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Opening Statement of the Honorable **Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman**  
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing:  
“Advancing U.S. Interests at the United Nations”  
June 28, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

This hearing will come to order. Today we consider the role of the United States at the United Nations.

In her first few months, Ambassador Nikki Haley has approached her job with determination and purpose.

Chairing the U.N. Security Council in April, she spotlighted the grave security challenges of North Korea and nuclear proliferation. She has castigated Iran and Hezbollah for their role in sowing instability across the Middle East. And Ambassador Haley has made it crystal clear that the U.N. Human Rights Council’s record of protecting dictators cannot stand. Indeed, as Ambassador Haley has declared, the United States role at the U.N. is to “show our strength, show our voice, [and] have the backs of our allies.” Well said, Ambassador.

The United Nations is charged with the ambitious mission to “maintain international peace and security” and “to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems.” But unfortunately, the organization all too often falls short. U.N. organizations continuously debate issues – but too often take no meaningful action.

As Ambassador Haley has eloquently described, U.N. organizations like the Human Rights Council give dictators and human rights violators a platform to attack Israel. In addition to calling for the U.N. to end its bias against Israel, she has made crystal clear that this international body can no longer be used to promote anti-Semitism.

I was pleased to see Ambassador Haley’s prepared testimony recognize that “human rights and conflict are directly connected.” Regimes that don’t respect the citizens over which they hold power – or visitors like Otto Warmbier – won’t respect their neighbors or international agreements.

Given its terrible human rights record, it’s no surprise that North Korea is determined to deploy international nuclear ballistic weapons technology, threatening the region and the United States. Meanwhile, companies and banks inside China continue to provide critical hard currency to that regime. The United Nations has passed good Security Council Resolutions on North Korea – spurred by U.S. legislation – but solid enforcement is needed.

As we will hear today, the President's budget proposal includes significant reductions in U.S. funding of the United Nations and its agencies. U.N. peacekeeping has played a critical role over the years advancing U.S. interests, and should be prioritized, in accordance with U.S. law. The recent deaths of peacekeepers in South Sudan and Mali remind us of the dangers they face. But peacekeeping would find more support if failing missions – some decades old – were closed and the horrendous sexual abuses tackled head-on.

This Committee has pushed to improve the U.N.'s transparency and accountability, advancing protections of whistleblowers and bringing U.N. peacekeepers that are sexual predators to justice.

Ambassador Haley, we look forward to hearing how we can support you working to improve transparency and accountability. This Committee stands ready to assist in your difficult tasks ahead.