

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FR: BILL McINTURFF/ELIZABETH HARRINGTON/GEOFF GARIN
DT: JUNE 14, 2019
**RE: BETTER WORLD CAMPAIGN – INDEX OF PUBLIC OPINION ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES
AND THE UNITED NATIONS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A national survey conducted from June 1-6, 2019 by Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates, on behalf of the Better World Campaign, shows:

- Overall, more than two-thirds of voters have a favorable image of the United Nations (68% favorable/8% neutral/23% unfavorable). This is the highest favorable rating of the UN since our tracking started in 2009. The image of the United Nations has been trending upward in recent years among voters overall. Looking at those sub-groups with much more favorable views of the UN from December 2016 to today, those who shifted most on their favorable image were: Retired voters, stay at home moms, women ages 35-54, White women, women college+, women ages 55+, Generation X voters (ages 39-54), opinion elites, suburban women, and soft/lean Democrats.
 - As we have witnessed in our years of tracking, partisanship impacts voters' perception of the United Nations. Democrats have very favorable impressions of the UN (87% favorable/7% unfavorable) and majorities of Independents have favorable views (67% favorable/21% unfavorable). A slight plurality of Republicans have a favorable image of the United Nations (47% favorable/43% unfavorable).
- More than eight in ten voters (83%) say that it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for the U.S. to maintain an active role in the UN, with a substantial majority (60%) saying it is “very important” for the United States to do so. Very comfortable majorities of Republicans (69%), Independents (84%), and Democrats (96%) believe it is “very or somewhat important” for the U.S. to maintain an active role in the UN.
- More than seven in ten voters support the United States paying our dues to the United Nations on time and in full (72% favor/25% oppose). This is the highest level of support and lowest level of opposition since our tracking began on this question in 2010.
- Two-thirds of voters support the United States paying our peacekeeping dues to the United Nations on time and in full (67% favor/28% oppose).
 - Majorities of Democrats and Independents support the U.S. paying both our UN general and peacekeeping dues on time and in full. Majorities of Republicans support the U.S. paying our UN general dues (55% favor/41% oppose) but are opposed narrowly to the U.S. paying our peacekeeping dues on time and in full (45% favor/52% oppose).

- More than seven in ten voters say the United Nations is an organization that is still needed today (72% still needed/22% outlived usefulness). Majorities of voters across party lines believe this to be true (Republicans – 54% still needed, Independents – 75% still needed, Democrats – 88% still needed).
- Voters overwhelmingly believe (80%) that it is better for the U.S. to work through allies and international organization than to act mainly on our own (16%). This is true across party.
- Even when disputes arise or when the U.S. does not achieve all of its objectives with other countries at the UN, a majority of voters (59%) say the U.S. should try to find a new diplomatic strategy and new allies at the UN to achieve its objectives, while only 22% of voters say the U.S. should leave the negotiating table and try to achieve its objectives without working through the UN. Nearly two in ten voters say they don't have a strong opinion about this one way or the other or say they don't know what the U.S. should do (19%).
 - There are differences on this question by party: Independents (60% new diplomatic strategy/17% leave negotiating table) and Democrats (76% new diplomatic strategy/6% leave negotiating table) are much more supportive of finding a new diplomatic strategy. Republicans are more evenly split between these two points of view (41% new diplomatic strategy/42% leave negotiating table).
- Majorities of voters believe the United Nations supports America's goals and objectives around the world (63% UN supportive/30% UN not supportive). This is especially true among Democrats (81% UN supportive/12% UN not supportive). Republicans are more divided (44% UN supportive/50% UN not supportive).

DETAILED FINDINGS:

- Overall, more than two-thirds of voters have a favorable image of the United Nations (68% favorable/8% neutral/23% unfavorable). This is the highest favorable rating in our tracking since our tracking began 2009. The image of the United Nations has been trending upward in recent years among voters overall. Looking at those sub-groups with much more favorable views of the UN from December 2016 to today, those who shifted most on their favorable image were: Retired voters, stay at home moms, women ages 35-54, White women, women college+, women ages 55+, Generation X voters (ages 39-54), opinion elites, suburban women, and soft/lean Democrats.

	<i>United Nations Image</i>	
	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
June 2009	54%	35%
October 2009	50%	36%
April 2010	60%	30%
October 2010	59%	29%
May 2011	59%	28%
October 2011	56%	30%
April 2012	58%	30%
October 2012	50%	32%
January 2013	57%	28%
October 2013	60%	28%
April 2014	59%	28%
October 2014	58%	28%
October 2015	63%	26%
December 2016	61%	26%
October 2017	65%	28%
June 2019	68%	23%

The United Nations maintains high favorables with Democrats and Independents. A slight plurality of Republicans have a favorable image of the organization.

	<u>Total Favorable</u>	<u>Total Unfavorable</u>
Republicans	47%	43%
Independents	67%	21%
Democrats	87%	7%

Overall, the United Nations maintains the highest favorable image rating among the organizations, institutions, and people we tested in this survey.

Image	% Total Favorable	% Total Unfavorable	% Total Heard Of
The United Nations	68%	23%	99%
NATO	60%	16%	90%
UNICEF	55%	10%	81%
Donald Trump	42%	53%	100%
The United States Congress	39%	51%	98%

2. More than eight in ten voters (83%) say that it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for the U.S. to maintain an active role in the UN, with a substantial majority (60%) saying it is “very important” for the United States to do so. Very comfortable majorities of Republicans (69%), Independents (84%), and Democrats (96%) believe it is “very or somewhat important.”

- We asked the following question: *“How important do you think it is for the United States to maintain an active role within the United Nations? Would you say...it is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?”*

	<u>Total Important</u>	<u>Total Not Important</u>
June 2009	85%	15%
May 2011	85%	15%
October 2011	86%	13%
April 2012	83%	17%
January 2013	86%	13%
October 2013	88%	12%
April 2014	86%	13%
October 2014	87%	11%
October 2015	89%	11%
December 2016	88%	11%
October 2017	88%	12%
June 2019	83%	16%

Significant majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats agree with this point of view.

	<u>Total Important</u>	<u>Total Not Important</u>
Republicans	69%	30%
Independents	84%	15%
Democrats	96%	4%

3. Voters continue to support the U.S. paying our dues for the UN regular budget. More than seven in ten voters support the United States paying our dues to the United Nations on time and in full (72% favor/25% oppose). This is the highest level of support and lowest level of opposition since our tracking began on this question in 2010.
- Respondents were read the following information and asked the following question: *“Each member-nation of the United Nations pays a portion of the UN regular budget in the form of dues. These dues are based on a member-nation’s capacity to pay or its share of world income. The United States represents approximately twenty-five percent of the world’s income, and is assessed to pay twenty-two percent of the UN’s budget. Knowing this, do you... favor...or...oppose...the United States paying our dues to the UN on time and in full?”*

Pay UN General Dues On Time/In Full

	Favor	Oppose
October 2010	63%	31%
May 2011	60%	34%
October 2011	64%	31%
April 2012	64%	32%
January 2013	67%	28%
October 2013	63%	31%
April 2014	65%	31%
October 2014	66%	27%
October 2015	67%	30%
December 2016	67%	28%
October 2017*	71%	27%
June 2019*	72%	25%

**Note: Compared to question language in surveys before October 2017, U.S. income as a percentage of the world’s income was changed from 26% to 25%, and “is assessed to pay” was changed from “currently pays.”*

Majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats favor paying our general UN dues on time and in full.

Pay UN General Dues On Time/In Full – By Sub-groups

	Favor	Oppose
Republicans	55%	41%
Independents	78%	18%
Democrats	84%	15%

4. Two-thirds of voters support the United States paying our peacekeeping dues to the United Nations on time and in full. This remains strong and relatively consistent with past tracks.
- Respondents were read the following information and asked the following question: *“As you may know, the United Nations organizes peacekeeping operations around the world. Each member-nation of the United Nations pays for a portion of the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the form of dues. The United States represents approximately twenty-five percent of the world’s income, and is assessed to pay twenty-eight percent of the UN’s peacekeeping budget. Do you favor or oppose the United States paying our peacekeeping dues to the UN on time and in full?”*

Pay UN Peacekeeping Dues On Time/In Full

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
April 2012	68%	30%
January 2013	67%	29%
October 2013	71%	27%
April 2014	66%	31%
October 2014	72%	24%
October 2015	73%	24%
December 2016	70%	25%
October 2017*	73%	23%
June 2019*	67%	28%

**Note: Compared to question language in surveys before October 2017, U.S. income as a percentage of the world's income was changed from 26% to 25%, and "is assessed to pay" was changed from "currently pays."*

Majorities of Independents and Democrats support the U.S. paying our UN peacekeeping dues on time and in full. Slight majorities of Republicans oppose paying our UN peacekeeping dues.

Pay UN Peacekeeping Dues On Time/In Full – By Sub-groups

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
Republicans	45%	52%
Independents	65%	24%
Democrats	89%	9%

5. More than seven in ten voters say the United Nations is an organization that is still needed today.
- We asked the following question: *"Thinking about the United Nations overall as an organization... do you think...it is an organization that is still needed today...or...it is an organization that has outlived its usefulness?"*

	<u>Still Needed Today</u>	<u>Outlived Usefulness</u>
June 2009	69%	27%
October 2009	67%	26%
April 2010	67%	26%
October 2010	68%	24%
May 2011	67%	28%
October 2011	68%	24%
April 2012	70%	25%
January 2013	72%	22%
October 2013	71%	23%
April 2014	67%	24%
October 2014	74%	22%
October 2015	69%	26%
December 2016	73%	23%
October 2017	79%	20%
June 2019	72%	22%

Majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats agree the UN is an organization that is still needed today.

	<u>Still Needed Today</u>	<u>Outlived Usefulness</u>
Republicans	54%	40%
Independents	75%	18%
Democrats	88%	8%

6. Eight in ten voters continue to believe it is better for the United States to work with allies and through international organizations (80%) than to act mainly on our own (16%). This viewpoint holds true across partisan lines. Republicans (62% through international orgs/33% on own), Independents (82%/11%), and Democrats (95%/4%) agree with this point of view.

- We asked the following question: *“Now, thinking about the United States foreign policy in general...To achieve our foreign policy goals, do you think it is better for the United States to work with allies and through international organizations or act mainly on our own?”*

	<u>Work with major allies/through international organizations</u>	<u>Act mainly on own</u>
October 2012	78%	18%
October 2013	78%	18%
October 2014	79%	16%
October 2015	82%	15%
December 2016	81%	14%
October 2017	83%	15%
June 2019	80%	16%

7. Even when disputes arise or when the U.S. does not achieve all of its objectives with other countries at the UN, a majority of voters (59%) say the U.S. should try to find a new diplomatic strategy and new allies at the UN to achieve its objectives, while only 22% of voters say the U.S. should leave the negotiating table and try to achieve its objectives without working through the UN. Nearly two in ten voters say they don’t have a strong opinion about this one way or the other (16%) or say they don’t know what the U.S. should do (3%).

- We asked the following question: *“The United States negotiates with other countries at the United Nations on initiatives that promote our economic, security and political interests. However, since it is a negotiation, the U-S does not always achieve all of its objectives. When the U-S does not achieve all of its objectives, should it try to find a new diplomatic strategy and new allies at the UN to achieve its objectives or leave the negotiating table and try to achieve its objectives without working through the UN or do you not have a strong opinion about this one way or the other?”*

	<u>Find New Diplomatic Strategy</u>	<u>Leave Negotiating Table</u>
Republicans	41%	42%
Independents	60%	17%
Democrats	76%	6%

8. Majorities of voters believe the United Nations supports America’s goals and objectives around the world (63% UN supportive/30% UN not supportive).
- We asked the following question: *“Thinking about the UN’s support for America’s objectives around the world, would you say the UN has been very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not at all supportive of America’s goals and objectives around the world?”*

This is especially true among Democrats, while a majority of Independents agree. Republicans are more closely divided with this premise.

	<u>Total Supportive</u>	<u>Total Not Supportive</u>
Republicans	44%	50%
Independents	64%	26%
Democrats	81%	12%

METHODOLOGY:

Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates conducted a national telephone survey of 800 registered voters (320 landline; 480 cell phone), from June 1-6, 2019 on behalf of the Better World Campaign. The purpose of the survey was to measure American attitudes toward international issues and the United Nations. The margin of error on a sample of 800 interviews is ±3.46%.