-linear models, specifically, multinomial logistic regression is employed in the empirical analysis (Long and Freese 2006).

This project utilizes recently made available data on *Strategies of Resistance Data Project* (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020), and *TIES* (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014) to test associated hypotheses on the dynamics of nonviolent and violent resistance within the targeted states. The merged dataset covers more than 900 self-determination groups and their tactics between 1960-2004.

#### 4.1.1 Dependent Variable

I recoded and grouped the tactics listed by Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé (2020) in one categorical variable *Tactic*, in which each category comprises a mutually exclusive outcome. These categories are borrowed from the original dataset being (1) exclusive nonviolence, (2) exclusive violence, (3) mixture of violent and nonviolent tactics, (4) no activity. Figure 4.1 depicts the distribution of the tactics used by self-determination groups in our effective sample. Exclusive nonviolence makes 11% and exclusive violence comprises 12% of our effective sample. The most frequent category is no activity 73%. Mixture of the tactics comprise the least employed category with

4% in our sample distribution.

When we cross-tabulate our dependent variable with our main independent variable, the lagged *Imposition of sanctions* (binary), we observe that the mean probability of observing each tactic in our effective sample significantly drops. Out of all observations, almost a quarter (23%) of all categories were employed under sanctions. This, in turn, shows that the number of observations under each category is low, being clustered around the tails of the distribution. In this case, and given that our dependent variable has four unordered binary outcomes, the proper estimator would be multinomial logistic regression. Maximum likelihood estimation requires a baseline category to which the probabilities of other categories would be compared. The most frequent category is usually set as the base one, which in our data is *No Activity* (Model 1). We additionally modify the base category to *Violence* (Model 2) to grasp the dynamics between strategies. Overall, we are interested in explaining whether usage of nonviolent tactics are more likely compared to no activity/violence by SD groups in their efforts to attain self-rule objectives.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of tactical choices by self-determination groups

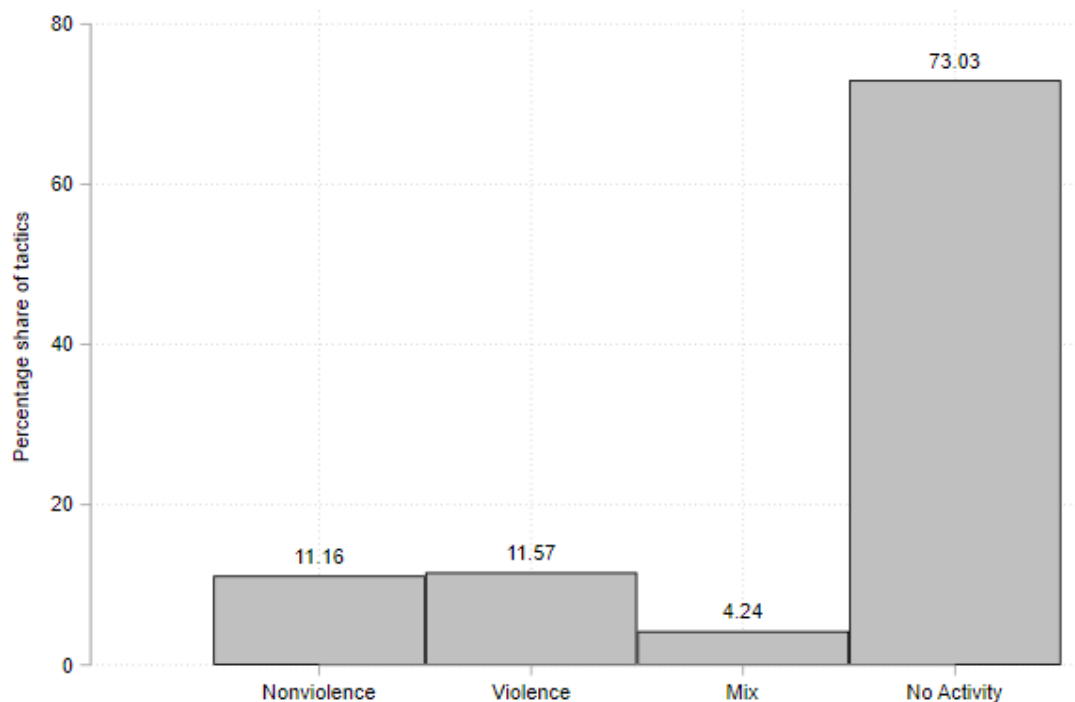


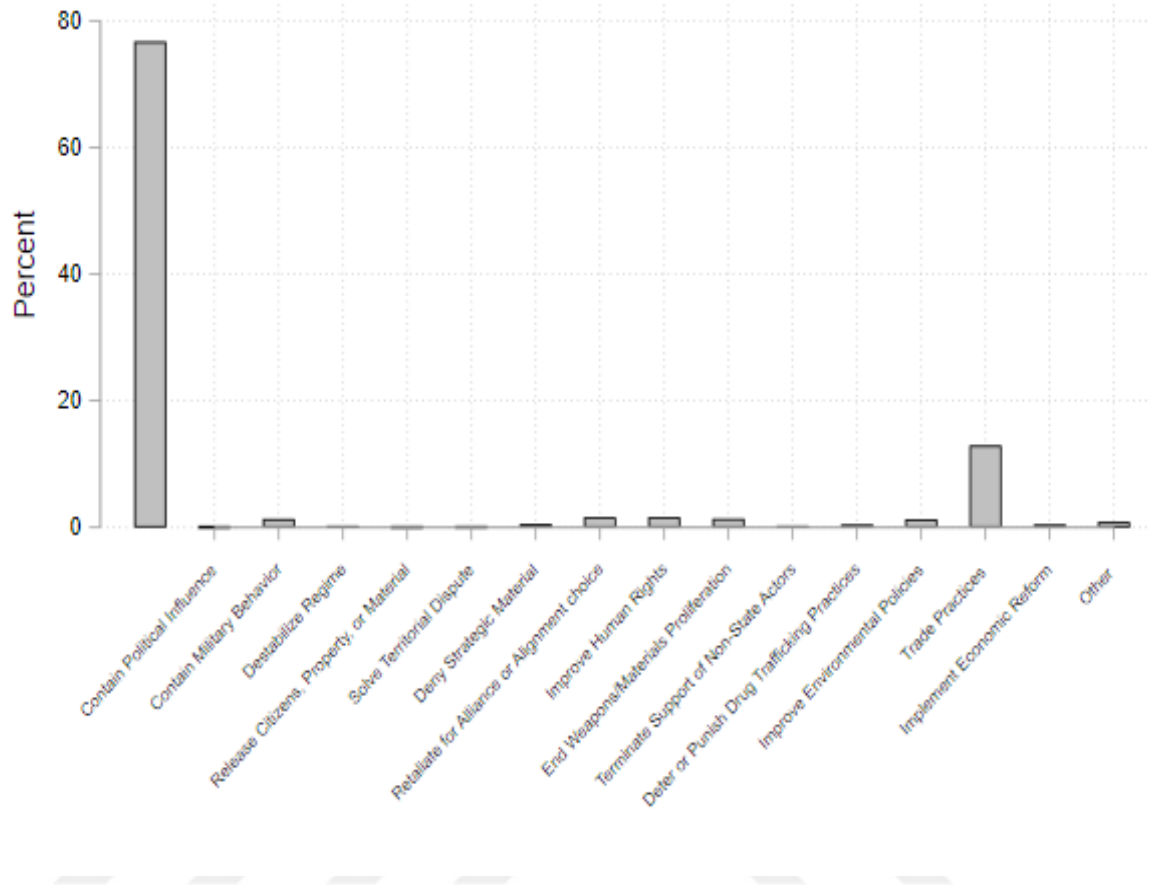
Table 4.1 Summary Statistics, 1960-2004

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Tactic	8727	3.391314	1.067441	1	4
Exclusive Nonviolence	8727	.1116	.3149	0	1
Exclusive Violence	8727	.1157	.3199	0	1
Mix of Violence and Nonviolence	8727	.0423	.2015	0	1
No Activity	8727	.7302	.4438	0	1
Imposition of sanctions <sub>(t-1)</sub>	8727	.2307	.4213	0	1
State repression <sub>(t-1)</sub>	8727	.5543	.4970	0	1
US Sanctions <sub>(t-1)</sub>	8727	.1409	.3479	0	1
Log sanctions duration <sub>(t-1)</sub>	8727	.1375	.4429	0	2.995
Polity Score	8727	3.532	6.898	-10	10
Log group population	8727	7.401	1.368	3.905	10.217
Civil War	8727	.3469	.4760	0	1
Independence Claim	8727	.6524	.4762	0	1

#### 4.1.2 Independent Variables

The main predictor of interest is Imposition of Sanctions, which is a dichotomous variable, taking the value of 1 for the SD organization-year when there were sanctions imposed one year before, and 0 otherwise. This variable is extracted from the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES) dataset (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014), and lagged by one year to account for the time needed for actors to update information about the policy. Although one year lag is a matter of subjective decision-making, a researcher has to make sure there would be a certain period in between the explanatory and outcome variables to account for such discrepancies, as we do not know for sure how much time is needed for actors to change their tactics once sanctions are imposed.

Figure 4.2 Distribution of economic sanctions by issue



Likewise, we lag *State Repression*, which can also impact the tactical choices by self-determination groups. The data on state repression, which comes from the previous study by Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé (2017), was extracted from the Political Terror Scale Project (Wood and Gibney 2010). *State Repression* is a dichotomous variable that indicates whether there is a case of repression by a state against the group in a previous year. In line with previous literature, we expect a positive effect of repression on groups’ usage of violence against the state (Davenport and Inman 2012; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Lichbach 1987). Additionally, we need to be aware that some sanctions may be imposed as a reaction to the state’s repressive policies. Also, state repression and discriminatory policies may result from the applied sanctions as previous literature entails (Escribà-Folch 2012; Peksen 2016; Wood 2008).<sup>1</sup>

*US Sanctions* is a variable that accounts for sanctions applied by the United States as the primary sender country, both individually or together with other countries. The

<sup>1</sup>With sanction policy comes an increased tendency to raise physical repression against civilians for preventing retreats and suppressing opposition. In an attempt to alleviate dissent at times of economic instability, a state may conduct targeted repression against potential threats (Escribà-Folch 2012, Wood 2008).



US is one of the key powers which can be considered as the champion of promotion of democratic and self-determination rights abroad. Sanctions, where the US is a primary sender, may exert a considerable impact on the SDGs, their search for international legitimacy, thus increasing incentives to use the tactics that would not undermine the third parties support.

*The Polity Score* variable controls for the effect of regime type on organizational strategic choices. Anocracies seem to be less stable and invite more anti-governmental dissent, unlike strong autocracies and democracies. Thus, where the country is located on the democracy scale would affect the availability of domestic opportunities to negotiate with the central governments through self-determination disputes. The incentives of self-determination organizations as well as whether SDG would opt for nonviolent, violent, or mixed strategies are affected in that respect. The variable ranges between -10 to 10, where the lowest scores represent full-fledged authoritarian regimes and highest scores indicate established democracies (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2007, 2002). We also control for the group population within the state. *Sanctions Duration* depicts the length of imposed sanction episodes in a given year. Both *Sanctions Duration* and *Group Population* are transformed into a log form to improve the model fit. All sanctions related variables lagged by one year.

Table 4.2 Multinomial Logistic Regression on Tactical Choices by Self-Determination Organizations (1960-2004). Raw Coefficients.

	Model.1			Model.2		
	Nonviolence	Violence	Mix	Nonviolence	Mix	No Activity
Imposition of Sanctions <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.447*** (0.172)	0.054 (0.165)	0.283 (0.198)	0.393* (0.216)	0.229 (0.224)	-0.054 (0.165)
State Repression <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.609*** (0.139)	0.009 (0.139)	0.989*** (0.259)	0.599*** (0.186)	0.980*** (0.272)	-0.009 (0.139)
US Sanctions <sub>(t-1)</sub>	-0.517*** (0.197)	-0.011 (0.174)	-0.504** (0.220)	-0.506** (0.232)	-0.493* (0.258)	0.011 (0.174)
Log of Sanctions Duration <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.348*** (0.085)	-0.022 (0.120)	0.262* (0.158)	0.370*** (0.138)	0.284 (0.202)	0.022 (0.120)
Polity Score	0.061*** (0.015)	-0.040*** (0.013)	0.077*** (0.020)	0.101*** (0.018)	0.117*** (0.019)	0.040*** (0.013)
Log of Group Population	0.202*** (0.062)	-0.147* (0.076)	-0.018 (0.101)	0.349*** (0.092)	0.129 (0.103)	0.147* (0.076)
Civil War	-0.037 (0.153)	1.826*** (0.158)	1.414*** (0.303)	-1.863*** (0.212)	-0.412 (0.305)	-1.826*** (0.158)
Independence Claim	-0.384* (0.204)	0.445** (0.223)	-0.215 (0.360)	-0.829*** (0.289)	-0.660* (0.361)	-0.445** (0.223)
Constant	-3.860*** (0.428)	-1.882*** (0.528)	-4.283*** (0.689)	-1.977*** (0.644)	-2.401*** (0.684)	1.882*** (0.528)
N	8727			8727		
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	0.092			0.092		
Log-likelihood	-6798.714			-6798.714		
AIC	13651.428			13651.428		
BIC	13842.431			13842.431		

*Note:* Raw coefficients are reported. Clustered standard errors are in parentheses. Two-tailed test is conducted \* p < 0.1, \*\* p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01. Base outcome in Model 1 is *No Activity*, and *Violence* is the base in Model 2. The columns refer to categories of resistance.

Table 4.3 Multinomial Logistic Regression on Tactical Choices by Self-Determination Organizations (1960-2004). Relative-Risk Ratio

	Model.1			Model.2		
	Nonviolence	Violence	Mix	Nonviolence	Mix	No Activity
Imposition of Sanctions <sub>(t-1)</sub>	1.563*** (0.268)	1.055 (0.174)	1.327 (0.263)	1.482* (0.320)	1.258 (0.282)	0.948 (0.156)
State Repression <sub>(t-1)</sub>	1.838*** (0.256)	1.009 (0.140)	2.688*** (0.696)	1.821*** (0.339)	2.664*** (0.726)	0.991 (0.137)
US Sender <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.596*** (0.118)	0.989 (0.172)	0.604** (0.133)	0.603** (0.140)	0.611* (0.158)	1.011 (0.176)
Log of Sanctions Duration <sub>(t-1)</sub>	1.416*** (0.120)	0.978 (0.117)	1.300* (0.205)	1.448*** (0.199)	1.329 (0.268)	1.022 (0.123)
Polity Score	1.063*** (0.016)	0.961*** (0.012)	1.080*** (0.021)	1.106*** (0.020)	1.124*** (0.021)	1.041*** (0.013)
Log of Group Population	1.223*** (0.076)	0.863* (0.065)	0.982 (0.099)	1.417*** (0.131)	1.137 (0.118)	1.158* (0.088)
Civil War	0.963 (0.147)	6.208*** (0.983)	4.111*** (1.248)	0.155*** (0.033)	0.662 (0.202)	0.161*** (0.026)
Independence Claim	0.681* (0.139)	1.561** (0.348)	0.807 (0.290)	0.437*** (0.126)	0.517* (0.187)	0.641** (0.143)
N	8727			8727		
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	0.092			0.092		
Log-likelihood	-6798.714			-6798.714		
AIC	13651.428			13651.428		
BIC	13842.431			13842.431		

*Note:* Relative-risk ratio are reported. Clustered standard errors are in parentheses. Two-tailed test is conducted \* p < 0.1, \*\* p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01. Base outcome in Model 1 is No Activity, and Violence is the base in Model 2. The columns refer to categories of resistance.

## 4.2 Findings

### 4.2.1 Statistical Analysis

We run multinomial logistic regression (MNL) on an effective sample of 914 self-determination organizations and 67 states for the period between 1960-2004 in order to test the association between economic sanctions imposition and tactical choices of SDGs. The model incorporates control variables as discussed in the previous part. The findings indicate that the imposition of economic sanctions increase the SDG's propensity to employ nonviolent tactics. The results also show that relative to no activity, odds of nonviolence usage are elevated by 56% at the times of sanctions imposition. Moreover, we have unexpected findings in relation to state repression and US sanctions. Similar to economic sanctions, state repression increases the probability of employing nonviolence by the SDGs; when compared to no activity, the odds of using nonviolence increase by 83%. In contrast to our expectation, US sanctions decrease the likelihood of using peaceful methods of resistance. They increase the odds of using violence compared to nonviolence by 65%. We cannot discuss the magnitude of the sanctions effect by looking at the coefficients in Table 4.2, thus, we report relative-risk ratios in Table 4.3. Tables and figures help examine the marginal effects of the variables of interest as well as the odds ratios to grasp the dynamics among the tactics in relation to *No Activity* and *Violence* alternatives.

Below, we present the model and discussion of the statistical results in more detail.

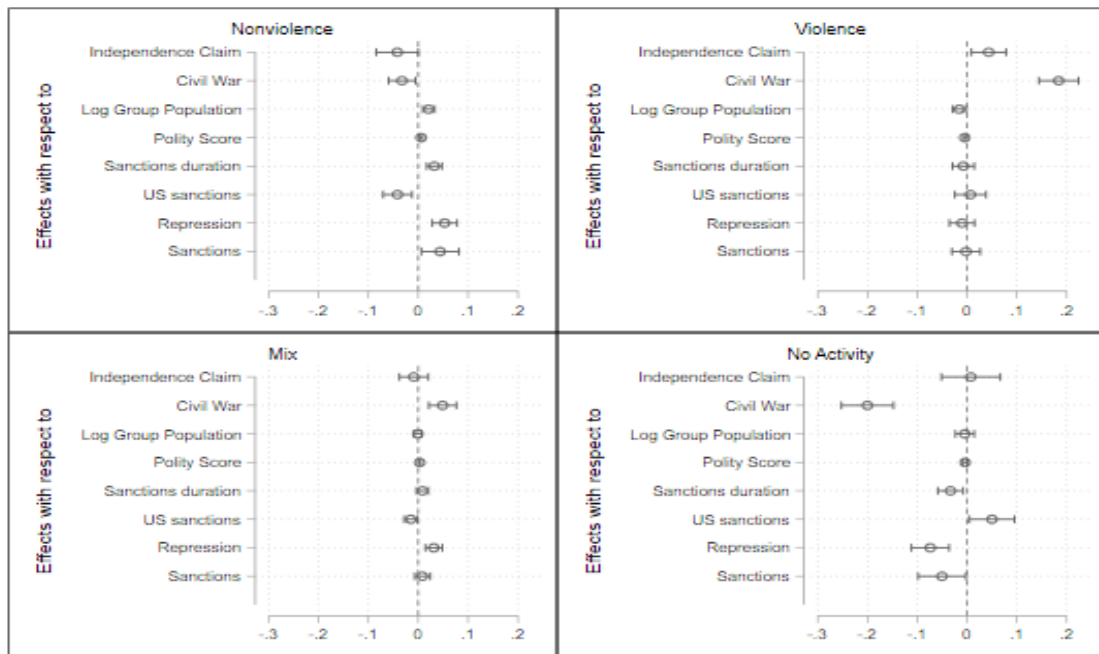
#### 4.2.2 Wald test and Small-Hsiao test of IIA

Before we proceed with the model, we run a test for the effect of each independent variable in our model on the dependent variable, as suggested by Long and Freese (2006). The Wald test showed that the effect of each variable reported in Table 4.2 was significant at the 0.1 level, except the unreported one *Multilateral Sanctions* variable. Thus, we dropped this variable from our model. Moreover, we tested whether any of the categories in the tactical choice variable violated the independence of irrelevant alternatives assumption (IIA). Results indicated that there was no category in our dependent variable violating IIA. Tactical choices are independent of other alternatives.

#### 4.2.3 Average Marginal Effect

Figure 4.3 helps to visualize changes in probabilities of each outcome with respect to variables in our model. With the imposition of sanctions, the predicted probability of observing nonviolent activity increases, while the changes in predicted probabilities of other tactics are almost negligible. *No Activity* category significantly drops in the usage at the times of sanctions. In Figure 4.3, we see that sanctions' effect is statistically distinguishable from zero for tactical nonviolence and no activity.

Figure 4.3 Average marginal effect with respect to tactical choices by SDGs



Estimated coefficients in Table 4.2 inform about the direction and statistical significance of the coefficients related to the independent variables. However, in order to grasp the magnitude of the effect we compute and plot the average marginal effect, as recommended by Long and Freese (2006). Figure 4.3 depicts the average marginal effect that each explanatory variable exerts with respect to each category in our dependent variable. In other words, it shows the predicted probability of each tactic for a unit change in the independent variable. A discrete change or one standard deviation change were computed for factor and continuous variables, respectively. The graph reveals that on average, a discrete increase in economic sanctions (from 0 to 1) is associated with 0.044 increase in predicted probability of using nonviolent tactic, and 0.002 decrease in usage of violent tactics. Effects on nonviolence are significant at 0.05 level. The predicted probability of nonviolence also increases with a standard deviation increase in SDG population and polity score. On average, for the groups with independence claims and at times of civil war, the predicted probability of using violence elevates considerably. Moreover, while state repression increases the probability of nonviolent tactics by 0.053, US sanctions reduce peaceful strategies by 0.042. All effects are statistically significant for nonviolent tactics, except the decreasing effect of independence claims.

#### 4.2.4 Odds Ratio

Odds ratios depict the dynamics among the tactical choices of SDGs. They show how odds in observing an individual category are expected to change in relation to the base category for a unit increase in the independent variable of interest. We compare odds in relation to *No Activity* (NA) and *Violence* (V). For easier interpretation, we transform the factor by which tactics are expected to change into percentage change. Moreover, Table 4.3 reports relative-risk ratios, to which we refer below.

Compared to *No Activity* the odds of observing nonviolent action increases by 56% at times of sanctions. Relative risks of using other tactics are not statistically significant. The sanctions policy also increases the odds of employing peaceful tactics compared to violence by 48%, and decreases the odds of using violent tactics by 32% in relation to nonviolence.

For other independent variables we see the following results. Independence claims, civil war and the US sanctions decrease the odds of nonviolence compared to no activity and violent means. All other independent variables render significant increases in the chances of observing peaceful tactics.

The odds ratio of violence for civil war are the largest, increasing the odds of using violent strategy six-fold, and mixture of tactics four-times compared to no activity. State repression increases the odds of nonviolence compared to both baseline tactics around 80%. It also elevates the chance of observing the mixture of tactics when compared to both base outcomes. US sanctions decrease the chances of observing usage of nonviolence by 40% in relation to both base alternatives.

#### 4.2.5 Marginal Effect of Sanctions Imposition and Other Independent Variables

Figure 4.4 depicts the marginal changes in probabilities of employing a tactic as a function of sanctions imposition. Imposition of economic sanctions elevates the likelihood of observing nonviolent strategy, as well as decreases the probability of employing no strategy. Marginal effect of the main independent variable of interest is distinguishable from zero for these categories. The magnitude of the marginal effect is not as substantial, however to understand the change better we look at the marginal effect of sanctions on each outcome category for varying levels of polity score (Figure 4.5).

The graph depicts that in targeted states scoring 0 and higher on the polity scale,

the use of sanctions increase the probability of observing nonviolent tactics by SDGs. This can be explained by the presence of low constraints on protest and other types of nonviolent resistance as the country becomes more democratic. The calculated odds ratios report, one unit increase in the polity score is associated with 10% increase in odds of observing nonviolent strategy relative to violent tactics. On the other hand, in more autocratic regimes, nonviolent action may be discouraged by laws and other practices. SDGs inactivity decreases with the regime becoming more democratic. The effect for other categories is indistinguishable from zero. Moreover, Figure 4.6 depicts predicted probabilities of tactics for varying levels of regime type, and other variables set at their representative values (mean or median). As the polity score increases, we observe an increase in predicted probabilities of nonviolent strategy and decrease in no activity. There is a slight fall in predicted probabilities of violent tactics, and the mix of strategies has a small increase for increasing values of polity score. Consequently, as the target becomes more democratic, nonviolent means proliferate, whereas violent tactics and no action become less probable, holding other variables constant.

Figure 4.4 Marginal effect of sanctions imposition

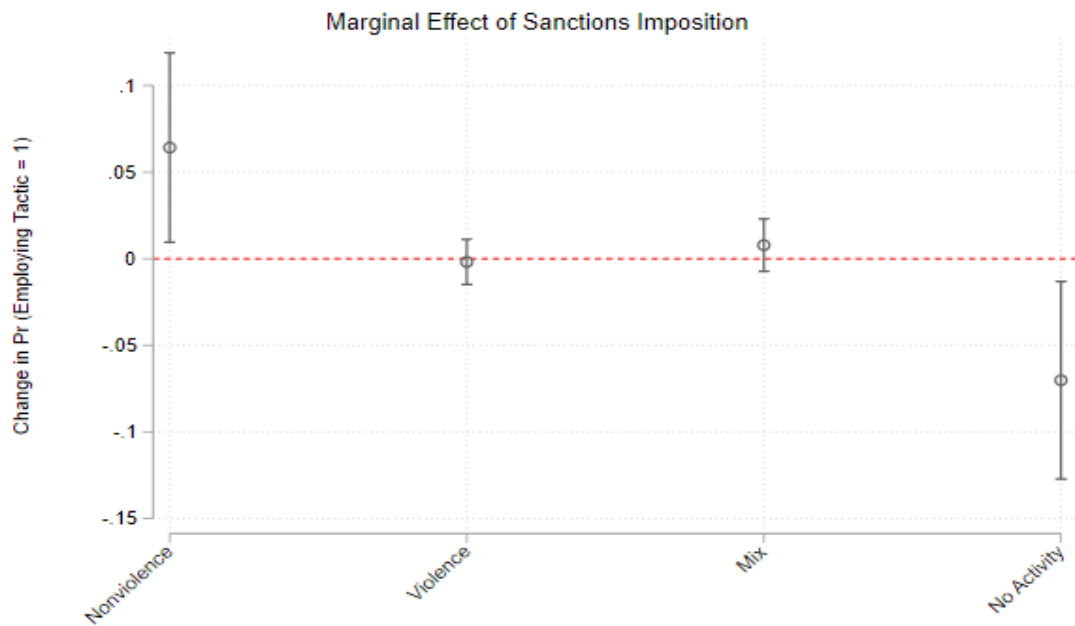


Figure 4.5 Marginal effects of sanctions imposition for varying levels of Polity Score

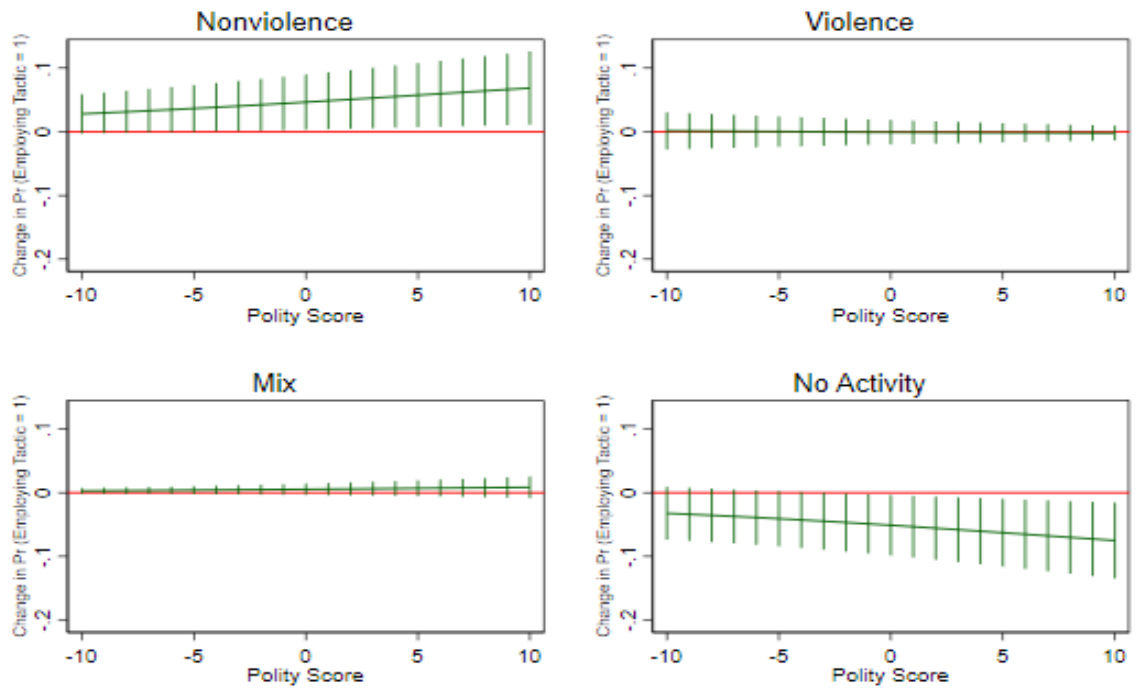
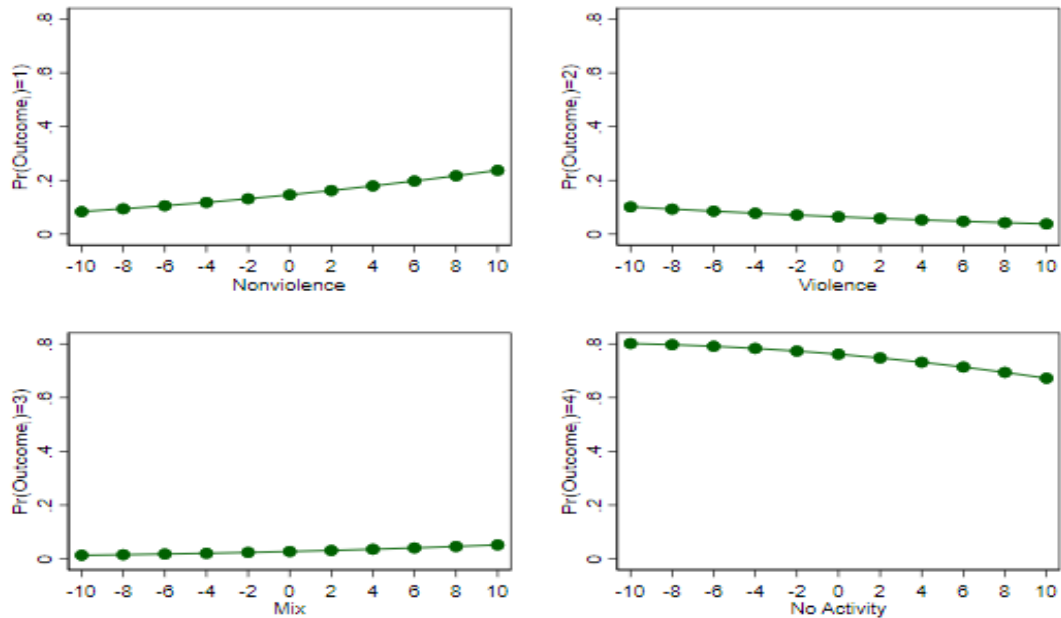


Figure 4.6 Predicted probabilities for varying levels of Polity Score, others set at representative moments



#### 4.2.6 Discussion

The results from the statistical analysis lend support to the hypothesis of this study. The findings suggest that imposition of economic sanctions is associated with an increased propensity of the SDGs to employ nonviolent tactics. In relation to inactivity, SDGs employ nonviolent tactics 56% more, while they also use nonviolent tactics around 48% more than violent attacks against the state after sanctions are issued against the target state. The odds of using violence are decreased when economic sanctions are imposed by 32% in comparison to employment of peaceful tactics. The marginal effect of economic sanctions is positive and statistically significant for the probability of observing the use of nonviolent strategies by the self-determination groups.

At times when a state is under international economic pressure, the benefits of nonviolent tactics by the SDGs within that state's borders increase. Gaining international legitimacy matters for self-determination groups. When the target is under international sanctions' pressure, it may help the SDGs to pull the home state to voluntarily acquiesce with the international peremptory norm, specifically, the right to self-determination. In the long run, the pressure may propel the government to willfully accommodate the demands of greater political, economic and social rights by the groups.

Because international society is positively biased towards nonviolent struggles and SD disputes are observable to the public, the type of tactics used by the SDGs serves as a significant factor that would either contribute or detract from legitimization of the SD cause and its future accommodation. Therefore, nonviolent tactics may be used by the SDGs as a strategy to legitimize themselves and gain the reputation of an adherent to peaceful conflict resolution. Even during the civil wars, some rebel groups which pursue legitimacy of their causes, may choose to abide by the international norms (Jo 2016). Although some groups may remain indifferent to international recognition, the groups, which carry the maximal goal of greater self-determination, may care about international dynamics and international rules precisely because attention and actions of international actors may provide them with legitimacy, recognition, and enhanced position against the home state. That, in turn, may shape their preferences towards peaceful tactics, such as protests, sit-ins, boycotts and other types of nonviolent actions in opposition to violent tactics that may cause state backlash. The case of Western economic sanctions against Russia were considered as isolating the target internationally by the Russian citizens and the SD group. Moreover, the deployment of sanctions showed that the Crimean Tatars are sensitive to what happens in the international arena as it indi-



rectly impacts their position.

Another important finding is related to the SDGs that put forward independence claims. For these groups in particular, imposition of economic sanctions is negatively associated with the likelihood of using nonviolent tactics. SDGs usage of nonviolent tactics is 56.3% less likely than employment of violent tactics after sanctions imposition. Conversely, the policy increases the odds of observing violence on the part of SDGs with independence claims by more than 50% when compared to inactivity. This finding could mean that the secessionist SDGs may view violence as an expensive but rapid step forward, and the imposition of economic sanctions may distort their perception that the target is weakened enough to further destabilize it through attacks. This is contrary to our theoretical expectations, since SDGs that pursue full independence should care for international legitimacy like any other group, thus imposing economic sanctions should force them to use tactics that are consistent with values that matter to international actors and help legitimize the fight for the SDGs. The findings may indicate that the demands for independence are one of the most stringent and explicit demands on the target states, which they consider to be a threat to national sovereignty. For the SDGs, which pursue an explicit goal of secession instead of partial autonomy, the target state may be conceived as devoid of legitimacy and no longer having power and sovereignty over the group. Violence, in turn, as the first step before an uprising, may seem like the only option to overthrow the illegal status quo, weakened by international sanctions.

Another explanation for this finding may be that the chances of the expected political advantage gained from violent struggle may seem greater than from the use of nonviolent tactics, when the goal of the SD is to gain complete independence. The SDGs may deliberately incite a state to violence against itself through attacks and hostilities, which in turn may intensify international pressure and outrage against the targeted governments that appear to be repressing the group.

On the other hand, in line with the literature on sanctions-repression, the imposed economic sanctions may be enough to catalyze state repression (Escribà-Folch 2012; Wood 2008). The previous anti-governmental claims-making and easily discernible identities make SDGs with separatist goals an attractive target for the state in which they live. Repression used by the state to eliminate potential anti-government dissent as a result of the imposed sanctions, in turn, can provoke strong reactions from the SDGs, even if the previous actions of the groups were predominantly peaceful (Lichbach 1987; White 1989).

Moreover, when the target state physically suppresses groups, the likelihood of enforcing violent tactics remains unchanged. The findings show that the SDGs use a

combination of violent and nonviolent tactics, which is twice as common as purely violent tactics at times of state repression. A possible explanation for this variation is that at times when physical repression is intensified, the use of a variety of violent and nonviolent tactics can eliminate the impact of repression against the group on SDG members and can help the SDGs overcome the risks of further government repression with less harm. Similar to the use of a combination of tactics, state repression increases the likelihood of adhering to exclusively peaceful tactics by 80% more than exceptional violence and lack of activity on the part of the SD group.

An analysis of control variables related to the duration of sanctions shows that longer sanctions are associated with a higher likelihood of adherence to nonviolent tactics and a combination of violence and nonviolence. If the duration of sanctions is extended by 50%, the use of peaceful tactics is 18% more likely than the use of violent attacks. Compared to other alternatives, the likelihood of adhering to violent strategies is almost negligible when the sanctions are extended.

While the effect of US sanctions on tactical choices is statistically significant for nonviolent and mixed alternatives, in contrast to the posited theoretical expectations, they reduce the odds of observing nonviolence and decrease the chances of employment of mixed strategies in comparison to no activity and violent tactics. After sanctions by the US are imposed, the dynamics of violence are not affected, rendering no change in relation to alternative tactics. The possible explanation for this may be that US sanctions usually result in greater economic damage, thus, they can reduce resources not only for the targeted government, but also for the SDGs. This finding may indicate that more attention should be paid to the economic impact of the sanctions, as strong players may have more opportunities to harm the economy of the target countries.

In terms of reasoning based on legitimacy, the SDGs may perceive US intervention as controversial. US actions abroad have raised much criticism and doubts about their legality. “The United States implementation of unilateral economic sanctions does not constitute procedures of pacific settlement as envisaged by articles 2(3) and 33 of the U.N. Charter” (Henderson 1986, 182-183). Unilateral US sanctions can often face opposition, as was the case when the US imposed an embargo against Nicaragua in 1985 (Henderson 1986, 177). The SDGs may choose to scale back because US sanctions do not indicate that they will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs on the international stage because of doubted legitimacy of the sanctions.

Lastly, the findings related to the target’s regime type are consistent with the previous findings. Scholars such as Allen (2008) found that patterns of anti-governmental political action, riots and demonstrations, are affected by economic sanctions, as

conditional on the interplay of the domestic institutions in the targeted states. If the regime is more open, it increases the chance of demonstrations. Similarly, the statistical results of this study show that if the regime becomes more democratic and respects individual freedoms and rule of law without risks of suppression, the usage of nonviolent tactics becomes prevalent.



## 5. CONCLUSION

This study can be located within the newly emerging line of literature on the influence of international sanctions on the resistance strategies of self-determination groups. While the previous studies examined the impact of international sanctions on the success of nonviolent and violent campaigns, they lacked a solid theoretical basis for how external pressures influence tactical choice decisions (Chenoweth and Lawrence 2010; Chenoweth, Stephan, and Stephan 2011). This dissertation, on the other hand, explores the impact of economic sanctions on the tactical choice of certain types of actors, the self-determination groups. The study enlarged the scope of the non-state actors, which challenge the states with their appeals to the peremptory norm of international law, the right to greater self-rule, and investigated the variety of exclusively nonviolent, violent strategies or their mixture in SDGs' struggles. In this study, I informed expectations with a combination of literature on economic sanctions and strategies of resistance. I merged the data on SD groups and strategic choices (Cunningham, Dahl, and Frugé 2020) with the Threat and Imposition of Sanctions data (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014) to test the relationship of interest.

The thesis made an initial assessment of potential mechanisms, whereby international sanctions may not only affect the target states but also incentives and behaviors displayed by self-determination groups residing there. Although Crimean Tatar case showed that in-group related factors play an important role in organizational resistance choices, the SDGs' decision over tactics may be equally affected by the dynamics of the international system and international actors, whose recognition and actions promise a constraint to the existing state policies in the shape of economic sanctions. The use of economic sanctions not only carry material ramifications to the target states, but also contribute to communicating senders' disapproval of the target behavior in the international arena to domestic audiences.

The theoretical framework posits that the signaling impact of economic sanctions lies in their ability to bring about reputational damage, international criticism and

objection to the sanctioned governments as the deployment of sanctions is a sign of credible commitment by the senders rather than the “cheap talk” (Farrell and Rabin 1996). Simultaneously, that particular message is spread across various domestic and foreign audiences as deployment of sanctions is also a very public and overt type of foreign policy. The enforcement of sanctions may change the perceived balance of power between the target state and the groups that challenge that state holding the self-determination claims. The issued sanctions speak to legitimacy-seeking needs of self-determination groups, and signal the opening of the window of political opportunity.

Findings to support the argument that imposing economic sanctions is positively associated with nonviolent tactics on the part of the SDGs may mean that international actors, who frequently use economic sanctions in their foreign policy instruments, need to be more aware of these unintended consequences. Economic intervention may play a role in mobilizing participants and providing incentives for them to adhere to the values that concern sending states at a time of increased international pressure on the target states. For the SDGs, the type of tactics used can be a significant factor that will either promote or diminish their legitimacy, hence, the prospects of their future accommodation. Thus, when economic sanctions are applied to states challenged by the SDGs, groups become very sensitive to their choice of strategies to further legitimize and acquire an international ally for their cause.

It is important to note that the modern Crimean example, which was used as the theory-informing case, is under the close attention of the scholarly community and policymakers from the point of view of strategies that actors undertake to tackle the conflict. While, along with diplomatic efforts and Western economic sanctions, Ukraine launched a military campaign in the eastern regions, the Crimean case drew only sanctions policy and diplomatic condemnation. Scholars such as Bartkowski and Stephan (2014) use the Ukrainian conflict in their article to provide several suggestions for sensitizing citizens and politicians to nonviolent, non-military means of resolving the protracted conflict. Based on the findings of the literature on civic resistance, the authors highlight nonviolent action as a strategy that can be successful because it can help “to win popular legitimacy and representation, to mobilize local population” (Bartkowski and Stephan 2014). Moreover, other scholars such as Zunes and Chenoweth (2014) also view the Crimean Tatars case as an example of nonviolent struggle that, unlike the armed insurgency, does not undermine the commitment of the international community. The authors suggested that the international community should support usage of “peaceful tactics and resistance” (Zunes and Chenoweth 2014). They called for punishing derogation of that right

to peacefully protest through imposing sanctions on states. These concerns are far more relevant today as protest and nonviolent resistance is under the constant threat in the conflict zones around the world.

## 5.1 Limitations and Further Research

The main limitations of this study are related to discerning the effect of sanctions in accordance with their characteristics. The extensiveness of sanctions, the goals by which senders impose them, the number of actors issuing sanctions may matter in their ability to change the calculations by SDGs over the employment of nonviolent or violent means of resistance. Moreover, while the example of self-determination of the Crimean Tatars served to substantiate the theoretical expectations in this dissertation, more recent examples should be included to explore the mechanism by which economic sanctions can influence their behavior. More research is needed on how groups perceive the imposition of sanctions and how external economic constraints and sponsorship play a role in shaping their long-term strategies.

Another limitation of this study is that economic sanctions imposed on certain issues can do more damage to the target's reputation than others, and thus can send signals of varying strength to the audience. This thesis argues that while sanctions can be imposed on a number of issues, they nevertheless imply that the target state is under pressure and its reputation is in doubt. Some issues that sender states try to tackle with the use of economic sanctions, such as human rights violations or territorial disputes, may seem more salient and may generate more outrage from the international community. Although their reputational damage can be greater than economic sanctions aimed at combating drug trafficking or trade dispute, in this thesis, economic sanctions are operationalized as a single umbrella concept. Firstly, the deployment of economic sanctions means that the issue to which they apply is an important issue for the sender. Second, the signaling effect of international pressure may continue to be perceived by opposition groups, in particular the SDGs, as it weakens and limits economic transactions with the state they are publicly fighting against. Future research should investigate whether the severity of an issue affects the strength of the signals that sanctions send to opposition groups such as the SDGs.

Moreover, as one of the unintended consequences of sanctions' imposition, the target government may concentrate and strengthen the domestic support around itself. However, some actors who oppose the existing policy of the status quo in their state

may not be subject to this effect; on the contrary, they may actively support the policy of external sanctions and even call for their strengthening. Lastly, further research may account for the variation of the demands made by self-determination groups (i.e. secessionist claims, demands for autonomy, cultural rights, etc.), intended goals of economic sanctions (i.e. human rights violations, terrorism, etc.).

Moreover, this study could be expanded to the self-determination cases with prevalent violent dynamics which can be compared against predominantly nonviolent SD disputes. For instance, one could examine the South Ossetian case, where the SD group employed violent tactics, and another state militarily intervened on behalf of the SD group. Future research may also uncover how the exogenous economic restraints influence the decision of self-determination groups to maintain or switch from one strategy to another across the variety of institutional, nonviolent and violent tactics to render their intended goals. Finally, it is important to examine whether the threats of sanctions are associated with the behavioral changes in organizational strategies of self-determination groups.

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