Negative: Diamonds / India

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

AFF plan bans imports of finished diamonds from India on the theory that most of them are really from Russia and should be sanctioned. Russian diamond mining company Alrosa produces most of the raw diamonds that are processed in India and then re-exported from India to the rest of the world. AFF's "harms" are not that the money from the diamonds is helping Russia fight Ukraine, but that the US foreign policy image is somehow harmed by making us "look bad" that our sanctions are being bypassed. This is easily answered with the classic reply: So what.

Negative: Diamonds / India 2

INHERENCY 2

1. Big reduction in Russian diamonds going to India 2

(Jan. '23) India experience massive reduction in diamonds coming in from Russia, due to Ukraine war 2

2. A/T "Russia bypasses sanctions on diamond exports to sell through India" 2

(Even if they bypass diamond sanctions…) Diamond sales don't happen because they can't bypass the banking sanctions 2

Sanctions on Russia are reducing diamond trade with India 2

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 3

1. A/T "Hurts US image to have loopholes in Russia diamond sanctions" 3

No image problem: Few people know Russia is a major diamond producer 3

We look good compared to the European Union: They haven't banned Russian diamond imports like we did 3

2. Diamonds have insignificant impact in Russia 3

Diamond revenues have "miniscule" impact for Russia on the Ukraine war 3

MINOR REPAIR 3

"IF" the only problem is the disconnect between the claim that we're sanctioning Russia and the diamond loophole in India, then the solution is easy: Repeal the diamond sanctions on Russia 3

SOLVENCY 4

1. Other countries will handle Russian diamonds instead 4

Belgium already handles a large amount of Russia's diamond exports 4

Belgium handles 86% of the world's rough diamonds 4

Belgium and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are the 2 top destinations of Russian export diamonds (not India) 4

2. No benefit to US foreign policy by strengthening sanctions 4

Sanctions produce negative net benefits. They do more harm than good 4

Sanctions on Russia backfire: They make it harder for Putin to back down and they toughen his resolve to win 4

3. Need to "DO SOMETHING" doesn't justify sanctions 5

Sanctions aren't justified by bad guys' bad behavior. Sanctions hurt the innocent and have no effect on the guilty 5

DISADVANTAGES 5

1. Innocent Russians harmed 5

A. The Link: Sanctions punish ordinary Russian citizens while having no effect on Putin and his allies 5

B. The Impact: Innocent people are harmed while the guilty go untouched 5

2. Sanctions harm U.S. image and reputation for human rights 6

Sanctions make us the human rights violator: They violate the human rights of US persons and companies 6

Taking away people's rights in the name of fighting authoritarianism is…hypocritical and wrong 6

Negative: Diamonds / India

INHERENCY

1. Big reduction in Russian diamonds going to India

(Jan. '23) India experience massive reduction in diamonds coming in from Russia, due to Ukraine war

Murali Krishnan 2023 (journalist with Deutsch Welle, a German news agency) 25 Jan 2023 "India: War in Ukraine robs diamond city of its sparkle" (accessed 3 Feb 2023) https://www.dw.com/en/india-war-in-ukraine-robs-diamond-city-of-its-sparkle/a-64509000

Mahesh Patel, 41, has been cutting and polishing diamonds for nearly two decades for various companies in the city of Surat, [one of the world's largest polishing hubs](https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-hits-indias-diamond-industry/a-55183728) in India's western Gujarat state. His years of experience and keen eye for detail used to bring him a decent income working in crowded markets of Surat's Mahidharpura region. But the war between [Russia and Ukraine](https://www.dw.com/en/war-in-ukraine/t-60931789) has left Patel and thousands of his peers without work or with just minimal working hours. The local diamond industry sources most of its rough stones from [Russia](https://www.dw.com/en/russia/t-19065060), and as they become less available, diamond factories face a growing crisis. "The short supply of diamonds has led many factory owners to lay off workers. We have been hit hard and work is hard to come by. Small diamond units have shut down," Patel told DW.

2. A/T "Russia bypasses sanctions on diamond exports to sell through India"

(Even if they bypass diamond sanctions…) Diamond sales don't happen because they can't bypass the banking sanctions

Murali Krishnan 2023 (journalist with Deutsch Welle, a German news agency) 25 Jan 2023 "India: War in Ukraine robs diamond city of its sparkle" (accessed 3 Feb 2023) https://www.dw.com/en/india-war-in-ukraine-robs-diamond-city-of-its-sparkle/a-64509000

Diamond suppliers also pointed out that the sanctions have removed Russia's central bank and two major banks from the global SWIFT payment system. Last November, India had given nine banks approval to open "vostro" accounts (an account held by one bank on behalf of another — ed.)  to help facilitate trade in rupees with Russia. The idea was to get around Western sanctions against Russia by carrying on trade in rupees. However, this move has not solved the issue. Though India wants to promote trade denominated in rupees, it has yet to see any major international trade deals settled in its domestic currency. "Trade settlement has become difficult, and this has led to supply disruptions. Not many companies are making use of the Vostro accounts," said Shah.

Sanctions on Russia are reducing diamond trade with India

Murali Krishnan 2023 (journalist with Deutsch Welle, a German news agency) 25 Jan 2023 "India: War in Ukraine robs diamond city of its sparkle" (accessed 3 Feb 2023) https://www.dw.com/en/india-war-in-ukraine-robs-diamond-city-of-its-sparkle/a-64509000

Amid the war in Ukraine, sanctions imposed by the Western bloc have disturbed overall rough diamond supply and spilled over into India's Surat. The United States is the largest market for India-processed diamonds, but several large American companies now refuse to buy goods of Russian origin.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. A/T "Hurts US image to have loopholes in Russia diamond sanctions"

No image problem: Few people know Russia is a major diamond producer

Heera Zhaveraat news bureau 2022 (**Diamond, Watch and Jewellery Trade Promotion Magazine**) "Antwerp Diamond fears sanctions against Russia: "Europe punishes Antwerp and not the Russians"" 24 Feb 2022 (accessed 4 Feb 2023) https://www.heerazhaveraat.com/heera/index.php/news/details/14345

 "Few people know that Russia is one of the largest global players in the diamond market. A quarter of our trade is with Russia," said Tom Neys of AWDC on Radio 2 Antwerp.

We look good compared to the European Union: They haven't banned Russian diamond imports like we did

Jael Holzman 2022 (journalist) 24 Mar 2022) " How Russia’s diamonds can avoid U.S. sanctions" (accessed 5 Feb 2023) https://www.eenews.net/articles/how-russias-diamonds-can-avoid-u-s-sanctions/

Although Alrosa deleted its public customer list as war broke out in Ukraine, an archived version of the list available online shows that the company had several long-term contracts with traders in Belgium and India at the start of the year. Two of the Belgian firms on the archived list, diamond wholesalers Dali Diamond and Pluczenik, continue to promote partnerships with Alrosa on their websites. Unlike the United States, the European Union hasn’t banned Russian diamond imports.

2. Diamonds have insignificant impact in Russia

Diamond revenues have "miniscule" impact for Russia on the Ukraine war

Mid House of Diamonds 2022 (manufacturers and distributors of polished diamonds) (article is undated but references events on Mar 31, 2022) "**SHOCKWAVES OF RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE**  
**RATTLE THROUGHOUT THE DIAMOND INDUSTRY"**  (accessed 5 Feb 2023) https://www.middiamonds.com/the-diamond-blog/shockwaves-of-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-rattle-throughout-the-diamond-industry/

Critics have charged that, because of its shareholding in Alrosa, the Russian government is a funneling revenues from rough diamond sales into its military campaign in Ukraine. But its share of the diamond company’s net profit, which totaled $840 million in 2021, makes up a minuscule proportion of what the war is costing. According to the Centre for Economic Recovery, the total daily cost of the campaign for Russia is likely to exceed $20-25 billion, including logistics, personnel, equipment, as well as the fiscal pressure on the Russian economy, as a result of outside sanctions.

MINOR REPAIR

"IF" the only problem is the disconnect between the claim that we're sanctioning Russia and the diamond loophole in India, then the solution is easy: Repeal the diamond sanctions on Russia

This is a simple 100% guaranteed solution to the problem of US image being harmed by having sanctions that are being bypassed. After repealing the diamond sanctions, they would no longer be bypassed because they wouldn't exist. This is better than the AFF case, which cannot guarantee 100% success because at least some Russian diamonds would go elsewhere besides India and would still bypass sanctions. If even 1 Russian diamond does that, then the Minor Repair solves the Affirmative's harm of "US foreign policy / image damaged" better than AFF does.

SOLVENCY

1. Other countries will handle Russian diamonds instead

Belgium already handles a large amount of Russia's diamond exports

Samuel Ord 2023. (Journalist) 16 Jan 2023 " EU exploring further sanctions against Russian diamond industry" (accessed 3 Feb 2023) JEWELLER (diamond industry trade publication) https://www.jewellermagazine.com/Article/12099/EU-exploring-further-sanctions-against-Russian-diamond-industry

One of the most significant opponents to further the installation of further sanctions against Russia and Alrosa has been EU member Belgium. A spokesperson for the Antwerp World Diamond Centre said that more than 10,000 jobs could be lost in Belgium if further prohibitions are placed on Russian rough. In 2021 approximately 36 per cent of Alrosa’s diamond revenue was generated from sales in Belgium.

Belgium handles 86% of the world's rough diamonds

Jennifer Rankin 2022 (journalist) 20 Nov 2022 "Belgium’s trade in Russian diamonds continues despite moral pressure" THE GUARDIAN (British newspaper) (accessed 4 Feb 2023) (brackets added) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/20/belgium-trade-russian-diamonds-despite-moral-pressure

A leisurely stroll through Antwerp’s diamond district takes only five minutes. Yet through just one sq[uare] km [kilometer] in a drab quarter of Belgium’s second city pass 86% of the world’s rough diamonds.

Belgium and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are the 2 top destinations of Russian export diamonds (not India)

Statistia Research Dept. 2022. (research organization) 9 May 2022 "Diamond export volume from Russia 2021, by territory" (accessed 4 Feb 2023) https://www.statista.com/statistics/1135564/russian-diamond-export-volume-by-country/

 In 2021, Russia exported over 28.2 million carats of rough diamonds to Belgium, which was the country's major destination of diamond exports. Furthermore, the export volume of Russian diamonds to the United Arab Emirates reached nearly 13.3 million carats.

2. No benefit to US foreign policy by strengthening sanctions

Sanctions produce negative net benefits. They do more harm than good

Dr. Daniel Larison 2022 (contributing editor at Antiwar.com and former senior editor at The American Conservative magazine. Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago) “We should’ve known sanctions on Russia wouldn’t work as intended” 17 June 2022 <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/06/17/we-shouldve-known-sanctions-on-russia-wouldnt-work-as-intended/> (accessed 22 June 2022)

Economic coercion through broad sanctions can cause tremendous destruction, but it routinely fails to advance U.S. interests or improve security conditions in other parts of the world. It is time to recognize that broad sanctions do more harm than good, and they worsen many of the problems they are supposed to remedy.

Sanctions on Russia backfire: They make it harder for Putin to back down and they toughen his resolve to win

Dr. William Ruger 2022 (Ph.D. in politics specializing in foreign policy, president of the American Institute for Economic Research) 5 May 2022 REASON magazine " William Ruger on Russia's Invasion of Ukraine" <https://reason.com/2022/05/05/william-ruger-on-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

The history of sanctions shouldn't leave anyone all that sanguine about their ability to effect the ultimate ends that you're trying to seek. Now, these sanctions may be extreme in many ways. If you impose essentially a financial blockade, they may have more bite. But the question is, do they actually cause what you're trying to achieve or do they make it much harder for Russia to stand down? You can imagine Putin and the Russian state not wanting to appear to cry uncle to this pressure. I think that's a real concern.

3. Need to "DO SOMETHING" doesn't justify sanctions

Sanctions aren't justified by bad guys' bad behavior. Sanctions hurt the innocent and have no effect on the guilty

Murtaza Hussain 2022 (journalist) 28 Apr 2022 "AS SCREWS TIGHTEN ON RUSSIA, A WARNING ABOUT CIVILIAN HARM OF SANCTIONS" <https://theintercept.com/2022/04/28/russia-sanctions-civilian-harm-reform/> (accessed 25 June 2022)

Oftentimes, as in the case of Russia today, countries subject to broad sanctions truly are unsavory or engaged in behavior that needs to be stopped. The problem, though, is that untargeted sanctions that punish civilian populations have been a poor means of making foreign governments change their policies. While elites in sanctioned countries usually find a way to get what they need, ordinary people find themselves sent into poverty — victimized by economic blockades that U.S. politicians treat as open-ended.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Innocent Russians harmed

A. The Link: Sanctions punish ordinary Russian citizens while having no effect on Putin and his allies

Dr. Daniel Larison 2022 (contributing editor at Antiwar.com and former senior editor at The American Conservative magazine. Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago) “We should’ve known sanctions on Russia wouldn’t work as intended” 17 June 2022 <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/06/17/we-shouldve-known-sanctions-on-russia-wouldnt-work-as-intended/> (accessed 22 June 2022)

A recent Bloomberg [report](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-14/corporate-self-sanctioning-of-russia-has-us-fearing-economic-blowback?srnd=premium-middle-east#xj4y7vzkg) called attention to the unwelcome but predictable consequences of broad Russia sanctions: “But some Biden administration officials are now privately expressing concern that rather than dissuading the Kremlin as intended, the penalties are instead exacerbating inflation, worsening food insecurity and punishing ordinary Russians more than Putin or his allies.” These harmful effects of broad sanctions should not come as a surprise to anyone that has followed these issues closely, since this is what almost always happens when a country’s entire economy is targeted for punishment.

B. The Impact: Innocent people are harmed while the guilty go untouched

Dr. Daniel Larison 2022 (contributing editor at Antiwar.com and former senior editor at The American Conservative magazine. Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago) “We should’ve known sanctions on Russia wouldn’t work as intended” 17 June 2022 <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/06/17/we-shouldve-known-sanctions-on-russia-wouldnt-work-as-intended/> (accessed 22 June 2022)

Often sold as a “low-cost” alternative to military conflict, broad sanctions in practice are an indiscriminate attack on an entire nation. They inflict punishment on tens of millions of ordinary people while leaving the wealthy and well-connected mostly untouched. In some cases, they create humanitarian crises all on their own, and in others, such as [Venezuela](https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/02/17/why-did-a-biden-official-deny-us-sanctions-humanitarian-impact-on-venezuela/), they greatly exacerbate existing crises and make them far deadlier than they would be otherwise. Sanctions are often imposed on countries under the de facto control of abusive authoritarian governments, which means that the people suffer twice over from those that rule them and outside powers that wage economic war in attempts to isolate those rulers. In every case, the people made to suffer for a given policy are in no position to change it, and sanctions tend to tighten the grip that authoritarian leaders have while the leaders’ domestic opponents are forced to scramble just to survive.

2. Sanctions harm U.S. image and reputation for human rights

Sanctions make us the human rights violator: They violate the human rights of US persons and companies

J.D. Tuccille 2022 (contributing editor) 13 May 2022 REASON magazine "Don't Oppose Russian Authoritarianism With More Authoritarianism" <https://reason.com/2022/05/13/dont-oppose-russian-authoritarianism-with-more-authoritarianism/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

The plight of a troubled yet functioning liberal democracy under assault from a brutal neighboring regime should involve the defense of freedom against those who would dictate terms to the unwilling. But sanctions have creeped from punishing the Russian state, to targeting the Russian people, to telling private firms and individuals in the United States that they can't do businesses with the customers of their choice. "The United States will prohibit U.S. persons from providing accounting, trust and corporate formation, and management consulting services to any person in the Russian Federation," a separate White House [fact sheet specifies](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/08/fact-sheet-united-states-and-g7-partners-impose-severe-costs-for-putins-war-against-ukraine/). So, admittedly not for the first time, the private sector is being used as a tool of foreign policy. Businesses are being ordered to close offices and sever ties with clients because they're subjects of rulers our rulers don't like, without regard for those customers' relation to that country's government or its invasion of a neighboring state.

Taking away people's rights in the name of fighting authoritarianism is…hypocritical and wrong

J.D. Tuccille 2022 (contributing editor) 13 May 2022 REASON magazine "Don't Oppose Russian Authoritarianism With More Authoritarianism" <https://reason.com/2022/05/13/dont-oppose-russian-authoritarianism-with-more-authoritarianism/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

Restrictions on freedom are authoritarian, even if government officials try to justify them with hollow claims of being on the side of peace and liberty. Just as you've gained nothing if battling monsters turns you into a monster, you need to rethink just what you hope to win if fighting authoritarians pushes your own society towards authoritarianism. If we want support for Ukraine to equate to defense of freedom, we have to actually respect that value instead of becoming what our political leaders pretend to oppose.