US votes against UN budget over 'anti-Israel' measure, lack of Iran action

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The Trump administration on Thursday voted against the [United Nations](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/united-nations)' 2021 program budget, citing its continued support of an "[anti-Israel](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/israel)" event and the failure to implement a mechanism to monitor Iran’s weapon use.

"Today this body is poised to adopt a budget that reflects such an accommodation that extends a shameful legacy of hate, anti-Semitism, and anti-Israel bias," U.N. Ambassador Kelly Craft said. "The United States rejects this effort and called for this vote to make clear that we stand by our principles, stand up for what is right, and never accept consensus for consensus’ sake."

Craft gave a number of reasons for the U.S. nay vote, including the funding for an event commemorating the controversial 2001 Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA). The U.S. has long opposed the Durban Declaration since it was adopted in Durban, South Africa in 2001 citing concerns that it is anti-Israel and anti-Semitic.

The declaration describes the Palestinians as being "under foreign occupation" and put its "plight" under a section on "victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance." The Bush administration walked out of the 2001 conference over draft language that [accused Israel](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/04/world/racism-walkout-overview-us-israelis-quit-racism-talks-over-denunciation.html) of a ''new kind of apartheid.''

"Twenty years on, there remains nothing about the Durban Declaration to celebrate or to endorse," Craft said. "It is poisoned by anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias. It encourages restrictions on the freedom of expression. It exists to divide and discriminate and runs contrary to the laudable goal of combating racism and racial discrimination."

The vote was backed by Israel, which also voted against the budget.

"Today we must all speak out against commemorating the disgrace that was the Durban Conference," Israel’s Ambassador Gilad Erdan said. "Israel opposes any measure aimed at allocating a budget for this purpose -- we all know that such funds will not be used to support human rights but to spread even more antisemitism and hate towards Israel."

Separately, Craft cited the U.N.’s decision not to implement the snapback mechanism of sanctions against Iran. [The U.S. triggered the mechanism](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/un-security-council-us-move-snapback-iran-sanctions), contained in the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, in August after it failed to extend an arms embargo on the Islamic dictatorship that expired in October as part of the accord.

The U.S. had requested an investigative mechanism to monitor the reimposition of sanctions, but it was not included in the budget.

"As I stated in September when the Trump administration announced the restoration of sanctions on Iran, the U.S. doesn’t need a cheering section to validate its moral compass," Craft said. "We don’t find comfort based on the number of nations voting with us, particularly when the majority have found themselves in an uncomfortable position of underwriting terrorism, chaos, and conflict. We refuse to be members of that club."

Craft praised certain parts of the budget, including funding for mechanisms in Syria and Burmaa and said that the vote reinforces  the U.S. commitment to a United Nations that functions effectively and in line with its founding principles."

The "no" vote is the latest move by the Trump administration to push for American interests at the U.N., moves that have also at times isolated the U.S. at Turtle Bay.

The U.S. has pulled funding from the U.N. Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA) and has left institutions like UNESCO and the U.N. Human Rights Council. Craft recently said that the U.S. should only re-enter the Council if a number of reforms are enacted first.

The incoming Biden administration is expected to take a radically different approach to the U.N. Biden has said [he wants to re-enter the Human Rights Council](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/un-ambassador-craft-reform-human-rights-council), as well as the Paris climate agreement and the Iran nuclear deal -- two U.N. brokered agreements that the U.S. withdrew from under President Trump.