



# AFPC VP Ilan Berman Explores the Limits of Sanctions

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On November 7, AFPC Vice President Ilan Berman was a featured speaker at the American Bar Association's 24th Annual Review of the Field of National Security Law. Ilan shared the podium with a number of leading sanctions experts on a panel exploring contemporary economic and financial threats and U.S. governmental responses to them.

In his remarks, Ilan focused on U.S. policy toward Iran, and the lessons it has imparted for economic pressure as a tool of statecraft. Although "sanctions have become the 'smart power' weapon of choice" in contemporary global affairs, he cautioned, they are not effective "when applied in lieu of strategy" or larger strategic objectives—something that appears to be occurring today vis-a-vis Iran.

Moreover, Ilan noted, sanctions contain an inherent flaw. "Sanctions policy is driven by the consideration that pragmatism and economic self-interest are the paramount drivers of national policy." Yet, "they are not, in many cases" - for example, Russia today seems guided more by ideological than economic imperatives.