



**Report to Congress on
United States' Participation in the United Nations
22 USC 287b(a): Reports to Congress by the President. Activities of the
United Nations and of the participation of the United States therein**

This report is submitted consistent with section 4 of the United Nations (UN) Participation Act of 1945 (P.L. 79-264), which provides, in part: “The President shall from time to time as occasion may require, but not less than once each year, make reports to the Congress of the activities of the UN and of the participation of the United States therein.”

What follows is a summary of key activities of the United States government under President Trump and Secretary of State Pompeo in the UN and its agencies during 2020, a year that both marked the 75th anniversary of the UN and that presented new global challenges given the emergence of COVID-19. The current year’s activities will be reflected in the 2021 version of this report, to be submitted in 2022. Upon submission to Congress, this report, as well as previous years’ reports, will be available online at <https://www.state.gov/reports-bureau-of-international-organization-affairs/>.

For the purposes of this report, U.S. participation in the UN is presented under broad categories: UN Security Council; UN Peacekeeping; Human Rights, Humanitarian Response, and Development; Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies; and Budget, Reform, and Administration.

75th Anniversary Commemoration

The UN and its member states marked the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN at several points throughout the year. In January 2020, the UNSC issued a Presidential Statement reaffirming its commitment to the UN Charter. In June 2020, the U.S. government participated in a virtual ceremony to mark the signing of the UN Charter, hosted by the president of the General Assembly. In September

2020, the U.S. government delivered remarks at the UN's ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary, hosted by the UN Secretary-General.

UN Security Council (UNSC)

Working Methods: In response to COVID-19, the UNSC agreed to a range of new working methods to allow member states to conduct their business virtually in March 2020, including new written voting procedures to adopt resolutions. From March until July 2020, the Security Council held discussions virtually via video teleconference. The rotating presidents of the UNSC issued monthly letters clarifying the working methods and the evolving COVID-19 precautions. From July until early October 2020, the few in-person UNSC meetings were hosted in the larger Economic and Social Council Chamber to allow for adequate social distancing. From October 8 until December 31, 2020, a limited number of in-person meetings resumed in the UNSC Chamber.

UNSC COVID-19 Response: On July 1, 2020, the UNSC unanimously passed resolution 2532, which extended support for the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire and humanitarian pause to fight the impacts of COVID-19. The resolution, drafted by France and Tunisia, included a carveout from the ceasefire for military operations conducted against terrorist groups which have been designated by the UNSC. The resolution did not, however, include language emphasizing the importance of transparency and information sharing. This resolution was the first product the UNSC issued on COVID-19, after deliberating for almost four months.

UN Mission Transitions: Over the course of the year, the UNSC established one new field mission, Sudan, and closed the African Union-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), both on December 31, 2020. On June 3, 2020, the UNSC adopted resolution 2524 establishing the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) for an initial period of 12 months. Headquartered in Khartoum and with a mandate spanning the entire country, the mission spent the year establishing its presence on the ground and beginning to implement its mandate to support Sudan's democratic transition.

North Korea: In 2020, the U.S. government promoted full implementation of UN sanctions related to the DPRK's unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile programs. These sanctions included prohibitions on using DPRK laborers; restrictions on supplying, selling, or transferring commodities including coal and petroleum

products to and from the DPRK; and a provision on the seizure and inspection of vessels suspected of prohibited activities in a member state's port or territorial waters.

During the reporting year, the U.S. government continued to exert pressure on member states to repatriate DPRK nationals earning income in their countries and proposed an implementation assistance notice to support member states seeking to comply with this obligation. The U.S. government continued consistent multilateral diplomacy to highlight problematic member states' complicity in sanctions-evasion activities, especially in the maritime domain. The U.S. government nominated 27 entities, vessels, and individuals for designation by the 1718 Sanctions Committee during the reporting period.

Israeli-Palestinian Issues: Throughout 2020, the U.S. government worked to address anti-Israel bias in the UN. This included opposing efforts to delegitimize Israel through 18 one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions. The U.S. government again affirmed that this conflict can only be solved through direct discussions between the parties. The U.S. government continued to support the work of UN Special Coordinator for Middle East Peace.

Iran: In 2020, the U.S. government worked to sustain pressure on Iran to address its continued missile activity in defiance of the UNSC resolution 2231. In February and May of 2020, the U.S. government notified the UN of space launch vehicle (SLV) launches conducted by Iran. The UNSC has called upon Iran "not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology." SLVs incorporate technologies that are interchangeable with those used in ballistic missiles to deliver nuclear weapons. In these letters to the UNSC, the U.S. government warned that Iran's development of ballistic missile technology contributes to regional tension and poses a threat to international peace and security.

In August 2020, the UNSC rejected a U.S. government proposal to extend the conventional weapons embargo on Iran. The U.S. government responded by invoking the snapback mechanism under UNSCR 2231 but received criticism from most members of the Security Council for this action, who argued that the United States lacked standing to initiate the snapback mechanism because the United States had ceased participation in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in 2018.

The U.S. government also worked to draw international attention to Iran's conventional weapons proliferation activities. In February 2020, the U.S. government coordinated a UN inspection of Iranian-origin weapons seized by the U.S. Navy in international waters off the coast of Yemen. The participation of weapons specialists from the UN Secretariat and the Yemen Panel of Experts allowed the UN to draw the conclusion in two separate reports that the weapons were of Iranian origin.

Syria: In January 2020, the UNSC adopted resolution 2504 reauthorizing cross border humanitarian assistance deliveries to Syria for six months and reducing the number of crossing points from four to two, despite U.S. efforts to keep all four crossings open. In July 2020, the Security Council addressed the issue again, adopting resolution 2533. Despite U.S. efforts, in the face of Chinese and Russian vetoes, the resolution further reduced the number of crossings to a single entry point. The U.S. government succeeded in extending the authorization for one year and blocking language that questioned the use of sanctions against the Assad regime. The resolution ensured that a monthly average of 1,000 trucks were able to cross from Turkey to opposition-held northwest Syria via Bab Al-Hawa to provide food, medicine, and other life-saving aid to 3.4 million people in need each month.

The U.S. government also worked in the UNSC in 2020 to support the work of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Technical Secretariat regarding the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons. The U.S. government called for the Assad regime to comply with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, cooperate with the OPCW Technical Secretariat, and fully disclose all information about its chemical weapons program, including two Syrian research centers alleged to be chemical weapons' development sites.

Libya: In February 2020, the Security Council worked to renew resolution 2509, which extended the authorization of measures against the illicit export of petroleum products from Libya and allowed member states to continue to inspect designated vessels off its coast. The U.S. government was able to achieve a resolution that modified the designation period of vessels to one year and requested that the Libya Panel of Experts report any information about illicit exports and imports of petroleum products. Adding this language was a U.S. priority to promote the implementation of the UN arms embargo. The U.S. government worked with the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and in the UNSC to

encourage the implementation of the October 2020 Ceasefire Agreement and progress toward the election.

Somalia: In November 2020, the UNSC renewed resolution 2551, which streamlined provisions of the Somalia arms embargo, renewed the maritime interdiction of charcoal and weapons, extended the mandate of the Somalia Panel of Experts, and added new items to the IED components ban. U.S. efforts also achieved a resolution on countering terrorist financing risks and money laundering, with a focus on combating Al-Shabaab's exploitation of Somalia's financial system.

Women: The U.S. government participated in negotiations on a Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) resolution led by Russia, which failed to pass. This problematic resolution would have undermined 20 years of progress made on WPS. The U.S. government delivered an Explanation of Vote explaining its commitment to WPS and refusal to accept a text that would have weakened this issue in the UN.

Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS): UNSC resolution 2535 on YPS was unanimously adopted July 14, 2020. As the third resolution on YPS, it underscores the critical role of youth in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and prioritizing young people's capacity and empowerment. Among other things, the resolution calls for better implementation of UNSC resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020), institutionalizing the agenda, and developing guidance on protecting young people. The resolution also introduces regular reporting on youth, peace and security and requests that the Secretary-General submit a biennial report to the UNSC.

UNSC 1267 ISIS Affiliate Designations: In 2020, the U.S. government worked to designate five ISIS affiliates at the UNSC 1267 ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida Sanctions Committee. These designations were part of an overall strategy to challenge ISIS affiliates after the defeat of ISIS's physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria. As a result of U.S. efforts, the 1267 Committee approved the designation of ISIS-Yemen, ISIS-Libya, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, ISIS-West Africa, and ISIS-Greater Sahara. These designations enable the U.S. government to leverage UN sanctions in support of U.S. counterterrorism objectives.

UN Peacekeeping

UN peacekeeping missions remain of vital interest to the U.S. government and continue to sustain peace, protect civilians, and create space for the political resolution of conflict. Several missions, including those in Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic, faced increasingly challenging operating environments made even more complex due to COVID-19 and associated restrictions.

In 2020, there were 13 UN peacekeeping missions with approximately 95,000 total personnel deployed. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) also operated under a UNSC mandate and received logistical assistance through the UN Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). As of December 31, 2020, the mandate for the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) ended and the mission entered its drawdown phase.

The U.S. government had 29 military observers and staff officers deployed to five peacekeeping missions and helped lead the UNSC's efforts to renew the nine missions whose mandates required continuous reassessment. The U.S. government also supported the final drawdown of UNAMID; advocated for the Government of Sudan to create and implement a National Plan to Protect Civilians in Darfur following UNAMID's departure; and advanced negotiations on the follow-on Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) special political mission, which is mandated to assist peacebuilding, civilian protection, and rule of law, including in Darfur, among other functions.

In addition to reform, the U.S. government continued to demand the preservation of critical human rights functions within UN peacekeeping operations, resisting efforts from other member states to substantially reduce or eliminate funding for these activities during peacekeeping budget negotiations. The U.S. government was able to ensure peacekeeping operations retained these essential resources while still achieving a substantial budgetary savings.

In 2020, the U.S. government supported peacekeeping reforms in a few key areas: (1) enhancing peacekeepers' abilities to perform the tasks mandated by the UNSC through both policy and capacity-building partnerships (performance); (2) designing and operating UN peacekeeping missions that can achieve their mandates (planning); and (3) pursuing fiscal discipline in peacekeeping budgets. The U.S. government focused on strengthening accountability for peacekeeping performance through implementing the Secretary-General's Action for

Peacekeeping agenda, UNSC Resolution 2436, and ensuring the inclusion of strong performance language in mission mandate renewals.

The U.S. government also continued to advocate for rigorous enforcement of the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The U.S. government pushed for improved support for victims and greater accountability for UN peacekeepers who commit these acts, including through swift and credible investigations.

Building on the U.S. government work during previous years to facilitate the creation of the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) by the Secretary-General and deployment of field-based victims' rights advocates in peacekeeping operations with a high instance of SEA, the U.S. government also supported the launch of a pilot mapping exercise by field-based victims' rights advocates to identify best practices, gaps, areas of overlap, and lessons learned in victims' rights approaches and available services. In 2020, the OVRA concluded this exercise and began developing and implementing projects to expand assistance to victims.

The U.S. government also advanced its campaign to expand women's participation in peacekeeping, with the understanding that operations with greater female participation see fewer instances of SEA. In 1993, women represented only one percent of uniformed personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations; by the end of 2020, women comprised nearly 5 percent of military contingents, 10.9 percent of formed police units, and 34 percent of justice and corrections government-provided personnel.

Human Rights, Humanitarian Response, and Development

In 2020, the U.S. government continued its engagement at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, and other UN bodies to advance human rights and humanitarian priorities.

Despite not being a member of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), the U.S. government continued to engage with independent mechanisms created by the HRC, including the Syria Commission of Inquiry, Burundi Commission of Inquiry, the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, and Special Rapporteurs on human rights in Burma, DPRK, Iran, and Belarus. The U.S. government also engaged with the Special Rapporteurs on freedom of religion or belief, expression, and peaceful assembly and association; Special Rapporteurs on disabilities and the

human rights of internally displaced persons; and the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity. At UNGA, the U.S. government advocated successfully to adopt resolutions condemning the serious human rights situations in Burma, Crimea, DPRK, Iran, and Syria, as well as a joint statement on human rights in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, China.

Empowerment of Women and Girls: On women and girls' empowerment, the U.S. government and other Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) member states negotiated a "Political Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women." The U.S. statement emphasized that societies empowering women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful. Countries thrive when women can travel freely, own property, access credit, live free from violence, and contribute to society on an equal basis as their male counterparts.

During UNGA, the U.S. government negotiated updated resolutions on violence against women, persons with disabilities, female genital mutilation, International Year of the Family, women and girls and COVID-19, rights of the child, obstetric fistula, trafficking in persons, child marriage, and protecting children from bullying, among others.

The U.S. government also advocated for the visibility and voice of civil society in the UN system, including through its seat on ECOSOC's Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Committee). The USG continued to serve on the boards of the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); and UN Women to support each organization's mission and ensure the effective use of contributions by member states.

Humanitarian Assistance: In FY 2020, the U.S. government remained the world's single largest humanitarian assistance donor, providing more than \$10.5 billion in humanitarian assistance. These vital resources were targeted to save lives and reduce human suffering in places such as Yemen, Syria, and the Sahel. Through participation in UN executive board meetings and other mechanisms, the U.S. government actively promoted UN humanitarian organizations' reform efforts to strengthen transparency, oversight, efficiencies, and effectiveness. Given the scale of global humanitarian needs, the U.S. government also encouraged other donors to increase their humanitarian funding. For example, the U.S. government co-hosted an October 2020 humanitarian pledging event for the Rohingya refugee

crisis attended by 34 countries and raised nearly \$600 million in new commitments.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): In 2020, the U.S. government worked closely with and supported OCHA in its efforts to coordinate and improve humanitarian responses to crises and natural disasters in many countries, including South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Libya. OCHA-coordinated relief aid reached more than 98 million people, 70 percent of the total population targeted in UN humanitarian response plans. This marks an increase of 6 percent compared to 2019.

In 2020, the U.S. government also continued efforts to support well-coordinated and efficient humanitarian assistance, including through UN agencies' executive board meetings and the Grand Bargain, a platform uniting 63 governments, UN entities, and NGOs. During UNGA, the U.S. government worked with partners to adopt several resolutions to prioritize resources, access, and measures to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): In addition to the work on PSEA detailed in the peacekeeping section above, the U.S. government also took steps with other donors to improve PSEA-related oversight and accountability of UN organizations and other implementing partners. In 2020, at various UN executive board meetings, U.S. officials regularly raised the need for improved safeguards and advocated the adoption of stronger PSEA measures, such as enhanced SEA risk analysis and mitigation efforts, and prioritizing safe and appropriate investigations, employee accountability systems, measures to remove perpetrators from employment circulation, and reinforcing meaningful and robust action when SEA is reported. Throughout 2020, several UN entities adopted or further implemented such measures. In May 2020, the U.S. government and 14 other donor governments pledged zero tolerance for SEA and pressed for the inclusion of a formal clause on SEA in all donor agreements with UN agencies and other implementing partners, the text of which was developed and negotiated in conjunction with USAID. The U.S. government also continued working to facilitate a coordinated approach across U.S. agencies on these issues. Continued oversight of the UN remains necessary to strengthen protection and accountability measures and timely reporting among sub-partners.

Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies

As in years past, the U.S. government actively engaged across a broad spectrum of UN specialized agencies and related organizations to advance U.S. national interests on a host of matters, including transportation, telecommunications, intellectual property, and economic growth. These bodies include high-profile institutions addressing critical national security issues such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and institutions which can advance the U.S. economy, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Cyberspace: On the cyberspace front, the U.S. government pushed for a transparent, appropriate, and consensus-based process for UN negotiations “to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes.” The U.S. government also continued to push our cyber stability framework through UNGA, over objections from Russia and China. Despite the challenges, the U.S. government and our partners worked constructively through two parallel processes – the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) consisting of all member states and the sixth Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on states’ use of information and communication technologies – both of which are expected to produce reports to UNGA in 2021.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): In 2020, the international aviation industry experienced unprecedented disruptions due to COVID-19. ICAO moved quickly to establish the Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) to provide coordinated guidance to governments and industry operators to safely restart the international air transport sector and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The U.S. government was a leading participant in that process, and CART has issued three reports since the beginning of the pandemic. Each report provided substantive and actionable recommendations to detect and control COVID-19 on flights so that stringent control measures like mandatory quarantines could be relaxed or removed entirely.

Budget, Reform, and Administration

The amount of funds appropriated by Congress for contributions to international organizations in FY 2020 was similar to prior years. The appropriation for the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account, which funds assessed

contributions to the UN regular budget, specialized agencies, and other international organizations was \$1.47 billion, of which \$1.09 billion was allocated for assessed contributions to the UN and affiliated agencies.

The appropriation for the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account, which funds U.S. assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, was \$1.53 billion. The appropriation for the International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) account, which funds U.S. voluntary contributions to many UN funds and programs, was \$390.5 million, of which \$339.7 million was allocated for UN entities, including \$32.5 million allocated for the UN Population Fund that was transferred to Global Health Programs.

As the result of 2019 budget negotiations, many UN agencies adopted new assessed budget levels for 2020. The levels of the assessed budgets at the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization remained constant. The assessed budget of the International Atomic Energy Agency increased 2.3 percent. The assessed budget of the International Labor Organization increased 3.95 percent. The level of the UN regular budget increased by 0.65 percent.

It is increasingly challenging for the U.S. government to identify cost savings at the UN, given the increasing demands that UN member states place on the organization. The U.S. government worked closely with other major UN contributors to limit growth in the UN regular budget during negotiations that concluded in December 2020. In the end, UNGA increased the level of the regular budget for 2021 to \$3.208 billion, an increase of \$12.3 million or 4 percent compared to the 2020 annualized level of \$3.085 billion.

In the Fifth Committee, the U.S. Mission to the UN worked to ensure the implementation of reforms initiated in 2019, including the establishment of the new Department of Operational Support and the new Department of Management Strategy, Policy, and Compliance. This was part of a larger reorganization of UN management structures to better support the speed and responsiveness of program and mandate delivery; establish greater coherence in management structures; and strengthen a performance management culture. In 2020, the UN's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was more effective and agile due to these reforms, which have allowed the UN to make decisions closer to the point of delivery with fewer bureaucratic hurdles and stronger collaboration between entities.

Under U.S. leadership, the Fifth Committee pushed back on some member states' efforts to end the trial of the annual budget process that replaced the biennial budget process and has led to a more responsive, transparent budget with greater oversight. The committee agreed to maintain the annual budget through its trial period ending in 2022. The committee also managed to hold off challenges to derail the implementation of management and peace and security reforms that have led to greater collaboration between departments, decentralized decision-making, and closer cooperation among agencies in the field.

In support of the common system, the committee approved the proposal of a base/floor salary adjustment, conditions of service in the field at duty stations with extreme hardship, and a minor allowances adjustment. The committee disapproved the proposed 10 percent increase in children's allowances, an increase that the U.S. government also firmly opposed.

On development reform, the U.S. Mission to the UN continued to constructively engage to strengthen the development system by implementing the new resident coordinator system. With the support of the U.S. Congress, the State Department was able to make a voluntary contribution of approximately \$21.9 million to the resident coordinator system, helping to ensure that the system would be financed through voluntary contributions instead of assessed contributions, an important accomplishment in the effort to ensure optimal use of appropriated funds.

The U.S. government also engaged with likeminded allies to advance management reforms across the UN system to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UN organizations and strengthen these organizations' oversight mechanisms. At the IAEA, for example, the U.S. government advanced a Board of Governors' decision to make the agency's internal audit reports publicly available annually in line with UN system best practice.

The U.S. government also led member state engagement to develop new accountability mechanisms for UN agency executive heads, including draft rules of procedures for conducting investigations of executives at both WIPO and ICAO. U.S. leadership and engagement on organizational ethics issues, including to combat fraud, waste, and abuse, led to several ethics and management-related reforms. At the Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, the U.S. government oversaw implementation of a member state decision requesting the organization to separate and enhance its ethics and ombudsman functions to strengthen both offices and eliminate the potential for conflicts of interest.