

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE "EXPERT STRATEGIES FOR ASSESSING GLOBAL CONFLICT" SURVEY

Countries of the Global South have moved beyond their historical role as marginal observers of global politics, yet the conceptual apparatus — neutrality, non-alignment, multi-vectoralism — that for decades served as the ideological foundation of their foreign policies is undergoing conceptual erosion. Expert knowledge about ‘distant wars’ is being radically transformed as audiences increasingly receive news through social platforms, contributing to the fragmentation of collective expert memory across generations.

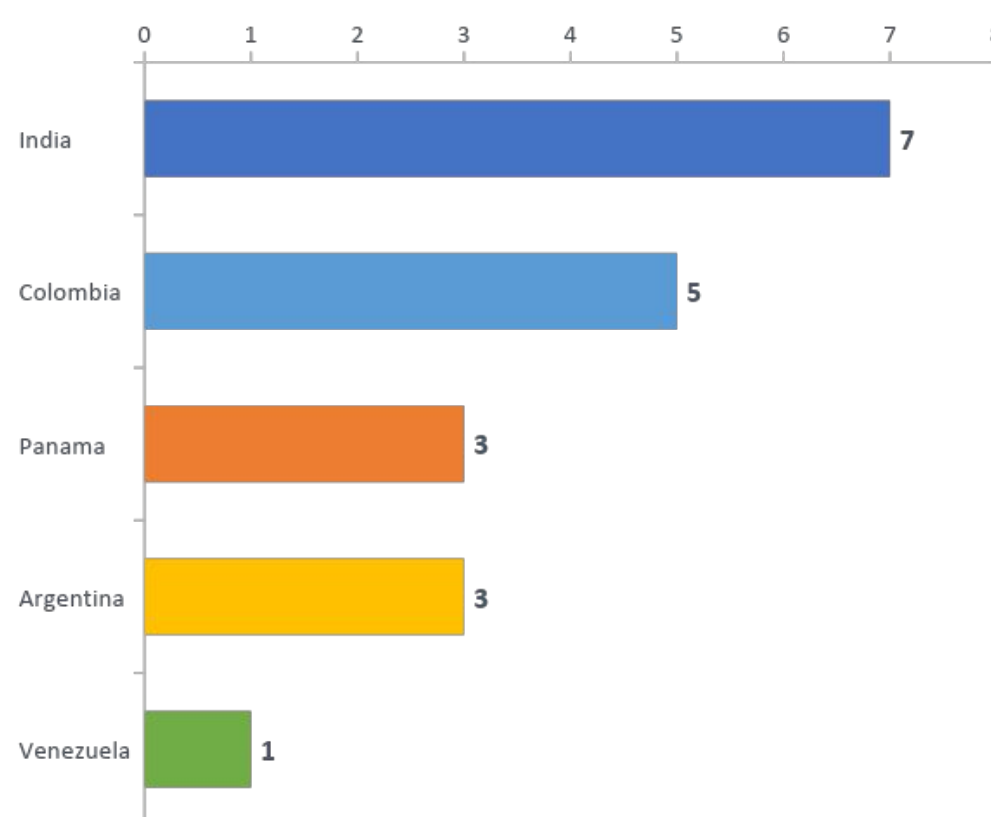
Objectives of the study

The survey comprises fourteen questions. Block 1 (Questions 1–7) captures conceptual frameworks and epistemological priors — how foreign-policy communities in India and Latin America define their own position toward conflicts between major powers. Block 2 (Questions 8–14) measures interpretive dynamics: how these frameworks are applied to the two most complex and information-saturated conflicts of our time, Ukraine and Iran.

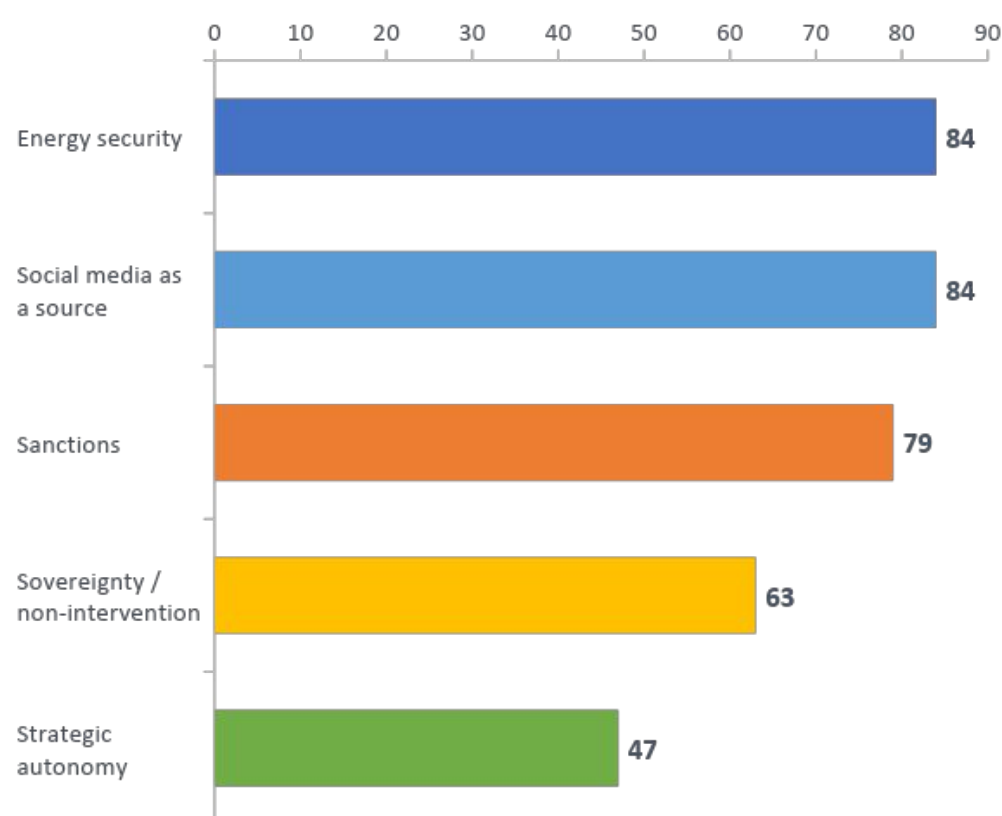
By triangulating data from both blocks, this report addresses a central question: to what extent are expert assessments in the Global South sovereign and deeply grounded, to what extent are they shaped by external media influence, and how are historical memory and the digital transformation of cognition reshaping the foreign-policy horizons of India and Latin America.

Nineteen experts across five countries — India, Colombia, Panama, Argentina and Venezuela — contributed their professional judgment to this panel, drawn from research institutes, government-affairs practice, multilateral organisations and the private sector.

Expert panel, by country (N=19)

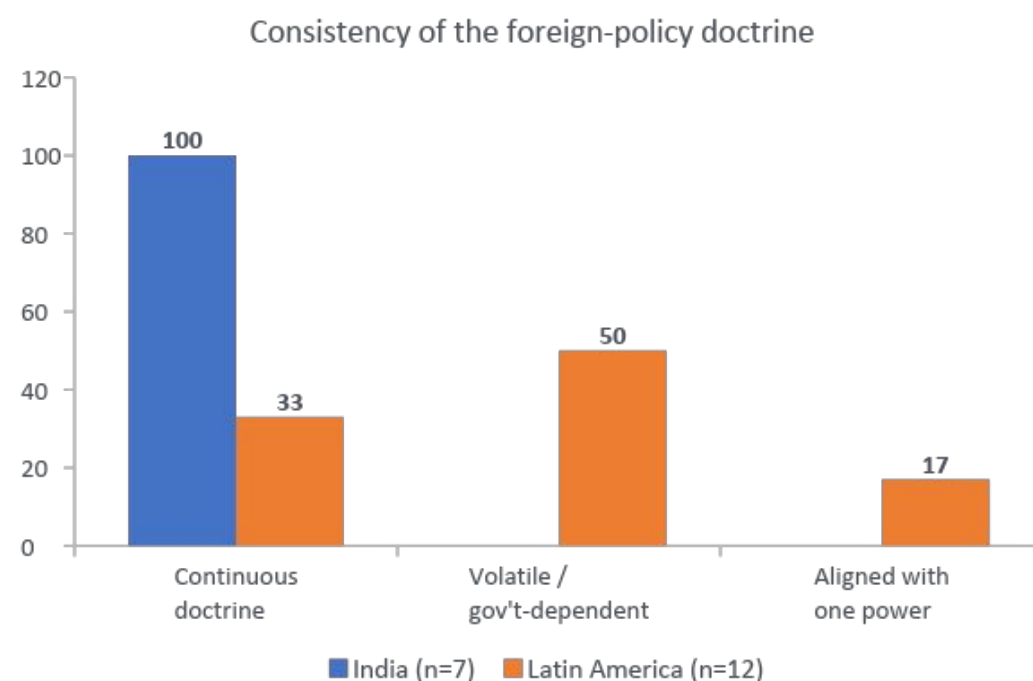


Cross-cutting themes raised across the panel



A continuous doctrine, or a foreign-policy pendulum?

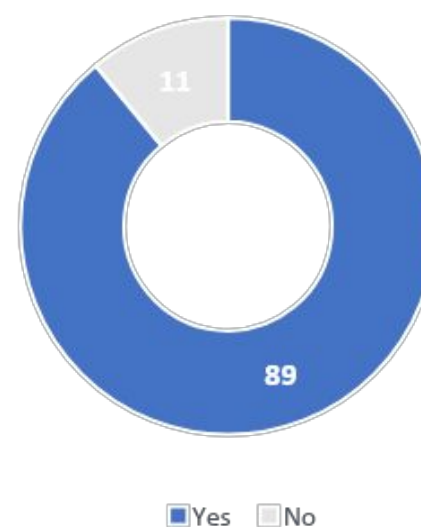
Every Indian expert (7 of 7) frames their country's position as a continuous, self-declared doctrine of 'strategic autonomy' — pragmatic, issue-based, and insulated from changes in government. Latin American experts describe something far less stable: only a third invoke a comparable doctrine of continuity. Half tie their country's stance explicitly to whichever government is in office — what Cecilia Naveda (Argentina) calls '*the Latin American pendulum*' — and two describe a structural alignment with a single power. As Diana Sirley García Quintero (Colombia) puts it, foreign policy here is '*not a consolidated state doctrine, but a function of the electoral cycle.*'



The region changes the calculus

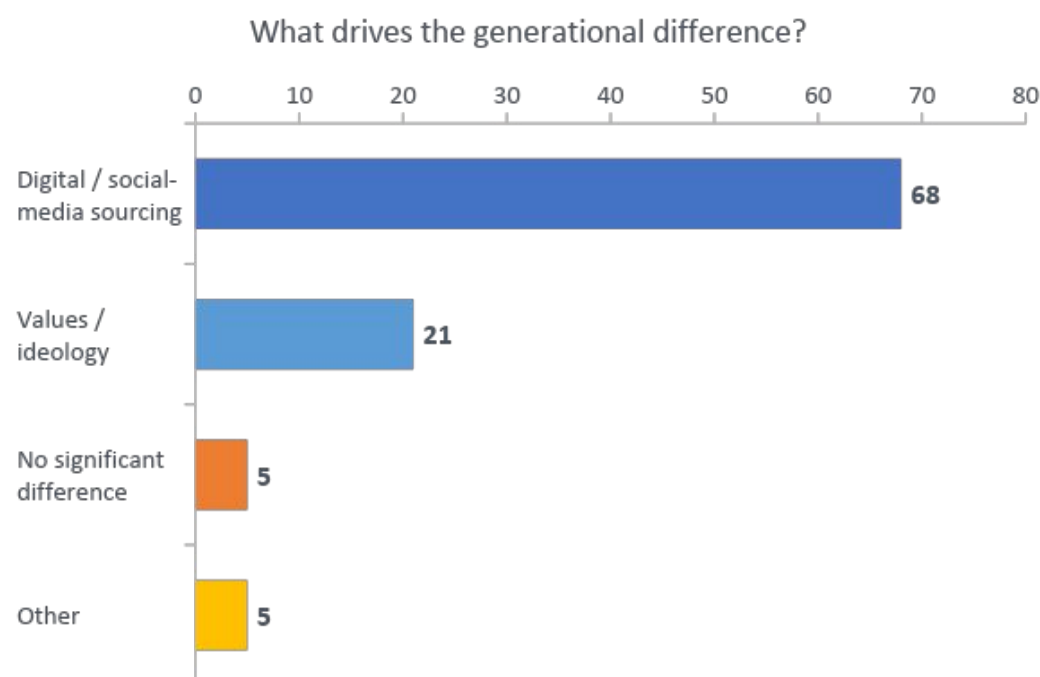
Seventeen of nineteen experts (89%) say the logic of a hypothetical UN vote shifts with the region in conflict. A rough hierarchy emerges: Europe invites low-cost, principle-based positioning; the Middle East forces a trade-off between energy and diaspora interests and domestic political division; East Asia is largely avoided, described by more than one expert as a zone of '*pragmatic self-censorship*' to protect trade ties with China.

Does the decision change with the conflict's region?



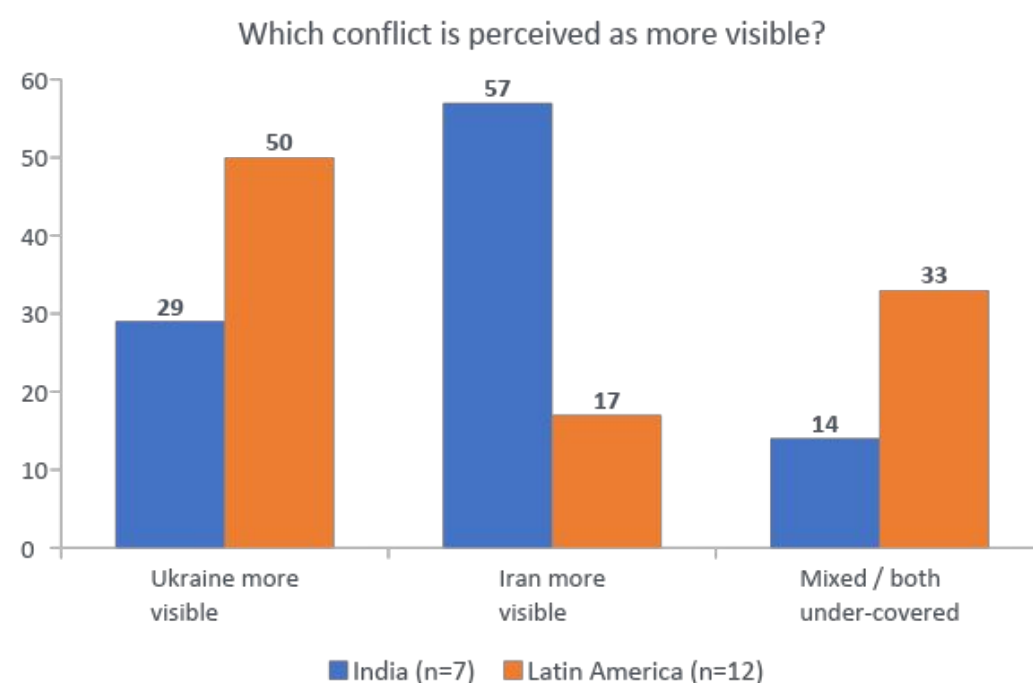
A generational shift in sourcing, not in values

Nearly the entire panel (18 of 19) sees a generational divide in how conflicts are interpreted — but converges on where it lies. Thirteen experts (68%) attribute it to a changed information ecosystem: younger analysts read conflicts through digital-native, open-source and social-media channels rather than official briefings and academic journals. Only a handful frame the gap as ideological instead.



Whose war gets the airtime?

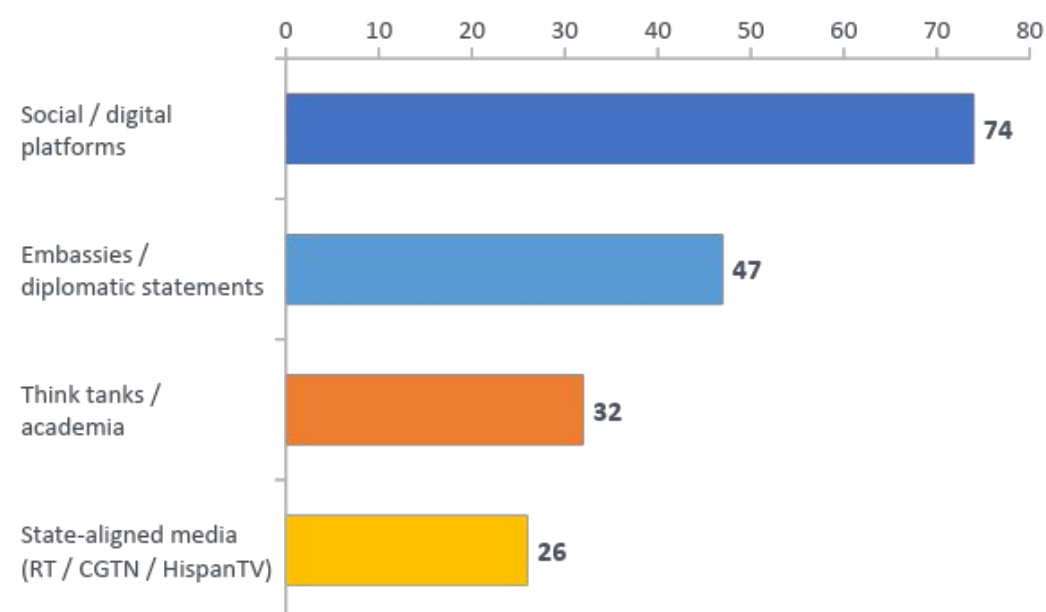
Visibility splits along a predictable axis of proximity and stake. In Latin America, Ukraine still leads (50% of experts), inherited largely from Western wire-agency framing and its direct hit on fuel and fertiliser prices. In India, Iran now draws more sustained coverage (57%), pulled by the Strait of Hormuz, energy imports and a large Gulf-based diaspora — even as Ukraine remains the more ‘global’ story.



State media, embassies, and the feed

Social platforms are now named as a communication channel by three-quarters of the panel (74%) — ahead of embassies and diplomatic statements (47%), think tanks and academia (32%), and openly state-aligned outlets such as RT, CGTN or HispanTV (26%). Experts describe a narrowing gap between official diplomacy and direct-to-audience messaging on X, Telegram and TikTok.

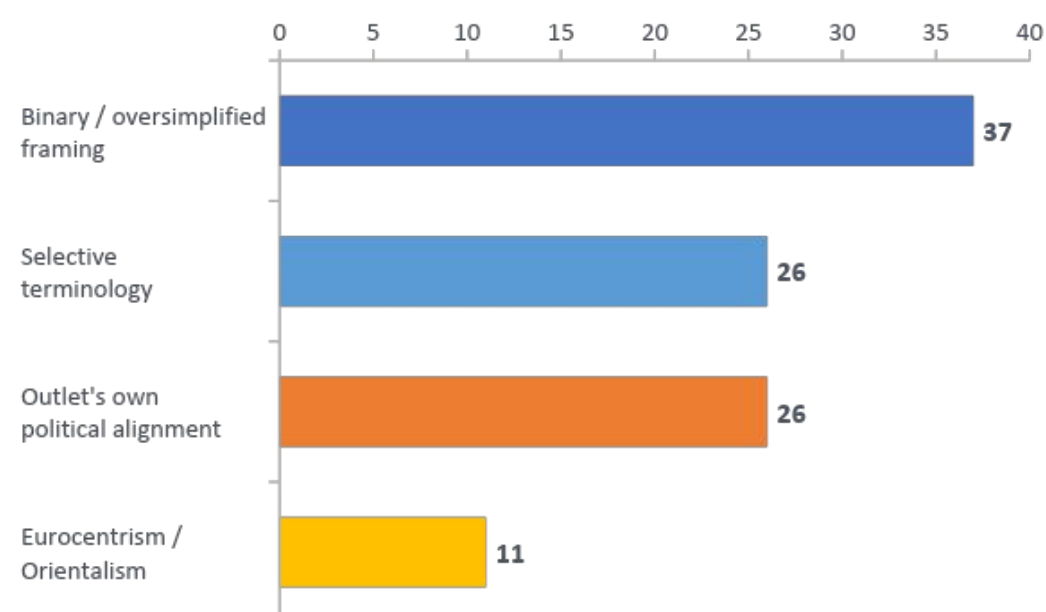
Channels used to communicate conflict narratives



Recurring distortions

More than a third of experts (37%) point first to binary framing — aggressor/victim, good/evil — that erases historical and regional context. Others flag selective terminology such as ‘regime’ versus ‘government’ (26%), coverage shaped by an outlet's own political alignment (26%), and a narrower Eurocentric or Orientalist lens that treats Global South suffering as secondary (11%).

Types of bias identified in coverage

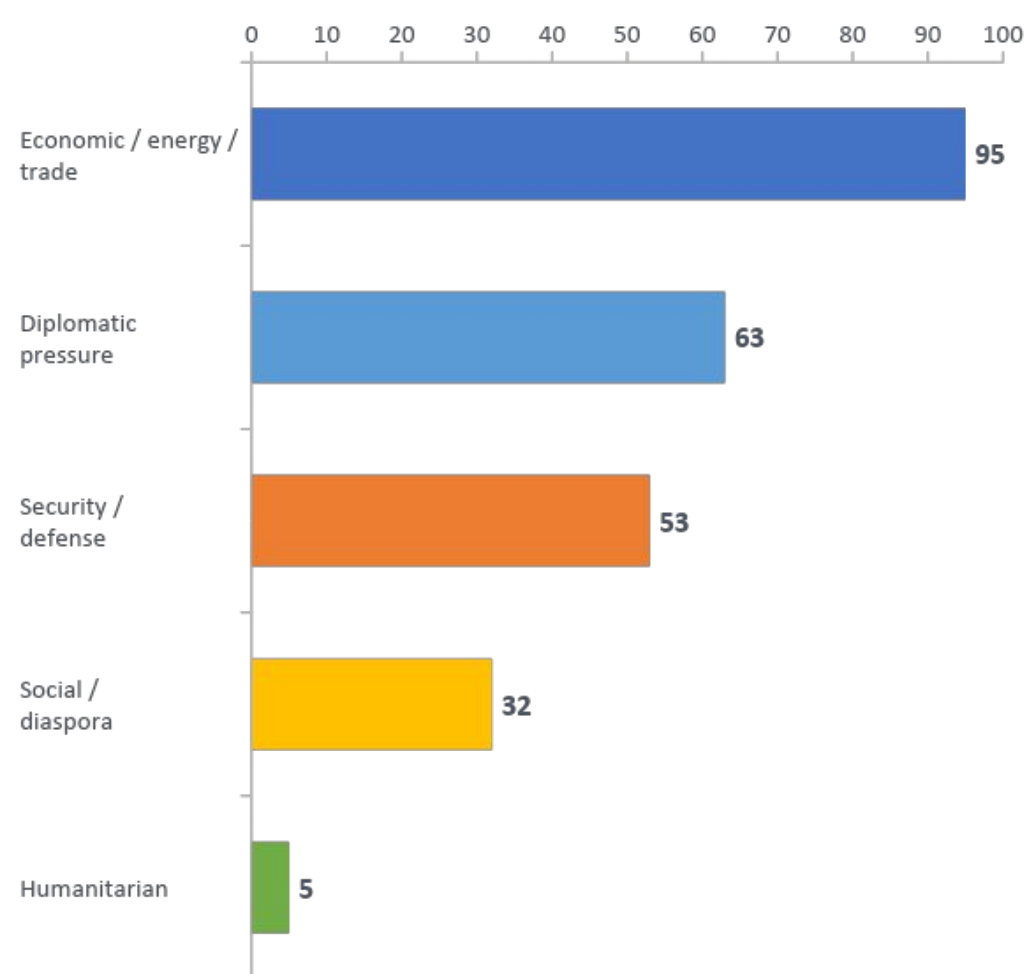


For both regions, these conflicts arrive first as a price, not as a headline. Eighteen of nineteen experts (95%) cite economic and energy effects — inflation, fuel and fertiliser costs, freight and insurance premiums — and, for India specifically, delayed defence deliveries and pressure on the Chabahar corridor. Diplomatic pressure to align with a bloc follows (63%), then security concerns (53%) and social or diaspora effects (32%), which matter most where communities are directly exposed: Indian workers in the Gulf, Latin American mercenaries recruited into the Ukraine front.

On sanctions, the panel echoes — almost point for point — the distinction the study itself set out to test. More than a third (37%) describe sanctions regimes as selectively applied, a *'double standard'* that lands hardest on the Global South. Nearly a third (32%) go further, explicitly separating sectoral economic sanctions — seen as a legitimate, if costly, instrument — from the extraterritorial reach into sport, science and culture, which experts on both sides of the Atlantic (citing examples from FIFA to Wimbledon) see as collective punishment disconnected from the stated political goal.

Perceptions of the major powers are similarly unsentimental: the United States and the European Union are read as strategic actors defending their own interests rather than neutral norm-setters; China is widely described as the conflicts' quiet beneficiary, extending economic ties with both Russia and Iran; and, for India specifically, Russia remains an indispensable but increasingly complicated defence and energy partner.

Effects experts attribute to these conflicts



How sanctions are perceived

