Republicans Prepare Legislation to Defund United Nations

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By Mallory Shelbourne

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<http://thehill.com/policy/international/312673-republicans-prepare-legislation-to-defund-united-nations>

House Republicans are preparing legislation that would decrease or potentially eliminate funding for the United Nations, [BuzzFeed News](https://www.buzzfeed.com/paulmcleod/republicans-are-readying-a-push-to-defund-the-united-nations?utm_term=.wtrwqOBXa1#.es3R8VyA2v) is reporting.

The House Freedom Caucus will convene next Monday to discuss two options: decreasing funding or stipulating that funding is voluntary, requiring Congress to decide every two years whether to continue contributions.

“One is an incremental step; the other is really a herculean leap,” said Rep. Mark Meadows (R-N.C.), who chairs the Freedom Caucus, according to the report.

“Israel is a bipartisan issue, so I think that [if legislation] is measured and appropriate, we could pick up a lot of Democrats to support it as well."

According to a 2012 [analysis by the conservative Heritage Foundation](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/09/us-should-challenge-huge-un-funding-disparities), the United States provides over 22 percent of the U.N.'s budget, which it is required to do as a member of the organization under its charter. The U.S. has earmarked $594 million in U.N. operational funding for next year, according to BuzzFeed.

The effort to cut back on financial support comes after the United Nations Security Council voted 14-0 on a resolution condemning Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The Obama administration abstained from the vote, refusing to use its veto power to block the resolution.

New Senate Democratic Leader [Chuck Schumer](http://thehill.com/people/charles-schumer) (D-N.Y.) who criticized the Obama administration after the resolution passed, declined to comment to BuzzFeed over the issue of U.N. funding.

The move has been met with backlash from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and Israeli leaders. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu summoned U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro just after the resolution passed.

The Senate is expected to take up its own measure aimed at the organization’s funding. Sen. [Lindsey Graham](http://thehill.com/people/lindsey-graham) (R-S.C.) [said last month](http://thehill.com/policy/international/un-treaties/311752-graham-pledges-to-propose-a-measure-to-cut-us-financial) that Congress should defund the United Nations unless it repeals the resolution on Israeli settlements.

Sen. [Ted Cruz](http://thehill.com/people/ted-cruz) (R-Texas) echoed Graham’s statement to BuzzFeed.

“I believe Congress should end U.S. taxpayer funding for the United Nations unless and until the U.N. reverses this anti-Israel resolution, and I believe there will be considerable support in Congress, I hope in both parties, to do exactly that,” Cruz told the news outlet.

Sen. [John McCain](http://thehill.com/people/john-mccain) (R-Ariz.) also said he supports the measure.

“Sen. Graham is leading on that, and I’m with him every step of the way,” he told BuzzFeed.