THE VALUE OF THE UN

PROMOTING PEACE, PROJECTING STRENGTH:
THE U.S. AND THE UN IN 2019

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING BOOK
WHAT’S AT STAKE:
WHY THE UNITED STATES NEEDS THE UNITED NATIONS

Established in 1945 at the initiative of the U.S. and the other Allied powers, the United Nations was given a lofty set of responsibilities: to maintain international peace and security and defuse international disputes by peaceful means; ensure cooperation between countries on efforts to address international humanitarian, economic, and social issues; promote human rights; and advance the development of international law. Scarred by the experience of two devastating world wars, the UN’s founders viewed the new intergovernmental body as a key element in a new international security order they hoped would prevent such horrors from being repeated.

Since then, the U.S. has enjoyed a uniquely prominent status within the UN, serving as a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN Security Council, host of UN headquarters in New York City, and its largest financial contributor. This has placed the U.S. in a prime position to shape the UN’s agenda to advance its own national security interests, foreign policy objectives, and values, which the UN does in a number of ways though various mechanisms.

**PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

UN peacekeepers are deployed to some of the most dangerous conflict zones in the world, tasked with protecting civilians from violence, facilitating humanitarian assistance, supporting democratic elections, and helping to lay the foundation for sustainable peace. While the U.S. itself provides very few troops to these missions (just several dozen out of a total force of more than 90,000), its seat on the Security Council ensures that it plays a decisive role in determining where peacekeepers should be deployed, for how long, and what responsibilities they should be required to undertake. UN peacekeeping is quite cost-effective when compared with unilateral military intervention: According to the Government Accountability Office, UN-led missions are eight times less expensive than deploying U.S. forces alone.
EFFORTS TO COUNTER TERRORISTS AND ROGUE STATES
The UN Charter allows the Security Council to impose legally-binding sanctions as part of its overall responsibility for addressing threats to international peace and security. From its seat on the Council, the U.S. has successfully pushed for the adoption of robust sanctions—including asset freezes, travel bans, arms embargoes, trade restrictions, and other measures—targeting the malign activities of terrorist groups (Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and the Taliban) and rogue states that seek to obtain weapons of mass destruction (North Korea).

ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CRISSES
Armed conflict, political instability, climate change, and other factors have led to an unprecedented growth in humanitarian needs around the world. UN agencies like the World Food Programme (WFP), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and UN Population Fund (UNFPA) are leading the global response, providing food, shelter, medical care, education, maternal health care, and other forms of life-sustaining aid to tens of millions of people in countries in crisis, including Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, Iraq, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Afghanistan. Because the U.S. doesn’t have the capacity or reach to lead every humanitarian response, it works closely with the UN, which brings together member states, NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and others to address crises.

RESPONDING TO INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CHALLENGES
Diseases know no borders, and in our highly interconnected world, a public health emergency in one country can quickly go global. The World Health Organization (WHO) works to meet this challenge by serving as a multilateral coordinating body on international health issues, responsible for monitoring and leading the response to outbreaks of infectious disease, spearheading vaccination efforts, and developing campaigns to combat life threatening illnesses like polio, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. WHO has played a leading role in efforts to combat the recent Ebola outbreaks in West Africa and DRC, coordinate the international response to the Zika virus, and provide medical care to Iraqi civilians fleeing Mosul during the 2016-2017 military offensive.
PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS
Since its founding, elevating and advancing human rights has been a key pillar of the UN’s work. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) conducts fact-finding missions and provides support to independent investigative mechanisms established by the UN Human Rights Council that probe serious violations in specific countries. In recent years, OHCHR has aided efforts to uncover and report on abuses in Syria, Iran, North Korea, Sri Lanka, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Belarus, Myanmar, Eritrea, and Ukraine, among other places. These activities help raise public awareness of human rights violations, magnify the voices of dissidents and civil society organizations on the ground, and provide a tool for pressuring repressive governments and holding abusers accountable.

The UN is certainly not without its imperfections, and like any large institution, benefits from critical eyes that prioritize periodic reassessments and carefully considered and planned reforms. Nevertheless, calls for the U.S. to dramatically scale back its engagement or financial support are strategically unsound. The world currently faces an array of seemingly intractable challenges that transcend national borders—from climate change and extreme poverty, to increasing forced displacement and violent conflicts in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. None of these issues exist in a vacuum, and no single country—even one as rich and powerful as the United States—can realistically hope to tackle them alone. By providing a platform from which countries can work out their differences peacefully and respond to common threats and challenges collectively, the UN is at the center of efforts to make the world a more secure, healthy, and humane place. Moreover, by marshalling the resources—financial or otherwise—of the entire international community, working through the UN ensures that neither American taxpayers, nor soldiers, will have to bear the full responsibility for addressing these challenges.

The following briefing book delves into a full suite of issues, including those outlined above, where the U.S. benefits from the work of the UN.

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 and Former Governor of South Carolina,
March 14, 2018
HOW THE UN BENEFITS THE U.S. ECONOMY

American investments in the United Nations help achieve U.S. foreign policy goals, but the return on investment goes well beyond advancing global peace and security. We also see a tangible economic benefit here at home.

Research conducted by the Better World Campaign found that American companies were awarded $1.74 billion in procurement contracts with the United Nations in 2017 (the most recent year for which data was available), by far the most of any country around the world. Since 2010, U.S. companies have received more than $9.5 billion in contracts with the UN overall.

American businesses working with the UN provide a range of goods and services, including telecommunications, financial services, construction, food production, medical care, and armored vehicles. Likewise, the economic impact of these contracts is immensely diverse, benefitting firms from Alaska to Alabama and Connecticut to Colorado. In fact, 84 Senators and 239 members of the House of Representatives have at least one company headquartered in their district or state doing business with the UN.

Below is a small sampling of some of the American companies that rely on a strong U.S.-UN partnership to employ thousands of hard-working Americans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>VALUE OF CONTRACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Lynden Air Cargo, LLC</td>
<td>$7,917,931.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Experis IT Services US, LLC</td>
<td>$16,734,539.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Plaza Towers, LLC</td>
<td>$8,094,197.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>OpenText Inc.</td>
<td>$459,926.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>U.S. Ocean, LLC</td>
<td>$6,229,760.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Sodexo</td>
<td>$30,035,822.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>Lockton Companies, LLC</td>
<td>$1,033,801.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Securitas Electronic Security Inc.</td>
<td>$1,916,169.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Disease Control Technologies, LLC</td>
<td>$2,622,420.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Retractable Technologies Inc.</td>
<td>$5,836,928.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Multiling Corporation</td>
<td>$903,042.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The UN also generates billions of dollars in revenue each year for New York City. A 2016 report by the New York City Mayor’s Office for International Affairs found that the UN boosts the local economy by $3.69 billion each year—the equivalent of hosting more than seven Super Bowls.

All of this put together means the U.S. economy receives more revenue from the UN than we spend on our UN regular budget and UN peacekeeping dues. That’s a smart deal any way you look at it.
Year after year, the results of a nationwide poll conducted by the bipartisan research team of Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates conclude that Americans strongly support a strong U.S.-UN partnership.

Our latest poll 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 seven 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.
RISING 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 10 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 DUES

Majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats support the U.S. paying our UN general and peacekeeping dues on time and in full.
IMPACT OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN 2019

Each year, the UN:

- Provides food aid to 91 million people in 83 countries
- Supplies vaccines to 45 percent of the world’s children
- Assists over 68.5 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 91,000 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

1,740,000,000

U.S. companies were awarded more than one billion dollars in contracts with the UN in 2017

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