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[**Ban Ki-moon over Tehran**](http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/315350/ban-ki-moon-over-tehran-clifford-d-may)

The U.N.’s latest outrage.

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Is there no point at which we conclude that the United Nations has evolved into an organization that is not just flawed, not just in need of reform, but fundamentally, structurally, and incorrigibly hostile to American values and the cause of freedom in the 21st century?

The latest — if not last — straw on the camel’s back: U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s visit this week to Tehran for a conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Iran’s rulers are the world’s leading sponsors of terrorism; they are under U.N. Security Council sanctions, illegally building nuclear weapons while refusing to allow the U.N.’s International Atomic Energy Agency to conduct inspections; they are in clear violation of the U.N. [Genocide Convention](http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html); they are sending cash, arms, and troops to support the Assad regime’s slaughter in Syria; they are persecuting Christians, Baha’i, and other religious minorities and using the most brutal methods to crush dissidents.

Ban knows all this. He knows, too, that the Tehran meeting is intended, in the words of the government-controlled [*Kayhan*](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/6629.htm) newspaper, as a “slap” to the U.S. and “the last volley against the liberal-democratic system.” Apparently, none of this matters to Ban.

Nor does it matter to the rulers of the more than 100 countries that belong to the NAM and are honoring Iran by making it the president of their organization for a three-year term.

Founded in 1961, the NAM used to claim to be outside both the American and Soviet orbits — viewing the former as no better than the latter. But such states as Cuba, a Soviet satellite, were admitted for membership anyway, ensuring that the Kremlin’s interests would be served while Washington’s were not.

The collapse of the USSR did not prompt the NAM to realign. Today, Iran, Venezuela, and other anti-American states largely dictate the organization’s agenda. The Riyadh-based Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (formerly the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, 56 states plus the Palestinian Authority, a bloc the late scholar [Bat Ye’or](http://www.cliffordmay.org/10314/european-caliphate) characterized as a “would-be, universal caliphate”) also has a hand on the tiller.

This global anti-democratic alliance enjoys a majority in the U.N. General Assembly. In the Security Council, autocratic Russia and China exercise veto power. Within this framework, one U.N. agency after another has morphed in ways that would have shocked even George Orwell.

The most infamous is the U.N. Human Rights Council, which does nothing to promote human rights. On the contrary, it protects the world’s worst human-rights violators while attacking Israel, the U.S., even [Quebec](http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/06/18/un-slams-quebecs-alarming-anti-protest-legislation-bill-78/). The council’s next member is likely to be Sudan, a jihadist dictatorship responsible for genocide in Darfur. On Monday, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, called that “callous, dangerous, and tragic.” The U.N., she added, “has hit a new low.”

Then there’s UNESCO, the U.N.’s culture and science agency. Last March, 33 of the 58 states on its governing board announced plans to award a $3 million prize financed by Teodoro Obiang Nguema, president of Equatorial Guinea. Obiang came to power through a coup in 1979 and, since then, with U.N. assistance, he has managed to do nothing to alleviate the grinding poverty of the people he rules — even as Equatorial Guinea has become Africa’s third-biggest oil exporter.

Another U.N. agency, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), has allegedly transferred American technology to both Iran and North Korea. WIPO has refused to cooperate with a congressional investigation.

And does anyone remember the special tribunal established by the U.N. to investigate the murder of Rafik Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister who was blown up in Beirut in 2005? Time and money were spent. Some high-level Lebanese and Syrian security officers were implicated. Hassan Nasrallah, head of Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanon-based terrorist proxy, denounced the tribunal. Surprise: No case has ever been brought to court.

Iran has been named a member of the bureau overseeing the U.N. Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty — even as it has been illegally supplying arms to Assad.

In recent years, Iran also has been a member of a U.N. advisory committee on international law, a member of the executive board of the U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF), a vice chairman of the U.N. Disarmament Commission, and a rapporteur of the U.N. Committee on Information, which is meant to support free speech and a free press. North Korea, China, and Russia sit on this committee, too.

We haven’t even touched on the U.N.’s failures in Rwanda and Srebrenica, its chronic financial corruption, and the revelations that U.N. “peace keepers” have inflicted sexual violence on the women and children they were charged to protect.

Needless to say, this is not what the founders of the U.N. had in mind. In 1946, President Harry S. Truman [hoped](http://trumanlibrary.org/calendar/viewpapers.php?pid=914) that the new organization would “provide the means for maintaining international peace.” The U.N. General Assembly, he said, would become “the world’s supreme deliberative body.”

The U.N. [claims](http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml) for itself four main purposes: keeping peace; developing friendly relations among nations; helping nations work together to conquer hunger, disease, and illiteracy, and to encourage respect for rights and freedoms; and harmonizing the actions of nations to achieve these goals. Can anyone seriously argue that the U.N. has not flatly failed on every count and become, in columnist Charles Krauthammer’s [apt phrase](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkCsfz8eHPs), “a sandbox of dictators”?

Does anyone not understand that the real mission of those who now run the U.N. is to transfer money and power from the United States and other free nations to anti-American and anti-democratic regimes — and to do so in the name of “social justice”?

The United States has long been the U.N.’s largest funder, contributing close to a quarter of the organization’s total budget — nearly [$7.7 billion](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative_reports/us_contributions_to_the_un_06062011.pdf) in fiscal 2010. (The U.S. government has delayed releasing figures for last year and this — which leads me to suspect we’re now spending considerably more.)

In these tough economic times, will Americans reach the point where we at least debate the wisdom of continuing to invest so much in an enterprise that produces considerable harm and little good? Is it not possible that a better way can be found to pursue the goals the U.N. was meant to achieve? Shouldn’t Ban Ki-moon’s most recent holiday in Tehran take us to that point?

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