

U.S. PRIORITIES FOR A STRONGER, MORE EFFECTIVE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations is engaged in one of the most important debates in its history: how to reform itself, strengthen itself as an institution, and ensure that it addresses effectively the threats and challenges of the 21st Century. The United States is prepared to help lead the effort to strengthen and reform the UN. What follows are key issues the U.S. has identified as priorities, as we work with the UN and other member states towards the goal of a strong, effective, and accountable organization.

Management, Budget, and Administrative Reform

Management reform is necessary to ensure that Member States receive the greatest benefit from resources and that UN personnel are held to the highest standard of ethical conduct and accountability. Our proposals relate to three themes: accountability and integrity, improved effectiveness, and boosting the UN's relevance in the modern world. Building on these themes, we believe the following specific measures need to be implemented:

- A strong ethics code must be instilled in UN Staff and strictly enforced.
- Internal Oversight needs to be more independent; an oversight board with separate authority to recommend budget levels would help to accomplish this.
- The Secretary General's authority and duty to waive immunity must be affirmed so UN officials suspected of committing criminal activities can be fully investigated, and guilty individuals held accountable.
- UN activities must be reviewed for continuing relevance as the Secretary General has urged, and General Assembly mandates need to be reviewed periodically for relevance and effectiveness [*note: it's not just to eliminate mandates after their objectives have been achieved, but also where the mandates have been proven fruitless, inefficient, etc.*].

Peace Building Commission

We strongly support the Secretary General's concept of a Peace Building Commission that would allow the UN to more effectively galvanize international efforts to help countries recover after conflict. Such a Commission is urgently needed to ensure greater coordination within the UN system during a country's

A Security Council that looks like the World of 2005: The U.S. Approach

The United States is open to UN Security Council reform and expansion as one element of an overall agenda for UN reform. We advocate a criteria-based approach under which potential members must be supremely well qualified, based on factors such as: commitment to democracy and human rights, economic size, population, military capacity, financial contributions to the UN, contributions to UN peacekeeping, and record on counterterrorism and non-proliferation. While the overall geographic balance of the Council is a consideration, effectiveness remains the benchmark for any reform.

transition from conflict to post-conflict recovery, to better provide reconstruction and humanitarian support, and to set the stage for long-term development.

Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism

Member states should unequivocally outlaw acts of international terrorism, and it is time to reach agreement on the Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). Adopting the CCIT would be an important achievement in the UN's global effort to counter terrorism.

Development

The United States supports the development goals in the Millennium Declaration, and President Bush has

made it clear that expanding the circle of freedom and prosperity are fundamental interests of the United States. The High-Level Event in September is an opportunity to renew our collective commitment to eradicate poverty and promote sustained economic development.

The UN Democracy Fund

The United States is a strong supporter of the newly-created UN Democracy Fund, which will provide grants to non-governmental organizations, governments, and international organizations to carry out democratization projects, particularly those that help develop civil society and democratic institutions. The Fund will coordinate with other UN offices that promote democracy and will generate greater interest and commitment toward funding and implementation.

Human Rights Council

Unfortunately, the current Commission on Human Rights, where countries with records of serious human rights abuses like Zimbabwe and Cuba sit in judgment of democratic countries, has lost credibility. We support the Secretary-General's initiative to replace the Commission on Human Rights with an action-oriented Human Rights Council, whose membership should not include states with a record of abuse. The Council's mandate should be to address human rights emergencies and the most egregious human rights abuses, to provide technical assistance, and to promote human rights as a global priority.