

End Funding for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

SAVINGS IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016-2020	2016-2025
\$81	\$81	\$82	\$83	\$85	\$86	\$88	\$91	\$92	\$94	\$412	\$863

Heritage Recommendation:

End U.S. contributions to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). This proposal saves \$81 million in 2016, and \$863 million over 10 years.

Rationale:

The UNDP aid meant to assist suffering populations in many authoritarian countries inadvertently helps perpetuate that suffering. In Burma, for example, a human rights group accused the UNDP of funding state-controlled programs to “expand military control over the population while divesting itself of the cost of operating programs and simultaneously legitimizing its policies in the name of development.”²⁷ The UNDP has also funded improper activities in Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

In addition, UNDP management of resources is weak. A 2011 audit by the U.S. Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) identified numerous management and oversight failings and concluded: “Until these oversight and monitoring issues are addressed, there will continue to be concerns about the value of UNDP’s services needed to provide the expected quantity, quality, and timeliness of progress in establishing and maintaining a viable police force.”²⁸ Correspondence in 2014 between SIGAR and UNDP indicate that these deficiencies remain and, more worryingly, UNDP “appears to downplay UNDP’s responsibility for overseeing LOTFA [Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan] and fails to acknowledge the problems that continue to plague this program.”²⁹

Additional Reading:

- Brett Schaefer and Steven Groves, “Congress Should Withhold Funds from the U.N. Development Program,” Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1783, January 26, 2008, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2008/01/congress-should-withhold-funds-from-the-un-development-program>.
- Brett Schaefer, “The UN Development Program Rewards North Korea,” *The Daily Signal*, October 1, 2009, <http://dailysignal.com/2009/10/01/the-un-development-program-rewards-north-korea/>.
- Brett Schaefer, “Why Does UNDP Continue to Aid Repressive Regimes?” *The Daily Signal*, August 27, 2010, <http://dailysignal.com/2010/08/27/why-does-undp-continue-to-aid-repressive-regimes/>.
- Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, “2011 SIGAR Review of the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan,” April 25, 2011, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/interactive/2014/10/16/2011-review-law-and-order-trust-fund-for-afghanistan/>.

Calculations:

Savings are expressed as budget authority and were calculated using the FY 2014 estimated spending levels as found on page 17 of the “FY 2015 Congressional Budget Justification: Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs,” <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/222898.pdf>. Spending levels have been increased at the same rate as discretionary spending for 2016–2025 according to the CBO’s most recent August 2014 baseline spending projections.