



What every American should know about the United Nations

THE UN BENEFITS AMERICANS IN MANY WAYS

BURDEN SHARING - All of the UN 193 members – nearly every nation on earth – contribute money to the UN to address problems that transcend geographic boundaries. The US spends approximately 1/10 of 1% of the federal budget on the entire UN system. This includes not only such bodies as the General Assembly, Security Council, Secretariat, and World Court but also the world financial institutions and other “specialized agencies.”

LABOR – American workers benefit from international labor standards set by the International Labour Organization.

ENVIRONMENT – Every single American – indeed, everyone under the sun – benefits from a treaty negotiated by the UN banning the production of gases that destroy the protective ozone layer of the earth’s atmosphere.

MAIL – The regular flow of mail between the US and other countries is made possible by agreements on international mail delivery supervised by a UN specialized agency, the Universal Postal Union.

HEALTH – Americans traveling abroad no longer need a vaccination against smallpox, thanks to the successful World Health Organization-led effort to eradicate the disease. Today, with the HIV virus spreading almost everywhere in the world, a program called UNAIDS that mobilizes and coordinates the expertise and financial resources of 6 UN bodies is attacking this pandemic on every front: medical, public health, social, economic, cultural and political.

PHONE CALLS – Making it easier to place phone calls overseas is another specialized agency, the International Telecommunications Union, where governments and the private sector get together to coordinate global telecom networks and services.

AIR TRAVEL – Americans, who make up 40% of international air travelers, can fly safely to other nations because still another UN specialized agency, the International Civil Aviation Organization, has set safety standards.

BUSINESS – The World Intellectual Property Organization promotes the global interests of US business by working to ensure respect for trademarks and copyrights.

WEATHER – American farmers (and consumers in turn) benefit from reports of the World Weather Watch – a program of the World Meteorological Organization, another UN agency.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS – Everyone benefits from the safeguards enforced by the International Atomic Energy Agency – an autonomous body established under UN auspices – that prevents the diversion of nuclear materials from peaceful use to weapons use.

RULE OF LAW – By expanding the rule of law in international affairs, the UN helps to stabilize relations among nations. This stability facilitates international trade, providing markets for US goods and jobs for American workers.