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Fiscal year 2023 Budget Request for the United Nations (UN)
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
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Thank you, Chairwoman Lee, Ranking Member Rogers, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, and members of the Subcommittee, for having me today.

I deeply appreciate this Subcommittee's bipartisan support of our work at the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

With your support, from Day One, this Administration has fully re-engaged across multilateral institutions to advance U.S. interests, address global challenges, and bolster the rules-based international order.

We have not shied away from pushing for comprehensive reforms to make these institutions more transparent, efficient, and accountable to U.S. taxpayers.

And, along with our allies and partners, we have tackled a range of challenges head-on -- including public health threats, climate change, and conflicts and humanitarian crises around the world.

In just over a year and a half at the UN, I've met with senior representatives from nearly every Member State. I've been able to strengthen longstanding relationships and forge new ones. And I know my counterparts at other international institutions have done the same.

And so, when crises have emerged, we have been ready.

Before President Putin carried out his further invasion of Ukraine, the U.S. went to the Security Council to expose Russia's plans to the world. And after he launched this unprovoked, unlawful, and brutal war, we mobilized over 140 Member States to condemn Moscow's actions. It was a unified and historic vote -- bigger than anyone expected.

We then led the effort to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council. And we're continuing to use every tool at our disposal to hold Russia's forces accountable.

This multilateral strategy is effective not just in supporting Ukraine -- but across the board. Our multilateral engagements helped lead to truces -- however fragile -- in Ethiopia and Yemen that have allowed for the delivery of urgently-needed humanitarian assistance.

And they've helped us respond to the recent spike in global food insecurity -- another consequence of Russia's war of aggression. Just last month at the UN, Secretary Blinken hosted a Global Food Security Call to Action ministerial where we rallied the world to respond to this worsening crisis.

Over 80 countries have aligned with our roadmap to combat global food insecurity, which calls for increased humanitarian assistance and in-kind food donations, among other actions. And in May, we also hosted an Open Debate on the links between armed conflict and food security.

The UN, in partnership with the G7, has been essential to our work to address global food insecurity, which threatens vulnerable populations around the world -- especially in the Middle East and Africa.

On nearly every issue and conflict, our multilateral engagement is delivering concrete outcomes for the U.S. and helping advance our values around the world.

But let me also be crystal clear: China and Russia are working day and night to drive an alternative, authoritarian agenda at the UN and other multilateral institutions. And they are putting significant resources and personnel behind these efforts.

Right now, at the UN, to paraphrase President Biden, we are in a fight for the soul of the world.

It would be a grave mistake to cede the UN and other multilateral fora to China -- which is why the President's budget asks for the resources and authorities needed to assert multilateral leadership and demonstrate that democracies can deliver.

Currently, our failure to live up to our financial obligations at the UN gives our adversaries an easy talking point -- one they hit us with again and again. And it's gaining traction -- we're hearing it now from our friends, too.

We need to be able to pay our bills in full and on time. This will bolster U.S. credibility and leadership and help us rally countries to our causes.

The President's budget also asks for additional support for UN peacebuilding efforts -- a worthwhile investment that helps prevent costly conflicts before they erupt.

And it asks for authority and funding to enable U.S. leadership in organizations like UNESCO, an institution that goes beyond the famous heritage sites and takes actions that affect our security, educational, and commercial interests. In the absence of U.S. leadership, China and others have been more assertive at UNESCO, seeking to shape international consensus on issues like emerging technology and artificial intelligence in ways hostile to democratic norms.

We need a seat at the table when international standards and best practices are being set so we can advance our values.

Finally, we have a series of personnel requests in this budget, including much-needed increases in housing allowances for Foreign Service Officers in New York -- and investments that will allow more young and diverse Americans to serve at the UN.

On the whole, these are modest budget requests. But they speak to a larger priority: we need to attract -- and retain -- the best and brightest if we're going to continue to be successful leaders at the UN and in multilateral fora around the world.

And with the support of this Subcommittee, we will continue to be successful -- at promoting peace, providing humanitarian aid, addressing global challenges, and leading the world -- the American way.

With that, I look forward to your questions. Thank you.