

UN BUDGET

The U.S. share of the UN regular budget is **\$707 million**

As the world's largest economy, the U.S. has been an essential financial contributor to the UN since the organization's founding. The UN's regular and peacekeeping budgets are approved by the General Assembly. In 2024, the U.S. share of the UN regular budget was \$707 million. This amount is one-tenth of the Delaware state budget.

The UN regular budget funds core bodies and activities that include the following.

- Special political missions operating in Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and other countries undergoing or emerging from conflict
- Efforts to ensure international implementation and compliance with sanctions adopted by the Security Council against terrorist organizations such as ISIS and rogue states like North Korea
- Many core human rights monitoring and advocacy work, as more than 40% of funding for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights comes from the regular budget

Funding from Member States comes from two broad sources: assessed and voluntary contributions.

Assessed

Assessed contributions are payments that all Member States are required to make under the UN Charter. Assessments provide a reliable source of funding to core functions of the Secretariat through the UN regular and peacekeeping budgets. UN specialized agencies have their own assessed budgets.

Voluntary

Voluntary contributions are made at the discretion of Member States and vital to the work of the UN's humanitarian and development agencies that do not have assessed budgets, like UNICEF, UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and World Food Programme (WFP).

Reassessments

Member State assessment rates are determined by the General Assembly, with renegotiations every three years. During the latest assessments in December 2024, the U.S. maintained a ceiling of 22% on regular budget dues (the only developed country in the world with such a cap on payments to the UN regular budget). The U.S. now pays 26.15% of UN peacekeeping costs, lower than the previous 27%. With the current 2024-2025 peacekeeping budget of \$5.59 billion, **the lower contribution rate would result in annual cost savings of roughly \$44.5 million for American taxpayers. This stands in contrast to China's peacekeeping rate of 23.78% (up from 15% in 2019-2021), costing them an additional \$306 million annually.**

U.S. Arrears: "China's Favorite Talking Point"

Due to late or missed payments and the cap on U.S. contributions to the peacekeeping budget, the U.S. has accrued **roughly \$1.1 billion in arrears**. U.S. debt impacts the UN's ability to reimburse troop-contributing countries. China has referred to the U.S. as the UN's "largest debtor," undermining perceptions of the U.S. abroad.

U.S. APPROPRIATIONS AND THE **UN BUDGET**

In recent years, **U.S. assessments for the UN regular budget, peacekeeping operations and specialized agencies account for around \$3 billion annually - or 0.06% of the total federal budget.** Annual funding for UN assessments is provided by Congress through three accounts in the State Department, Foreign Operations and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations bill: Contributions to International Organizations (CIO), Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Each year, the Better World Campaign formulates recommendations based on anticipated funding needs for these accounts. Additional funding for UN agencies is appropriated through the International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) account.

Funding for these accounts and FY 2025 recommendations are provided below. CIO funds U.S. assessments for the UN regular budget and more than 40 other international organizations, including UN specialized agencies and non-UN organizations such as NATO and the Organization of American States.

CIPA funds U.S. assessments for eleven UN peacekeeping missions, including critical operations in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Golan Heights, Lebanon and South Sudan. All missions are approved by the UN Security Council and play an essential role in promoting stability, protecting civilians and mitigating conflict in strategically significant regions of the world.

The PKO account supports several non-UN regional peacekeeping operations and bilateral security initiatives, as well, including an international observer force in the Sinai Peninsula and the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) that help local forces defeat Al-Shabaab, a terrorist group linked to Al-Qaeda.

Account	FY22 Omnibus	FY23 Omnibus	FY24 Omnibus	FY25 Senate SFOPS	FY25 Final	FY26 BWC Recs
CIO	\$1.66B	\$1.44B	\$1.54B	\$1.68B	TBD	\$1.74B
CIPA	\$1.50B	\$1.48B	\$1.37B	\$1.23B	TBD	\$1.48B
PKO	\$455M	\$460M	\$410M	\$411M	TBD	\$444M
IO&P	\$423M	\$509M	\$437M	\$475M	TBD	\$459M

THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF CUTTING FUNDING TO THE UN

Benefits to U.S. Adversaries

Funding cuts signal a U.S. retreat from the world stage, creating a vacuum that China, Russia and countries misaligned with American values and interests are happy to fill. In addition to being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China is now the second largest financial contributor to the UN regular and peacekeeping budgets. If the U.S. eliminates funding for the regular budget, adversaries will promote a narrative that the U.S. is an unreliable partner disinterested in international cooperation.

Peacekeeping Reimbursements

Cutting American contributions to the UN exacerbates mounting U.S. arrears, with negative consequences for missions in the field.

It means the UN is unable to fully reimburse countries that voluntarily provide troops, police and equipment to these missions. This would also threaten the ability of countries that participate in peacekeeping – most of which are low- or middle-income nations that cannot afford to float the costs of deployment and instead rely on reimbursement – to sustain their involvement. The U.S. – as a truly globally deployed military force – would suffer the most from the collapse of UN peacekeeping by having to divert resources and deployments to stem the corresponding rise in instability.

UN Agency Leadership

Cutting funding to UN agencies means that the U.S. forgoes the ability to influence and participate in the essential work of UN standard-setting bodies.

Following the withdrawal from UNESCO, for example, programs valued by the U.S. around literacy, freedom of the press and Holocaust education were weakened, as was the ability to advocate for U.S. World Heritage sites that can bring an economic boost of more than \$100 million dollars to individual locations. American departure from the agency also paved the way for China to become the organization's largest funder, using that leverage to push UNESCO to support vocational and job training programs in countries engaged in China's Belt and Road Initiative. The U.S. reentered UNESCO in 2024 because it was manifestly in America's best interest.



Direct Effect

In January 2025, the U.S. announced its intention to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO). Without WHO membership, the U.S. loses access to essential information and early warning systems that monitor more than 100,000 health threats each month. Because infectious diseases know no borders, U.S. collaboration with the WHO protects American communities against the spread of measles, avian flu and other global health emergencies.