

Acknowledgments

THIS BOOK TOOK A long time to come to fruition, starting as it did with late-night drives home from work at the National Security Council and State Department, and then continuing with sunny bike rides to and from Columbia University. It changed significantly across many drafts and was not without frustration, but I persevered in writing it largely because two people convinced me that it was worth the effort: Professor Bob Jervis, a legend in the field of international affairs, and my wife, Erin Nephew. The former stressed to me the importance of telling some of what I've learned . . . the latter reminded me that, though many have studied sanctions, all too few have worked on them and made them work in turn. I hope you find it constructive.

I want to thank Shirin Jamshidi and Joel Smith for their assistance in the researching of this book, as well as Colleen Stack, Peter Harrell, and Erin for their very helpful early review and comments on the text.

Acknowledgments

I also want to thank my editor, Bridget Flannery-McCoy, for her thoughtful work in making this an accessible and hopefully interesting product.

I would also like to thank the staff of the Center on Global Energy Policy, especially Jesse McCormick and Matt Robinson, for their assistance in getting the book from a vague idea to the typed page, and the director of the Center, Jason Bordoff, for sheltering me, yet another U.S. government expat, as I worked on it.

I want to thank my family for their loving support while I was engaged in both the writing of this book and the practice of sanctions that gave rise to it. My three children—Kiran, Amara, and Elijah—were born while I was about this business, and they sustained me as I spent countless days and nights away from home. My parents—Mike and Dorothy Nephew—and in-laws—Bob and Laura Engasser—pitched in to keep the ship afloat, while Erin steered. I treasure you all.

Last, this book is dedicated to the many people in the U.S. government and those of our partners with whom I worked for so many years on the challenge of Iran's nuclear program. On November 24, the day that the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) was adopted, I was in a bus heading from the InterContinental Hotel in Geneva, Switzerland, to the UN building where the agreement would be formally announced. It was around 3:00 A.M. I had not slept properly in a long time, and the day, night, and early morning had been somewhat tense. My memory of what I said and to whom after agreement was reached is mostly fuzzy. But I can clearly remember an e-mail exchange with two colleagues of mine from the State Department, Kurt Kessler and Geoff Odium. They offered congratulations for my having played a role in the back-channel talks that led to the JPOA. I told them that this victory was not mine, nor was it even that of the people gathered in Geneva. It was a team win, achieved over decades of work by intelligence officers, military service-people, civil servants, sanctioners, Congressional staff, and diplomats. All dedicated public servants,

Acknowledgments

committed to one goal. I learned so much from you and benefited from our friendships and enmities, our successes and failures. This book is for all of you, and may it help to explain to the uninitiated how real professionals—you—go about their business.

And, sadly, this book is also dedicated to my many colleagues who remained in government when Donald Trump took office with campaign promises that suggested willingness—if not an outright desire—to dismantle the JCPOA and to replace it with something “better.” We now look forward to seeing whether his administration, which entered office extremely confident in their ability to better the Obama team across the board, can deliver on this promise. History will not regard them kindly if they fail—or indeed my own efforts if they succeed. Yet I hope and pray for their success.

The Art of Sanctions

