

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Barbara Lee Chairwoman
State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Programs Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers Ranking Member
State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Programs Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lee and Ranking Member Rogers:

We write to express our strong support for meeting our financial obligations to the United Nations in Fiscal Year 2023 State/Foreign Operations Appropriations legislation. Specifically, we request \$2.577 billion for the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account, \$1.658 billion for the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account, and \$553 million for the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account. We also request the inclusion of language lifting the arbitrary 25% cap on U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping operations.

The UN continues to serve as a force-multiplier for the United States, helping to protect our interests and promote our values with the support of partners within the international community. For example, UN peacekeeping operations play an important role in shortening the duration of conflicts, stabilizing fragile states, ensuring peaceful transitions of power, and protecting civilians, including from sexual and gender-based violence. Successive GAO reports have found UN peacekeeping operations to be one-eighth the cost to U.S. taxpayers of deploying our own forces. These missions include soldiers and police from more than 120 countries, allowing the United States to avoid deploying a significant number of our own boots on the ground to support them.

In addition to peacekeeping, a range of other UN work also helps advance U.S. interests and values. We have seen UN humanitarian agencies at the forefront of international efforts to respond to Russia's unjustified and illegal invasion of Ukraine. With more than 10 million Ukrainians internally displaced or having become refugees, the UN has been scaling up to provide food aid, cash assistance, shelter, clean water, medical care, and other lifesaving forms of relief to millions of civilians. In Afghanistan, the UN has worked to prevent the collapse of the country's health system by paying salaries directly to doctors, nurses, and other health care workers while skirting the Taliban authorities. The World Health Organization (WHO) continues

to coordinate the international response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing policy guidance, testing and treatment supplies, and vaccines in developing countries around the world.

We were pleased that parts of the final Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus appropriations bill provided robust financial resources for the UN and its family of agencies across a range of critical activities and programs, as well as addressed important issues such as sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations. Unfortunately, even with this funding, the United State has not returned to good financial standing at the UN. Specifically, the final FY'22 legislation failed to lift the statutory cap on U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. As a result, the United States continues to carry more than \$1 billion in debt on its peacekeeping assessments.

Continuing to accrue arrears at the UN harms U.S. efforts to retain influence, advance our interests, and gain credibility in several areas. First and foremost, accumulating arrears negatively impacts our ability to pursue our reform agenda at the UN. In addition, our status as a peacekeeping debtor provides a convenient and damaging talking point to foreign adversaries all while giving them more room to expand their influence at the UN. While the United States has underfunded its financial obligations to peacekeeping in recent years, China substantially increased its own and is currently the second largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping operations (covering 18.6% of the budget). As part of China's comprehensive, long-term strategy to replace the United States as the global leader, China is leveraging these contributions to curry favor with the international community, upend U.S. national security objectives, and push peacekeeping in a direction that more closely aligns with its national interests and values.

As a responsible actor should always do, the United States uses its permanent seat on the UN Security Council to prioritize civilian protection and promote internationally recognized human rights norms in peacekeeping mandates. In recent months, we have seen the Russian Federation do the opposite by using its seat on the UN Security Council to delay, obstruct, and deny the human rights of millions of innocent people in Ukraine. Just as concerning is that despite the overwhelming support for Ukraine from countries all over the world, votes during the UN General Assembly to condemn Russia's ghastly aggression against Ukraine reveal that Russia has also expanded its sphere of influence there. For the United States to remain successful in efforts to lead the international community against the likes of Russia and other foreign adversaries, it is critical that we prioritize full reengagement with the UN, including by paying our dues on time and in full. That is why we urge you to temporarily waive the cap and provide sufficient funding in the CIPA and PKO accounts to pay our peacekeeping arrears. We also urge you to fully fund our share of the UN's other core activities through the CIO account.

We look forward to working with you to ensure we return to good financial standing at the UN. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



Gregory W. Meeks
Chair
House Foreign Affairs
Committee



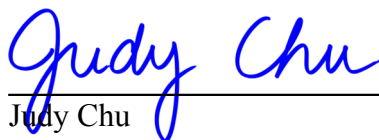
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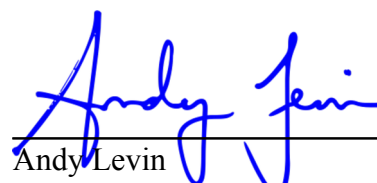
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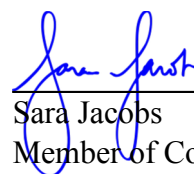
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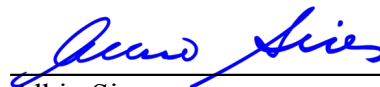
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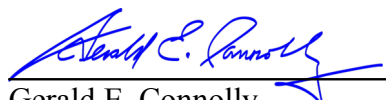
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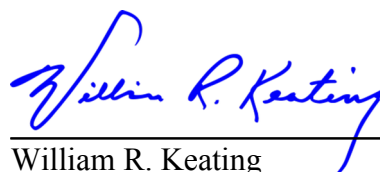
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