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House Foreign Affairs Committee

Advancing U.S. Interests at the United Nations

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Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am grateful for this panel's enduring commitment to American leadership at the United Nations and in the world. And I appreciate the rigor that your members bring to ensuring the oversight and effective use of our contributions to the United Nations – a goal we share.

Today, I will lay out five main objectives to advancing America's interests at the United Nations, and detail the progress we are making towards meeting them: 1) marshalling the unique multilateral capabilities of the UN to address transnational threats; 2) reforming UN peacekeeping for 21st century conflicts; 3) fighting bias and discrimination within the UN; 4) promoting human rights and human dignity; and 5) improving the UN's efficiency and effectiveness by pressing for reforms that make the organization more fiscally responsible, accountable and nimble.

I. Rallying Multilateral Coalitions to Address Transnational Threats

The first objective is building multilateral coalitions to address global threats. In the past year, a deadly epidemic exploded in West Africa, threatening to roll back decades of progress and kill tens or even hundreds of thousands of people. A monstrous terrorist group emerged from Syria's grinding civil war, seizing large swaths of Iraq – and executing journalists, aid workers and entire communities simply because of their ethnicity or what they believe. Unsatisfied with occupying and attempting to annex Crimea, Russia trained and armed separatists in eastern Ukraine, and sent Russian soldiers to fight by their side.

What many of these contemporary crises share in common is that the threats they pose extend far beyond any national border or even region. And no individual country – not even one as powerful as the United States – can tackle them alone. Nor would we want to, even if we could. But far too often, we have seen other countries – including those most directly affected – do little or nothing at all, as though expecting the United States or others to do the job for them. That puts us in a daunting position – aware that we ignore these problems at our own risk, but also that, to address them, we must rally other countries that are often reluctant to do their part.

These are the kinds of global challenges for which the United Nations was created. And yet these crises also expose profound weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the international system. We saw a global health system led by the WHO that – despite multiple warnings from NGOs like Médecins Sans Frontières and from our own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – was slow to respond to the epidemic’s growing momentum, missing the chance to contain the outbreak early. We saw a UN Security Council where two out of the fifteen members – China and Russia – used their veto to stop a resolution on the situation in Syria that included a referral to the International Criminal Court. That resolution would have sent a clear message to perpetrators that the international community agreed they must be held accountable for their crimes – particularly the Assad regime, which has tortured, killed, starved, bombed and gassed its own people; but instead it was blocked. And we see Russia – one of the permanent members of the Council entrusted with “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” – trying to lop off territory of its neighbor Ukraine. I visited Ukraine just last week in order to send a message of solidarity with the Ukrainian people and reaffirm our support for their right to determine the course of Ukraine’s future.

In my position as the United States Representative to the United Nations, I have to confront these vulnerabilities every day. The reality is that we need the UN to work, and to do so more efficiently and effectively, if we are to confront today’s global threats and succeed in making the world more secure. We need to marshal the international community’s unique multilateral capabilities to complement our unilateral capabilities, and the UN is the best forum for doing so.

Iran

As we consider the importance of multilateralism, let me address an issue on everyone’s minds: Iran. Republicans and Democrats agree that we cannot and will not allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon. That is why President Obama worked with members of both parties in Congress to put in place unprecedented U.S. sanctions on Iran. President Obama also recognized that convincing other countries to impose similar sanctions would increase the pressure on Iran – which is why the Administration pushed hard to get the UN to impose multiple rounds of targeted sanctions against Iran. And we succeeded. Today, the UN has in place one of the toughest sanctions regimes in the history of the organization – sanctions that all UN Member States are required to

enforce. The European Union and other like-minded countries followed suit with their own additional sanctions. It was this combination of unilateral and multilateral pressure that helped bring Iran to the negotiating table. With our leadership, the UN Human Rights Council established a Special Rapporteur to monitor human rights in Iran, and it has renewed the rapporteur's mandate since then. The rapporteur has written hard-hitting reports that maintain international pressure on Iran to improve its human rights record.

Because I know it is of interest to this committee, let me speak briefly about the framework of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that our negotiators reached in early April. This deal is not predicated on trusting Iran. To the contrary, the Administration entered these negotiations clear-eyed about the nature of the Iranian regime – a regime that has been a leading state sponsor of terrorism, a chronic human rights violator, and patron of abusive regimes. We have never lost sight of that reality. Indeed, that is precisely why we grounded the framework on rigorous verification measures to provide the information and access necessary to ensure that Iran meets its commitments and that its nuclear program is exclusively peaceful. It is based on facts, not faith. On proof, not goodwill.

This framework is predicated on our core objectives – strictly limiting Iran's program to ensure it is exclusively peaceful, and cutting off every pathway that Iran could take to developing enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon. That means no enrichment paths through Natanz or Fordow. No plutonium path through Arak. And effectively no potential covert path.

Iran will be subject to a rigorous transparency regime. Many important commitments such as those related to enrichment last at least a decade, yet some commitments are permanent – with no sunset clauses. Iran will decommission over 10,000 enrichment centrifuges, around two-thirds of the stock it possesses. Under this deal, Iran will get rid of about 98 percent of its stockpile of enriched uranium, retaining only 300 kilograms. As centrifuges are removed and facilities repurposed, Iran's breakout time – the time it could take to produce enough highly enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon – will go from a few months to at least one year.

In exchange, Iran will receive substantial sanctions relief only when it verifiably completes its major nuclear-related steps and the breakout time has been increased to at least a year. And if Iran violates the deal, we will snap sanctions back into place.

Just as the pressure from UN sanctions helped bring Iran to the negotiating table with the P5+1, we expect the UN Security Council to play an important role in an eventual deal. And just as our domestic sanctions can easily be put back into place if there is substantial noncompliance, there will be procedures to ensure that the UN sanctions snap back too.

Ebola

A nuclear armed Iran is not the only threat for which we have mobilized multilateral action through the UN. In September 2014, as we looked in horror at the sharply rising curve depicting the Ebola epidemic's projected spread, we used the UN to catalyze the international community – including the UN's own institutions – to confront a threat growing exponentially. On September 15, we convened representatives of UN Member States at the U.S. mission for a briefing by the CDC. At the briefing, CDC representatives told diplomats from around the world that – according to the worst case projections – more than a million people could be infected with the disease within months if urgent action was not taken. Together with the CDC and representatives from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the United States argued that an all-hands-on-deck effort was essential to avoiding a catastrophe on this scale. And we urged the diplomats in that room to send this urgent message back to their capitals.

Three days later, we used our convening power as president of the UN Security Council to hold the Council's first ever emergency meeting on a health crisis. We invited a Liberian healthcare worker named Jackson Naimah to speak to the Council by video. He described people dying outside the gates of the Médecins Sans Frontières clinic in Monrovia where he worked, because there were no more beds to take them in. He said, "I feel that the future of my country is hanging in the balance... If the international community does not stand up, we will be wiped out."

The following week, President Obama convened world leaders, pressing them to do their part, whether by deploying health professionals and logisticians, building Ebola treatment units and labs, providing personal protective equipment, contributing cash, or filling any of the other gaps enabling the epidemic's exponential spread.

The United States led this effort by example, deploying more than 3,500 U.S. civilian and military personnel from the Department of Defense, USAID, the CDC, the U.S. Public Health Service, and other agencies to Liberia. Liberia went from having the highest number of infections many times over when the U.S. began its intervention, to the first of the three most affected countries to reach zero cases in April. We are extremely grateful to Congress for providing the resources for this robust response through an emergency appropriation, without which the United States' decisive role in addressing this crisis would not have been possible.

The UN system's response as coordinated by UNMEER has played – and continues to play – a critically important role in bending the curve, from the logistics support provided by the World Food Program, to the awareness-raising efforts in communities by UNICEF, to the trainings and epidemiological work of the World Health Organization (WHO). As we move from bending the curve to ending the curve, we are working closely with the UN Secretariat to ensure UNMEER is scaled down as swiftly as conditions allow, and ultimately concludes its mission. UNMEER is

scheduled to transfer its remaining responsibilities on the ground to relevant UN agencies and country teams by the end of July, and close out financially by the end of August.

We are not at zero yet but there is no question that, had it not been for the U.S.'s leadership – not only in our unilateral efforts in Liberia, but also in galvanizing other nations to do their part – tens or even hundreds of thousands more lives may have been lost. And our job does not stop at zero – we know that 70 percent of countries are not yet prepared to prevent outbreaks like Ebola from becoming epidemics. President Obama hosted 44 countries at the White House to advance the Global Health Security Agenda and over 100 concrete new commitments to build capacity around the world to prevent, detect and respond to infectious disease threats. G-7 Leaders have just agreed to match the U.S. commitment by agreeing to assist 60 countries over the next five years, including the countries of West Africa, to establish this vital capability. In New York, we continue to work with partners to attain additional, tangible commitments and to ultimately prevent the tragedy that unfolded in West Africa from happening again.

Foreign Terrorist Fighters

In addition to strengthening our efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and curb the deadly Ebola outbreak, we are also using the UN to mobilize coordinated global efforts to combat violent extremism – and in particular, to halt the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and their sources of funding. More than 22,000 foreign terrorist fighters from over 100 countries have traveled to Syria since the beginning of the conflict, at least 4,000 of whom carry Western passports.

This is a problem where the failure of any one country to stop the flow of fighters or funding can have immediate, dire consequences for other countries. Yet governments have been slow to develop the laws and capabilities to address this grave threat. To help close these gaps, President Obama convened a Summit of world leaders at the UN in September, where the Security Council adopted a resolution requiring countries to have laws to prosecute foreign terrorist fighters and those who fund them, and to prevent them from entering and transiting their territory. It also calls on governments to improve cooperation in this effort, including through increased information sharing and capacity building, as well as efforts to counter violent extremism. We are now focused on implementing this landmark resolution, mobilizing the UN system alongside our individual efforts to help countries develop their ability to address this threat.

We are also using the UN to find innovative ways to cut off the ways violent extremist groups fund their violence and recruitment. As with our sanctions on Iran – the more countries that join this effort, the harder it is for groups like ISIL and al-Nusra Front to fill their coffers. A resolution we led in February targeted three of the groups' funding streams: illicit oil smuggling, the trade in looted antiquities, and ransoms for kidnapping victims.

II. Preparing UN Peacekeeping for 21st Century Conflicts

The second objective is reforming UN peacekeeping for 21st century conflicts. There are currently sixteen UN peacekeeping missions worldwide, made up of nearly 130,000 personnel, at least 100,000 of them are uniformed military and police, compared to just 75,000 total personnel a decade ago. This is by far the most peacekeepers that have ever been active in history and does not even include the 22,000 personnel deployed as part of the African Union mission in Somalia.

Numbers only tell part of the story. We are asking UN peacekeepers to do more, in more places, and in more complex conflicts than at any time in history. We are asking them to contain – and at times, even disarm – violent groups. We are asking them to facilitate safe delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance. We are asking them to protect civilians from atrocities. And we are asking them to help provide stability and post-conflict reconstruction in countries emerging from brutal civil wars. Two-thirds of peacekeepers are operating in active conflict areas, the highest percentage ever, often involving myriad rebel groups and militias who have made clear that they intend to keep fighting.

Some say that we're asking too much of UN peacekeeping. But we are asking more of peacekeeping because today's threats demand that peacekeepers play such a role.

These conflicts matter to the United States. Violence within a country can quickly cause national and regional instability, displacing millions of people, upending markets, and spilling over into neighboring countries. Conflicts undo the hard-earned progress countries have made toward building democracy; they weaken both governments and civil society; and they allow criminals and repressors to thrive. And conflicts increasingly attract violent extremist groups, who can use the vacuum of authority to terrorize civilian populations and plan and launch attacks – including on the United States or on American citizens living abroad. The suffering they cause can also be a powerful recruitment tool for terrorists, even when they are not fueled at the outset by violent extremist elements.

Not only does curbing violent conflict make us safer, it is also consistent with what our hearts tell us is right. We – and by “we” I count not only members of the Administration and Congress, but also the vast majority of Americans – do not want to live in a world where religious or ethnic communities who lived together for decades in harmony, such as the Muslims and Christians in the Central African Republic, learn to hate and fear one another.

There is one additional reason America has a strategic interest in making UN peacekeeping effective: it ensures that other countries help shoulder the burden in addressing violent conflicts, both by contributing troops and sharing the financial costs of operations, thereby helping address the free-rider problem we see in so many matters of international security, and helping avert potentially costlier U.S. military involvement.

But at the same time as we see the promise of contemporary peacekeeping, we also see its pitfalls. Troops frequently take a long time to deploy, and have limited mobility. Missions have trouble keeping units fed and hydrated in remote areas. And with alarming regularity, peacekeepers fail to stand up to human rights abusers and protect civilians from attacks.

Consider the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. After years of stagnancy, a special unit of the mission known as the Force Intervention Brigade has played a catalytic role in disarming and defeating powerful rebel groups. The UN force commander, Brazilian Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, has led the brigade in neutralizing a number of powerful rebel groups, including the M23, which had committed unspeakable atrocities against Congolese civilians. And yet at the same time, we still see UN peacekeepers in Congo all too often failing to protect civilians. Last June, when the Congolese town of Mutarule came under attack just a few kilometers from a UN peacekeeper base and residents called for help, no one responded. More than thirty people were massacred, eight of them kids.

We are also deeply troubled by the observations of sexual exploitation and abuse detailed in a recent evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). This is unfortunately yet another in a string of reports which highlighted allegations made against foreign troops, including UN Peacekeepers, operating in situations in which soldiers, entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the dignity, welfare, and lives of vulnerable people, fundamentally violate that trust. Any instance of sexual exploitation or abuse is one too many. We have urged the United Nations to shed light on these and other allegations of abuse in support of efforts to prevent or halt such abuses. In the same vein, we are urging the United Nations to take swift action to hold those responsible to account and to protect those who expose such abuses.

Let me share five lines of effort the United States is pursuing to strengthen UN peacekeeping so it can better meet the demands of 21st century conflicts.

First, we are deepening the pool of countries that deploy troops and police. That is why Vice President Biden convened world leaders at the UN General Assembly in September 2014 for a Peacekeeping Summit, where he pressed for – and secured – more commitments from capable force contributors, particularly from developed countries. Indonesia announced that it will more than double its deployment of troops to peacekeeping from 1,800 to 4,000. Colombia announced its intent to contribute troops for the first time in its history. President Obama will convene another UN summit in September to build on this momentum, and secure the additional troop and police commitments to match the demand of today's conflicts.

A critical part of that effort is encouraging the return of European militaries to UN peacekeeping. Two decades ago, 25,000 troops from European militaries served in UN peacekeeping operations

– more than 40 percent of blue helmets at the time. Today, fewer than 6,000 European troops are serving in UN peacekeeping missions, less than 7 percent of UN troops. In March, I traveled to Brussels to make this case directly to European leaders.

As I argued in Brussels, peacekeeping allows European troops with key niche capabilities to have an outsized impact, and raises the quality of the entire enterprise, while giving European militaries the chance to preserve their level of preparedness, and take up their fair share of maintaining international peace and security. We have seen the momentum-shifting impact that even a modest contribution of 400 Dutch troops can make in the capabilities of the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. And the need comes at a time when Europe has troops to spare, having drawn down in Afghanistan from approximately 35,000 troops four years ago to less than 2,000 today.

Second, we are ensuring that countries with the will to perform 21st century peacekeeping have the capacity to do so. To this end, President Obama announced the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership, APRRP (“A-Prep”), which is investing \$110 million each year for the next three to five years to build the capacity of an initial core group of six countries – Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda. The initiative aims to deepen our investment in countries that have a track record of deploying troops and police to peacekeeping operations and that make a commitment to protecting civilians from violence and complements the ongoing Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program and its pre-deployment training of over 75 battalions for African Union/United Nations Peace support operations demands. APRRP is an extremely important initiative that deserves Congress’s support.

Third, we are working to build a global consensus in support of the mandates peacekeepers are being asked to undertake. Today, approximately 98 percent of UN peacekeepers have mandates that charge them with protecting civilians. However, a number of large troop-contributors openly express skepticism at the scope of responsibilities assigned to their forces, which has resulted in their standing by or standing down rather than standing up when civilians are attacked. A report by the UN’s internal oversight office last March found that in 507 attacks against civilians from 2010 to 2013, peacekeepers virtually never used force to protect civilians under attack. Thousands of civilians may have lost their lives as a result. This is unacceptable and we are committed to changing it.

Fourth, we are pressing UN peacekeeping to make bold and innovative institutional reforms. Recent reforms include longer troop rotations to preserve institutional memory, financial penalties for troops who show up without the necessary equipment to perform their duties, and financial premiums for troops who are willing to accept higher risks. The Secretary-General launched the first strategic review of peace operations in nearly 15 years and we anticipate the

final report on this review any day now. While we don't expect a review alone to remedy deficiencies in capabilities and shortages in political will, we are pushing the high-level panel to address the shortcomings within the UN itself, such as inadequate planning, uneven mission leadership, and inadequate measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.

Fifth, we are making UN peacekeeping missions more adaptive to changing conditions on the ground. While the UN is not known for being a nimble organization, crises are fluid, and peacekeeping must get better at adapting to them. Consider the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia, UNMIL. Last year, we were in the process of drawing down UNMIL's forces when the Ebola outbreak metastasized. Our strategy had to shift swiftly from downsizing to maximizing UNMIL's abilities and infrastructure to aid in the Ebola response. Now that the outbreak has been brought under control in Liberia, our discussion of UNMIL's role must adapt once again.

We are constantly looking for ways to right-size missions. In some circumstances, right-sizing means scaling down. This year, thanks in large part to our pressure, the MINUSTAH mission in Haiti will complete its reduction to the troop and police levels it had before the 2010 earthquake, while continuing to train the Haitian National Police to take up their responsibilities. As Côte d'Ivoire prepares to hold its first presidential elections since the 2011 crisis, the UN peacekeeping mission there is continuing its phased reduction in military personnel. And as Liberia and its neighbors bring the Ebola outbreak to zero, we will once again be looking to draw down forces in UNMIL.

Right-sizing does not always mean downsizing. In South Sudan – where more than 120,000 civilians are taking shelter from violence on UN bases, at least 2 million people have been displaced, and a peace agreement remains elusive – current troop levels must be maintained. In the Central African Republic – where last year blue helmets took the place of African Union peacekeepers, and where French troops are drawing down – the UN is still at only 80 percent of its full strength. The mission must scale up to 100 percent to create the political space for a transition to a new, democratically elected government, and to ensure peacekeepers can prevent atrocities like the ones we have witnessed by armed militias.

As we work to make the UN better at adapting to changing conditions, it is important that we make ourselves more nimble as well. No matter how carefully we plan, unforeseen emergencies can and often do arise – including crises for which it is in our national interest to support new or expanded peacekeeping operations. The Central African Republic and South Sudan are just the most recent examples.

That is why I hope Congress will support the request to authorize the Peace Operations Response Mechanism requested in this year's budget. This mechanism would ensure funding is available to respond swiftly to unforeseen requirements that emerge outside of our regular budget cycle,

without endangering critical, ongoing, budgeted peacekeeping efforts or other national security priorities. This added flexibility will strengthen our ability to help prevent conflicts from destabilizing countries or entire regions, and to save lives. Any allocation of such funds would be subject to the Secretary of State's determination that additional funds are needed, and would be allocated only after consulting with Congress.

And finally, there is very little that undermines the efforts of a UN peacekeeping mission more than to have those who are sent to protect the vulnerable become the abusers. The United States is therefore a leading and long-standing proponent of measures to prevent and investigate misconduct in peacekeeping operations, in particular sexual misconduct. Any case of abuse is a case too many, and we remain concerned at the number of cases involving the most egregious forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. We are working with partners to improve the measures for protection from this abuse in the areas of prevention, including training, enforcement and remedial action. We have called upon all member states to continue their efforts in strengthening accountability, including holding perpetrators accountable. We support measures that will enhance community outreach for reporting, and those that adequately provide for victim assistance.

III. Fighting Bias and Discrimination within the United Nations

The third objective is confronting anti-Israel bias, which has become a long and bipartisan American tradition at the UN. It is the living legacy of every single U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations – from my predecessor, Ambassador Rice, through master diplomats from both parties, from Moynihan to Kirkpatrick, Albright to Holbrooke.

Day in and day out, we push back against efforts to delegitimize Israel at the UN, and fight for its right to be treated like any other nation. We do this not because Israel is one of our closest allies – though Israel is. We do it because unfairly singling out any nation undermines the entire UN system, by violating its core principles. Or, as UN Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan so eloquently put it in 1975, when the UN was on the verge of passing its infamous resolution declaring Zionism a form of racism, “What we have at stake here is not merely the honor and the legitimacy of the State of Israel – although a challenge to the legitimacy of any member nation ought always to arouse the vigilance of all members of the United Nations. For a yet more important matter is at issue, which is the integrity of the whole body of moral and legal precepts which we know as human rights.”

Here are just a few of the ways we are doing that.

When 18 biased resolutions against Israel were proposed during the UN General Assembly last September – as they are every fall – we opposed every one of them.

When the UN Human Rights Council held a special session last July to create a Commission of Inquiry to investigate alleged human rights violations committed in the context of military operations in the Palestinian Territories, we cast the sole “no” vote on a profoundly flawed resolution that focused overwhelming criticism on Israel without once mentioning Hamas.

Before the United States joined the UN Human Rights Council in 2009, more than half of all country-specific resolutions were focused on Israel; today, we’ve helped lower that proportion to one-quarter. Nonetheless, the Human Rights Council has still adopted many more resolutions criticizing Israel than it has on North Korea, Iran, Syria or Sudan, which is unacceptable.

For years Israel was the only UN Member-State that was excluded from a regional body at the UN in Geneva and the only Member State that had no group to caucus with in New York in the General Assembly committee that addresses human rights. We were determined to change this, and we did. In January 2014, after a sustained, full court diplomatic press, we helped secure for Israel permanent membership in the Western European and Others Group – the regional group that includes the United States. And in February 2014, we secured Israel’s membership in the like-minded human rights caucus, JUSCANZ, from which it had long been excluded in New York.

The United States has worked hard to stand up to every effort that seeks to delegitimize Israel or undermine its security. We have consistently and firmly opposed one-sided actions in international bodies, and will continue to do so. In most cases of unfair and unbalanced texts introduced in the Security Council, we have been able to advocate successfully for the U.S. position during negotiations and, if necessary, form a coalition of like-minded countries to stop such resolutions from moving forward. In December, when a deeply unbalanced draft resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was hastily put before the Security Council, the United States successfully rallied a coalition to join us in voting against it. Secretary Kerry reached out to leaders of multiple countries represented on the Security Council, as we did simultaneously from our mission in New York. As a result of our efforts, the resolution failed to achieve the nine votes of Security Council members required for adoption.

The United States believes that a two-state solution is vital to ensuring the preservation of a Jewish and democratic Israel, and we will continue to work to achieve that goal.

IV. Promoting Human Rights and Human Dignity

The fourth objective is promoting human rights and human dignity. The United Nations was created not only to maintain international peace and security, but also to, “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person.” We strive every day to press the UN to live up to this goal – standing up to repressive regimes, shining a light on their

abuses, pressing for perpetrators to be brought to justice, and empowering victims and human rights defenders.

In scale and sheer depravity, few human rights crises in the world compare to the horrors of present day North Korea. Between eighty and one hundred and twenty thousand people are confined in gulags, where the torture and rape of prisoners is routine, and children are forced to watch the executions of their own parents. Yet the regime's denial of access to independent observers, such as human rights groups and journalists, and its draconian measures to prevent people from escaping the country, has limited the documentation of its widespread abuses. That is why we worked with countries on the UN Human Rights Council to create a Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea in 2013, to conduct an in-depth investigation of the country's human rights conditions.

The Commission conducted more than 200 confidential interviews with victims, eyewitnesses, and former officials, and held public hearings in which more than 80 witnesses gave testimony. Witness accounts were corroborated by other forms of evidence, such as satellite imagery confirming the locations of prison camps. The Commission's findings, laid out in its February 2014 report, included that "systematic, widespread, and gross" human rights violations have been and are being committed by the North Korean government, in many instances constituting crimes against humanity, committed "pursuant to policies established at the highest level of the State."

Building upon these findings, we have worked with our international partners to press for the UN to continue to denounce North Korea's abuses, and take steps to hold the perpetrators accountable. These efforts led to the Security Council holding its first ever meeting focused on the human rights situation in North Korea. Representing the United States in that December 22 meeting, I had the opportunity to help give voice to victims of the North Korean regime, like Kim Young-soon, who had escaped from Prison Camp 15. She and other prisoners were so famished they picked kernels of corn from the dung of cattle to eat. She said, "If there was a day that we were able to have mouse, that was a special diet for us. We had to eat everything alive, every type of meat we could find." I also spoke to the Council about North Koreans who had been tortured for trying to flee the country, such as the man who – after being returned by China – was chained to the back of a truck by North Korean authorities, and then dragged for three loops around the city where he lived – nearly 30 miles in distance – so everyone there could see. "When he fell down, they kept on driving," the man's sister told the Commission of Inquiry.

As I told the Council in that meeting, we not only denounce repressive regimes because it is in keeping with American values. We also denounce them because – as we have seen throughout history, the way governments treat their own citizens – particularly those governments that systematically violate the rights of their own people – tends to align closely with the way they

treat other countries and the norms of our shared international system. It is no coincidence that the Assad regime, which tortures thousands of people to death in its prisons, assigning victims a case file and serial number, has also repeatedly violated the international ban on chemical weapons, as we saw in the heart-wrenching video of the three tiny children who were the victims of one of its recent attacks in Sarmin, in Idlib province. It is no coincidence that the Russian government, which has methodically cracked down on independent human rights organizations within its borders, is also violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and seeking to prevent the Ukrainian people from determining their own future. And these are parallels we highlight in our diplomatic efforts and our public efforts.

Some of our most important battles to fight discrimination and promote human rights are being waged within the United Nations system. When Russia sought to overturn a decision by the Secretary-General granting benefits to the spouses of UN employees in same-sex marriages, we rallied other countries against Russia's effort, and roundly defeated it. When multiple countries on the UN's NGO committee sought to exclude organizations simply because they focus on promoting LGBT rights, we pushed to ensure they are treated equally. These efforts send a clear signal of our commitment to advocate for all human rights for all people.

Another enduring form of discrimination – within the UN and in the world – is anti-Semitism. The last year has seen an alarming rise in attacks on Jews, including in the heart of Europe – from the assault on the Jewish supermarket in Paris in January, to the attack on the Jewish museum in Brussels in May. So, when President Obama asked me to lead a Presidential Delegation to the 10th Anniversary of the OSCE's Berlin Conference on anti-Semitism, I raised our concerns about the rising tide of anti-Semitism in Europe directly with their leaders. I made clear that such attacks are not only a threat to the Jewish community – they are a threat to European liberalism and pluralism. And we made clear that all countries must make this struggle a national priority, whether it is unequivocally condemning it, providing the necessary resources and political backing to efforts to combat the rising tide of hatred and attacks, holding perpetrators accountable, and providing outreach to the community at risk.

It was in this context that it was an especially important milestone that, working with Israel, the European Union, Canada, and other nations, we convened the first-ever meeting on anti-Semitism in the UN General Assembly in January, at which Congressman Deutch spoke on a panel. More than fifty countries – representing nations of all faiths – took the podium not only to denounce anti-Semitism and attacks like the barbarous killings in Paris that had occurred weeks earlier, but also to commit their countries to take concrete steps to stop its alarming rise. Going forward, we intend to hold those countries to their pledges, and to persuade the other countries that did not speak that this struggle is theirs too.

V. Making the UN More Efficient, Accountable and Nimble

Finally, our fifth objective is making the UN more efficient, effective, nimble, and accountable.

Before we dig into the details of the individual accounts, it is worth putting into perspective the relative scale of U.S. contributions to the UN. As Secretary Kerry pointed out when testifying before this Committee in February, the United States' foreign policy budget totals approximately \$50.3 billion. That is roughly one percent of the entire federal budget. One percent. And U.S. contributions to the UN are just a small fraction of that small foreign policy budget. How small? The total request for the three accounts that fund the UN and affiliated organizations – CIPA, CIO and IO&P – totals approximately \$4.8 billion. That comes out to less than one-tenth of one percent of the United States federal budget. One-tenth of one percent. That is an important scale to keep in mind as we discuss the relative increase and decrease of the requested accounts.

That sense of scale does not mean we should not work relentlessly to maximize the impact of every dollar we contribute – we should and we must. Nor does it mean that \$4.8 billion is an insignificant contribution – it is substantial, and far more than any other country contributes to the UN system and international organizations, which is why we are working hard to negotiate a lower assessment rate for peacekeeping. But it is worth remembering – even with a clear-eyed view of the limitations of the United Nations – that we are getting a lot of multilateral leverage out of a relatively modest proportion of our overall budget.

In the FY 2016 budget, some of our account requests have increased compared to last year. For example, we have asked for increased Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities. Yet it would be a mistake to conflate such requests with a lack of fiscal discipline or the declining efficiency of our contributions. In reality, we are not only getting the UN to do more to fulfill its mandate, but also ensuring that it does its job more efficiently.

First, we are making the UN more fiscally responsible. Take the example of peacekeeping. Since the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the cost per peacekeeper has actually been reduced by 18 percent, when adjusted for inflation. And through tough negotiations with G77 countries, we have prevented reimbursement rates from rising dramatically. In addition, we have strongly supported the UN's Global Field Support Strategy, which aims to optimize the delivery of support to peacekeeping operations, through streamlining and utilizing centralized shared services to support missions. The strategy's implementation saved some \$250 million in peacekeeping costs during the 2012 to 2013 financial period, while improving the access of forces in the field to critical start-up resources.

We have also worked with the UN to change the way it awards air service contracts for peacekeeping operations. In 2014, these contracts accounted for some \$770 million. Yet under the previous system, Russian companies enjoyed a near monopoly, thanks in part to subsidies by

their government. The new Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which we played a leading role working with the UN to adopt, has helped level the playing field, enabling companies from other countries to compete. In the first RFP process held last year, a Western company won a helicopter contract for the first time in twenty years. That company happened to be American.

We are applying this same sense of fiscal discipline across the UN system. We have limited increases to the 2014/2015 budget to 2.2 percent, compared to 4 percent or higher in previous two-year periods. We have led efforts to slow rising staff costs – the main driver of UN budget growth over the last decade – through pay freezes dating back to 2012, and which will extend at least through the end of 2016, affecting some 30,000 UN staff across twenty-four UN organizations. And we are actively pursuing additional efforts to reduce staff costs by rationalizing headcounts and compensation costs in these organizations.

Second, we are making the UN more accountable. We succeeded in requiring the public disclosure of audit and evaluation reports for the organization, which began on January 1, 2015. We are working to ensure that the UN and its agencies follow best practices in protecting whistleblowers – and where they do not, to strengthen those protections – using the leverage that Congress provided to withhold 15 percent of U.S. contributions to organizations that do not effectively protect whistleblowers from retaliation. We helped secure the establishment of an independent Inspector General-like office responsible for evaluating the performance and readiness of peacekeepers in the field. And we helped obtain an unprecedented prohibition on some payments to individual soldiers or police from UN peacekeeping missions found to have engaged in misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse. We know the real measure of this reform will be in its implementation, and we intend to focus on ensuring the UN follows through on this commitment.

In order to continue to push for these and other much-needed reforms, it is essential that we pay our UN contributions on time and in full. When the United States is unable to pay our bills, we undermine our ability to advance our national interests. Some argue paying up front essentially gives the UN a free pass. But the opposite is true. When we don't pay our bills, we lose leverage in pressing for the reforms the UN needs; plus, we undermine our credibility in urging other countries to pay their dues on time and in full, which ensures the burden does not fall disproportionately on us.

In closing, we are tireless in our efforts to make the UN more efficient and maximize the impact of our contributions to advance our national interests and fulfill our duty to the American taxpayer. But we are also rigorous because we recognize that, when we right-size a peacekeeping mission and free-up surplus troops, we can redeploy those blue helmets to another crisis, where they can protect children from being recruited as fighters, and prevent communities from being massacred. We recognize that when we streamline the delivery of humanitarian assistance, we

free up resources like medical supplies, tents, and rations that can be directed to other people who need them to survive. The bottom line is simple: when we save resources, we help save lives.

We take seriously our obligation to the American people to protect their security and ensure that their tax dollars are spent wisely, and we are confident that our contributions to the UN – both in terms of U.S. funding and our leadership – effectively and responsibly advance U.S. national security interests and American values in an era of diffuse and diverse challenges.