Written Testimony Submitted by Ambassador Susan E. Rice,
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations,
To the House Appropriations Committee - State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee
On "United Nations Budget and Policy"
April 6, 2011

Introduction

Chairwoman Granger, Representative Lowey, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify today. It's an honor to come before this committee. We're grateful for your continued support for our work to advance our national interests at the UN—from imposing tough sanctions on Iran and North Korea, to lifesaving peacekeeping and humanitarian work in Sudan and Haiti, to providing critical assistance to emerging new democracies in Tunisia and Egypt.

At this time of fiscal restraint, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to highlight the ways that our diplomacy and investments in the United Nations advance America's interests and values around the globe—and to discuss with you the Administration's priorities for reforming the UN to make it more efficient, effective, and transparent.

Let me start by paying tribute to the dedication and sacrifice we have seen from the brave men and women of the UN in recent days—from those murdered at a UN compound in Afghanistan to those gravely wounded trying to protect civilians in Cote d'Ivoire to those tragically lost in a plane crash in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those who were killed or wounded came from all corners of the globe, but they were united by a shared commitment to protect the innocent, keep the peace, and defend universal rights. We honor their sacrifice by rededicating ourselves to promoting the principles for which they gave their lives.

I'd like to begin with the current crisis in Libya, where, with U.S. leadership, the UN has taken strong action. To prevent impending massacres in Benghazi and elsewhere, the UN Security Council authorized all necessary measures to protect civilians including a no-fly zone. The Security Council swiftly imposed strong sanctions on Colonel Qadhafi and those who still stand by him—imposing a travel ban, and asset freeze on key regime figures, banning all flights by Libyan-owned planes, freezing the assets of Libyan government entities, including the Central Bank and National Oil Corporation, and imposing an arms embargo that will be enforced through vigorous cargo inspections. The Council has also referred the situation in Libya to the International Criminal Court—the first time it has ever unanimously agreed on a referral. With broad international support, the General Assembly suspended Libya from the UN Human Rights Council by consensus —another historic first. Meanwhile, UN agencies—including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Food Program, and others—are working to meet the needs of the tens of thousands of refugees and displaced migrants. The Secretary General appointed a Special Envoy to Libya, Abdel Ilah Al-Khatib, and

dispatched him to meet with leaders of the Libyan Government and the opposition, as well as key regional representatives and our coalition partners.

The crisis in Libya reminds us of the UN's value in an age of 21st-century challenges. We are the world's most powerful country, but even a superpower's resources and influence are not limitless. That's why the United Nations is so important to our national security—and a worthwhile investment for the American taxpayer. The UN allows us to share the costs and burdens of addressing global problems - even more important in today's tough fiscal environment - rather than leaving the world to look to America alone. At the same time, we're ever mindful of the UN's shortcomings, and we're always clear with UN colleagues about them—and not always diplomatically. But the sum of what we get from the United Nations is a solid return on the roughly one-tenth of one percent of government spending that we invest. When we meet our financial obligations to the UN, we make Americans safer, save lives around the world, and share the burden of tackling common problems that threaten us all.

Advancing U.S. Interests and Values at the United Nations

Our leadership at the United Nations advances America's interests in five fundamental ways.

First, the UN prevents conflict and keeps nations from slipping back into war. Since 1948, UN peacekeeping and political missions have saved countless lives, ended wars, and helped bring democracy to dozens of countries. More than 120,000 military, police, and civilian peacekeepers are now deployed in 14 operations around the world. Of that total, less than 100 are American military personnel, who always remain under US command. This is burden-sharing at its best, and it is making a real difference.

In Iraq, the UN is mediating local disputes, supporting Iraqi refugees, and helping the Iraqi government deliver critical services such as education, water, and security. These activities move us closer to the goal of bringing our soldiers home responsibly.

In Afghanistan, the UN supports the country's political and social transition with an assistance mission of more than 2,000 national and international staff. The UN promote girls' education, provides critical humanitarian assistance, and supports Afghan governmental institutions.

South Sudan, soon to be the world's newest nation, owes a great debt to the UN. Due in large part to UN assistance, the referendum on independence was successful, credible, and on time. UN diplomats played a critical role in persuading Sudanese President Bashir's government to accept peacefully South Sudan's independence, and the UN is likely to be called upon to help build this new nation.

In Darfur, the UN and African Union peacekeeping mission known as UNAMID protects civilians and provides much-needed humanitarian access. The genocide in Darfur has claimed nearly 300,000 lives. As much as a quarter of Darfur's total population – close to 2 million civilians – remain displaced from their homes. The Government of Sudan continues to use aerial

bombings, which routinely kill civilians. Persistent insecurity continues to hamper the delivery of humanitarian aid to an estimated 368,000 people.

In Liberia, with critical support from UN peacekeepers, national elections were held in 2005, resulting in Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's election as the first female President in Africa. The UN's 9,000 troops and police maintain the peace and assist in rebuilding Liberia's armed forces.

In Haiti, thanks to the resilience of a 12,000-person UN peacekeeping force, U.S. troops were able to conclude their incredible work and come home swiftly after the devastating earthquake in January 2010. That quake also took the lives of 102 UN personnel, including most of the mission's leadership. Despite that terrible blow, the UN rallied and played a key role coordinating and delivering relief after the disaster, and has continued to help provide security.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UN's 19,000-strong peacekeeping mission is helping stabilize the conflict-riddled east. Under the leadership of former U.S. ambassador Roger Meece, the UN mission (MONUSCO) helps protect civilians in perilous conditions—even more so in recent months, when the mission has stepped up its patrols and community liaison efforts. UN personnel also disarm former combatants, support the promotion of human rights, and liberate children that militias have tried to exploit as soldiers.

UN troops in these and other hot spots cost a fraction of what it would cost to field a U.S. soldier to do the same job. The UN reimburses countries that contribute troops a little more than $1,000 a month per soldier; the U.S. share of that bill is approximately $270. An American soldier deployed in similar conditions would cost us several times that amount. For example, according to a 2007 GAO study, deploying one U.S. soldier in Haiti would cost us eight times as much as deploying a UN peacekeeper.

Second, the UN helps halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In the past two years, with U.S. leadership, the Security Council has imposed the toughest sanctions that Iran and North Korea have ever faced. Strong Security Council resolutions have provided a foundation for others—from the European Union to Canada to South Korea and Japan—to impose additional sanctions of their own.

These sanctions are showing results. The Security Council called upon states to inspect suspicious cargo in their airports, seaports, and even on the high seas. As a result, states are blocking transfers of missile parts, explosives, and other nuclear-related technology—all of which the transfer or use by Iran or North Korea are now prohibited by UN resolutions.Late last year, Nigeria seized tons of Iranian munitions. A few months earlier, a European country reported efforts to block a North Korean attempt to acquire graphite processing equipment that could be used in North Korea's nuclear program. Strong and sustained UN action makes crystal-clear to governments that defy their international nuclear obligations that they will face isolation and significant consequences.

Third, the UN helps isolate terrorists and human rights abusers. UN sanctions target individuals and companies associated with terrorism, atrocities, and cross-border crime, such as trade in conflict minerals. The UN helps enforce these measures through a network of expert panels and committees. For example, the Security Council committee established in the wake of 9/11 to impose sanctions against individuals and entities associated with al-Qaeda and the Taliban now includes roughly 400 individuals and 100 entities. Late last year, a Security Council committee imposed sanctions on four individuals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for serious human rights abuses, including recruiting child soldiers; it froze their assets and banned them from international travel. In 2009, the Security Council put Eritrea under UN sanctions to pressure it to stop supporting al-Shabaab and destabilizing Somalia and the greater region.

Fourth, UN humanitarian and development agencies often go where nobody else will go to provide desperately needed assistance. UN humanitarian and development assistance does more than save lives. It also helps break the devastating downward spiral of chronic desperation that fuels violence and threatens international peace and security.

When 125,000 Iraqi refugees faced desperate conditions, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees provided cash grants to buy heating fuel and warm clothes. In Darfur and surrounding areas in Northern Sudan, UN agencies provided more than 3 million people with chlorinated water and more than 450,000 people with safe water and sanitation facilities. In Pakistan, the World Food Program now delivers food assistance to millions in need after last year's terrible floods. UNICEF provided clean drinking water for 3 million flood-affected Pakistanis and repaired or rebuilt about 4,000 schools. When polio erupted in Central Asia last year, the World Health Organization vaccinated 6 million kids in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—at a cost of less than $2 million. With millions of young people at risk from deadly disease, UNICEF provides vaccines to fully 40 percent of the world's children, and it supplies millions of insecticide-treated mosquito nets in 48 countries to prevent malaria.

The UN helps draw attention to the links between poverty, education, and political reform. Years before the dramatic tide sweeping the Middle East, the UN Development Program produced the path-breaking Arab Human Development Report, written and compiled by leading Arab scholars and researchers, which helped draw attention to the rising demand for reform and change in the Middle East from within the region. These valuable reports spurred important debates on the need for political leaders to fix the key deficits of freedom, knowledge, and women's empowerment in the region—and recent events prove how far-sighted this work was.

By promoting the **Millennium Development Goals**, the United Nations helps combat poverty and ensure that all children have the basic opportunities that we insist upon for our own kids. These goals include cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015, slashing the mortality rate of children under 5 by two-thirds, and halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases by 2015. The UN has helped galvanize substantial progress toward these goals. Although much remains to be done, nearly half a billion people have been lifted out of poverty world-wide. The number of children in developing countries who die

before their fifth birthday is still far too high, but it dropped from 11.9 million deaths in 1990 to 7.7 million deaths in 2010. Access to treatment for HIV/AIDS in low- and middle-income countries has also grown ten-fold in just five years. The UN has also helped provide safe drinking water to the 1.7 billion people who gained access since 1990. The UN supports universal access to primary education by investing in programs to increase enrollment, such as advocating legal frameworks that guarantee eight to ten years of uninterrupted basic education. The UN also works to end child marriages and provides incentives to poor and rural families to send their children to school.

Fifth, the UN promotes universal values Americans hold dear.

Since the UN's founding in the wake of World War II, protecting and promoting **human rights** has been at its core. On behalf of President Obama and the United States, I had the honor to build on that legacy by signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities—the first new human rights treaty of the 21st century. We have also been proud to recently announce our support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And when some countries sought to remove a reference to sexual orientation in a UN resolution on extrajudicial killing, we fought back so that when the final resolution passed in the General Assembly, it was crystal clear that nobody should ever be murdered because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Last year, we led efforts at the Human Rights Council to promote the full equality of women worldwide and better protect the ability of human rights defenders in oppressive countries to exercise freedom of assembly and association. The United States also succeeded in passing resolutions in the General Assembly condemning the terrible human rights records of Iran, North Korea, and Burma—by the largest margins ever. We have supported expanding UN human rights monitors deployed in the field, who can deter would-be human rights violators around the world.

The UN also does critical work to support **democracy**. The governments of Egypt and Tunisia have reached out for UN assistance with their upcoming elections. Last month, the UN fielded a senior team to offer technical support as Tunisia's interim government struggles to implement democratic reforms that their people have demanded for years. The United Nations has helped many emerging democracies by providing legal, technical, and financial assistance. Over the past decade alone, dozens of countries—**including Sierra Leone, Zambia, Bangladesh, and Iraq**—have received support, including training for electoral officials, dispute resolution, voter registration, and electoral administration.

The United States has also led in the fight at the UN for **equality and women's rights**. We forged a broad coalition to create UN Women, a new UN agency to empower women and girls. UN Women streamlines disparate efforts on women across the UN system, elevating women's issues throughout the UN's work. This consolidation also enabled the UN to achieve efficiencies (one front office, one IT system, one set of experts, etc..). The United States strongly supports

the leadership of former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, who was chosen by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to head this important new agency.

Promoting UN Reform

Madame Chairman, members of the committee, I hope these five points give you a fuller sense of the value the UN offers to the American taxpayer. Let me turn now to the question of how the UN can do better—and to the Administration's sustained and determined efforts to reform the UN and improve its management practices.

As the UN's largest financial contributor, founding member, and host country, the United States has the greatest stake in ensuring that the UN delivers results efficiently and effectively. The more effective the UN is, the better it can advance our shared interests and values. I work every day with the UN, so I'm very much aware of its imperfections. This is a large, complex system, and fixing it isn't a simple matter of flipping a switch. The UN is a body made up of 191 other member states, with their own interests and sometimes opposing efforts. When the UN stumbles, it's usually because its members stumble—because big powers duck tough issues in the Security Council or because spoilers grandstand in the General Assembly. Lasting and far-reaching reform will require American leadership, determination, and patience.

Our efforts today focus on reforms that can enable the UN to do more with less. We are working to foster a culture of accountability and transparency; to improve business practices throughout the UN system; and to build up the political will and operational capacities to deliver lifesaving services to those in need.

Our reform agenda focuses on seven priorities.

First, UN managers must enforce budget discipline. Last month, Secretary-General Ban instructed senior managers to cut 3 percent from current budget levels for his next budget. This would be the first proposed reduction compared to the previous year of spending in ten years. At this moment of economic distress at home and abroad, at a time when governments are making painful cuts, we are working to help the United Nations to take cost saving measures such as abolishing long-vacant posts, freezing pay for UN staff, exploring alternative business practices, and finding other efficiencies to offset the cost of new or increased responsibilities.

Second, we continue to demand a culture of transparency and accountability for resources and results. We aggressively promote a strengthened, independent Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and an improved UN Ethics Office to ensure accountability and better manage financial risk. In recent years, the United States has led efforts in the General Assembly to defend the operational independence of OIOS and ensure that it has the resources it needs. We defeated efforts to restrict access by member states to OIOS reports, and we pressed the General Assembly to reaffirm that right of access—as part of our larger drive to foster a culture of transparency and accountability. The United States was instrumental in ensuring that the

cases and competencies of the Procurement Task Force, established in response to lapses in the Oil-for-Food program, were transferred and integrated into OIOS, so its important work could continue.

The United States actively supports the newly appointed UN Inspector-general, Carman Lapointe of Canada. She is a tough and experienced auditor committed to carrying out aggressive investigations into waste, fraud, and abuse. We are working closely with Ms. Lapointe to ensure she has the resources and support to bolster OIOS' investigative work, including more capacity in the field.

A respected American, Joan Dubinsky, now heads the UN Ethics Office. We demand strong disciplinary action when ethics violations occur. We are pressing for deployment of a strong, mandatory ethics training program for all managers and mandatory public financial disclosure for all senior UN officials.

The United States also leads efforts to enhance transparency and accountability across the wider UN system, including UN funds, programs, and specialized agencies. We work hand in hand with the UN to make sure aid is coordinated, and that duplication with our national efforts is avoided. Despite its many successes, UNDP has a long way to go on internal oversight and accountability, including donor access to program audits—an issue that we press them on regularly. And we work closely with an American, Anthony Lake, who now heads UNICEF, to support reforms that will strengthen its unmatched ability to reach the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Third, the UN needs a more mobile and meritocratic civilian workforce. Today's United Nations mostly works in the field, mediating conflicts, peacekeeping, delivering humanitarian assistance, or supporting development—not sitting behind a desk in New York or Geneva. The United States has supported major human resource reforms in the General Assembly that streamline the large, confusing array of contracts previously used to hire UN staff and harmonize different conditions of service across the UN system. These reforms should help reward staff for taking on tough assignments in places such as Darfur, the eastern DRC, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

We are urging the UN to do more to make human resources reform a top priority—replicating best practices in the public and private sectors to reward top performers, develop staff skills, and streamline the workforce, and building partnerships that will help the UN focus on core missions. We are pressing the UN to slash recruitment time to fill critical vacancies, as well as to continue to invest in its senior leadership appointment process to field the best possible leadership teams for crucial missions.

Fourth, we are improving protection of civilians across the UN system. The United States has consistently led Security Council efforts to strengthen UN peacekeeping mandates to protect civilians. That leadership resulted in the groundbreaking Resolution 1820, which gives the UN better tools to combat sexual violence in conflict zones, including the first-ever UN Special

Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We consistently demand accountability for those responsible for genocide and war crimes, most recently in Libya. And President Obama personally stressed the importance the United States attaches to protecting civilians in war zones in his historic September 2009 meeting in New York with the leaders of the countries that contribute the most troops and police to UN operations.

We are also urging senior UN officials in the field to adopt mission-wide strategies to ensure they're living up to their Security Council mandates to save innocent lives. We urge countries that contribute forces to UN missions to press their soldiers and police to use all tools at their disposal to protect civilians in danger. This is particularly important when it comes to the shocking and horrific use of rape as a weapon of war, which has reached epidemic proportions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere. We press for zero tolerance and full accountability for the unacceptable cases when peacekeepers betray their honor and victimize the civilians they should be protecting.

We are encouraged that DRC military officers have recently been prosecuted for conflict-related sexual violence, including the conviction of senior officers for mass rape and crimes against humanity. We will continue to demand justice. One rape is one too many. But as we continue to push for improvement, we must remain mindful that the Democratic Republic of Congo is a country the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River, with few roads, few police, and far too many marauders. Some 20,000 peacekeepers with only a couple dozen helicopters cannot be everywhere they may be needed all the time.

Fifth, we are ensuring that peacekeeping missions have reasonable mandates they can fulfill. From 2000 to 2008, the annual UN peacekeeping budget rose dramatically—from roughly $1 billion in 2000 to more than $7 billion by the end of the Bush Administration. Over the same period, the total number of peacekeeping personnel deployed globally under the UN flag grew from 40,000 to more than 120,000. Not only did the total number of UN peacekeepers grow more than three-fold, they were also sent by the Security Council into new and tougher environments: uncooperative host countries, conflicts where there wasn't much peace to keep, and places such as Darfur where UN forces struggle to cover the vast terrain.

We insist that missions match mandates and that mandates be implementable. We are judicious about when and where we establish new peacekeeping missions. Not a single new UN peacekeeping operation has been created in the last two years. Meanwhile, we supported the closure of a UN mission in Chad and the Central African Republic, saving up to $600 million per year. In fact, in 2010, for the first time in six consecutive years, we managed to reduce the peacekeeping budget. We also led efforts to end the UN Mission in Nepal once its contributions reached the point of diminishing returns.

Sixth, we are working to overhaul the UN's administrative and logistical support systems for peacekeeping missions. Traditionally, the UN creates a separate administrative and logistics support structure for each new peacekeeping operation. But it would be far more cost-effective to have one support structure serving several peacekeeping and political missions in a

particular area. The previous, piecemeal approach to field support meant delayed deployments and unnecessary costs. So we pushed hard to secure adoption of the Secretary-General's new Global Field Support Strategy, one of the four planks of the "New Horizons" peacekeeping reform agenda—a five-year effort to overhaul the policies, performance standards, capabilities, planning, oversight, and logistics support for peacekeeping operations.

Implementing the Global Field Support Strategy is projected to yield tens of millions of dollars in annual savings in 2011—for instance, by providing common air-transportation services and back-office administrative support to UN missions in East Africa and the Great Lakes through a Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda.

And finally, we are pressing the UN to complete an ongoing overhaul of the way it conducts its day-to-day business, including upgrading its information technology platforms, procurement practices, accounting procedures, and budget planning. The UN is in the midst of a major exercise, known as the Enterprise Resource Planning project, to revise business processes for core administrative functions and to employ modern information systems to manage them in the future. This could lead to sweeping administrative reform and hundreds of millions in annual savings—which is why have an active interest in closely monitoring its implementation. We are also pushing the UN to fully implement the International Public Sector Accounting Standards to bring the UN system in line with modern accounting practices.

The United States continues to lead the charge for serious and comprehensive reform. We demand a UN that is more lean, more nimble, and more cost-effective. No one pushes harder than the United States to protect whistleblowers, impose budget discipline, and promote transparency. And we will not rest until the UN reduces its bureaucracy, reaps greater savings, rewards talent, and retires underperformers.

The Human Rights Council

We hope the taxpayers' confidence in the UN will continue to grow as it makes progress on the reforms I have just mentioned. But the UN's credibility and efficacy also require it to live up to its founding principles, especially in bodies such as the Human Rights Council.

The United States joined the Human Rights Council to strengthen and reform it. We have no illusions about the Human Rights Council. But the results there were worse when America sat on the sidelines. Dictators frequently weren't called to account; abused citizens couldn't count on their voices being heard; and Israel was relentlessly bashed. As Secretary of State Clinton said, we joined the HRC "not because we don't see its flaws, but because we think that participating gives us the best chance to be a constructive influence." Indeed, U.S. engagement and leadership are paying dividends as we press for significant change session by session.

Earlier this month, the General Assembly suspended Libya's membership from the Council—the first time any country has been suspended from the Council or the Human Rights Commission that came before it—and it held a special session in late February, 2011 that established an

independent commission of inquiry into the ongoing violence. Since joining the Council, we have broadened support to renew the term of the UN's Independent Expert on Sudan, the only international mechanism monitoring human rights violations throughout the country—in the face of staunch opposition. We led efforts to create a new Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and Association, giving civil society organizations additional protection from oppressive governments. We pushed to ensure that countries can no longer claim an international sanction for blasphemy laws. We led action to establish a group of independent experts to promote ending discrimination against women and girls.

Throughout our membership on the Council, we have consistently highlighted the human rights abuses of the Iranian government. Most recently, the U.S. and partners led a successful effort to establish a new Special Rapporteur to shine a spotlight on human rights abuses in Iran — the first country-specific mandate created by the Council since 2006. We will continue to push for strong action by the Council and the General Assembly to hold the Iranian government accountable for future violations.

We have made a priority of pressing the Council to come to grips with human rights emergencies wherever and whenever they occur. U.S. leadership led to a Special Session on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, sending Laurent Gbagbo a clear message that the world is watching, and helped establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate abuses there. The United States also played a pivotal role in February in the Council's creation of an independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations by the Government of Libya. The United States has also worked to reauthorize the Special Rapporteur on human rights in North Korea, winning more votes this year than last. But, the Council's record during emergencies remains mixed; it rose to the occasion in response to recent crises in Libya, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and Kyrgyzstan, but it has not yet addressed Zimbabwe, Belarus, or Syria. We will continue to work to ensure that the right mechanisms are in place to call the Council to action when necessary.

We believe that membership on the Human Rights Council should be earned through respect for human rights, not accorded to those who abuse them. While no UN body can expect to have only countries with perfect records on it, we are focused on keeping the most egregious and disruptive human rights abusers off the Council, as we did last year when Iran sought a seat. They make a mockery of the Council, as well as the credibility of the United Nations as a whole. As recent events in Libya demonstrate, countries that grossly and systematically violate human rights have no place on the body. We succeeded in getting Iran to withdraw its candidacy last year and in suspending Libya's membership this winter, and we firmly oppose Syria's candidacy this year.

We have found that change at the Council can best be achieved resolution by resolution, forcing the body to address urgent and chronic human rights situations, and insisting upon principles of universality and objectivity. Taken together, the actions of the recent session of the Human Rights Council represent continued positive change in the Council's trajectory and are substantially due to U.S. engagement. Throughout negotiations in Geneva and New York,

the United States has pushed for a serious review of the Human Rights Council that would lead to real improvements in its ability to meet its core mission: promoting and protecting human rights. Unfortunately, the Geneva process fell well short. As a result, we will continue to press in New York for measures that will strengthen the Council's membership criteria, including calls for contested regional slates in elections and having candidate countries defend their human rights records in a public forum.

Finally, we consistently push for fair treatment of Israel, including eliminating Item Seven, the stand-alone agenda item that unfairly singles out Israel while all other countries are treated under a common item. Structural bias against Israel is wrong, and it undermines the important work we are trying to do together as member states. We have already taken the Council in a better, stronger direction, but much more needs to be done.

Singling Out Israel

That brings me to another important priority: ensuring Israel gets normal treatment in the UN system. UN members devote disproportionate negative attention to Israel and consistently adopt biased resolutions. I spend a good deal of time working to ensure that Israel's legitimacy is beyond dispute and its security is never in doubt.

The tough issues between Israelis and Palestinians can only be solved by direct negotiations between the two parties, not in New York. That's why the United States vetoed a Security Council resolution on settlements in February that risked hardening the positions of both sides. Like every administration that has dealt with this issue, we believe that Israeli settlement activity is illegitimate, undermines Israel's security, and corrodes hopes for peace and stability in the region. But we also think it unwise for the Security Council to attempt to resolve the core issues that divide Israelis and Palestinians.

We've been plain about the deep flaws of the Goldstone Report and the Human Rights Council's inquiry into the tragic flotilla episode. As we made clear when the Goldstone Report was initially presented, and as we have maintained ever since, we did not see any evidence that the Israeli government had intentionally targeted civilians or otherwise engaged in war crimes—and we note that, in a Washington Post op-ed last weekend, Justice Goldstone has now reached the same conclusion. We would like to see the UN end its actions related to the Goldstone Report and the reports that have flowed from it, and we will continue working to end the anti-Israel bias in the Human Rights Council and other UN bodies. That includes consistently opposing anti-Israel resolutions in the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, and elsewhere. Last year at UNESCO in Paris, we were the only "no" vote on five anti-Israel resolutions forced to a vote by the Arab group. In 2009, we withdrew from the Durban Review Conference due mainly to its insistence on reaffirming the 2001 Durban Declaration, which unfairly singles out Israel.

The United States continues to fight for full and equal Israeli participation throughout the UN system. We supported Israel's election to the leadership of the UN Commission on Sustainable

Development and as Chair of the Kimberley Process on conflict diamonds. In December 2009, we succeeded in formally adding Israel to the so-called JUSCANZ consultation group—consisting of Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and others—for the Fifth Committee, which handles budgetary matters. We added Israel to the JUSCANZ group at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. We renewed Israel's membership in a regional grouping of the World Intellectual Property Organization. And we are working hard to include Israel into the Western European and Others Group in Geneva, allowing it to fully participate in a UN regional group, as it already does in New York.

Underlying all of this is our bedrock commitment to ensuring that Israel is treated as a full and equal member of the community of nations. As President Obama said last September before the entire UN General Assembly, "It should be clear to all that efforts to chip away at Israel's legitimacy will only be met by the unshakeable opposition of the United States."

Meeting Our Financial Obligations

We advance our interests and improve our ability to lead on reform when we meet our financial obligations in full and on time. To that end, I request the Committee's support for the FY2012 President's budget request of $1,619,400,000 for the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account and $1,920,000,000 for the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account.

After all, the UN can't deliver the results we want if we starve it of the resources it needs. Moreover, it's very much in our interest to ensure that the rest of the world continues to pick up almost three-quarters of the tab for UN activities, as they currently do. If we treat our financial obligations under the UN Charter as optional, others will too—and we could end up paying far more than we do today.

As the Committee works on appropriations legislation, the Administration requests your continued steady support for paying our peacekeeping and regular budget dues in full. We very respectfully request that Congress fund full payment of our peacekeeping obligations to ensure that nations that send their troops into conflict zones on missions voted for by United States are properly reimbursed. I also ask that this Committee provide the Administration with the authority to pay our peacekeeping dues in full at the current rate of 27.14 percent for FY2011 and FY2012.

I remain concerned about the Stearns amendment, adopted by the House in H.R. 1, which bars contributions for critical renovations of the UN headquarters building. This project was vigorously requested and supported by the City of New York and the New York Police Department. They are rightly concerned that New York's finest and bravest might have to respond to a terrorist attack or other emergency in a building filled with asbestos and without fire sprinklers. Stopping our support now makes no sense. It would leave the UN with a half-gutted building, and it would cut off critical construction jobs for American workers in New

York. The math is clear: for every dollar that the United States contributes to the renovation of UN headquarters, $4 in construction contracts are awarded to American companies.

Finally, let me address the issue of credits that have unnecessarily accumulated at the UN over the past decade. I agree with this Committee's recommendation in H.R. 1, that credits should be used to offset current and future UN assessments and the Administration is committed to utilizing all existing credits in Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012. We are working with the United Nations to ensure that its formulas for estimating expected costs are revised to ensure greater accuracy. In these tough economic times, we must not allow money to pile up in UN accounts.

UN Reform Legislation

Congress is now considering legislation that aims to shift our contributions to the UN from assessed to voluntary and seeks to reform the UN by withholding assessed dues. Let me start by saying that we are in agreement on the need for reform at the UN, even while we differ on tactics. A more accountable, more responsible and more effective UN is in all of our interest.

But the tactical difference is a serious one. The reforms championed by the previous Administration–strengthening the UN's mechanisms for accountability, creating the Ethics Office, streamlining UN agencies – were all implemented without withholding our dues. The Bush Administration opposed congressionally mandated withholdings from the UN regular budget while they were pushing these reforms.

The Obama Administration has continued to fight for improvements throughout the UN system, and we have done so from a position of strength. As outlined earlier, we have successfully defended OIOS from various attempts to weaken its independence, enhanced its investigative capacity in the field, and supported a tough Canadian auditor as its new head. We secured the appointment of a highly qualified American to head the Ethics Office, who is now working to strengthen its financial-disclosure policies. We led efforts to adopt sweeping reforms to the way the UN supports its peacekeeping and field operations. We are insisting on budget discipline in the UN's regular budget and seeking major changes in the UN's everyday business practices. We have done all of this while fulfilling the President's commitment to paying our UN bills.

Failing to pay our dues to the UN undermines our credibility and influence – not just on reform, but on a range of U.S. national security priorities. When we choose to isolate ourselves by failing to meet our commitments and sticking others with the bill, we alienate our allies and partners. This is particularly true when it comes to action in the Security Council, where other nations are asked to carry the burden and cost of sending troops into conflict zones for UN missions we strongly support, such as in Haiti, Sudan, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Congo.

Similarly, signaling a retreat from the Human Rights Council would embolden those who wish to unfairly ostracize Israel and weaken the international community's role in preventing human rights abuses. For all the Council's flaws, U.S. leadership led it to condemn the Libyan regime,

recommend that its membership be suspended by the General Assembly, appoint the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran that civil society groups there had long sought, and established a Commission of Inquiry into the violence in Cote d'Ivoire. Retreating from the Council would only play into the hands of human rights violators, like Iran and Cuba, who would like nothing more than to see the United States off the Council.

The Congress is also debating a shift from assessed to voluntary dues for the UN regular budget. We oppose this proposal. It does not serve U.S. interests, and it would leave us having to pay more for the programs we care most about – likely significantly more than we pay today.

The rest of the world now pays more than three-quarters of the bill for critical UN political missions and humanitarian presence worldwide. As a result, we pay a relatively small portion of the budget for UN missions in Iraq and Afghanistan that are helping to stabilize those countries so we can responsibly bring our troops home. The budget for those two missions totals nearly half a billion dollars each year. In addition, the UN budget funds U.S. priorities in countries such as Somalia and Lebanon, experts responsible for monitoring sanctions on Iran, Libya, and al-Qaeda and the Taliban, important internal oversight and accountability mechanisms at the heart of our reform agenda, and global efforts to combat human trafficking, illicit drug trafficking, and genocide. Treating our bills as an a la carte menu would invite others to follow suit—and would likely lead to greater financial burdens on the United States.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me reiterate: the UN isn't perfect. But it delivers real results for every American by advancing global stability and American security through genuine burden-sharing. That burden-sharing is more important than ever in a world of 21st-century threats that don't stop at borders, in a time when Americans are hurting and cutting back, and at a moment when American troops are still in harm's way.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, the UN is contributing to stability so our soldiers and others can responsibly return home. In Libya, UN refugee workers and the World Food Program are providing urgent humanitarian aid to hundreds of thousands in need. In Cote d'Ivoire, UN peacekeepers are helping citizens stand against a strongman who stole an election and won't give way to the country's democratically elected president. In Tunisia, UN experts are helping plan for historic elections that will let the will of the people be heard. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UN forces are protecting women and girls from violent thugs and sexual predators. Iran and North Korea are being pressured by the toughest international sanctions either country has ever faced.

The United Nations plays an indispensable role in advancing our interests and defending our values. It provides a real return to the American taxpayer on our investment. From fighting for fair treatment for Israel to reforming management practices to strengthening peacekeeping missions, we have made real progress to tackle the flaws that had eroded U.S. confidence in the UN. None of this is possible without strong U.S. leadership. That leadership is the engine that

drives strong and effective action from the United Nations—from peacekeeping to nuclear nonproliferation, human rights to counterterrorism, democracy to development. And for the United States to continue to lead effectively, the active and full support of this committee is absolutely essential.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss these important issues with you today. I look forward to working with you to ensure that we continue to provide strong support for our efforts at the United Nations—and to consulting with you on how we can work together to do even better in the years ahead.

Thank you. I am pleased to answer the Committee's questions.