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POWER IN FLUX: THE GEOECONOMICS IN A MULTIPOLAR ORDER

~ Shivang Sharma & Shivani Agarwal [1]

Abstract

Geoeconomics in the Multipolar World Order explores the shift from a U.S.-led unipolar moment to a multipolar system, emphasizing the redefined instruments of national power, particularly the strategic use of economic tools. The paper argues that, while military capability is still important, the focus of geopolitical competition has transitioned to geoeconomics, using tools like sanctions and tariffs to achieve national goals. The emergence of various power centers has weaponized economic interdependence, transforming cooperation into a strategic persuasion tool. Through case studies like U.S.–China competition and the Russia–Ukraine conflict, the paper highlights how nations leverage geoeconomic influence to protect interests and enhance their diplomatic and economic ties. It examines the implications for global governance and trade stability, ultimately questioning if this competitive environment can lead to a stable multipolarity or fosters fragmentation and strategic uncertainty.

Keyworks

Geoeconomics, Diplomacy, Tariffs, Multipolar World, Sanctions, Geopolitics.

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INTRODUCTION:

The contemporary shift in geopolitical landscape has given rise to Geoeconomics as the most important tool for modern diplomacy. It revolves around the term "Weaponised Interdependence" as coined by Henry Farrell and Abraham Newma. Geoeconomics refers to the strategic use of economic networks, market access, supply chains, financial infrastructures, and technological systems by states to achieve geopolitical objectives and maintain national power. Drawing from Farrell and Newman's framework, geoeconomics rests on the idea that states embedded in central positions within global economic networks can convert interdependence into political leverage, using their control over chokepoints, such as payment systems, advanced semiconductors, logistics hubs, or digital platforms, to coerce, constrain, or shape the behaviour of other states without resorting to military force[2].

In this view, power no longer derives primarily from territorial dominance or military deployments, but from a state's ability to manipulate the flow of goods, capital, data, and technology across globally interconnected systems. They can use them to monitor activity, block or slow economic and information flows, identify and exploit vulnerabilities, push other governments to change their policies, and discourage actions they consider undesirable. Geoeconomics thus treats economic networks as instruments of statecraft, where tools such as sanctions, export controls, market restrictions, and technological standards play the central role[3].

Geoeconomics has compelled scholars to think about this framework and its impact on foreign economic policy and national security. The rise of geoeconomic statecraft can be understood as a direct consequence of how globalization has transformed the fundamentals of state power. Breslin's 2023 study on economic statecraft argues that the growing density of global production networks, financial systems, and regional political economies has created an environment in which economic instruments now shape strategic behavior as effectively as military force[4]. This argument is further corroborated by the 2024 Carnegie analysis of the European Union, which shows that states increasingly rely on market access, regulatory power, and trade relationships to

[2] Henry Farrell and Abraham L Newman, 'Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion' (2019) 44 *International Security* 42.

[3] ibid 1at 1

[4] Shaun Breslin, 'Economic Statecraft, Geoeconomics and Regional Political Economies' (2023) 33 *Asia Pacific Business Review* 1.

pursue geopolitical aims when conventional hard power is either limited or politically costly[5]. Sanjaya Baru defines geoeconomics and national security and adds that economic statecraft has risen because economic and security domains have become inseparable in a world where supply chains, digital networks, and capital flows determine are key aspects that constitute national power[6]. The IGCC analysis further explains that great power competition is now centered on technology, critical minerals, and strategic industries, which encourages governments to use export controls, investment screening, and state-backed industrial policy as tools of influence[7]. The Oxford Handbook of Geoeconomics and Economic Statecraft also highlights that modern states find economic coercion attractive because tools such as sanctions, financial restrictions, and trade manipulation can generate strategic outcomes without the political risks and material costs associated with military escalation[8].

Together, these sources show that geoeconomics statecraft has risen because global interdependence has created new levers of influence that operate through markets, supply chains, and regulatory systems. States now recognize that controlling the economic conditions that structure global interaction allows them to protect national interests, and shape international order through economic means rather than via direct military confrontation.

Structural Shift from Unipolarity to Multipolarity

The immediate post-cold war world period marked the dominance of United States at the global stage. The U.S. solely dominated on military and economic spheres. Scholars such as G. John Ikenberry later argued that this unipolarity was not simply material but also institutional, because the United States was able to shape international rules, norms and governance structures in ways that reinforced its position. However, this dominance proved to be temporary.

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[5] Erik Brattberg, 'Geopolitics and Economic Statecraft in the European Union' (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2024) https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/11/geopolitics-and- economic-statecraft-in-the-european-union accessed 15 Nov 2025.

[6]Sanjaya Baru, 'Defining Geoeconomics, Economic Statecraft and the Political Economy of National Security' (2024) *ResearchGate*https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380804883_Defining_Geoeconomics_Economic_Statecraft_and_the_Political_Economy_of_National_Security accessed 15 Nov 2025

[7] UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, 'Geoeconomics and Economic Statecraft' (IGCC, 2024) https://ucigcc.org/research/geoeconomics-and-great-power-competition/geoeconomics-and-economic-statecraft/accessed 15 Nov 2025.

[8] Christopher A McNally, 'Introduction: The Rise of Geoeconomics' in Christopher A McNally (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Geoeconomics and Economic Statecraft* (Oxford University Press 2025).

The dominance progressively weakened due to internal fragmentation in the liberal world order and emergence of new economies[9]. By the early 2000s, the global power realignments had begun to erode the foundations of U.S. primacy. There were several reasons that lead to this like the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that demanded enormous military, financial and political resources. They produced diminishing returns. Stephen Walt also notes that the global backlash against America's interventionist posture reduced its ability to mobilise allies and maintain the political consensus necessary for leadership[10]. The 2008 global financial crisis further exacerbated the confidence in Western economic management and accelerated the economic rise of non-Western powers. Scholars like Carlan Norrlof argue that these cumulative pressures reduced the structural advantages that had sustained U.S. primacy, opening space for new actors to emerge[11].

One of the most apparent consequences of this erosion is the development of multipolarity. China is the most prominent among the emerging powers. Their fast economic modernization, enormous production capabilities as well as the ambitious technological plan have transformed it into the main threat to the U.S.-dominated order. In his analysis of China long term strategy, Rush Doshi reveals the way Beijing has been able to extend its influence systematically by means of trade, infrastructure investment, technological innovation and diplomatic outreach. The increase of China in global governance as well as its projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative have helped it to establish alternative channels of political and economic power that directly challenge Western institutions[12]. Other centers of power have become more aggressive also beyond China. The European Union with no traditional military power, compared to the giant powers, has become a regulatory superpower. The internal regulatory standards of the EU affect the global markets, forces multinational corporations to comply and international norms. Such influence of an external organization supports the EU in terms of a multipolar system despite the lack of traditional military forces.

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[9] G John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton University Press 2011).

[10] Stephen M Walt, 'The Collapse of the Liberal World Order' *Foreign Policy* (25 June 2016) https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/25/the-collapse-of-the-liberal-world-order/ accessed 15 Nov 2025.

[11] Carlan Norrlof, 'Hegemony, Hierarchy, and Unipolarity' (Working Paper, 2019) https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3459858 accessed 15 Nov 2025

[12] Rush Doshi, *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order* (Oxford University Press 2021).

India has also emerged as a major player of the changing order. The comprehensive research by organizations like the Lowy Institute[13] and CSIS[14] note the increasing economic weight of India, its growing demographic power and more autonomous foreign policy decisions. The fact that India can preserve her strategic autonomy and is a participant in both the Western and non- Western coalitions and leader of the Global South makes it an indispensable component of multipolarity. Although Russia has experienced economic limitations and political isolation over the recent years, it still has quite significant military strengths and strategic power, especially with its energy exports and regional activities. These reasons make sure that Russia is a consequential pole in the new set up. The decline of the U.S supremacy and the emergence of several centres of power has altered the tools of statecraft used by the major powers. The transition of the military to economic instruments is among the characteristics of this new environment. Economic pressure was significant even during the early twentieth century, but today's level of interdependence makes such tools far more potent[15]. As power becomes more diffuse and the international system grows more complex, economic statecraft offers tools that align more effectively with the realities of interdependence. The world that has emerged is therefore characterized by several major powers that engage in competition through markets, networks, and regulations.

Tools of Economic Statecraft

1. Sanctions

One of the most significant tools of modern economic statecraft is sanctions and financial restrictions since they are aimed at the backbone of the modern economy capital and payment systems and international markets. Strong governments and alliances can sever banks and businesses out of correspondent banking, limit access to international payment messaging networks, and issue secondary sanctions that cause third parties to either lose access to the market or continue to do business with the targeted actor. These actions come at short-term liquidity and trade expenses, increase price of spreading of borrowing by both sovereigns and businesses, and

[13] Herve Lemahieu, *Asia Power Index* (Lowy Institute, annual reports 2018–2024) https://power.lowyinstitute.orgaccessed 15 Nov 2025

[14] CSIS, 'India as a Pivotal Power in the Indo-Pacific' (CSIS Report 2023) https://www.csis.org accessed 15 Nov 2025

[15] Erik Brattberg, 'Geopolitics and Economic Statecraft in the European Union' (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2024) https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/11/geopolitics-and-economic-statecraft-in-the-european-union accessed 15 Nov 2025

may entail severe macroeconomic dislocations that limit policy choices of a target state. The framework proposed by Farrell and Newman[16] can be used to understand the importance of financial chokepoints: financial actors that have access to key nodes of financial and informational networks are able to convert the phenomenon of interdependence into a form of coercive power. The effectiveness of sanctions in practice has increased due to the concentration of US dollar and dollar-clearing facilities, concentration of world finance in a small number of jurisdictions and the convenience with which modern compliance regimes can be applied to impose sanctions. Meanwhile, academia warns not to perceive sanctions as all- powerful. The targets do tend to change by employing other payment methods, avoidance and third-country intermediaries. The history of sanctions provided by Nicholas Mulder demonstrates that such sanctions can be effective and yet limited and backfire; excessive use can also encourage the development of alternative financial systems or the establishment of stronger relations among sanctioned nations. Recent surveys underline that financial exclusion and secondary sanctions are some of the most convincing of non-military coercive instruments to be applied by states, and specifically so because they can make both states and the private companies conduct their business within the global markets alter their behaviour[17].

2. **Trade wars and Tariffs**

Some other effective instruments of geoeconomic competition are trade wars and tariff retaliation, which have implications on the model of state level incentives. The tariffs distort relative prices, cut the export revenues, and disrupt the profitability of the targeted sectors. Tariffs, when used strategically, achieve two political outcomes: they inflict pain on certain sectors that happen to form the economic core of a competitor, and they have leverage, through the threat of causing more significant harm to the economy, to realize political demands. The recent tariff wars between the U.S and China and India would be a good example of how specific tariffs can be applied as a signal of resolve, protect strategic industries, and trying to change world value chains. The fights on tariffs also have defensive reactions that transform the world production[18]. Retaliatory tariffs may create self-destructive cycles in which firms may seek to

[16] supra 1 at 1
[17] Nicholas Mulder, *The Economic Weapon: The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War* (Yale University Press 2022).
[18] 'The US–China Trade War: Economic Statecraft, Multinational Corporations and Public Opinion' (2022) *Business and Politics* https://doi.org/10.1017/bap.2022.10.

outsource production, diversify the suppliers, and demand onshoring or friend-shoring policy. These types of realignments are a kind of structural change: they restructure the comparative advantages and may speed up the processes of deglobalisation of certain sectors. Observers observe that the political environment within the local country, WTO regulations, and the possibility of committing self-inflicted economic damage limits the strategic use of tariffs, thus states normally combine tariffs with other forms of policy, including export controls, screening of investment, and subsidies to have room to bargain in a prolonged battle[19].

3. Energy Diplomacy (OPEC+, Pipelines, LNG routes)

Energy diplomacy has continued to be an immediate and well-known type of geoeconomic statecraft due to the energy being essential to economies, as well as frequently concentrated in a particular area. States with meaning of control of the production routes, pipeline routes, or coordinated choices of supply can affect prices, cause shortages or excess, and incur costs with political effects[20]. OPEC+ and its co-ordinated production policies have shown that producer coalitions can deliberately control the world supply to serve either an economic or political aim. Recent OPEC+ output management rulings provide a manifestation of how well-coordinated reductions or expansions may impact the price around the world and provide hierarchical power in wider geopolitical rivalry[21]. The situation with the gas reliance on the Russian pipeline supplies in Europe before 2022 is an illustration of the structural weaknesses caused by the interdependency in energy. The need to show power by using pipelines strategically, arrival terms into a deal and synchronizing routes on which energy is being transported can provide the exporter with power over the political decision of the importers. The change in flows after the occurrence of geopolitical conflict has the indirect impact on industrial production, on inflation and feelings of the population, and has the influence on the policies made in importing countries.

Investments are also a part of energy diplomacy: long-term supply contracts, infrastructure financing, and upstream investment: these are various instruments of developing long-term influence. On the other hand, importers are taking diversification by means of LNG terminals, strategic petroleum reserves, and renewable transitions to mitigate exposure. Geopolitical rivalry has evolved beyond the fossil fuel markets and involves politics of the critical energy transition

[19] World Trade Organization, *World Trade Report 2020: Government Policies and International Trade* (WTO 2020).
[20] International Energy Agency, 'Europe's Energy Crisis in Focus' (IEA 2023) https://www.iea.org accessed 15 Nov 2025
[21] OPEC Secretariat, *OPEC Bulletin* (various issues) https://www.opec.org accessed 15 Nov 2025

material and clean energy technologies. This is concisely referred to as energy diplomacy, as it involves immediate leverages on markets, but long run infrastructure commitments which influence strategic alignment in a multi polar world.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict can be considered one of the biggest examples of how the reliance on energy can be turned into a potent mechanism of geoeconomic pressure. Europe was dependent on Russian natural gas, with Russia providing close to 40 percent of natural gas, which was facilitated by the pipeline infrastructure built over the years of 1980-2017, including Nord Stream, Yamal Europe, and Brotherhood. This skewed interdependence allowed Moscow to employ the energy as a deterrent and a bargaining tool. The manipulated flow in pipelines enabled Russia to indicate pressure, create economic insecurities and affect the political behaviour of the European states. In 2021-2022, the Russian supply has reduced by 100 million barrels per day, which, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), has more than five folded the wholesale gas price in Europe, demonstrating the geopolitical weakness that energy dependence via infrastructure has imposed. After the conflict intensified in February 2022, energy became one of the key arenas of power politics. Russia held a bar on pipeline deliveries, asked for payments in Rubles, and diverted cargoes to Asia, with energy leverage acting as punishment to European countries which sanctioned Russia.

By late 2023 these actions left Russia with less than 10 percent of the European gas, which constituted one of the most rapid structural energies rebalances in the history of energy. Simultaneously, Russia enhanced its ties with China and India by selling oil at a discounted price, paying in rupees or the yuan, and avoiding the Western shipping and insurance infrastructure by using a so-called shadow fleet. This exposed the pressure and counter- pressure in the international markets that are formed by energy diplomacy in conjunction with financial sanctions. The war has transformed the world oil governance, as well[22]. OPEC+ (including Russia) modulated the targets at decisive times and contributed to stabilising the revenues of Moscow in the face of Western price caps. Such organization demonstrates the geopolitical worth of producer coalitions in times of crisis: it offers other diplomatic methods to members subject to sanctions and makes them more capable of influencing price movements across the world. The energy crisis between Russia and Ukraine underscores a more significant geoeconomic fact that, in a multipolar world, energy

[22] International Energy Agency, *Gas Market Report 2022–2023* (IEA 2023) https://www.iea.org/reports/gas- market-report-q2-2023 accessed 15 Nov 2025.

networks cannot be merely commercial constructions, but strategic infrastructure. They may be used in terms of rewarding loyal partners, imposing costs on enemies, and restructuring world supply chains, and energy diplomacy is one of the most powerful tools of statecraft currently.

4. **Technology Controls (Chips, 5G, AI)**

The technologies of the twenty-first century have turned into a control mechanism since the development of innovative technologies is dual-purpose in nature: it supports the competitiveness of the economy and the military forces. Export bans on semiconductors, lithography equipment, highly developed AI solutions and other key inputs of technology are attempted to delay the development of competitors by famishing them of the equipment and software at the edge. The US and allied export-based controls of high-end microchips and other devices are meant to maintain asymmetries in research, production, and deployment, both regarding high-value strategic worth. The logic of weapons interdependence as developed by Farrell and Newman describes how the dominion of technological nodes can give them coercive choices since merely a limited number of suppliers and conventionalities can offset contemporary patterns of diffusion around the world. The ecosystem of semiconductor displays the importance of controls. The manufacturing is regionally focused on specialized phases, including design and intellectual property in the United States and the state-of-the-art manufacture in Taiwan and hi-tech machinery in the Netherlands and Japan. The supply chain CSIS[23] mapping shows chokepoints at which policy action will have disproportionate impact on the level of an adversary with next-generation chips in the field. Export controls do not merely suppress immediate access however, they force their targets to make expensive substitutes using indigenous industry, invest in local capacity or find alternative suppliers. These substitutions can mostly be politically and economically challenging due to time lag and scale of investment.

The U.S.- China chip war has become the most significant example of how states use technological controls as instruments of geoeconomic coercion. Semiconductors lie at the centre of twenty-first century economic and military power because they underpin artificial intelligence, quantum computing, advanced weapons systems, telecommunications, and critical infrastructure[24].

[23] Center for Strategic and International Studies, 'The Semiconductor Supply Chain' (CSIS Report 2021) https://www.csis.org/analysis/semiconductor-supply-chain accessed 15 Nov 2025

[24] Congressional Research Service, *"U.S. Export Controls and China: Advanced Semiconductors"* (CRS Report R48642) https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R48642 accessed 15 Nov 2025

Unlike traditional economic tools such as tariffs, technological restrictions reshape long-term innovation trajectories, alter industrial structures, and determine which states will control the technological foundations of future political and military power. The U.S.–China semiconductor contest therefore represents not only a commercial rivalry but a central arena in the struggle for global leadership.

Rise of Non-European Alliances

1. BRICS+ and the Push for de-dollarization

The BRICS+ has become one of the most apparent forms of realignment of geoeconomy in a multipolar world. What once was a group of developing and underdeveloped economies has now become a larger platform to defy the dollar-based financial order and diminish the risk of Western sanctions. The joining of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia and Iran are an indication of the change in the direction of institutional pluralism where the emerging powers are seeking to establish alternative centres of financial and monetary management[25]. The New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) are small, yet symbolic steps to stop overdependence on Western-led organizations, including the IMF and World Bank. A larger portion of trade between members of BRICS has now been resolved using local currencies, such as yuan-rubble energy trade, rupee-dirham oil settlements, and China-Brazil yuan-live commodity deals. Although these tendencies do not mean the withdrawal of the dollar, they portray an intentional effort to diversify the risk of the monetary assets, avoid financial bottlenecks, and shield economies against the coercive effects of the secondary sanctions[26]. The creation of digital cross-border payment systems such as m-Bridge and other CBDC pilots also demonstrate the intentions to create the parallel financial infrastructure that would diminish the exposure to the systems under the control of the West.

2. **Emerging Southern Powers and the New Geoeconomic Landscape**

Alongside BRICS, the rise of emerging powers across Asia, the Middle East and Latin America have intensified the intermingling of geoeconomic influence. India has positioned itself as a

[25] M. Saaida, *"BRICS Plus: De-Dollarization and Global Power Shifts in New Geoeconomic Architecture"* (2024) https://brics-econ.arphahub.com/article/117828/ accessed 15 Nov 2025

[26] SAE Zein, *"Understanding De-Dollarization Among BRICS Nations"* (2025) https://www.scielo.br/j/rac/a/pQPSp8k3hzgFfhT8hnyrZTq/ accessed 15 Nov 2025

central "swing state" that engages simultaneously with Western and non-Western blocs. Its growing economic weight, leadership in the Global South, and strategic role in pharmaceutical, IT and semiconductor supply chains grants it an increasing leverage. India's use of local- currency trade with the UAE and its continued purchase of discounted Russian oil demonstrate a pragmatic geoeconomic autonomy[27]. Similarly, Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE have evolved into financial and energy hubs whose sovereign wealth funds, OPEC+ alignment and participation in yuan-denominated oil trade give them substantial strategic influence. Türkiye leverages its control of key maritime chokepoints and its expanding defence industries to shape regional calculations. Brazil uses agricultural and mineral dominance to strengthen South–South coalitions, while Indonesia and Vietnam have become major manufacturing nodes and critical mineral suppliers. Collectively, these emerging powers form a diversified geoeconomic constellation that complements and strengthens the BRICS+ challenge to traditional Western influence[28].

3. **Regional Trade Blocs led by Global South Countries**

21st Century is also coupled by rise of various trade blocs lead by the global south like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which is the world's largest trade bloc, representing roughly one-third of global GDP and population[29]. Although it includes advanced economies such as Japan and South Korea, its core is driven by ASEAN member states and China, with substantial manufacturing capacities concentrated in Southeast Asia. RCEP integrates the supply chains of countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand into a unified production ecosystem. This allows firms to shift manufacturing across borders without facing regulatory mechanisms, making the Indo-Pacific the global hub of electronics, textiles, semiconductors, and automotive components. RCEP also strengthens the negotiating position of Asian economies by giving them a consolidated economic network independent of Western frameworks such as the CPTPP or the EU single market.

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[27] D. Flemes, *"India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) in the New Global Order"* (2009) https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/36891/ssoar-intstudies-2009-4-flemes-India-Brazil-South_Africa_IBSA_in_the.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1 15 Nov 2025

[28] B. Bull, *"The Rebirth of the Global South: Geopolitics, Growth and the Changing International Order"* (2025) https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08039410.2025.2490696 accessed 15 Nov 2025.

[29] RAND Corporation, "RCEP Forms the World's Largest Trading Bloc: What Does It Mean?" (9 Dec 2020) https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2020/12/rcep-forms-the-worlds-largest-trading-bloc.html accessed 15 Nov 2025

In Africa, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents a transformative project aimed at creating the largest single market by population, spanning 54 countries[30]. AfCFTA reduces intra-African tariffs, promotes regional industrialisation, and incentivises investment in logistics corridors, digital trade, and pan-African value chains. It supports regional manufacturing hubs such as Ethiopia (textiles), Kenya (technology), South Africa (automobiles), and Rwanda (finance and services). By shifting production from export orientation toward intra-African trade, AfCFTA aims to insulate African economies from commodity volatility and external shocks[31].

MERCOSUR, led by Brazil and Argentina, continues to expand its geoeconomic significance. It is negotiating preferential agreements with the EU, China, and ASEAN, which would integrate South America more deeply into global agricultural, mineral, and industrial supply chains. Brazil's leadership in agriculture, energy, and green technology positions MERCOSUR as a foundational platform for South-South cooperation[32].

Conclusion

The paper explores how geoeconomics has emerged as a means of statecraft pertaining to increasing global interdependence and the growing influence of countries. The growth of economics weakened the USA's unipolarity and moved towards the rise of multipolarity among China, the EU, India, and other countries. Tools like Sanctions, trade wars and tariffs, energy diplomacy, and technology control prove to be much more effective for asserting dominance and coercing power in the present scenario and are not financially heavy like military escalations. Sanctions, if used excessively, may backfire and lead to the formation of alliances between sanctioned countries. Retaliatory tariffs may prove to be harmful for the country imposing them in the first place, forcing a structural change to fight it. Energy diplomacy involves leveraging

[30] World Bank, "The African Continental Free Trade Area" (27 Jul 2020) https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/the-african-continental-free-trade-area accessed 15 Nov 2025

[31] FIW (Austrian Institute of Economic Research), "The African Continental Free Trade Area: Progress, Opportunities and Challenges" (7 Dec 2023) https://www.fiw.ac.at/en/2023/12/07/the-african-continental-free- trade-area-progress-opportunities-and-challenges-of-africas-mega-regional-initiative/ accessed 15 Nov 2025

[32] CFR Backgrounder, "Mercosur: South America's Fractious Trade Bloc" https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/mercosur-south-americas-fractious-trade-bloc accessed 15 Nov 2025

critical and clean energy transitions, beyond fossil fuel control. It is no longer a tool for commercial construction but strategic infrastructure. Technology control directly hampers the growth by directing the countries to more expensive alternatives by banning equipment for growth. With the rise of non-European alliances like BRICS+, emerging relations between Southern Powers, and regional trade blocs like the RCEP, AfCFTA, and MERCOSUR, it can be interpreted as the downfall of the power of the USA as the world leader. This provides a level playing field, giving every country a share in the world market, and if used strategically, can be of great importance in the evolving sphere of economies.