

Trump Turns International Organizations into ‘Neo-Confetti’

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Trump and his neo-cons have withdrawn from so many international organizations and agreements that his foreign policy has earned a shameful nickname: “the Withdrawal Doctrine.”

Donald Trump, currently under the strong influence of arch neo-conservative John Bolton, his national security adviser, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a neo-con in “libertarian clothing,” has embarked on a policy to not only distance the United States from international organizations, but to withdrawal from them altogether. The only international organization Trump currently supports is NATO and that is only because Bolton, Pompeo, and other neo-cons advising Trump are proponents of unilateral warfare by the United States, with NATO forces as cannon fodder, wherever neo-con doctrine determines America’s interests are threatened.

Trump’s recent announcement that he is nominating Heather Nauert, a former Fox News “talking head”-turned-State Department spokesperson for Pompeo, as the next US ambassador to the United Nations is another indication that Trump would, if possible, withdraw the US from the international organization.

Trump’s naming of Nauert, a person who once inanely opined that the Allied D-Day landings in France represented a high-point in US-German relations, followed on the heels of Pompeo questioning the need for the UN and other international organizations. Speaking at a Brussels event sponsored by the German Marshall Fund, Pompeo lashed out at the UN, European Union, Organization of American States, African Union, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization, while referring to the Brussels-based NATO as an “indispensable institution.” Pompeo made no mention of Trump’s recurring criticisms of NATO.

Trump’s disdain for the UN is palpable. His selection of Bolton, the only US ambassador to the UN never to be confirmed by the Senate, as national security adviser sent a stark message to the UN. Trump, like many other far-right conspiracists, including members of the John Birch Society and white supremacist groups, have long advocated for American withdrawal and the expulsion of UN headquarters from New York. Their rallying cry – “America out of the UN and the UN out of America” – feeds right into the neo-con game plan for diminution of UN power.

The neo-cons, who only exist as a sustained force to ensure that Washington kowtows to Israeli interests, have long despised the UN for its resolutions condemning Israeli policies in

the Middle East. In 1994, Bolton said,

“The (UN) Secretariat building in New York has 38 stories. If it lost 10 stories, it wouldn’t make a bit of difference.”

It was that 1994 statement – suggesting that the UN building’s upper floors be destroyed and recalled so soon after the destruction of the World Trade Center – that partially resulted in the US Senate rejecting Bolton as ambassador to the UN. It was only by giving Bolton a recess appointment that George W. Bush was able to place him in the US delegation’s seat.

In Brussels, Pompeo, referring to the UN, asked, “Does it continue to serve its mission faithfully?” Echoing Bolton’s 1994 comment about the UN, Pompeo answered his own rhetorical question in stating,

“International bodies must help facilitate cooperation that bolsters the security and values of the free world, or they must be reformed or eliminated.”

Bolton and Pompeo represent a virtual “dastardly duo” in shredding treaty after treaty into “neo-confetti.”

Trump’s trashing of treaties and agreements has fit into a doctrinaire neo-con playbook. Since becoming president, Trump has pulled the United States out of the Paris climate-change agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement, and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Trump’s replacement for NAFTA – the US-Mexico-Canada agreement (USMCA) – was only marginally different from its predecessor. Trump also withdrew the United States from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) because of what he cited as the organization’s “anti-Israel bias.” The UNESCO withdrawal was a classic neo-con move because it, once again, showed the world that America’s actions were dictated by Israeli-controlled neo-cons like then-US ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley.

Trump earned the world’s opprobrium when he scrapped America’s signature on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between the European Union, Russia, China, and Iran on Iran’s nuclear program. Not only did Trump threaten increased sanctions on Iran, in violation of the JCPOA, but also threatened to impose them on the remaining signatories if they did not participate in the neo-cons’ tightening of the screws on Iran. Trump also trashed several agreements with Cuba signed after the restoration of US-Cuban diplomatic relations during the Barack Obama administration. The Trump administration ordered closed the Palestine Liberation Organization’s (PLO) office in Washington, DC, which had maintained a diplomatic presence in Washington since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

In December 2017, the US announced its withdrawal from the Global Compact on Migration, which was adopted in 2016 by all 193-member states of the UN. The Trump administration also withdrew the US from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Again, showing that she was merely a puppet controlled by the Israelis, Haley gave as the reason for America’s withdrawal from the UNHRC, the organization’s “anti-Israel bias.” IN another decision inspired by Trump’s Israeli masters, Haley announced the slashing of US funding for

the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), the primary UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees, before committing to withdrawal from the agency entirely.

Trump has slashed US funding for the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (with vaccines for children being adversely impacted), UN Environment Program, UN Women and the UN Development Program, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (over maritime and fisheries disputes with Canada), and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The Trump administration opposes the WMO's dire warnings, all fact-based and peer-reviewed, about the effects of global climate change.

Bolton announced that the US would issue travel bans on judges of what he called the "illegitimate" International Criminal Court (ICC), based in The Hague, and freeze the court's funds in the US financial system. Bolton also vowed that the US would never join the court.

Trump began veering into more dangerous territory when, in October 2018, he announced that the US would withdraw from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia. There were also indications that Trump would also abrogate the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). Bolton, backed by Pompeo, are known to be critics of the two arms control treaties. Nothing would make Bolton and Pompeo, modern-day "Dr. Strangeloves," happier than a major nuclear arms race.

In April 2018, the Trump administration withdrew the US from the London-based International Coffee Organization, an international organization of coffee exporting and importing nations the John F. Kennedy administration helped create in 1962. It was Trump's first action after he fired Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. Speaking recently at a public event in Houston, Tillerson revealed that Trump often wanted him to violate treaties in what would have constituted breaches of the law.

Charging that the Rome-based Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), a UN specialized agency, is involved in "mission creep" into global climate change policy, some Trump officials have threatened a US withdrawal from the agency. The US is already in arrears in dues to FAO. FAO established a Climate Change department in 2017. The Trump administration has also expressed opposition to the Carbon Offset and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which is based in Montreal.

The Trump administration's opposition to environmental protection has also affected the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The US wants a go-slow approach on IMO rules that specify that ships must, in 2020, use fuels with 0.5 percent of sulfur or less.

Over a beef with China about parcel post rates, the Trump administration announced it was withdrawing from the Universal Postal Union (UPU), one of the world's oldest international organizations and one that predates the League of Nations. Today, the UPU is a UN specialized agency.

Other longstanding organizations under threat from Trump include the Antarctic treaty System (ATS); the International Hydrographic Organization, based in Monaco; and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), based in Abu Dhabi. The Trump administration, which is attempting to abrogate treaties with indigenous nations in North America and the Pacific, wants to limit, if not exclude entirely, indigenous Permanent Participants (PPs) in such organizations as the Arctic Council and Pacific Regional

Environment Program (SPREP).

Trump has threatened to withdrawal from the World Trade Organization if it does not “shape up.” Trump administration officials have also threatened US withdrawal from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) unless it abandons its support for “net neutrality” – universal access rights to the Internet – something Trump adamantly opposes and has scrapped in the United States.

The right-wing Heritage Foundation, which is primarily funded by corporate polluters, urged the Trump administration not to ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Considering that most of the Heritage Foundation’s proposal have quickly become Trump administration policies, it appears that UNCLOS will be joining JCPOA, UNESCO, TPP, and others in Trump’s rubbish bin.

Trump has shown his disdain for cooperating with other world leaders by pointedly refusing to sign concluding communiques issued at the end of recent G7 and G20 summits.

Pro-Trump Republicans in the US House of Representatives introduced a bill titled the “American Sovereignty Restoration Act.” The bill called on the United States to “terminate” its membership in the UN.

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