

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FR: BILL McINTURFF/ELIZABETH HARRINGTON/GEOFF GARIN
DT: SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
RE: BETTER WORLD CAMPAIGN – INDEX OF PUBLIC OPINION ON THE UNITED NATIONS AND U.S./UN RELATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A national telephone survey conducted from September 1-8, 2021, by Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates, on behalf of the Better World Campaign, shows:

- Voters overwhelmingly believe important functions of the United Nations today are to help stop the spread of COVID-19 overseas in poor and developing countries (82%) and provide humanitarian support on the ground in Afghanistan (90%).
 - Majorities of voters across partisan affiliation recognize the importance of these aspects of the United Nations' work.

The poll also shows that significant majorities of voters:

- Believe it is important that the United States maintain an active role within the UN (84%).
- View the United Nations as a relevant organization that is needed in the world today (69%).
- Have a favorable opinion of the United Nations (56%).
- Believe the UN supports America's goals and objectives around the world (62%).
- Believe it is better for the United States to work with allies and through international organizations (75%) than to act mainly on our own (19%).
- Support the U.S. paying our dues to the UN on time and in full (pay regular budget dues – 63% favor, peacekeeping dues – 68% favor).

DETAILED FINDINGS:

Eight out of ten voters (82%) believe it’s an important function of the United Nations to help poor and developing countries combat COVID-19. More than six out of ten voters (63%) think this is a “very important” role or function of the United Nations. Voters across party believe it is important for the United Nations to have a role in combating COVID-19 overseas.

- We asked the following question: *“I am going to read you some different roles and functions some people say the United Nations serves or could serve. For each role or function, please tell me how important it is to you that this be a role or function the United Nations serves... very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important.”*

Helping stop the spread of COVID-19 overseas in poor and developing countries by delivering vaccines and personal protective equipment, holding vaccination drives, providing technical and emergency health services, and educating about the virus.

	<u>Total Important</u>	<u>Total Not Important</u>
Republicans	69%	30%
Independents	75%	21%
Democrats	98%	2%

An overwhelming majority of voters (90%) say it is important for the United Nations to provide humanitarian support in Afghanistan on the ground and protect the rights of women and girls. More than six out of ten voters (68%) think it’s a “very important” role/function of the United Nations to help in Afghanistan. Significant majorities of voters across party recognize the importance of the UN’s work in Afghanistan.

- We asked the following question: *“I am going to read you some different roles and functions some people say the United Nations serves or could serve. For each role or function, please tell me how important it is to you that this be a role or function the United Nations serves... very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important.”*

Providing humanitarian support on the ground in Afghanistan by delivering life-saving assistance to millions in need and protecting the rights of women and girls.

	<u>Total Important</u>	<u>Total Not Important</u>
Republicans	87%	10%
Independents	89%	11%
Democrats	95%	3%

More than eight in ten voters (84%) say that it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for the U.S. to maintain an active role in the UN, with a majority (55%) saying it is “very important” for the United States to do so. Very comfortable majorities of Republicans (73%), Independents (82%), and Democrats (97%) believe it is “very important” 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%
September 2020	85%	14%
September 2021	84%	15%

Roughly seven in ten voters (69%) 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%
September 2020	73%	22%
September 2021	69%	25%

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	51%	41%
Independents	65%	27%
Democrats	90%	7%

A majority of voters (56%) have a favorable opinion of the United Nations.

<i>United Nations Image</i>	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
June 2009	54%	10%	35%
October 2009	50%	12%	36%
April 2010	60%	8%	30%
October 2010	59%	8%	29%
May 2011	59%	12%	28%
October 2011	56%	11%	30%
April 2012	58%	10%	30%
October 2012	50%	14%	32%
January 2013	57%	12%	28%
October 2013	60%	9%	28%
April 2014	59%	10%	28%
October 2014	58%	12%	28%
October 2015	63%	9%	26%
December 2016	61%	11%	26%
October 2017	65%	6%	28%
June 2019	68%	8%	23%
September 2020	64%	7%	27%
September 2021	56%	15%	26%

As we have witnessed in our years of tracking, partisanship impacts voters' perception of the United Nations. Democrats have very favorable impressions (82% favorable/7% unfavorable) and Republicans have a net unfavorable image (35% favorable/ 43% unfavorable) of the UN.

While there has been no increase in unfavorable ratings for the UN since last year, the current trend data shows that more respondents express a neutral opinion of the United Nations and fewer express a favorable opinion. Still, the 30-point net favorable rating for the UN remains significantly better than the ratings for other institutions and organizations.

Image	% Total Favorable	% Total Unfavorable
The United Nations	56%	26%
WHO	52%	36%
NATO	51%	20%
The United States Congress	33%	53%

Majorities of voters believe the United Nations is supportive of America’s goals and objectives around the world (62% UN supportive of U.S. goals/26% UN not supportive of U.S. goals).

- 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 slight majority of Independents agree. Republicans are more split on this measure.

	<u>Total Supportive</u>	<u>Total Not Supportive</u>
Republicans	49%	41%
Independents	53%	33%
Democrats	80%	8%

Three out of four voters believe it is better for the United States to work with allies and through international organizations (75%) than to act mainly on our own (19%). This viewpoint holds true across partisan lines (Republicans – 65%, Independents – 73%, Democrats – 86% say it is better for the U.S. to work with allies and through international organizations).

- 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%
September 2020	71%	26%
September 2021	75%	19%

Majorities of voters continue to support the U.S. paying our dues for the UN regular budget (63% favor) and for UN peacekeeping (68% favor) on time and in full.

- 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

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
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%
September 2020*	68%	27%
September 2021*	63%	33%

**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.”*

- 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%
September 2020*	69%	27%
September 2021*	68%	27%

*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 favor paying both our general and peacekeeping UN dues on time and in full, while Republicans are very divided in their views.

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

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
Republicans	46%	49%
Independents	55%	37%
Democrats	86%	11%

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

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
Republicans	47%	47%
Independents	60%	33%
Democrats	89%	8%

METHODOLOGY:

Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates conducted a national telephone survey of 800 registered voters (65% cells, 35% land lines), from September 1-8, 2021, on behalf of the Better World Campaign. The purpose of the survey was to measure American attitudes toward the United Nations and U.S.-UN relations. The margin of error on a sample of 800 interviews is $\pm 3.46\%$.