



*House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Oversight and Intelligence*

**U.S. Accountability at the United Nations: Challenges and Opportunities for Reform**  
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Chairman Mills and honorable members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. C-Fam commends the members of the committee and their staff for bringing attention to United Nations (“UN”) reform and UN accountability to the American People.

There is a widely held misconception that the UN system is wholly ineffective. This is largely true if you are looking at what the UN core mission for peace and security. However, The UN system *has* been very effective in areas in which it has no competence, like promoting highly controversial social policies, including abortion, gender ideology, DEI, and censorship. It does so without regard for federal law, international law, the UN Charter, sovereignty, and self-government. To be effective, UN reforms need to address this bureaucratic overreach.

**The UN Transformed: Neo-Colonial “Global Governance”**

The UN Charter envisions a system of cooperation between states.<sup>1</sup> Against this, UN agreements increasingly describe the UN as a system for “global governance.”<sup>2</sup> A complex web of General Assembly agreements imposes common policy targets on all countries and gives UN officials and UN mechanisms mandates to interfere in domestic policy debates about energy, migration, human rights, gender, health, and other policies.<sup>3</sup>

While UN political agreements are not legally binding on states, they are legally binding on the UN system, analogous to non-legislative administrative rules within federal agencies. The

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<sup>1</sup> U.N. Charter art. 2, especially para. 1 and 7.

<sup>2</sup> See Pact for the Future, ch. V (Transforming Global Governance), G.A. Res. 79/1, U.N. Doc. A/RES/79/1 (Sept. 22, 2024), available at: <https://docs.un.org/en/a/res/79/1>

<sup>3</sup> Some of the most cited of these agreements are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council, the Paris Accords, and the Pact for the Future.

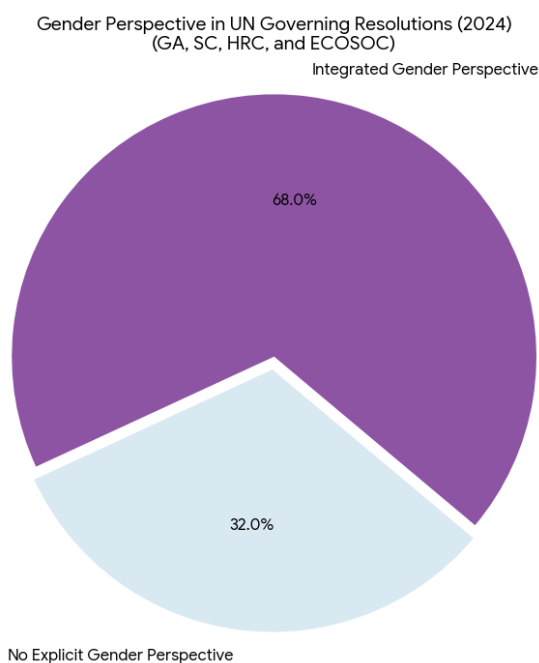
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General Assembly adopts over 350 resolutions every year.<sup>4</sup> Under these mandates, the UN system and a vast network of government-funded non-governmental organizations alternately pressure and incentivize domestic legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government and the private sector to adopt UN policy targets.

## **Examples of UN Bureaucratic Overreach and Impact in U.S. Policy Debates**

### *A. Gender Ideology and DEI*

Before gender ideology was ever debated in Congress, it was promoted at the UN. The process of integrating a “gender perspective” at the UN has been ongoing since 1995 (See Figure 1).<sup>5</sup> All UN system entities are required to adopt a “gender perspective” and “gender mainstreaming” or “integration,” and their performance is scored.<sup>6</sup> Even UN peacekeeping operations are subject to gender perspective guidelines.<sup>7</sup> The UN secretariat has DEI policies that build on these efforts, including DEI hiring practices and dedicated DEI staff.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 1.** UN resolutions that include “gender perspective” across UN normative bodies. (April 23, 2026). <https://gemini.google.com/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/ga/80/resolutions.shtml>

<sup>5</sup> E.S.C. Res. 2021/7, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into All Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System (July 22, 2021), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n21/410/99/doc/n2141099.doc?OpenElement>

<sup>6</sup> U.N. Sustainable Dev. Grp., *UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard: Technical Guidance* (Dec. 2023), <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/unct-swap-gender-equality-scorecard>.

<sup>7</sup> *Implementing a Gender Perspective into the Military Component of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (Guidelines)*, U.N. Doc. 2023.02 (Feb. 2023), <https://peacekeepingresourcehub.un.org/en/policy>.

<sup>8</sup> Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, UN Sys. Chief Executives Bd. for Coordination, <https://unsceb.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion> (last visited Mar. 5, 2024).

In the UN system, the term “gender” does not just refer to the equality of men and women. UN gender policies disregard the longstanding definition of gender as only referring to men and women in UN agreements.<sup>9</sup> UN gender policies encompass what some would describe as a neo-Marxist and even a “woke” theoretical framework, including “gender identity”, “gender-diverse people,” and “intersectionality.”<sup>10</sup> This affords preferential treatment to individuals based on their intersecting identities rather than merit or legally defined characteristics.<sup>11</sup> The UN system justifies this through mandates to address “multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination” and “women in all their diversity” in UN resolutions.<sup>12</sup>

The endgame for the bureaucracy promoting gender ideology is not merely DEI hiring practices.<sup>13</sup> A draft treaty on crimes against humanity<sup>14</sup> currently under consideration in the General Assembly would criminalize opponents of sex-rejecting procedures for minors and advocates for female-only spaces.<sup>15</sup> In January 2026, several delegations voiced concerns about this.<sup>16</sup>

These UN gender policies have also been influential in U.S. policy. Executive orders, U.S. foreign policy memos, and other guidelines cite UN gender policies.<sup>17</sup> “Gender integration” has been codified in U.S. foreign assistance law.<sup>18</sup> Congressmen have proposed legislation to stigmatize opponents of gender ideology as international criminals.<sup>19</sup> Some European nations already categorize opposition to gender ideology as a hate crime and a crime against humanity.<sup>20</sup>

### *B. Abortion Activism*

UN agencies and human rights mechanisms systematically promote abortion-on-demand as a human right, even though no UN human rights treaty mentions abortion and no UN agreement

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<sup>9</sup> See Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 Sept. 1995, ¶ 1, Annex IV, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1 (Oct. 17, 1995); See also Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court art. 7(3), July 17, 1998, 2187 U.N.T.S. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., supra note 10, p. 5 and 6.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Intersectional feminism: What it means and why it matters right now (12 June 2025), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/intersectional-feminism-what-it-means-and-why-it-matters-right-now>.

<sup>13</sup> U.N. GAOR, 79th Sess., *Crimes Against Humanity: Report of the Sixth Committee*, U.N. Doc. A/79/473 (Nov. 25, 2024).

<sup>14</sup> *First Session of the Preparatory Committee*, U.N. OFF. LEG. AFFAIRS, [https://legal.un.org/diplomaticconferences/cah/prepcom\\_stmt\\_1sess.shtml](https://legal.un.org/diplomaticconferences/cah/prepcom_stmt_1sess.shtml) (last visited Apr. 27, 2026).

<sup>15</sup> Stefano Gennarini, New U.N. Treaty Decriminalizes AI Child Sexual Abuse Images, *The Federalist*, November 20, 2025, <https://thefederalist.com/2025/11/20/new-u-n-treaty-decriminalizes-ai-child-sexual-abuse-images/>.

<sup>16</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *International Gender Crimes Coming from the UN*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Jan. 30, 2026), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/international-gender-crimes-coming-from-the-un/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/international-gender-crimes-coming-from-the-un/).

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Agency for Int'l Dev., Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 205: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy (2023), [usaid.gov](https://www.usaid.gov).

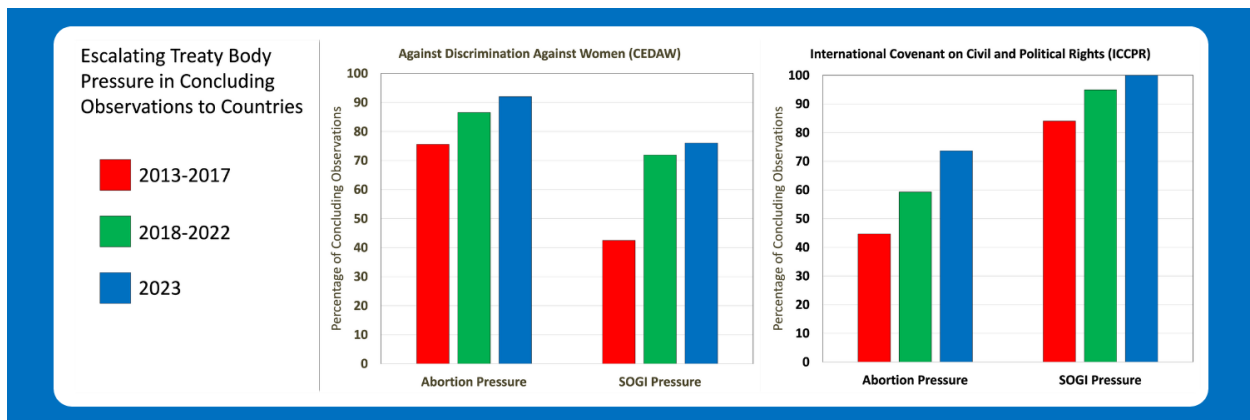
<sup>18</sup> Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-428, 132 Stat. 5463 (2019).

<sup>19</sup> Global Respect Act, H.R. 6151, 119th Cong. (2025) and GLOBE Act of 2023, H.R. 4050, 118th Cong. (2023).

<sup>20</sup> R. Albert Mohler Jr., Religious liberty crashes in Finland, *WORLD*, March 27, 2026, <https://wng.org/opinions/religious-liberty-crashes-in-finland-1774597126>.

grants them such authority. This has resulted in hundreds of recommendations from UN treaty bodies to UN member states to decriminalize abortion under all circumstances.<sup>21</sup>

UN agencies, including the World Health Organization, UN Women, UNICEF, and the UN Population Fund, also systematically promote abortion.<sup>22</sup> They do it in every context, including humanitarian emergencies, when peoples are at their most vulnerable, including by calling for limitations on conscience protections to medical professionals who oppose abortion.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 2.** Escalating Treaty Body Pressure in Concluding Observations to Countries. Adapted from Rebecca Oas, *C-Fam Database Shows Increased Treaty Body Pressure on Abortion, Gender*, C-Fam: Friday Fax (June 23, 2022), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/c-fam-database-shows-increased-treaty-body-pressure-on-abortion-gender/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/c-fam-database-shows-increased-treaty-body-pressure-on-abortion-gender/).

They have done this even though UN policy expressly prohibits the UN system from interfering in legislative debates about abortion.<sup>24</sup> They have done it even at our own U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>25</sup> It is notable that some in Congress are actively working with foreign actors to codify the non-binding recommendations about abortion of the UN human rights system in federal law.<sup>26</sup>

## **Recent Examples of UN Reform Efforts**

### *A. Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance Policy*

The new *Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance Policy (PHFFA)* prohibits U.S. funds from being used to promote abortion, gender ideology, and diversity, equity, and inclusion

<sup>21</sup> Rebecca Oas, *C-Fam Database Shows Increased Treaty Body Pressure on Abortion, Gender*, C-Fam: Friday Fax (June 23, 2022), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/c-fam-database-shows-increased-treaty-body-pressure-on-abortion-gender/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/c-fam-database-shows-increased-treaty-body-pressure-on-abortion-gender/).

<sup>22</sup> *UN-safe Abortion: How the Abortion Industry has Used UN Agencies to Legitimize Abortion*, C-Fam (July 15, 2020), <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UN-safe-Abortion.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> *Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings*, Inter-agency Working Grp. on Reprod. Health in Crises (2018), <https://iawgfieldmanual.com/manual>.

<sup>24</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development*, ¶ 8.25, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.171/13/Rev.1 (Oct. 18, 1994).

<sup>25</sup> Brief for United Nations Mandate Holders as Amici Curiae Supporting Respondents, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Org.*, 142 S. Ct. 2228 (2022) (No. 19-1392).

<sup>26</sup> Women's Health Protection Act of 2025, H.R. 12, 119th Cong. (2025) and Reproductive Rights are Human Rights Act of 2025, H.R. 4888, 119th Cong. (2025).

(DEI) at the UN.<sup>27</sup> The U.S. government adopted positions consistent with the with the PHFFA in UN negotiations and official meetings dealing with social policy and humanitarian assistance.

### *B. Protecting Children from Gender Ideology*

The U.S. refused to endorse the Strategic Plan of the UN Agency for Children, UNICEF.<sup>28</sup> UNICEF's work has increasingly come under scrutiny for promoting gender ideology through sex education programming in formal school settings as well as tech applications and promoting sex-rejecting procedures for children as part of "sexual and reproductive health" in agency publications and guidelines. C-Fam published a report exposing these programs in 2025.<sup>29</sup>

### *C. Upholding U.S. Federal Restrictions and UN Consensus on Abortion*

The U.S. government proposed pro-life amendments to a UN resolution that governs the UN humanitarian system.<sup>30</sup> The amendments ruled out abortion as a human right and require the UN system to provide the best possible maternal health in humanitarian emergencies to "eliminate the need for abortion."<sup>31</sup>

### *D. Defining Gender in UN Policy*

The Trump administration proposed a resolution at the UN Commission on the Status of Women to define gender as only referring to a man and a woman, in line with past UN agreements, and would have excluded gender ideology.<sup>32</sup> It also asked for a footnote to define gender in the main agreement of the Commission.<sup>33</sup>

### *E. Opposing DEI in UN Programs*

The Trump administration successfully supported efforts to delete language expressly supporting gender ideology and DEI in a UN resolution on disability rights, specifically the term "sexual orientation and gender identity."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of State. "Protecting Life in Foreign Assistance", "Combating Gender Ideology in Foreign Assistance", and "Combating Discriminatory Equity Ideology in Foreign Assistance Rules." Federal Register 91, no. 17 (January 27, 2026): 3319–3345.

<sup>28</sup> [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/u-s-slams-unicef-for-sexualizing-children-breaks-consensus-on-new-strategic-plan/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/u-s-slams-unicef-for-sexualizing-children-breaks-consensus-on-new-strategic-plan/)

<sup>29</sup> C-Fam, UNICEF: Attack on the World's Children: Evidence of UNICEF Promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Gender Ideology, and Abortion (Sept. 2025), <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/Analysis-UNICEF-1.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *Europeans Run from Abortion Fight at UN*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Dec. 12, 2025, 10:47 AM), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/europeans-run-away-from-abortion-fight-at-un/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/europeans-run-away-from-abortion-fight-at-un/).

<sup>31</sup> U.N. GAOR, 80th Sess., Annex, U.N. Doc. A/80/L.31, A/80/L.32, A/80/L.33 (Dec. 10, 2025), available at: <https://journal.un.org/en/new-york/meeting/officials/9cf506d4-4650-41ad-9fc7-1b77fcfc724a/2025-12-10>

<sup>32</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *European Union Censors Gender Debate at the UN*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Mar. 20, 2026), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/european-union-censors-gender-debate-at-the-un/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/european-union-censors-gender-debate-at-the-un/)

<sup>33</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *Costa Rica, EU Block UN Definition of "Woman"*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Mar. 13, 2026), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/costa-rica-eu-block-un-definition-of-woman/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/costa-rica-eu-block-un-definition-of-woman/).

<sup>34</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *EXCLUSIVE: Sexual Left Defeated in UN Vote*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Dec. 19, 2025), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/exclusive-sxual-left-defeated-in-un-vote/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/exclusive-sxual-left-defeated-in-un-vote/).

## *F. Opposing Censorship and AI Regulation*

The U.S. administration opposed UN-sponsored global censorship and AI regulation under the pretext of combating disinformation, hate speech, upholding human rights, and eliminating gender bias.<sup>35</sup> Argentina and Paraguay supported the U.S. position.<sup>36</sup> The UN Secretary General has placed great emphasis on the nexus between AI and efforts to combat “disinformation.”<sup>37</sup> EU and Soros-funded efforts have sought to censor and expel organizations like C-Fam from UN debates through the label “anti-rights.” It is unfortunate that U.S. State Department personnel were found to be involved in this.<sup>38</sup>

## *G. Protecting Children from Child Pornography and Sex Trafficking*

The U.S. successfully amended a resolution to ensure the UN system cooperates to combat all forms of child pornography,<sup>39</sup> in line with federal law and international law.<sup>40</sup>

## **Challenges to Reform**

### *A. Structural Challenges to Reform*

The growth of voluntary contributions has significantly changed the UN over the last 25 years (see Figure 3). The UN system is now characterized by overlapping spheres of influence without accountability or checks and balances. Previously existing checks on the UN bureaucracy from great power competition have faded since the end of the Cold War.

The premise of the functioning of the United Nations system when it was created 80 years ago was a multi-polar world, where the competing interests of great powers would keep the UN system accountable and in check to avoid the danger of the emergence of a global government. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall—a period some characterize as “unipolar” because of unrivaled U.S. power and influence—the U.S. government together with progressive governments in Europe and the Anglosphere have transformed the multilateral system into a neo-colonial structure for social and economic engineering.

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<sup>35</sup> G.A. Res. 80/215, *The Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation*, U.N. Doc. A/RES/80/215 (Dec. 18, 2025).

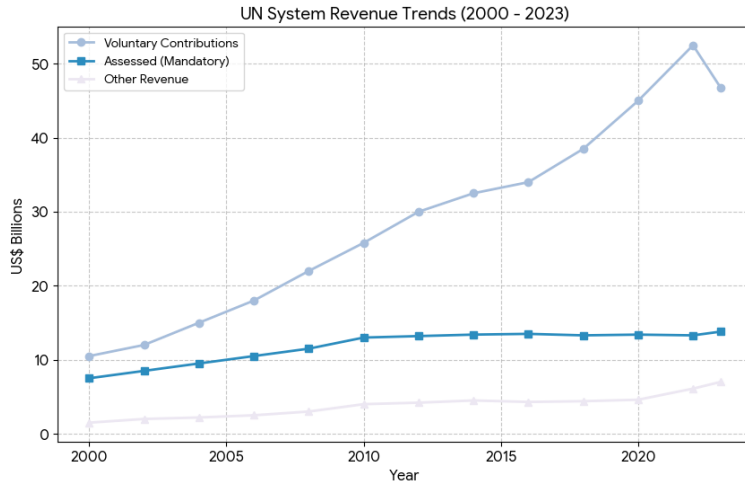
<sup>36</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *UN General Assembly Expands Global Censorship*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Nov. 21, 2025), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/un-general-assembly-expands-global-censorship/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/un-general-assembly-expands-global-censorship/).

<sup>37</sup> *UN Information Integrity*, U.N., <https://www.un.org/en/information-integrity> (last visited Apr. 27, 2026).

<sup>38</sup> Stefano Gennarini & Rebecca Oas, “*Anti-Rights*”: *A New Strategic Label to Suppress Dissent*, C-Fam (Dec. 9, 2021), <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/Definitions-Anti-Rights.pdf>

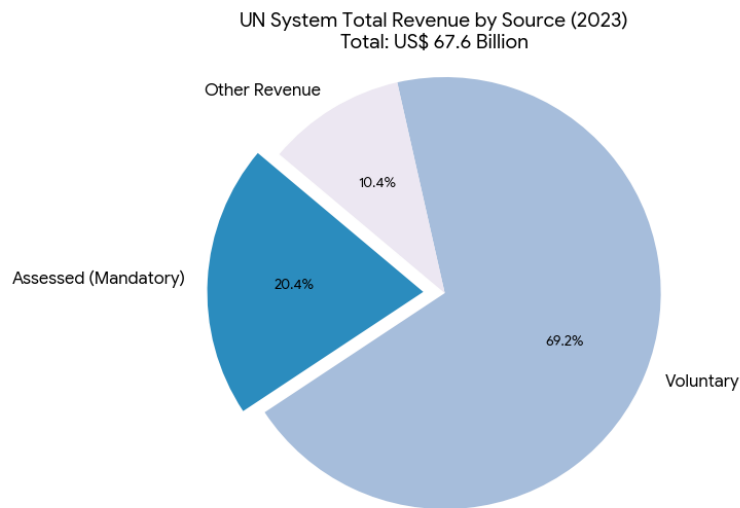
<sup>39</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *US Wins UN Vote to Combat Child Porn*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Nov. 21, 2025), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/breaking-us-wins-un-vote-to-combat-child-prn/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/breaking-us-wins-un-vote-to-combat-child-prn/).

<sup>40</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *New U.N. Treaty Decriminalizes AI Child Sexual Abuse Images*, THE FEDERALIST (Nov. 20, 2025), <https://thefederalist.com/2025/11/20/new-u-n-treaty-decriminalizes-ai-child-sexual-abuse-images/>.



**Figure 3.** Growth of the voluntary contributions to the UN budget over the last quarter-century. (April 23, 2026). <https://gemini.google.com/>

Recent UN budget cuts sponsored by the Trump administration are laudable, but they only affect assessed contributions, leaving nearly 70% of the budget untouched (see figure 4).<sup>41</sup>



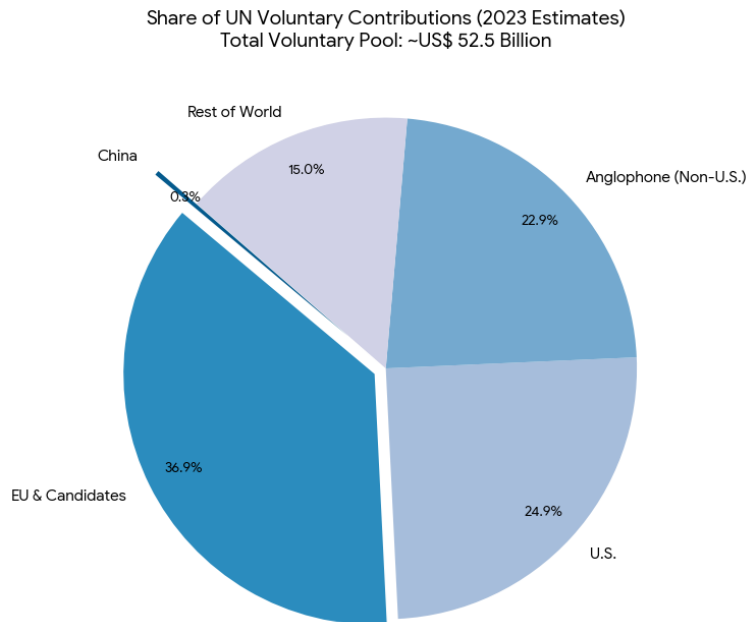
**Figure 4.** UN budget by revenue source. (April 23, 2026). <https://gemini.google.com/>

### B. Geopolitical Challenges to UN Reform

The U.S.’s biggest geopolitical rival at the UN is not China, but Europe and other Anglophone countries that promote abortion, gender ideology, DEI and censorship as priorities. China’s contribution to the voluntary budget is less than 1% of the total (See Figure 5). Europe accounts for over 33%. The European Union (EU) openly postures as a rival to the U.S. in UN debates on

<sup>41</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *Can Trump Deliver Real UN Reform?*, REALCLEARWORLD (Feb. 28, 2026), [https://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2026/02/28/can\\_trump\\_deliver\\_real\\_un\\_reform\\_1167642.html](https://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2026/02/28/can_trump_deliver_real_un_reform_1167642.html).

social policy. EU delegations ignore U.S. positions and stall UN debates.<sup>42</sup> They are expecting a weakened U.S. lame-duck presidency this November.<sup>43</sup>



*Figure 5. UN voluntary budget by revenue source. (April 23, 2026). <https://gemini.google.com/>*

### **The Way Forward: More Bilateral Aid and More UN Engagement**

Delivering bilateral aid directly through governments will help foreign nations see the U.S. as a more desirable partner than the European Union or Anglophone countries, which impose conditions related to abortion and gender ideology.

U.S. foreign aid must be leveraged to implement UN reforms and build coalitions. One excellent example is the *Geneva Consensus Declaration on Protecting Women’s Health and Strengthening the Family*.<sup>44</sup>

As we celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of our nation, the U.S. should remind the world that we are the longest-standing self-governing republic in the world. Over time, everyone will discover the U.S. as the most stable, benign, and reliable of all the geopolitical actors vying for their trust and friendship. Many already know it to be true.

<sup>42</sup> Stefano Gennarini, *General Assembly President Openly Disdains U.S.*, C-FAM: FRIDAY FAX (Dec. 19, 2025), [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/general-assembly-president-openly-disdains-u-s/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/general-assembly-president-openly-disdains-u-s/)

<sup>43</sup> Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Pol’y & Vice-President of the Eur. Comm’n, Keynote Speech at the 2026 EU Ambassadors Conference (Mar. 9, 2026), [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/keynote-speech-hrvp-kaja-kallas-2026-eu-ambassadors-conference\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/keynote-speech-hrvp-kaja-kallas-2026-eu-ambassadors-conference_en).

<sup>44</sup> See Letter dated Dec. 1, 2020 from the Permanent Representatives of Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Uganda and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, U.N. Doc. A/75/626 (Dec. 8, 2020); See also Press Statement, U.S. Dep’t of State, United States’ Renewed Membership in the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women’s Health and Strengthening the Family (Feb. 13, 2025),