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Each year, BWC and UNA-USA build support for U.S. policies that reinforce U.S. engagement with the UN and educate people about the real benefits the U.S. receives through our relationships with the UN. To help the UN better address the transnational challenges of the 21st century, we are working with the Administration and Congress to accomplish the following:

- **ENSURE** payment of our nation’s UN regular budget and peacekeeping dues on time, in full, and without pre-conditions;
- **PROMOTE** greater U.S. assistance to UN peacekeeping operations to strengthen each mission’s capabilities in logistics, training, doctrine, and management expertise;
- **SPOTLIGHT** the value of UN specialized agencies in enhancing American interests;
- **FURTHER** constructive engagement on structural and management reforms at the UN and the continued implementation of ongoing reforms;
- **ENCOURAGE** continued U.S. participation in the UN Human Rights Council;
- **ADVOCATE** for progress towards achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015;
- **SUPPORT** Senate ratification of key international agreements, including the Conventions on the Law of the Sea, the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
THE VALUE OF THE UN
A CRITICAL PARTNER FOR THE U.S. IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

For more than seven decades, the U.S. has relied on the United Nations as a key partner to address critical, transnational challenges. With unparalleled global reach and political legitimacy, the UN is uniquely positioned to make headway where bilateral or unilateral efforts fall short. From its peacekeeping missions to its humanitarian and development programs to its sanctions-monitoring bodies and specialized agencies, the UN is a force multiplier for the U.S., carrying out a range of activities that advance our national security, promote our values, keep us healthy, and ensure our prosperity. Perhaps even more crucially, the UN harnesses the collective will and resources of 193 member states to get other countries to contribute to these efforts, ensuring that the burden will not fall solely on the shoulders of American troops or taxpayers.

Promoting Peace and Stability

- **Peacekeeping operations** are among the largest and most complex endeavors undertaken by the UN in the field. Authorized by the UN Security Council, UN peacekeeping missions work to stabilize societies torn apart by conflict, separating combatants and supporting peace processes, protecting civilians from violence, facilitating disarmament and demobilization programs, training local police forces to uphold law and order, ensuring delivery of humanitarian assistance, and supporting democratic elections. They are an excellent example of how working through the UN promotes global burden-sharing. While the U.S. is the largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping, it also holds significant power over the decision to deploy peacekeepers in the first place: as a permanent, veto-wielding member of the Security Council, no mission can be authorized, renewed, or withdrawn without U.S. consent. Despite its unique authority on these matters, the U.S. contributes very few uniformed personnel to UN missions (currently, 57 troops and police out of a total force of 90,000). The gap is filled by more than 120 other countries—including U.S. allies and partners like Jordan, Morocco, Ghana, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Italy—who collectively provide thousands of uniformed personnel and do not possess a veto over Security Council decisions.

We are always stronger when we speak with one voice, and the future of this institution is worth the extra mile.

— **NIKKI HALEY,**
U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, September 18, 2017
UN peacekeeping operations have been shown to be more cost-effective than other forms of military intervention. A February 2018 report published by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) compared the cost of a current UN peacekeeping mission with a hypothetical operation undertaken by the U.S. military. Overall, the GAO analysis found that supporting a UN peacekeeping operation is eight times less expensive for U.S. taxpayers than the deployment of U.S. forces.

Providing Lifesaving Humanitarian Assistance

- Armed conflict, political instability, climate change, and other factors have led to an unprecedented growth in humanitarian needs around the world in recent years. UN agencies like the World Food Programme (WFP), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and UN Population Fund (UNFPA) are playing a leading role in the global response. They provide food, shelter, medical care, education, maternal health care, and other forms of life-sustaining aid to tens of millions of people whose lives have been upended by crises in countries such as Syria, South Sudan, Myanmar, Somalia, Yemen, and Iraq.

- The U.S. doesn’t have the capacity and reach to lead the response to every humanitarian crisis. That is why it works with the UN, which brings member states, NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and other partners together to respond to emergencies.

Responding to Global Health Challenges

- The World Health Organization (WHO), a UN specialized agency, serves as a coordinating authority on international public health. It is responsible for leading the global response to health emergencies, monitoring outbreaks of infectious disease, spearheading global vaccination efforts, and developing campaigns to combat life threatening diseases like polio, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. In addition to a number of other critical activities, WHO played a leading role in international efforts to combat the Ebola epidemic in West Africa and coordinate the international response to the Zika virus.
Supporting Efforts to Counter Terrorist Groups and Rogue States

- The UN is a critical partner in U.S.-led efforts to confront violent extremist groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda and isolate rogue regimes like North Korea. The Security Council has adopted sanctions—legally binding on all UN member states—including arms embargoes, travel bans, asset freezes, and other measures, designed to increase pressure on these groups, undercut their ability to finance illegal activities, and hold entities that do business with them to account. U.S. contributions to the UN Regular Budget help finance efforts to monitor compliance with these measures, ensuring that they are being implemented effectively and adjusted accordingly.

- Over the last year, the Security Council has significantly ratcheted up sanctions against North Korea over its rapidly advancing nuclear program. The Council has unanimously adopted a series of U.S.-backed resolutions targeting the central pillars of North Korea’s economy, banning Pyongyang from exporting coal, iron, textiles, seafood, lead, and agricultural products; cutting imports of refined petroleum by 89 percent; requiring countries to expel North Korean guest workers, a critical source of hard currency for the regime; and compelling countries to seize and impound ships caught smuggling prohibited items to and from North Korea. In the words of U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, they represent “an unprecedented response” to North Korea’s defiance of the international community.

Commerce and Trade: Providing the Connective Tissue for Global Commerce

- Various UN specialized agencies provide the “soft infrastructure” for the global economy by negotiating universally accepted technical standards in areas like trade law, customs procedures, intellectual property, aviation, shipping, and telecommunications:
  
  - The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) helps ensure safe air travel by promulgating global standards for navigation, communication, and airline safety;
  
  - The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has helped make shipping safer and more secure, creating standards that have impact on 80 percent of global trade. The regulatory framework developed and maintained by IMO is vital to safe, secure, and efficient international shipping;
  
  - The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) promotes the protection of intellectual property rights, which are essential to economic development and prosperity.

- The UN also has laid the groundwork for investment in developing economies by promoting stability and good governance, battling corruption, and urging sound economic policies and business-friendly legislation.
BENEFITING THE U.S. ECONOMY

The U.S. invests in the United Nations to achieve its foreign policy goals, but the return on investment goes beyond advancing global peace and security — we also see tangible economic benefits here at home.

Research conducted by the Better World Campaign found that U.S. businesses generated more than $1.5 billion in contracts with the United Nations between 2014 and 2016 (the last three years for which data are publicly available). In 2016, for example, 118 American companies across 25 states won more than 225 contracts with the UN, totaling almost $539 million. Similarly, the value of U.S. contracts with the UN totaled $450 million in 2015 and $555 million in 2014.

The businesses working with the UN provided a range of goods and services to the world body, including vehicles, telecommunications, financial services, construction, medical care, and food production. The vast majority of these companies are U.S.-owned. A sampling of some of the largest contracts include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>VALUE OF CONTRACTS</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLANSON INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION</td>
<td>$51,394,252.00</td>
<td>NEW GLOUCESTER, ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHL EXPRESS (USA) INC.</td>
<td>$21,509,043.00</td>
<td>PLANTATION, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS</td>
<td>$18,668,468.00</td>
<td>WASHINGTON, DC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOLMAR CONSTRUCTION INC.</td>
<td>$15,000,000.00</td>
<td>BROOKLYN, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERNATIONAL SOS GOVERNMENT</td>
<td>$14,672,534.00</td>
<td>PHILADELPHIA, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL FLEET SALES LLC</td>
<td>$13,413,447.00</td>
<td>SOUTHFIELD, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTROPHYSICS INC.</td>
<td>$1,924,380.00</td>
<td>CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST COAST POWER AND GAS LLC</td>
<td>$1,905,233.68</td>
<td>BRONX, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROHN PRODUCTS LLC</td>
<td>$1,118,579.00</td>
<td>PEORIA, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE NEWBERRY GROUP INC.</td>
<td>$920,904.00</td>
<td>ST. PETERS, MO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SONY ELECTRONICS</td>
<td>$869,266.00</td>
<td>SAN DIEGO, CA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The UN not only benefits thousands of American workers in Missouri, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Florida; it also generates billions of dollars in revenue each year in the city of New York. In fact, a 2016 report by the New York City Mayor’s Office for International Affairs found that the annual UN community contributed approximately $3.69 billion to the New York City economy in 2014 – making hosting the UN the economic equivalent of hosting seven Super Bowls a year.

All of this put together means the U.S. economy receives more revenue from the UN than the U.S. government spends on its UN Regular Budget and UN Peacekeeping dues. That’s a smart deal any way you look at it.

Economic benefits of the UN to the U.S.:
$4.229b PER YEAR

U.S. Share of the UN Peacekeeping and UN Regular Budget:
$2.7b PER YEAR
SHIFTING TRENDS:
HOW AMERICANS VIEW U.S. GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

79% of voters agree the UN is still needed today

More voters than at any point since 2009 say the UN is an organization that is still needed today (79% still needed/20% outlived usefulness). This belief is true across party lines.

6/10 voters have a favorable image of the UN

Six in ten voters have a favorable image of the United Nations (65% favorable/6% neutral/28% unfavorable). This is the highest favorable rating of the UN since our tracking started in 2009.

7/10 voters support paying our UN & UN peacekeeping dues

Majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats support the U.S. paying our UN general and peacekeeping dues on time and in full.
In October 2017, showed that a sizable majority of Americans, 65 percent, maintain a favorable impression of the UN. Moreover, even amid a tight fiscal environment, majorities of Republicans, Democrats and Independents—more than 7 in 10—support the U.S. paying its dues to the UN and UN Peacekeeping on time and in full.

When analyzing specific voting blocs, the poll found that 65 percent of Republicans, and specifically 58 percent of Trump voters, agree the UN is still needed today. Similarly, among millennial voters, 86 percent also agreed with that sentiment, making support for the UN one area that millennials and Trump voters agree on.
U.S.-UN PRIORITIES
Since the UN’s founding in 1945, the United States has been the organization’s largest funder. As a permanent member of the Security Council and host of UN Headquarters, the U.S. holds a significant amount of clout at the UN, and its leadership in providing financial support to the organization is a reflection of that influential role. Continued U.S. funding is essential to a number of UN activities that promote core U.S. interests and values, from peacekeeping missions and global nonproliferation efforts, to the provision of humanitarian and development assistance to some of the world’s most vulnerable populations.

Assessments for the Regular Budget and UN Specialized Agencies

The UN Regular Budget covers the UN’s core bodies and activities, including special political missions. The current assessment structure for the Regular Budget sets maximum (22 percent) and minimum (.001 percent) rates for member states, with a country’s individual assessment rate based on its ability to pay. That is determined by a complex formula that takes into account a member state’s gross national income (GNI), GNI per capita, and several other economic indicators. The UN General Assembly renegotiates and approves every three years.

Given the U.S.’s high GNI and GNI per capita relative to other countries, it pays the maximum rate. Over time, the U.S. has negotiated several reductions in its share of the Regular Budget, most notably an agreement in 2000 to establish the current maximum and minimum assessment structure, essentially capping U.S. contributions at 22 percent. Prior to this agreement, the U.S. was assessed 25 percent of the Regular Budget.

The U.S. contribution to the Regular Budget is included under the State Department’s “Contributions to International Organizations” (CIO) account. In addition to the Regular Budget, CIO covers U.S. dues payments to more than 40 other UN and non-UN international organizations, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the WHO.
PUTTING THE UN’S BUDGET IN PERSPECTIVE:

TOTAL UN REGULAR BUDGET
$5.5b
Less than what Americans spend on greeting cards per year ($6.5b)

THE U.S. SHARE OF THE UN REGULAR BUDGET
$600m
Less than the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma’s FY ’17 budget ($767m)

THE U.S. SHARE OF THE UN PEACEKEEPING BUDGET
$2.1b
Less than what Americans spent on Easter candy in 2016 ($2.4b)

TOTAL UN PEACEKEEPING BUDGET
$7.3b
Less than the state of Rhode Island’s FY ‘17 budget ($8.9b)
Assessments for the UN Peacekeeping Budget

Like the Regular Budget, assessments for UN peacekeeping operations are based on a member state’s ability to pay, with one major difference: the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council—the U.S., U.K., China, France, and Russia—shoulder a higher proportion of peacekeeping costs relative to what they pay for the Regular Budget. Since each of the P5 hold veto power over Security Council decisions, in effect no UN peacekeeping mission can be deployed without their support. The P5’s higher financial responsibility is meant to reflect its unique role in authorizing missions and crafting peacekeeping mandates.

The U.S. is currently assessed 28.4 percent of the UN peacekeeping budget—a level that the U.S. negotiated and voted for in the General Assembly in 2015. Like Regular Budget assessments, peacekeeping rates are revised every three years, and new assessment rates for 2019-2021 are scheduled to be approved in December 2018. Over the past two decades, the U.S. rate has decreased from a high of 31.7 percent in 1994 to the rate in effect today. At the same time, other countries have seen their assessment rates increase. For example, over the last 10 years, China’s rate has risen dramatically, from just 3.1 percent in 2008 to 10.2 percent in 2018, a testament to its growing economic clout.

U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are included under the State Department’s “Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities” (CIPA) account. In addition, Congress includes U.S. assessments for the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS)—which provides logistical support and equipment to a peacekeeping force led by the African Union tasked with countering al-Shabaab and extending the authority of the Somali government—under the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account. The Administration, by contrast, typically requests UNSOS funding under CIPA.

Since FY ’96, federal law has capped U.S. peacekeeping contributions at 25 percent. As a result, Congress has to revisit the issue every year during the appropriations process. While, in a number of cases, Congress has decided to include language in appropriations legislation allowing the U.S. to pay its dues at the full assessed rate, there have been several instances where the cap has remained in place, and the U.S. has accrued arrears. Most recently, Congress failed to lift the cap in FY’17 and FY’18, causing the U.S. to take on an estimated $505 million worth of peacekeeping debt ($275 million in FY’17 and an estimated $230 million in FY’18).

Failing to pay our peacekeeping dues at the full assessment rate is problematic because: it denies critical resources to missions that support long-standing U.S. policy objectives and promote the values we hold dear as Americans; withholds financial reimbursement from countries—including U.S. allies and partners like Jordan, Morocco, Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Ghana—who contribute the bulk of troops to UN peacekeeping operations; and, by causing the U.S. to accumulate arrears, puts American taxpayers on the hook for back dues for years to come. Unilaterally reducing funding for peacekeeping operations also makes other member states less receptive to U.S. calls for budgetary and management reform at the UN, including a lowering of the U.S. assessment rate.
Article 17, paragraph 2, of the UN Charter stipulates that: “The expenses of the Organization shall be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly.”

Since 2016, China has been the second-largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping operations, replacing Japan, which is currently in third place.

PKO mostly funds voluntary U.S. contributions to peacekeeping activities undertaken by regional organizations and bilateral security initiatives.

CIPA figure in the final FY'18 Omnibus reflects the 25 percent cap. As a result, current projections show the U.S. accruing $230 million in arrears in FY'18. BWC’s FY'19 CIPA projection, therefore, takes account of the following: (a) additional funds to pay FY'18 cap-related arrears; (b) $275 million to address cap-related arrears from FY'17 that were not addressed in FY'18. FY'19 needs are based on the current assessment rate of 28.43%, though this will change in January 2019. New peacekeeping assessment rates for 2019-2021 are currently being negotiated.

This figure includes funding for UNSOS, which was included under CIPA in the President’s request. The total U.S. assessment for UNSOS (at the current rate of 28.43 percent) is $165.5 million.

### Recent Funding Levels for Select UN-Related Accounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOUNT</th>
<th>CIPA</th>
<th>CIO</th>
<th>PKO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY'16 FINAL</td>
<td>$2.460 billion</td>
<td>$1.446 billion</td>
<td>$600.63 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'17 ESTIMATE</td>
<td>$1.907 billion</td>
<td>$1.359 billion</td>
<td>$659 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'18 PRESIDENT’S REQUEST</td>
<td>$1.196 billion</td>
<td>$996 million</td>
<td>$301.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'18 HOUSE SFOPS</td>
<td>$1.495 billion</td>
<td>$1.160 billion</td>
<td>$460.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'18 SENATE SFOPS</td>
<td>$1.382 billion</td>
<td>$1.449 billion</td>
<td>$497.3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'18 OMNIBUS</td>
<td>$1.382 billion</td>
<td>$1.467 billion</td>
<td>$537.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'19 PRESIDENT’S REQUEST</td>
<td>$1.196 billion</td>
<td>$995 billion</td>
<td>$291.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY'19 BWC PROJECTION</td>
<td>$2.38 billion</td>
<td>$1.467 billion</td>
<td>$655.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Article 17, paragraph 2, of the UN Charter stipulates that “The expenses of the Organization shall be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly.”

2. Since 2016, China has been the second-largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping operations, replacing Japan, which is currently in third place.

3. PKO mostly funds voluntary U.S. contributions to peacekeeping activities undertaken by regional organizations and bilateral security initiatives.

4. CIPA figure in the final FY'18 Omnibus reflects the 25 percent cap. As a result, current projections show the U.S. accruing $230 million in arrears in FY'18. BWC’s FY’19 CIPA projection, therefore, takes account of the following: (a) additional funds to pay FY’18 cap-related arrears; (b) $275 million to address cap-related arrears from FY’17 that were not addressed in FY’18. FY’19 needs are based on the current assessment rate of 28.43%, though this will change in January 2019. New peacekeeping assessment rates for 2019-2021 are currently being negotiated.

5. This figure includes funding for UNSOS, which was included under CIPA in the President’s request. The total U.S. assessment for UNSOS (at the current rate of 28.43 percent) is $165.5 million.
Reducing Costs and Improving Efficiency

In December 2017, the General Assembly approved the 2018-2019 UN Regular Budget, which covers the organization’s core activities and expenses. Overall, the budget for this two-year cycle totals $5.397 billion, a reduction of $285 million (5 percent) from the final 2016-2017 appropriation. In addition, the General Assembly approved new management reforms, including a proposal to move the UN from a biennial to annual budget cycle on a trial basis, beginning in 2020. This shift, which Secretary-General Guterres strongly advocates, is meant to allow spending and resource requirements to be prepared closer to the point of implementation, so that budgets are based on more up-to-date information and better able to integrate lessons learned.

UN STRENGTHENING AND REFORM

In order to meet the challenges of the 21st century and ensure that member state resources are used most effectively, the UN has sought to update its operations and management practices. Changes have taken place in nearly every area of UN operations in recent years, from the management of peacekeeping missions to tougher ethics rules to delivery of humanitarian aid on the ground. Since taking office in 2017, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has sought to build on this work, proposing a comprehensive reform agenda with three pillars: (1) repositioning the UN development system so that it is best able to make progress on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; (2) pursuing management reforms that simplify budgetary and planning processes, streamline human resources procedures, increase transparency, and generally deliver a leaner and more efficient organization; and (3) restructuring the UN’s peace and security architecture so that it is more effective at conflict prevention.

Obtaining approval from the UN General Assembly and implementing these proposals is a long-term process that will play out over 2018 and 2019 and involve extensive consultations with all 193 UN member states, UN staff, and other stakeholders. Throughout this process, Secretary-General Guterres has worked closely with U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley. Moving forward, achieving progress on this agenda will take concerted engagement by all member states, including continued positive U.S. leadership. Provided below is a selection of initiatives that have already been completed or are underway.

We pledge to be partners in your work, and I am confident that if we work together and champion truly bold reforms, the United Nations will emerge as a stronger, more effective, more just, and greater force for peace and harmony in the world.

— PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP,
September 18, 2017
This is far from the first time that the General Assembly has sought to cut costs. Indeed, the 2016-2017 Regular Budget approved by the General Assembly in December 2015 was itself a significant reduction (roughly $400 million) from the previous biennium. That budget also provided for a reassessment of the UN’s staff compensation package for the first time in 26 years, approving a unified base/floor salary scale structure to replace separate scales for staff with and without dependents. The staff compensation package reform alone is expected to save the UN approximately $500 million over five years.

The UN has also successfully worked to increase the cost-efficiency of its peacekeeping missions. For example, the UN implemented the Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS), a five-year project (2010-2015) aimed at improving the efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and speed of administrative and logistics support to UN field missions. As a result of the UN’s implementation of GFSS, the cost per peacekeeper declined by 18 percent between 2008 and 2015.

### Expanding Protections for Whistleblowers

Protecting UN staff members from retaliation for reporting misconduct is another key priority of the Secretary-General. To this end, on January 20, 2017—three weeks after taking office—the Secretary-General issued an updated whistleblower protection policy, which includes the following elements:

- The UN Ethics Office and Office of Internal Oversight Services (tasked with carrying out internal audits of UN programs) are empowered to take preventive action where a risk of retaliation has been identified, instead of complainants being required to identify a specific retaliatory act before they can request protection;
- Whistleblowers who report wrongdoing committed not only by staff but also by contractors, non-UN peacekeepers, and others are afforded protection from retaliation;
- Staff have the right to seek review of Ethics Office determinations regarding cases of retaliation;
- The Ethics Office is required to notify complainants of disciplinary measures taken against staff members found to have retaliated against them.
Combating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers

In recent years, the UN has been buffeted by a number of high-profile allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by UN peacekeepers, most notably in the Central African Republic. In response, the UN—under both the current Secretary-General and his predecessor, Ban Ki-moon—has been working to implement a number of measures and policy changes to help combat these appalling crimes. Among other actions, the UN:

- Has sought to expand vetting mechanisms currently in place for civilian personnel to cover all troops and police serving on UN peacekeeping missions. In 2017, 8,000 uniformed personnel were screened each month through the UN’s Misconduct Tracking System, an increase of 252 percent from the year before;
- “Names and shames” individual member states by publishing country-specific data on the number of credible allegations of SEA against uniformed peacekeeping personnel;
- Requires UN investigative entities to conclude their own investigations into SEA cases within a six-month timeframe, which will be shortened to three months “where circumstances suggest the need for greater urgency”;
- Developed a mandatory online training program for all UN personnel on SEA prevention, allowing for more flexible delivery of SEA-related pre-deployment training in multiple languages;
- Has repatriated entire military or police units to their home countries when there is evidence of widespread or systematic violations by members of these units. In 2016, for example, Secretary-General Ban ordered the repatriation of more than 800 soldiers from the Democratic Republic of Congo serving as part of UN peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic after serious allegations of misconduct came to light;
- Created a trust fund to support the provision of critical services—including psychological assistance, medical care, access to legal help, and assistance in settling paternity claims—to victims of SEA. The trust fund is financed in part through reimbursement payments that are withheld from troop-contributing countries because of substantiated SEA allegations.
PEACE AND SECURITY ISSUES
Peacekeeping operations are among the most visible, complex, and impactful activities undertaken by the United Nations today. With more than 106,000 uniformed and civilian personnel currently serving on 14 missions across four continents, UN peacekeeping constitutes the largest deployed multinational military force in the world. Every day, peacekeepers work to stabilize countries stricken by conflict, serving as a buffer between warring parties, protecting civilians from violence, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, training local security forces to uphold law and order, and supporting free and fair elections and the creation of stable governing institutions. UN peacekeeping activities are authorized by the UN Security Council, and since the United States is a permanent, veto-wielding member of that body, no peacekeeping mission can be sent into the field without U.S. consent.

The last two decades have witnessed an unprecedented expansion in the size of UN peacekeeping missions and the complexity of their mandates. This trend has been strongly supported by successive U.S. administrations, both Democratic and Republican. The reasons for this record of bipartisan support are manifold. Countries undergoing conflict provide fertile ground for the growth of extremist groups and organized crime, potentially threatening U.S. national security and economic interests. Furthermore, armed conflicts frequently involve high levels of deprivation and human rights abuses, both of which are an affront to many of our nation’s most deeply held values. By undertaking a range of stabilization and protection measures, UN peacekeepers can help avert the collapse of fragile states, prevent civil wars from metastasizing into regional conflicts, reduce forced displacement and refugee outflows, and decrease the likelihood that dormant conflicts will flare up again. In addition, by harnessing the collective resources and will of the international community, UN peacekeeping helps ensure that the U.S. will not have to confront these challenges alone.

With over 100,000 total personnel and a budget close to $8 billion, peacekeeping is the UN’s most powerful tool to promote international peace and security.

— NIKKI HALEY,
U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, April 6, 2017
UN peacekeeping continues to evolve to meet new security threats and challenges. It has also become more dangerous: over the last five years, UN peacekeepers have been confronted with asymmetric threats in Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During that time, nearly 200 peacekeepers have been killed in hostile acts. In December 2017, for example, the UN suffered its deadliest attack in more than two decades when 15 peacekeepers were killed in an attack by rebels in eastern Congo. As a result of these and other challenges, Secretary-General Guterres is in the process of developing concrete reform proposals to guide the future design and conduct of UN peacekeeping operations. In this effort, he is working closely with Ambassador Haley.

As peacekeeping marks its 70th anniversary, I hope we can develop a set of mutually-agreed principles and commitments to create peacekeeping operations fit for the future.

— ANTÓNIO GUTERRES,
UN Secretary-General, March 28, 2018
Benefits of UN Peacekeeping

- **Promotes Stability and Protects Civilians:** UN peacekeeping operations have proven to be effective at reducing violence and preventing its resurgence in countries emerging from conflict. For example, a study conducted by Columbia University found that deploying UN peacekeepers reduces the likelihood that a country will return to war by about half. In addition to promoting stability in a broader sense, UN peacekeeping missions have also been documented to enhance civilian protection. A 2013 paper by Swedish and American researchers found that deploying large numbers of UN peacekeepers “significantly decreases violence against civilians.” To support their hypothesis, the authors examined monthly civilian death tolls from civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa between 1991 and 2008. Their findings were striking: in instances where no peacekeeping troops were deployed, monthly civilian deaths averaged 106. In instances where at least 8,000 UN troops were present, by contrast, the average civilian death toll fell to less than two. The paper concluded that ensuring UN peacekeeping forces “are appropriately tasked and deployed in large numbers” is critical to their ability to protect civilians. Currently, more than 90 percent of UN peacekeepers serve under a civilian protection mandate.

- **A Bargain for Taxpayers:** While the U.S. is currently assessed 28 percent of the UN’s annual peacekeeping budget, this figure must be kept in perspective: UN peacekeeping operations are significantly more cost-effective than other forms of military intervention. In 2018, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that it would cost the U.S. more than twice as much as the UN to implement a hypothetical operation comparable to the UN peacekeeping mission in CAR (MINUSCA). MINUSCA cost the UN approximately $2.4 billion for the first 39 months of deployment. By contrast, GAO estimates that a hypothetical U.S. operation in CAR of roughly the same size and duration would cost at least $5.7 billion—nearly eight times the $700 million the U.S. contributed to MINUSCA over the same period.

HOW UN PEACEKEEPING CAN STABILIZE AN ENTIRE REGION

LIBERIA: CLOSED MARCH 2018
CÔTE D’IVOIRE: CLOSED JUNE 2017
SIERRA LEONE: CLOSED JUNE 2006

For the past two decades, the once war-stricken region of West Africa comprised of Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, and Liberia heavily relied on blue helmets to bring back peace, rule of law, and stability to their respective countries. Today, the region has been transformed, thanks in large part to the UN’s presence. In March 2018, the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia was the last of the three UN peacekeeping missions in the region to complete its mandate and leave its host country a safer, more stable place than they found it.
• **Exemplifies International Burden-Sharing:**
  The U.S. is the wealthiest and most powerful country in the world, but it cannot, and should not, take on the responsibility of maintaining global peace and security alone. UN peacekeeping is a case study in the benefits of multilateral burden-sharing. While the U.S. is the largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping, and—by virtue of its permanent seat on the Security Council—holds veto power over these operations, it provides very few troops and police to support them. In fact, the U.S. currently contributes just 57 uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, out of a total force of more than 90,000. The resulting gap is filled by more than 120 countries—including U.S. partners and allies like Bangladesh, Italy, Ethiopia, Senegal, Morocco, Jordan, and Indonesia—who voluntarily provide thousands of troops and police and do not possess a veto over Security Council decisions.

> Not only is UN peacekeeping a cost-effective alternative to putting our own soldiers in harm’s way, it works!

— LT. GEN. JOHN G. CASTELLAW, USMC (RETIRED),

February 23, 2018
MALI

The UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was deployed in July 2013 to stabilize the country’s northern region, which had been overrun by several extremist groups before a French military intervention drove them out in 2012. Working alongside French and Malian forces, MINUSMA is responsible for helping to extend government authority in northern population centers, protect civilians from violence, monitor, investigate, and report on human rights violations, and facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance. MINUSMA also supported successful efforts to restore democratic governance in Mali, which experienced a military coup in March 2012. Mali is poised to hold its second presidential election since the coup this July.

Unfortunately, extremist groups—including regional affiliates of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State—continue to operate in Mali and the wider Sahel region. These groups have increasingly targeted peacekeepers, killing nearly 100 UN personnel since 2013 and making MINUSMA the most dangerous UN peacekeeping mission in the world. They have also carried out attacks against non-UN targets: in October 2017, for example, four U.S. Special Forces commandos stationed in the neighboring country of Niger were killed in an ambush by militants near the Mali border. In light of these growing threats, five Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger) have created a 5,000-strong force focused on securing their respective border areas to work alongside French troops and MINUSMA.

SOUTH SUDAN

Civil war broke out in South Sudan in December 2013, leaving tens of thousands of people dead, driving millions from their homes, and leaving millions more in urgent need of food aid. The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), originally deployed to support South Sudan’s stability and development following its independence from Sudan in 2011, was immediately forced to shift its focus to civilian protection. In an unprecedented move, UNMISS opened the gates of its bases to those fleeing the violence and soon had tens of thousands of South Sudanese descend on its compounds in Juba seeking shelter. As fighting spread outside of the capital, several other UNMISS bases likewise became de facto displacement camps, referred to as Protection of Civilians (POC) sites. Currently, UNMISS is providing physical protection to more than 200,000 civilians at six POC sites around the country. This has saved the lives of many people who would have otherwise likely been directly targeted by parties to the conflict.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

UN peacekeepers were dispatched to CAR in 2014, following vicious political and sectarian strife that left thousands dead and sparked concerns of genocide. Tasked with a number of critical responsibilities, including civilian protection, facilitating humanitarian assistance, investigating human rights violations, and building the capacity of CAR’s police force and justice system, MINUSCA has helped the country make some important strides. In 2016, for example, CAR organized, with robust UN support, peaceful and credible presidential and legislative elections, replacing a previous government that had been in office on an interim basis. While MINUSCA’s work has helped to preserve calm in some key areas of the country—particularly the capital—the security situation has deteriorated in northern and eastern CAR, with a complex patchwork of armed groups fighting each other for control of resources and targeting civilians. This has led to sharp increases in displacement and humanitarian needs. As a result of these developments, the Security Council voted in November 2017 to increase the mission’s troop levels.
UN POLITICAL MISSIONS

In addition to peacekeeping missions, the UN operates special political missions (SPMs) engaged in conflict prevention, mediation, and post-conflict peacebuilding around the world. SPMs, most of which are authorized by the Security Council and fall under the purview of the UN Department of Political Affairs, have an array of responsibilities, including supporting political dialogue and national reconciliation processes in countries emerging from conflict, facilitating free and fair elections, investigating human rights violations, and encouraging the development of effective criminal justice institutions and respect for the rule of law. Funded by member state dues, SPMs account for nearly one-fifth of the UN Regular Budget. SPMs are currently deployed to a diverse set of countries, including Libya, Somalia, Guinea-Bissau, Colombia, and Lebanon. However, the largest of these missions (in terms of personnel and budget) are located in Iraq and Afghanistan. The UN’s work in these two countries is discussed in greater detail below.

Iraq

First established by the Security Council following the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, the UN Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) works to promote inclusive political dialogue and human rights, coordinate delivery of humanitarian and development assistance, and encourage the creation of stable and democratic governing institutions. As part of these efforts, UNAMI provided significant support during the drafting of Iraq’s 2005 Constitution and furnished strategic and technical assistance to the country’s electoral authorities in support of national parliamentary and provincial elections in 2005, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, and 2018. Currently, UNAMI is focused on supporting dialogue to resolve territorial disputes between the central government in Baghdad and Kurdish authorities in Erbil. UNAMI’s Human Rights Office monitors and reports on the human rights situation in the country, investigates alleged violations, regularly visits prisons and women’s refuges to assess conditions in these facilities, and provides training to civil society actors, journalists, and government officials on human rights advocacy and monitoring.

Beginning in 2014, the terrorist group ISIS overran large swaths of Iraqi territory, including its second-largest city, Mosul, killing thousands, committing genocide against the country’s Yezidi minority, and driving nearly 6 million people from their homes. The UN has played a central role in efforts to respond to the immense humanitarian challenges created...
by this crisis. For example, military operations to recover Mosul—completed in July 2017—entailed the largest managed evacuation in modern history, with more than 1 million civilians being helped to safety. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) played a significant part in this, building camps to shelter the displaced and providing civilians with blankets, hygiene kits, cooking sets, and other essential materials. The World Health Organization (WHO) partnered with Iraqi health officials to establish static and mobile medical clinics near the front lines that provided round-the-clock emergency and primary health services to more than 20,000 people. At the same time, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) worked to ensure access to life-saving emergency obstetric services and safe delivery options for thousands of pregnant women.

In addition to meeting immediate humanitarian needs, restoring basic infrastructure and services to areas of Iraq recently retaken from ISIS is critical to improving the country’s prospects for long-term stability and allowing displaced civilians to return home. To this end, the UN Development Program (UNDP) established a Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) to finance efforts to quickly rebuild areas freed from ISIS rule and help restore confidence in the Iraqi government. The FFS has either already completed or is currently supporting 1,200 projects across five governorates, including repairing essential public infrastructure (such as water systems and electricity grids), employing youth on work brigades to remove rubble, providing cash grants to help businesses reopen, and rehabilitating schools and health facilities. In one such project, UNDP is supporting efforts to restore more than 2,100 badly damaged houses in Bartela, a predominately Christian town near Mosul.

**Afghanistan**

Following the start of U.S.-led military operations in Afghanistan in 2001, the Security Council established the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to assist reconstruction and reconciliation efforts, facilitate humanitarian and development assistance, monitor and promote human rights, and encourage stable governance and free elections. Given how closely these activities align with its policy objectives in Afghanistan, the U.S. government has long had a strong interest in UNAMA’s work. From January 13-15, 2018, for the first time since 2010, Security Council diplomats (including Ambassador Haley) visited Afghanistan to assess the political, security, and development challenges currently facing the country.

The UN carries out a number of activities critical to the country’s future stability and development. During the summer of 2014, for example, when the second round of Afghanistan’s presidential election was marred by accusations of fraud, election experts from UNAMA and UNDP coordinated international supervision of a full audit of all 22,828 ballot boxes from polling stations across the country. This process, and mediation efforts by the U.S., EU, and UN, helped bring about a power-sharing agreement between the two candidates, which came to fruition when Ashraf Ghani was sworn in as the country’s new president in September 2014. Currently, the UN is gearing up to support parliamentary elections scheduled for July 2018 and presidential elections scheduled for next year.

The UN is also supporting efforts to build up and professionalize the Afghan National Police (ANP) and promote respect for the rule of law. UNDP administers the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan, a mechanism that focuses on funding salaries for more than 150,000 police personnel, improving ANP infrastructure and administrative systems, and increasing gender parity within the police force. Given Afghanistan’s status as a key player in the global opium trade, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime works to address the impact of drug production and widespread use on the health of communities; strengthen the Counter Narcotics Police’s capacity to enforce the rule of law; enhance border control management to prevent smuggling; increase institutional integrity of the Afghan justice system to combat impunity; and help oversight bodies within the Afghan government improve their ability to fight corruption. In 2017, UN agencies and partners also delivered lifesaving humanitarian assistance to more than 1.2 million people each quarter. This includes UNHCR, which focuses on addressing the needs of Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan, Iran, and other countries.
HOW THE UN STEPPED UP IN MOSUL

As cities in Iraq become liberated from ISIS, the UN and its agencies have been on the ground working to secure a sustainable peace in the country. And in Mosul in particular, the UN has played a key role in helping civilians recover from a liberation that was the largest urban battle since World War II.

In terms of humanitarian assistance, the response has been massive both before and after the liberation — with the UN and partners providing aid to 1.5 million Moslawis.

HERE IS A BRIEF SNAPSHOT OF THAT WORK:

**EVACUATIONS**
One million civilians were evacuated—one of the largest managed civilian evacuations in modern history.

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**
20,000 near the front lines were aided with critical health services, including ambulatory transfer, IV fluids, oxygen, and medications.

**MATERNAL HEALTH**
1,000+ were given lifesaving obstetric emergency services and safe delivery options via mobile delivery rooms and field hospitals.

**IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE**
Continues to provide shelter and lifesaving emergency assistance, including blankets, sleeping mats, hygiene kits, and cooking sets to those fleeing.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**
More than 300 projects are underway, including the rehabilitation of five water treatment plants and 20 primary health centers and schools.
COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Terrorism and violent extremism pose a grave and persistent threat to international peace and security. As we’ve learned over the last two decades, terror networks operate in countries frequently beyond the reach of American access and influence, making a comprehensive, multilateral approach imperative.

The UN is a critical partner in this unparalleled challenge. The UN’s global efforts to stamp out violent extremism and address the root causes of terrorism help amplify and broaden the reach of our nation’s own counterterrorism initiatives. Provided below is a selection of actions taken by the UN on this issue.

Multilateral Sanctions

For more than 15 years, the UN Security Council has had in place robust, legally-binding sanctions— including asset freezes, travel bans, and arms embargoes—targeting individuals, groups, and entities associated with al-Qaeda. UN sanctions imposed by the Security Council are considered the “gold standard” for coordinated international action and are preferred by businesses as it ensures a level playing field. While the U.S. can impose unilateral sanctions, many countries will not adopt their own sanctions absent the important global legal imprimatur of a United Nations decision. The U.S. chaired a special meeting of the Council in December 2015 to discuss measures the international community could take to restrict ISIS’s ability to finance its criminal operations via activities such as oil smuggling, kidnapping, human trafficking, and the sale of stolen antiquities. The session resulted in the unanimous adoption of a resolution requiring member states to criminalize all financial transactions related to terrorism and enhance engagement with the private sector.
Security Council Resolutions on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Intelligence Sharing

The rise of ISIS and other extremist groups in Iraq and Syria has pushed the issue of foreign fighters—and how to suppress the recruitment and travel of these individuals to conflict zones—to the forefront of global policy debates. In late 2014, the UN Security Council, with strong backing from the U.S., unanimously adopted a legally binding resolution compelling all countries to put in place domestic laws to prosecute anyone who travels abroad to join a terrorist organization—including anyone who aids a potential terrorist by, for instance, helping raise funds for their trip. The Security Council followed up this action most recently with a resolution in December 2017 urging Member States to strengthen their efforts to stem the threat of terrorism through enhanced border control and information sharing, including calling on Member States to employ evidence-based risk assessments, screening procedures, and the collection and analysis of travel data to identify individuals who pose a terrorist threat.

Building a Stable Post-ISIS Iraq

UN operations are essential in helping to rebuild and stabilize parts of Iraq that were devastated by ISIS. During the Battle of Mosul, the UN and its partners provided aid to 1.5 million Iraqis caught in harm’s way and helped nearly 1 million civilians evacuate the city. The operation was one of the largest managed civilian evacuations in modern history. In 2017, the UN Development Program (UNDP) restored power and electricity to more than 20 Iraqi towns once held by ISIS and rebuilt dozens of schools and hospitals across the country, allowing millions of civilians to return to their homes. UNDP now has more than 1,200 active or completed projects in former ISIS strongholds, putting young people to work and jump-starting communities that were on the brink of ruin. These investments will be critical to ensuring stability in Iraq, helping to address some of the factors that allowed ISIS to gain a foothold in the country.
ECONOMIC & SOCIAL ISSUES
THE UN AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The fight for human rights and fundamental freedoms around the world has been a core part of the UN’s mission from its inception. These efforts stem from the UN Charter—the 1945 treaty that founded the world body—and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948 in the UN General Assembly largely because of American leadership, particularly the efforts of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Seventy years later, the UN works to advance human rights through a number of tools, mechanisms, and partnerships, including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR or “UN Human Rights Office”), UN Human Rights Council, independent human rights experts (sometimes called “special procedures”), and bodies of individual experts that seek to support states to meet their commitments under international human rights treaties.

UN Human Rights Office

Separate from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the Human Rights Office was established in 1993 with U.S. backing. The Office operates 14 country offices and 12 regional offices that provide technical assistance, monitoring, and public reporting related to human rights issues. It has a Rapid Response Unit for swift deployment in human rights and humanitarian emergencies, which has recently supported fact-finding efforts in North Korea, Syria, Bangladesh, Central African Republic, and Sri Lanka, among others.

To help support this varied and geographically diffuse work, the U.S. provided just over $20 million in voluntary contributions to OHCHR in 2017. To put that number in perspective, the U.S. contribution is $3.6 million less than what the Department of Defense spent for new refrigerators on Air Force One last year.

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world…Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

— FIRST LADY ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, MARCH 27, 1958
UN Independent Experts

There are more than 50 UN special procedures with mandates to promote universal human rights around the world through country visits, expert-level reporting, and supporting the work of local advocates on the ground. Considered independent from the UN, special procedure mandate holders do not receive a salary and are expected to serve in their personal, expert capacity.

Existing special procedure mandates include the special rapporteurs on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, freedom of religion and belief, and freedom of expression. There are also more than 10 country-specific special procedures tasked with scrutinizing the human rights situations in nations including Belarus, Burundi, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

UN Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is the only global intergovernmental body created with the exclusive purpose of upholding universal human rights. It is composed of 47 member states, elected for three-year terms by the General Assembly and based on equitable geographic distribution. A political body rather than a court, the Council meets several times throughout the year, passing resolutions on individual human rights situations, ordering inquiries into allegations of human rights violations, and appointing independent experts on a range of subjects to investigate particular countries or thematic human rights issues.

The Human Rights Council was created by the UN General Assembly in June 2006, with U.S. input to replace an earlier UN human rights body that had been criticized as ineffective, politicized, and biased against Israel. Initially, the United States declined to run for a seat on the new body, and in its early years the Council struggled to fulfill its mandate. The Council’s work was unduly focused on Israel and characterized by antagonistic relationships among regional blocs of states.
In 2009, however, the U.S. changed course, successfully running for a seat on the Council with the goal of changing the body’s dynamics; it was overwhelmingly reelected to the Council by UN member states in 2012 and again in 2016. The United States launched its third, three-year term on the Council in January 2017. Overall, the record is clear that U.S. membership on the UNHRC has produced tangible, positive outcomes on a number of core American foreign policy objectives. For example:

- The Council, with U.S. support, established a Commission of Inquiry (COI) to investigate human rights violations in North Korea. In 2014, the Commission released a 400-page report implicating the North Korean regime in a wide range of crimes against humanity, including murder, torture, rape, enslavement, forced abortions, and knowingly causing prolonged starvation. As a result, the human rights situation in North Korea was added to the UN Security Council’s official agenda, and the UN Human Rights Office established a field office in Seoul to track rights violations in North Korea. According to Human Rights Watch: “[The field office] is something that Kim Jong Un should be staying awake at night thinking about, because he is going to be facing a determined team of professional investigators looking and speaking to people to find out the abuses that are taking place against them.”

- The Council established a COI on the human rights situation in Syria, which has helped gather evidence against specific individuals for their involvement in crimes against humanity. In 2018, the COI moved to cooperate with the preeminent global accountability mechanism for war crimes in Syria, the “International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism” (IIIM), established by the UN General Assembly in 2016. In 2015, the Syria COI also acted to share its findings, including a “perpetrators list,” with international judicial bodies. In February 2017, the Commission released the results of an independent investigation into atrocities in Aleppo. Using first hand accounts and satellite imagery the COI implicated the Syrian government in war crimes, including “deliberate” attacks on civilians and aid convoys.

- The U.S. worked with other Council members to establish a UN special rapporteur to scrutinize the human rights situation in Iran. The rapporteur’s most recent report, issued in March 2017, called out Iran’s government for its extremely high rate of executions, noting that Iran had executed at least 530 prisoners in 2016, including juvenile offenders. The March report also noted concern over “targeting and harsh treatment of Christians from Muslims” and others observing what Iranian authorities call “deviant faiths.” This included arbitrary arrests, harassment and detention, and risk of prosecution under apostasy laws.

- In December 2017, the UN Human Rights Council, with U.S. support, convened a special session focused on human rights violations committed against the Rohingya minority in Myanmar.

- With U.S. leadership, the Human Rights Council passed three historic resolutions on combating discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity in 2011, 2014, and 2016. The most recent resolution established an independent expert focused on combating violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The new independent expert will allow for an unprecedented global-level reporting on international human rights challenges facing LGBT individuals, including extrajudicial killings, brutalization, and criminalization of consensual same-sex relationships.
Council membership has aided U.S. efforts to **normalize Israel’s treatment at the UN.** While the Council is imperfect and maintains a disproportionate level of scrutiny on Israel, the proportion of Israel-specific resolutions has significantly declined since the U.S. joined the Council as a member. According to the American Jewish Committee’s Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, there was a 30% decrease in Israeli country specific resolutions during U.S. membership on the Council versus the period when we were off. The number of special sessions on Israel also dropped significantly since U.S. membership—six during the three years before we joined the Council and one in the last three years. In March 2018, the State Department also reported that that Council saw “the largest shift in votes towards more abstentions and no votes on Israel related resolutions since the creation of the [Council].”

The January 2017 Council on Foreign Relations report “Bolstering the UN Human Right’s Human Rights Council’s Effectiveness” found U.S. catalytic leadership on the Council has played a critical role in diluting anti-Israel bias, growing the organ’s appetite for timely country-specific action, advancing fundamental freedoms reflective of U.S. values, and helped to laid the groundwork for accountability in cases of war crimes. On the other hand, the report notes that in the period when the U.S. was disengaged, the Council was largely dominated by countries like Algeria, Cuba, Egypt, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.
PROVIDING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

For many people, the UN is the world’s “911” service in the aftermath of natural disasters or conflicts—a first responder and essential provider of food, shelter, clean water, medical assistance, and education in times of crisis. Given its high degree of international legitimacy, capacity, and operational reach, the UN is uniquely positioned to coordinate these types of relief efforts. Over the last year, UN humanitarian agencies like the World Food Programme (WFP), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and others have responded to crises in a diverse set of countries, providing life-sustaining aid to tens of millions of people in the process.

These efforts have been mounted at a time when the UN humanitarian system as a whole is facing ever-increasing demands on its resources. More than 65 million people around the world have been driven from their homes by war, persecution, or human rights abuses, representing the highest level of forced displacement in the UN’s history. In addition, 2017 saw an unprecedented number of countries threatened by famine, with more than 20 million people at risk of starvation. Provided below is a snapshot of the work of these agencies and the challenges they face.

Working to Prevent Famine

In 2017, a complex mix of armed conflict and environmental factors brought four countries—South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia, and northeastern Nigeria—to the brink of famine, with millions of people facing severe food shortages. The UN has played a central role in the international response to these emergencies. In South Sudan, which has been devastated by a four-year civil war, WFP and UNICEF have significantly scaled up their work, deploying rapid response teams to provide aid to more than 500,000 people each month in remote areas accessible only by air, treating critically malnourished children and pregnant and nursing women, operating a school meals program that reaches 200,000 children, and supporting the societal reintegration of former child soldiers. In Nigeria, WFP is distributing food and cash assistance to more than 1 million people each month in three states—Yobe, Adamawa, and Borno—hardest hit by the Boko Haram insurgency. In Yemen, despite significant access constraints, WFP has been providing monthly assistance to 7 million people across the country since August 2017. In response to a cholera epidemic that has sickened more than 1 million people and caused 2,200 deaths since April 2017, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) are supporting dehydration treatment centers, delivering clean water, providing fuel to public hospitals, and supplying lifesaving medicine and vaccines.

“The U.S. needs the UN to be strong. And the UN needs the U.S. to be integrally engaged.”
—DAVID BEASLEY, Executive Director, World Food Programme, March 14, 2018
Confronting the Rohingya Crisis

In what the UN has termed a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing,” hundreds of thousands of Rohingya, a stateless Muslim minority group in Myanmar, have been driven from their homes into neighboring Bangladesh by an organized campaign of violence and persecution since August 2017. While the UN and international NGOs have only been granted limited access to Myanmar’s northern Rakhine state, the epicenter of the violence, they are playing a crucial role in meeting the needs of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. WFP has provided food aid—including rations and vouchers—to more than 790,000 Rohingya, as well as nutrition support to tens of thousands of malnourished children and pregnant and nursing women. UNHCR has airlifted hundreds of tons of supplies—including tents, blankets, kitchen sets, and sleeping mats—since August, and is building latrines and wells in refugee camps to protect against the spread of waterborne diseases.

Assisting Syrian Civilians

Since fighting first broke out in 2011, Syria has been devastated by a vicious civil war: hundreds of thousands of people have been killed, nearly 5.5 million Syrians are living as refugees in neighboring countries, and more than 6 million are displaced within the country. Here too, the UN is leading the international humanitarian response. In addition to distributing food rations to several million displaced civilians inside Syria every month, WFP provides electronic vouchers that allow 1.5 million Syrian refugees sheltering in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq to purchase food in local markets. These vouchers have helped inject $2 billion into regional economies, creating hundreds of jobs in the food retail sector in countries whose resources are increasingly stretched thin by the refugee crisis. UNHCR is a critical provider of shelter, stoves and fuel for heating, insulation, winter clothing, and medicine to Syrian refugees throughout the region. UNICEF’s work inside Syria has allowed millions of people to gain access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation services, education, and vaccines. UNFPA, meanwhile, provides lifesaving reproductive health services for pregnant women: its maternal health clinic in Jordan’s Za’atari refugee camp—which currently hosts more than 80,000 Syrians—has delivered more than 8,500 children without a single maternal death as of June 2017. 60 percent of all maternal deaths occur in humanitarian emergencies.

Needs Increasingly Straining Resources

As was noted previously, UN humanitarian agencies are under increasing strain as they work to confront historic levels of suffering around the world. Unfortunately, despite the immense humanitarian needs generated by a raft of crises, funding for the UN’s humanitarian portfolio has failed to keep pace. For example, in 2016, WFP needed more than $8.8 billion to deliver lifesaving food aid and nutritional support to tens of millions of people around the world, but received only $5.92 billion from donors. In 2017, there was an even larger disparity: while needs had grown to $9.6 billion that year, the agency received just $5.96 billion in contributions. This has negatively impacted WFP’s ability to serve vulnerable communities. In Syria, for example, the number of people the agency was able to reach each month with food rations dropped from 4 million in November 2017 to 3.3 million in December. In Yemen, where millions are at risk of famine, WFP was forced to drastically cut monthly rations for one-half of the country’s approximately 7 million food aid recipients. Other UN humanitarian organizations have had to make painful cuts as well.

While the U.S. has long been an extremely generous funder of global humanitarian assistance efforts, the current state of affairs is unsustainable and warrants a closer look at how we can bolster the work of these UN agencies and their partners. The U.S. should also redouble its efforts to encourage allies in Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, and elsewhere to do the same.
UNRWA’s Critical Work With Palestinian Refugees

Another UN humanitarian agency is facing an even more dire financial prognosis. Established by the UN General Assembly in 1949 to assist Palestinians who were forced from their homes by the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) provides an array of critical services to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, including the following:

- **EDUCATION:** UNRWA is a critical provider of education, offering primary and junior secondary education free to refugee children. UNRWA schools achieved gender parity in the 1960s and have maintained this record ever since. Overall, more than 50 percent of the agency’s budget is applied toward education, reaching nearly 500,000 Palestinian children with a curriculum centered on tolerance, gender equality, human rights, and non-violence. To put that in perspective, UNRWA schools teach more children than the Chicago school system. In terms of the U.S., only the New York City and Los Angeles school districts serve more students.

- **HEALTH CARE:** UNRWA provides health services (including comprehensive primary care, maternal care, child health, disease prevention and control, and dental care) to 3 million Palestinian refugees, providing 9 million annual patient visits at 143 health facilities throughout the region.

- **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:** UNRWA’s microfinance department provides access to credit and related financial services to entrepreneurs and small-business owners, helping to create jobs and reduce poverty, particularly among young people and women.

- **EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE:** UNRWA is also an important provider of emergency assistance in times of crisis. The agency has scaled up its operations in Syria in recent years to provide lifesaving aid to the country’s 500,000 Palestinians, nearly 400,000 of whom have been forced to flee their homes by the ongoing civil war.

The U.S. has long been a key funder of these activities, contributing a total of $369 million to UNRWA in 2016 alone. However, in January 2018, the Trump Administration announced that it would withhold most U.S. funding for the agency. This amounts to 83 percent of the U.S.’s anticipated contribution, a situation that, if left unresolved, will have far-reaching consequences. In Gaza, for example—where 1.3 million people are eligible for UNRWA services, and more than a decade of conflict and blockade have left 80 percent of the population dependent on international assistance—cuts in UNRWA services could cause a humanitarian crisis; in addition to education and health services, more than 1 million Gazans depend on UNRWA for food aid. The vacuum left by the absence of these services could fuel instability and further empower extremist groups like Hamas.

Jordan could also experience damaging knock-on effects from this decision. With a Palestinian population of more than 2 million, Jordan hosts the largest community of Palestinian refugees in the region. The services provided by UNRWA are an important safety valve for the Jordanian government, which is also hosting more than 600,000 Syrian refugees and whose resources are spread increasingly thin. Withdrawing funding from these programs would likely exacerbate these challenges, placing an even greater burden on Jordanian society and potentially destabilizing a key U.S. ally in the region.

At its core, cutting assistance to vulnerable populations, such as those served by UNRWA, flies in the face of American values and decades of U.S. humanitarian policy. By potentially stoking popular anger and leaving a vacuum that could be filled by extremists, such actions also undermine U.S. and Israeli security interests. Officials in both countries recognize this fact. For example, former Israel Defense Forces Spokesperson Lt. Col. (ret.) Peter Lerner wrote in an opinion piece in the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, "By weakening UNRWA and, consequentially, the Palestinian population even further, without a real administrative alternative, I believe that Palestinians will be even more
susceptible to extremism and violence. This will not contribute to security or stability in the region.” Even U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley expressed support for the work of UNRWA in the past, noting in Congressional testimony last spring, “There is also good that comes out of UNRWA: what they do with schools and health care. You do see value in it.”

Partially as a result of these types of arguments, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to reject an amendment in September that would have stripped funding for UNRWA in Fiscal Year 2018.
In 2015, all 193 UN member states came together to build a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight ambitious targets meant to halve extreme poverty worldwide. While the MDGs were largely met on a global level between 2000 and 2015—600 million people moved out of extreme poverty, 2.3 billion people gained access to improved drinking water sources, 4.3 million malaria deaths were averted, and gender parity and access to primary education topped 90 percent—serious challenges remained for many people around the world. Through a process that had input from millions of people around the globe and here in the United States, countries negotiated a new set of targets to build on the progress made by the MDGs and end extreme poverty.

The outcome of that process—the 17 Sustainable Development Goals—were launched in September 2015 by a unanimous vote of the UN General Assembly. These new goals contain many U.S. priorities, such as ending human trafficking, a focus on access to jobs and collaboration with the private sector, gender equality, and good governance. The goals also seek to finish the job in areas where the MDGs, with the strong support of the U.S., made incredible progress: ending preventable diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria and maternal deaths; improving access to education, food, and sanitation; and promoting gender equality.

The Global Goals were put together with an eye towards harnessing data to improve programs and spur additional investment. The goals also recognize that the siloed approach to development continues to impede progress towards achieving the end of extreme poverty. The 17 goals, can be grouped into five categories: people, prosperity, peace, partnership, and planet. Through these five reinforcing elements, and a focus on data, the pathway to ending extreme poverty is clearer than ever.

The commitment to the goals can be seen through private-sector commitments and country ownership of the goals. Before the goals were even created, the private sector was brought in as part of the solution. Then Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon argued that solutions will come from everywhere and involve “disruptive innovations—and everyone from world leaders and chief executives.” His commitment to involving the private sector has seen multinational corporations like Dupont and Kellogg and local firms like Green World Shipping in Decatur, Georgia, join together in support of the goals.
U.S. Engagement

Combined with the strong grassroots and civil society push for the new set of goals, (75,000 people engaged in the conversation online and across 50 cities) the U.S. played a strong role in member state consultations at the UN during the negotiation process. Because of this strong American engagement in crafting the goals, they reflect long-standing bipartisan foreign policy and development priorities that Republican and Democratic Administrations and Congress have all championed. From promoting gender equality to focusing on hunger and poverty alleviation, encouraging transparency and good governance, ensuring access to safe drinking water, and improving education and global health, the goals reflect the priorities of American foreign policy over the last generation.

U.S. Leadership, Not U.S. Law

While the goals serve as a road map for achieving key global development goals, they are not legally binding. Nevertheless, sustained U.S. leadership in supporting the goals will ensure that we can leverage our resources and expertise with the private sector, governments, faith-based organizations and nonprofits to build a better and safer world for generations to come. The expanded goals represent a new understanding of what works. The goals now include key economic drivers of poverty alleviation, and go beyond foreign aid to focus on trade and investment from the private sector to better account for their important contributions to development, health, and economic and social opportunity. Moreover, by addressing support for the rule of law, rooting out corruption, and increasing transparency (Goal 16), the Global Goals focus critical attention on governance-related issues, which are also critical to combating extreme poverty.

The SDGs provide an important framework for progress globally and here at home by bringing partners to the table and leveraging resources and knowledge.

Here are some issues the SDGs tackle that are of particular importance to Americans:

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

OPIOIDS

GIRLS’ EDUCATION
GLOBAL HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Over the last 70 years, the health and welfare of people around the world has been at the core of the United Nations. Key UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, and WHO have long partnered with NGOs, faith-based organizations, and country governments, and as a result people around the world are living longer, more prosperous lives. As the largest overall donor to the UN, the U.S. is a critical partner in UN global health activities, working to ensure the vision of the UN comes to fruition in an efficient and effective manner.

Provided below is a summary of efforts undertaken by the UN and a variety of partner organizations on a number of pertinent global health and family planning issues. We provide a summary of the UN’s recent work in three key countries, followed by a larger set of global health issues and specific diseases that the U.S. and UN agencies are working to address.

Key Countries Where the U.S. and UN Are Working Together:

JORDAN: UNHCR has been leading the response to the Syrian refugee crisis, providing shelter, core relief items, energy, community services, and health care to 115,000 Syrian refugees living in camps—more than half of whom are children. Agencies like UNFPA have a maternal health clinic in the Za’atari refugee camp that has delivered over 8,500 babies without one maternal death. 60 percent of all maternal deaths happen in humanitarian emergencies.

AFGHANISTAN: In a collaboration between UNDP, the Government of Afghanistan, and the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria, six schools have been established across Afghanistan to train women to be nurses. The WHO estimates that 40 percent of all health facilities are without female staff so these nurses will be critical for women to get access to the health care they need.

IRAQ: In just one day in December 2016, UN agencies including UNFPA, UNICEF, and the WFP delivered desperately needed aid to 42,000 people in eastern Mosul. UNFPA and the Iraqi government created a survivors’ center to meet the needs of women and girls fleeing abuse at the hands of ISIS. The center was fully supported by funding from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.
Key Areas of Collaboration

**CHILDREN’S HEALTH:** The U.S. has long been a key contributor to UNICEF, which is responsible for procuring vaccines that reach 45 percent of the world’s children. Childhood vaccination is one of the most successful medical interventions in the last 50 years, and is responsible for saving the lives of 2.5 million children each year.

Gavi brings together governments from developing and developed countries, WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank to increase access to immunization in poor countries. The U.S. is Gavi’s fourth-largest donor, contributing a total of $800 million in the form of direct funding making up less than 10 percent of total contributions.

**POLIO:** The world has never been closer to eradicating polio. The U.S. is the largest government donor to global polio eradication efforts and has been vital to the work of UN agencies in reducing polio by 99.9 percent, from 350,000 wild poliovirus cases in 1988 to just 22 in 2017.

**GLOBAL PANDEMICS:** The UN system is well positioned with the international credibility, convening power, and organizational mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate health work on a global scale in order to better detect, prevent, and respond to fast-moving pandemics and infectious diseases.

- In 2014, more than 30 countries including the U.S. launched an initiative to work together to achieve the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). This initiative commits to strengthen and support the implementation of International Health Regulations and other global health security frameworks. As the Ebola crisis broke out in West Africa in September 2014, the White House hosted a high-level meeting with 44 countries to announce more than 100 commitments to enhance the capabilities under the GHSA to prevent future epidemics caused by outbreaks. The success of this initiative does not rest on one country’s efforts but on strategic partnerships among all participating countries.

- In the past, cuts to WHO led to major reductions in their outbreak and emergency response units, elimination of critical staff, and severe scale backs in disease surveillance. This played a central role in the slowed response to the Ebola crisis, which cost the U.S. nearly $2.4 billion.

- The new WHO Health Emergencies Program, requested by member states and approved at last year’s World Health Assembly, is only partially funded. If WHO isn’t able to secure full funding, including maintained funding from the U.S.—one of its largest donors—the world is at risk of another major outbreak or worse: a global pandemic. Global collaboration, including the sharing of pathogens and timely reporting of outbreaks, is possible only through a trusted multilateral platform such as the UN and is absolutely critical in preventing health emergencies. A large-scale disease outbreak could cost the global economy up to $6 trillion.
**HIV/AIDS:** The U.S. is one of the largest contributors to the UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). UNAIDS has been an essential partner of the U.S. government since the launch of the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and plays a critical role in global efforts to end the AIDS epidemic. UNAIDS helps articulate the vision and mobilize the political will and resources that support the U.S. goals of saving lives, achieving epidemic control and increasing global burden sharing. UNAIDS ambitious targets for expanded prevention and treatment set the vision for the response to AIDS while the UNAIDS annual global report tracks progress, drives accountability and identifies opportunities to reach as many in need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**WOMEN’S HEALTH:** The U.S. has historically been a leader in international reproductive health and family planning (IRH/FP) efforts and is the largest donor to IRH/FP in the world. While our bilateral assistance continued to be robust, last March, the Administration made a negative Kemp-Kasten determination against UNFPA, halting all funding to the agency. With this assistance, 25 million women and couples receive contraceptive services, helping to avert 7.4 million unintended pregnancies. Currently 214 million women have an unmet need for modern contraception. If we were to reach this unmet need worldwide, we would see 67 million fewer unintended pregnancies, 36 million fewer induced abortions, and 224 million fewer maternal deaths. In 2015, 303,000 women still died as a result of childbirth. The cuts to UNFPA and the reinstatement of the Global Gag Rule (along with its expansion) will further hamper progress on ending maternal mortality.

**MALARIA:** The UN catalyzed a global commitment to combat malaria through the Millennium Development Goals when the disease was still considered neglected. Subsequently, the rate of malaria-related deaths among children under five has dropped 69 percent since 2000. This progress was made possible through the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI), as well as U.S. contributions and partnership with WHO, UNICEF, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. In 2015, the U.S. and other countries reconfirmed their commitment to eliminate malaria through their endorsement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to reduce malaria cases and deaths by 90 percent and eliminate malaria from 35 countries by 2030. Achievement of these targets would result in an estimated 4.5 million more lives saved from malaria, 1.3 billion cases averted, and an additional $4.1 trillion in additional economic output.

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**VENEZUELA**

was the first nation in the world to be certified by WHO to be free of malaria, beating the United States and other developed countries to that milestone in 1961.

It was a huge accomplishment for a small nation, but in recent years progress has backslid. Economic turmoil has caused a serious flare-up of malaria, with estimates pointing to a 75 percent increase in cases in 2016.
REDUCING THE RISKS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

Brief History

Over the last 200 years, modern energy, agriculture, and industrial practices have greatly increased the level of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere (especially carbon dioxide and methane), and there is broad scientific agreement that the world is warming as a result, with damaging and unpredictable impacts on the weather.

In 1992, the international community agreed to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This treaty committed signatories to avoiding dangerous human interference with the climate system and to reducing emissions commensurate with their levels of development. President George H.W. Bush signed the treaty, and the Senate immediately and unanimously ratified it. After years of negotiations on implementation of the treaty—including the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the Copenhagen Accord in 2009—a breakthrough was achieved with the Paris Agreement in 2015. The agreement, which was adopted by 194 countries, seeks to keep the increase in global average temperatures to “well below 2°C” (3.6°Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels while “pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C” (2.7°F). This goal is supported by voluntary national commitments to reduce emissions.

On June 1, 2017, the Trump Administration announced its intention to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement. Particularly given that every other country in the world has signed on to the agreement, the Administration’s action represents a historic forfeiture of global leadership that threatens to undermine efforts to stave off the worst effects of climate change. But Americans from across the country and in all sectors—from U.S. states and cities to businesses, investors, civil society organizations, and citizens—have stood up to declare their support for the agreement. Perhaps most notably, a bipartisan group of 16 governors created the U.S. Climate Alliance and committed their states to work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement.
Scientific Consensus

In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created by the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Environment Program to establish a strong scientific basis for policy on climate change. The IPCC—which depends on the uncompensated engagement of hundreds of climate experts from leading academic and research institutions worldwide—has released five Assessment Reports, each expressing increasing certainty about the human contribution to climate change and warning of the likely consequences if the world does not respond. In 2007, the IPCC received the Nobel Peace Prize for its work.

In 2014, the IPCC concluded its most recent cycle of work and published its Fifth Assessment Report on Climate Change. The assessment made clear that scientists agree that climate change is real, that it is already having adverse impacts on people and the natural world, and that the situation will get much worse in the coming years without immediate and sustained action.

The IPCC has since started work on three new Special Reports: (1) on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C and pathways to achieve it; (2) on the impacts of climate change on the oceans and polar regions; and (3) on climate change, desertification, sustainable land management, and food security. The first report will be finalized in October 2018, the second and third in 2019.
The UN’s Role on Climate Change

The United Nations annually convenes the nations of the world to address climate change through the UNFCCC and informs the debate through the IPCC’s assessments of the published, peer-reviewed scientific literature. Additionally, the UN responds directly to the widening impacts of a warming world through its many arms—for example, the World Health Organization combating increases in mosquito-borne malaria and the Food and Agriculture Organization helping farmers adapt to changing weather patterns.

A public-private partnership launched by the UN in 2011, “Sustainable Energy for All,” promotes three objectives (echoed in the Sustainable Development Goals) to be achieved by 2030: ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. Billions of dollars have been committed to these objectives, including a pledge by Bank of America to invest $125 billion in low-carbon business by 2025.

UN Climate Negotiations

In 1997, 170 countries adopted the Kyoto Protocol as an implementing agreement to the Framework Convention. The Protocol called on developed countries to reduce their emissions by 5 to 7 percent from 1990 levels by 2012. The U.S. signed but never ratified the Protocol.

In 2009, in Copenhagen, the world made a second attempt at implementation, but the conference was ultimately unsuccessful at brokering an agreement on emissions reductions.

The Paris Agreement, reached in December 2015, for the first time brings all nations under a common framework to combat climate change. The Agreement commits the world to keeping global temperatures from rising more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit temperature increases to 1.5°C. The Agreement received broad support—led by the U.S., China, and India—and entered into force on November 4, 2016.

The Paris Agreement is based on country action plans ("nationally determined contributions"), which are to be strengthened over time in five-year increments starting in 2020. The Agreement also reaffirms a commitment made in Copenhagen to mobilize $100 billion a year from public and private sources to help developing countries deal with the impacts of climate change, and it provides for regular reporting on progress. For the first time, it invites non-governmental actors (businesses, cities, states, and NGOs) to engage with the UN process and make commitments on climate.

In addition to the formal climate negotiations, significant progress was made through UN processes in 2016 on reducing emissions from aviation, as well as chemical coolants that are powerful greenhouse gases:

- At a meeting in Montreal convened by the UN’s aviation arm, for the first time, 191 countries agreed to limit greenhouse gas emissions from international flights. Aviation already produces more emissions than entire countries like Canada and South Korea; without this decision, those emissions were projected to triple by 2050.

- A series of UN negotiations concluded successfully in Kigali, Rwanda, with a new deal agreed by 170 countries to phase out the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Used in air conditioners and refrigeration systems around the world, HFCs, are pound for pound, far more powerful greenhouse gases than carbon dioxide.
All photographs are courtesy of THE UNITED NATIONS
IMPACT OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN 2018

Each year, the UN:

- Provides food to 80 million people in 80 countries
- Vaccinates 45 percent of the world’s children
- Assists over 65.3 million refugees and people fleeing war, famine, or persecution
- Works with 195 countries to combat climate change and make development sustainable
- Keeps the peace with 110,000 peacekeepers in 14 operations on 4 continents
- Fights extreme poverty, helping improve the lives of more than 1.1 billion people
- Supports maternal health, helping over 1 million women a month overcome pregnancy risks

And through all of the good that the UN does, it is a resoundingly good bargain for the U.S.:

0.2%
Funding for the UN amounts to 0.2 percent of the total FY ‘18 federal budget

1,500,000,000
The UN has brought more than one billion dollars in revenue to the U.S. from 2014-2016