

Opening Statement for Michael Waltz
Nominee for U.S. Representative to the United Nations, with the Rank of
Ambassador, and U.S. Representative in the UN Security Council
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 15, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Shaheen.

It's an honor to be here as President Trump's nominee. First, I want to thank my family. My wife, Julia, a fellow combat veteran and herself an accomplished diplomat, comes from a Jordanian Catholic immigrant family that arrived through Ellis Island and embodies the American dream. My mother, Brenda, my rock, who bootstrapped her way through life, my daughter Anderson, a rising senior at UC Boulder, and our three-year-old son Armie – who joins us today in spirit, might challenge the Capitol Police with his energy.

I also want to thank my fellow Green Berets, SEALs, veterans, and Gold Star families here today. We've had each other's backs through wars shaped by decisions made in this building. Their families bear the heaviest burden, and I promise to keep you in mind as we support President Trump's focus on peace through strength.

My experience as a Green Beret, serving alongside NGOs and development agencies in Africa and the Middle East, shapes my view of this position. I've seen many organizations mean well and execute poorly due to lack of coordination, bloated bureaucracy, and poor contracting. I've seen over and over again - hospitals lack beds, schools lack supplies or teachers- and by the time aid filters through layers of subcontractors, only pennies reach those in need.

As a former Congressman, I bring the perspective of representing hardworking Americans—welders, nurses, teachers, small business owners. If we were in a town hall, could we answer their questions on whether their dollars are well spent? And should we be in the UN at all?

I'd answer their questions with the need for the UN's reform but also with its potential. We should have one place in the world where everyone can talk - China, Russia, Europe, the developing world can resolve conflicts. But after 80 years, it's drifted from its core mission of peacemaking. We must return to the UN Charter's first principles of preventing and resolving disputes.

Second, UN bodies set international standards—aviation, telecommunications, intellectual property—where U.S. leadership is essential and America should have a strong voice.

Third, peacekeeping has an important role but needs reform. The U.S. funds 25% of these efforts, yet we have missions in Africa at a cost of billions with tens of thousands of soldiers and others that have been in place since the 1940s with no end in sight. We must press the Security Council on length, cost, and clear end states, focusing on peacekeeping, not nation-building.

Countering China is critical. It's absurd that the world's second-largest economy is treated as a developing nation throughout UN agencies that gives China favorable status. China pushes its personnel into roles at all levels often advancing CCP interests over the UN's professed values. If confirmed, I'll work with Secretary Rubio to challenge this influence.

We must also challenge pervasive antisemitism. From 2015–2023, the General Assembly passed 154 resolutions against Israel versus 71 against all other nations combined. UNRWA in Gaza, with staff involved in the October 7th attack and schools teaching antisemitic hate, must be dismantled. The reappointment of Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese with her calls to boycott American companies doing business with Israel, highlights this bias. President Trump's executive order and Chairman Risch's "Stand with Israel Act" require withholding funds from such bodies. I fully support Rep. Elise Stefanik's proposal for an Abraham Accords Caucus to further unite the Arab world and Israel within the UN.

Regarding budget, the UN's revenue quadrupled from \$14.9 to \$67.6 billion in the last 20 years, yet the world is not commensurately more peaceful. The U.S. pays more than 183 countries combined. Meanwhile, 28 countries contribute just \$37,000. The UN has ballooned to over 80 agencies, with overlapping missions that waste resources. If confirmed, I'll push for transparency like what we see in the Secretary General's UN80 reform plan calling for a 20% staff cut. It's worth remembering that, even with cuts, the U.S. is by far the most generous nation in the world.

Finally, the UN's radical politicization— such as reports on “stolen Native American land” its “George Floyd Mechanism” labeling policing in America as “systemically racist” with input from despotic countries like Cuba and Venezuela—is unacceptable.

Ronald Reagan once said, “the UN can solve problems or spread discord; the choice is ours.”

In just six months, President Trump has brought dozens of hostages home, justice for our Abbey Gate Gold Star families, secured the border, denied Iran a nuclear weapon, and brought ceasefire to conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Yet there is still tremendous work to be done. I'm confident that under this President's leadership we will continue to spread peace and prosperity and I'm confident we can Make the UN Great Again.

I look forward to your questions.