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THE DONOR 'HUMAN RIGHTS' SCHIZOPHRENIA

Aid cuts for human rights violations or the high costs of having good intentions

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is devoted to challenging the idea that human rights violations should be a reason to cut foreign aid. While the issue is regarded as a matter of individual donor policy, if any, some provisional theoretical orientation for reconsidering and reframing such a practice is discussed here, along with a call for a more thorough and observant approach to human rights both in policy formulation and associated decision-making. The aforementioned stance is formed in relation to two factors: donors' general attitude towards human rights in their foreign aid policies, and general objections that can be made to use of conditionality in aid. A closer focus on human rights conditionality reveals inconsistencies related to recipient's ownership in development, donor's assumption of a judicial role, and the difficulties associated with its implementation which lead to it lowered effectiveness. Finally, the mere hypothesis of feasibility of conditionality leveraging human rights improvements is put to a test, as it seems to be unable to address the complexity of situation at stake.

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