Trump Is Right To Call For Big UN Funding Cuts

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In 2005, Citizens United produced a documentary entitled *Broken Promises: The United Nations At 60*, hosted by the late actor Ron Silver. The film took a fresh look at the record of the UN over its six decade history and probed into whether or not it was living up to its original charter.  We found that the UN was failing horribly in its mission to rally and act against evil in the world and was rife with corruption and anti-Israel bias.  Now, twelve years later, we ask again:  has the United Nations been able to reform itself and if not, why does the United States continue to fund the UN at such high levels and why are we not seriously rethinking our relationship with the organization generally?

The Trump Administration is indicating it will be seeking deep cuts in funds that the U.S. sends to the United Nations, which could save taxpayers billions of dollars.  President Trump has stated repeatedly that he wants to concentrate more American taxpayer funds on American jobs and infrastructure.  The President’s platform of rethinking American foreign aid and our expensive support of international organizations is a big reason why he was propelled to the presidency in 2016.

President Trump has experience when it comes to the way the United Nations spends money.  At the time our film was made, the UN was contemplating a building renovation project and President Trump offered to take on the project.  He was kind enough to sit for an interview for the film to discuss his experiences with the UN in this regard.  Here’s what our future president said in 2005:

I think you could save a billion dollars.  I then get a letter saying we’re not interested…they weren’t interested in saving a billion dollars…then after that I started hearing about all of the scandals and everything else and I fully understand why those scandals took place.  I don’t think it’s incompetence, I think it’s much worse than incompetence.  They are going to spend much more than a ‘billion-five’ on fixing up a building and it’s impossible to do that.

Since our film was released, little has changed at the United Nations with regard to scandals.  In [April 2016](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-un-corruption-exclusive-idUSKCN0X00VD), *Reuters* reported that a “21-page confidential report…outlines the results of an audit ordered by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in response to charges against John Ashe, General Assembly president in 2013-2014, and six other people…It is the biggest financial corruption crisis to rock the United Nations since the Oil-for-Food scandal hit the world body during the tenure of Ban’s predecessor Kofi Annan. U.N. officials and diplomats say latest [sic] scandal highlights the need for greater transparency at the United Nations.”

And with regard to anti-Israel sentiment at the United Nations, in January of this year Senators Ted Cruz and Lindsey Graham felt compelled to introduce a bill that would cut U.S. funding of the UN until the organization reverses an anti-Israel resolution that passed the Security Council in December.  Senator Graham was correct when he stated, “Twenty-two percent of the money to fund the U.N. comes from the American taxpayer. I don’t think it’s a good investment for the American taxpayer to give money to an organization that condemns the only democracy in the Middle East.”

In summing up our film my friend Ron Silver said, “For decades there has been talk of UN reform. But on its 60th anniversary, there seems to be consensus that the UN must reform or face irrelevancy.”  So I ask again, now in its 72nd year, has anything changed at the UN?  This is the precise time for America to pull back on its massive investment in the United Nations.  Perhaps the time has come for America to have a debate about leaving the body altogether. History has shown the UN is unlikely to undertake any true reform absent extreme measures by its primary financial benefactor.