
Disengaging Entirely From the United Nations Debacle (DEFUND) Act

Since 1945, the U.S. has ceded incrementally greater sovereignty to the United Nations system under the auspices of the altogether illusory “customary international law.” As one nation out of 193, the U.S. finances one-fifth of the UN system. Even more egregious is that the vast majority of U.S. contributions are voluntary – which we have no obligation or agreement to provide. Despite the internationalists’ appeal to “soft power,” U.S. dollars are used to make a mockery of our values and interests and those of our allies. Our contributions have given refuge to terrorists through UNRWA¹; facilitated coercive abortions under the guise of “reproductive healthcare” at UNFPA²; provided political cover for the WHO to act as China’s mouthpiece³; and continue to provide the financial armor for the General Assembly to engage in blatant anti-Israel bias. This includes “overwhelmingly” endorsing membership for a State of Palestine last year⁴ and tacitly supporting ICC-led efforts to prosecute Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu given the UN-ICC cooperative agreement.⁵

The bloated, bureaucratic, supranational framework of the UN is the very sort of entanglement that our Founders cautioned against. While Presidents have in the past curtailed funding or initiated withdrawals from specific UN entities, those actions have been undone by subsequent Presidents.

While the UN may have provided a needed forum for diplomatic engagement in the post-WWII era, it has long ceased to be a valuable or responsible use of U.S. resources. The Disengaging Entirely From the United Nations Debacle (DEFUND) Act will withdraw U.S. dollars and participation from the UN system and place strict parameters around any potential UN engagement in the future.

Bill Specifics

- Repeals the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, the primary implementing legislation for U.S. participation in the UN system
- Repeals the United Nations Headquarters Agreement Act, which allowed the UN to establish a sovereign district in New York
- Terminates assessed and voluntary contributions to the UN
- Prohibits U.S. participation in any UN peacekeeping operations
- Strips UN employees and officers and those of any mission to the UN of diplomatic immunity in the U.S.
- Withdraws from the World Health Organization
- Ends US participation in any conventions and agreements with the UN or its subsidiaries
- Prohibits the President from reentering the UN system without the advice and consent of the Senate, which will be subject to a reservation requiring that any ratification instrument include an explicit withdrawal provision

¹ <https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/palestinian-group-accused-harboring-terrorists-received-1b-biden-admin>

² https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-administration-to-eliminate-its-funding-for-un-population-fund-over-abortion/2017/04/04/d8014bc0-1936-11e7-bcc2-7d1a0973e7b2_story.html

³ <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/the-world-health-organization-bows-china>

⁴ <https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12599.doc.htm>

⁵ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/11/1157286>

For more information concerning this bill or to be added as a cosponsor, please contact Karina Mariotti (Karina_Mariotti@lee.senate.gov) in Senator Lee’s office.