



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
of the United States of America
AND THE BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR THE UNITED NATIONS



May 14, 2008

MAY 19 2008

Representative Nydia M Velazquez
266 Broadway, Suite 201
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Representative Velazquez:

This year's election cycle offers an important opportunity to redefine America's role in the world and to examine our approach to major global challenges—from climate change, to crimes against humanity, terrorism, or the global food crisis.

We live in a world where the solutions to global problems require international cooperation, whether they are economic, environmental, or concerning our national security. Working cooperatively with other nations and international institutions, like the United Nations, ensures that we don't have to pay all the bills or take all the risks for global security and progress. And the U.S. has increasingly turned to the UN to help tackle global challenges, like taking on a bigger role in Iraq, keeping an eye on Iran's nuclear ambitions, and bringing peace to Darfur.

With this in mind, we have designed the following survey to learn your positions on key issues in the U.S. – UN relationship and important American national interests.

Your responses will be posted on our websites (www.betterworldcampaign.org and www.unausa.org) and will also be made available to the media. We would appreciate your response to the attached questionnaire, as well as any comments you wish to include, by July 31, 2008.

Your response can be emailed to campaignsurvey@betterworldcampaign.org or mailed/faxed to:

Congressional Candidate Survey
Better World Campaign
1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Fax: (202) 462-2686

The Better World Campaign works to build a stronger relationship between the U.S. and the UN through outreach, communications, and advocacy. The United Nations Association of the USA is a national membership organization that has a long history of raising awareness about and building support for the work of the UN and the value of a strong U.S. – UN partnership.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alan Averty (aaverty@unausa.org; 202.462.3446) or Nicole Sawran (nsawran@betterworldcampaign.org; 202.462.4900).

Sincerely,

Steven A. Dimoff
Vice President, Washington Office
United Nations Association of the USA

Deborah Derrick
Executive Director
Better World Campaign



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
of the United States of America
AND THE BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR THE UNITED NATIONS



**United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA)
Better World Campaign (BWC)**

2008 Congressional Candidate Questionnaire on U.S. - UN Relationship

U.S. Participation in the United Nations

Working cooperatively with the international community and engaging with international organizations can be an important and cost-effective means for furthering U.S. national security interests. The UN provides a forum for the U.S. to build support for global action on enduring foreign policy interests, such as international stability, prosperity, and the promotion of fundamental freedoms. Through burden sharing, the UN allows us to advance our goals without paying all the bills or taking all the risks. Unfortunately, the United States began 2008 with \$1.5 billion in debt to the United Nations and continues to fall behind in paying its UN dues. This debt has accumulated despite the fact that the U.S. is asking the UN to undertake a wide variety of new tasks and missions, including complex missions in places like Iraq, Lebanon, and Darfur. (For further information, visit www.un.int/usa.)

Does the United States advance national interests and security by working through the United Nations?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

The U.S. has wasted valuable capital with the international community by going it alone on many crucial foreign affairs issues. Luckily, we have the power and diplomatic weight to repair. We need new leadership, bent on establishing new coalitions instead of wrecking them.

Do you support paying off U.S. debt to the UN? Will you work to ensure that the U.S. honors its treaty commitments to the United Nations by paying our UN dues on time, in full and without conditions?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

The UN and Iraq

The situation in Iraq has implications that extend far beyond the region, and it is in the interest of the United States to engage the United Nations in stabilizing Iraq. In August 2007, the UN Security Council renewed the UN Mission in Iraq and expanded its mandate in three key areas: (1) promoting national reconciliation; (2) facilitating regional dialogue on issues such as border security, energy, and refugee matters; and (3) providing humanitarian assistance to and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced Iraqis. These efforts build on the United Nations' prior assistance with national elections, the drafting, approval and review of the 2005 Constitution, and the coordination of reconstruction, development, and humanitarian assistance. (For further information, visit www.uniraq.org.)

Do you support an increased role for the United Nations to help strengthen the U.S.-led effort to stabilize Iraq?

YES

NO

Do you support providing the necessary U.S. resources for an enhanced UN presence?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

The Fight against Global Terrorism

International terrorism is a shared challenge that can be confronted most effectively through coordinated global action. In 2006, UN member states adopted a common Global Counterterrorism Strategy that denounces all forms of terrorism and includes a detailed plan of action with practical steps for fighting terrorism at the national, regional, and international levels. The UN and its member governments must now find a way to successfully implement this new comprehensive strategy. (For further information, visit www.un.org/terrorism.)

Do you support collective action through the United Nations to address international terrorism?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

Our efforts to prevent Al Qaeda from winning over the young potential peacekeepers and terrorists of tomorrow will be much more successful if we work to solve underlying problems in the world through the UN.

Climate Change

Climate change is the most far-reaching environmental challenge facing the international community, requiring diplomatic, economic, scientific, and technological cooperation. The UN can provide the most effective platform for much of this cooperation. Under the framework of the United Nations, the international community has begun the process of drafting a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, which expires in 2012. The goal of these negotiations is the establishment of a widely-accepted comprehensive international agreement for preventing catastrophic climate change by the end of 2009. (For further information, visit www.un.org/climatechange.)

Do you support the development of a new international agreement for addressing climate change under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

Strengthening the United Nations

There is broad support within the international community for renewing and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations. Proposals for UN reform generally focus on the organization's three major structures: the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Secretariat. The United States has promoted numerous reforms of the General Assembly and the Secretariat, but has been less eager to engage on Security Council reform. Many other nations place a priority on Security Council reform due to concern that the permanent membership of the Council has remained unchanged since the UN was created at the end of World War II. Some argue that the unrepresentative nature of the Security Council has damaged the legitimacy of its decisions and will need to be addressed before further UN reforms can be agreed upon. (For further information, visit www.centerforunreform.org.)

Do you support Security Council reform?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

The UN Security Council format ~~is~~ should be flexible enough to stay relevant as the world changes.

UN Peacekeeping

UN peacekeeping is perhaps the world's best example of cooperating for international security—an effective means of ensuring that no nation has to pay all the bills or take all the risks associated with maintaining international peace and stability. Over the last several years, the UN Security Council has authorized an increasing number of new and expanded peacekeeping missions in places such as Darfur, Lebanon, Haiti, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Once the hybrid United Nations – African Union mission to Darfur is fully deployed, there will be more than 130,000 personnel serving in 18 different UN-led peace operations around the world. *(For further information, visit www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko.)*

Despite its continued support for new and expanded missions, the U.S. has been negligent in paying its fair share for UN peacekeeping, resulting in more than \$1.2 billion in debt at the UN for peacekeeping operations alone. *(For further information, visit <http://www.betterworldcampaign.org/issues/funding/growing-us-debt-to-the-un.html>.)*

Do you support UN peacekeeping operations as 'force multipliers' that can complement U.S. efforts to stabilize conflict zones around the world?

YES

NO

Do you support full U.S. funding for UN peacekeeping operations?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court is the world's only permanent international court with jurisdiction to try individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and serious war crimes when national courts are unwilling or unable to act. More than 100 countries have joined the Court, which only has jurisdiction over crimes committed on the territory or by a citizen of a country that has joined the Court or granted it special consent, or that have been referred to it by the UN Security Council. The International Criminal Court is currently investigating cases in Darfur; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Uganda; and the Central African Republic. *(For further information, visit www.icc-cpi.int.)*

Should the United States support and join the International Criminal Court?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

Global Poverty

The scale and scope of global poverty render it a scourge that demands broad international cooperation: one third of the world's population—more than 2 billion people—live in abject poverty. At the urging of the United Nations and the international donor community, world leaders agreed in 2000 to a specific, prioritized development agenda to strengthen international focus on and commitment to anti-poverty efforts. Reaffirmed by world leaders in 2005, the UN Millennium Development Goals (or MDGs) include eight concrete objectives for achievement by 2015: cutting extreme poverty in half; achieving universal primary education; empowering women; reducing child and maternal mortality; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases; protecting the environment; and cooperating internationally on these aims. The MDGs have been endorsed by Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. *(For further information, visit www.un.org/millenniumgoals.)*

Do you support U.S. efforts to help meet the Millennium Development Goals?

YES

NO

COMMENTS:

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey. Your response can be emailed to campaignsurvey@betterworldcampaign.org or mailed/faxed to:

Congressional Candidate Survey
Better World Campaign
1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 462-2686 [fax]

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alan Averyt (aaveryt@unausa.org; 202.462.3446) or Nicole Sawran (nsawran@betterworldcampaign.org; 202.462.4900).

About the Better World Campaign

The Better World Campaign (BWC), an initiative of the Better World Fund, works to strengthen the relationship between the United States and the United Nations through outreach, communications, and advocacy. It encourages U.S. leadership to enhance the UN's ability to carry out its invaluable international work on behalf of peace, progress, freedom, and justice. In these efforts, BWC engages policy makers, the media, and the American public to increase awareness of and support for the United Nations. For more information, visit www.betterworldcampaign.org.

About the United Nations Association of the United States of America

The United Nations Association of the United States of America is dedicated to educating, inspiring, and mobilizing Americans to support the principles and vital work of the United Nations, strengthening the United Nations system, promoting constructive United States leadership in that system, and achievement of the goals of the UN Charter. For more information, visit www.unausa.org