The Future of U.S. Leadership in Multilateral Development Institutions

* A Playbook for the Next 10 Years

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A Report of the CSIS Project on Prosperity and Development
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This project was made possible by the generous support from the Smith Richardson Foundation. Thank you, in particular, to Chris Griffin for his continued support and partnership with CSIS.
Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB  Asian Development Bank
AfDB  African Development Bank
AIIB  Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
CDC  Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DAC  Development Assistance Committee
DESA  Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN)
EBRD  European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EPA  Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.)
ECOSOC  Economic and Social Council (UN)
EO  Executive Order
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organization
FSO  Foreign Service Officer
GAO  Government Accountability Office
HHS  Department of Health and Human Services (U.S.)
IADB  Inter-American Development Bank
IAEA  International Atomic Energy Agency
IBRD  International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICAO  International Civil Aviation Organization
ICT  Information and communications technology
IDA  International Development Association
IFC  International Finance Corporation
IFI  International financial institutions
ILO  International Labour Organization
IMF  International Monetary Fund
IA  Department of Treasury’s Office of International Affairs (U.S.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>Department of State’s Bureau for International Organization Affairs (U.S.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IO/MPR</td>
<td>IO Office of Management Policy &amp; Resources (U.S.)</td>
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<td>IO/PRF</td>
<td>IO Office of Policy, Regional, and Functional Organizations (U.S.)</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunication Union</td>
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<td>JPO</td>
<td>Junior Professionals Program</td>
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<td>MAR</td>
<td>Multilateral Aid Review</td>
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<td>MDB</td>
<td>Multilateral development bank</td>
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<td>MIGA</td>
<td>Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
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<td>NSC</td>
<td>National Security Council</td>
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<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Security Strategy</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<td>PAE</td>
<td>Pacific Architects and Engineers</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-private partnership</td>
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<td>RDB</td>
<td>Regional development bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
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<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>U.S. Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USDA</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>USG</td>
<td>Under-secretary-general</td>
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<td>USUN</td>
<td>U.S. Mission to the United Nations</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<td>WIPO</td>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organization</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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The CSIS Project on Prosperity and Development has undertaken a research project that evaluates opportunities for the United States to rebuild its leadership role and its influence in multilateral development institutions (herein “multilaterals”; see Box 1 for scope). The premise of the report is that member states can exert influence in the multilateral system through personnel—specifically by placing qualified candidates in leadership and senior staff positions. Leaders set the direction and agenda of these organizations and have significant decisionmaking power, particularly over institutional priorities and staff composition. Similarly, senior staff familiar with the inner dynamics of organizations are responsible for implementing the decisions of leaders. Strategically placing people who understand how to exercise power in positions of authority can catalyze greater change in these institutions and can advance good policy decisions that are in the interest of U.S. national security.  

This research has found that the United States has been losing influence in multilateral institutions over the past 30 years. Specifically, the United States’ ability to compete in leadership races and place qualified representatives in top positions has diminished, and the presence of qualified Americans in staff positions has also declined.

There are many forces behind these trends. The U.S. government has sometimes undermined its influence in multilateral institutions by withholding or delaying financial support or by withdrawing its membership without a specific outcome or reform in mind. It has also at times failed to nominate
official U.S. representatives to certain governing bodies. Beyond this, a significant change has been the increased number of member countries participating in multilateral institutions. Decolonization in the 1960s and 1970s and the breakdown of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, for example, have led to increased membership by developing countries and by former Soviet republics. In addition, many countries with which the United States shares traditional liberal values are making more focused efforts to place their own qualified citizens in leadership and staff positions. Today, both U.S. allies and competitors are taking a strategic approach in placing qualified international civil servants in these institutions. It is also hard to overstate the impact of the growing role of China in international organizations; China currently heads 3 of the 15 specialized agencies of the United Nations, while the United States leads just one (the World Bank). At the same time, China has had many of these institutions enter into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with their global infrastructure development strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

In the next three years, there will be leadership transitions in many multilaterals, including the UN Secretariat, regional development banks (RDBs), and UN specialized agencies. The United States, working in cooperation with like-minded partners, has an opportunity to support qualified candidates who will work to maintain a global order founded on liberal values—including respect for the rule of law, human rights, open markets, and free trade.

In practical terms, the United States needs to do two things with respect to vacancies in leadership positions:

- For selected organizations that are deemed strategic, it should compete systemically to place U.S. candidates in leadership positions, investing adequate resources toward planning and campaigning for these jobs.
- For other organizations, it should work with partner countries to help get their candidates selected for leadership jobs.

It is vital that the United States supports leaders that promote universal liberal values and uphold global rules and standards. Without such a strategic approach, there is a real risk that multilateral institutions will become increasingly vulnerable to more opaque processes, authoritarian norms, and policies that undermine the interests, values, and objectives that the United States supports.

With regard to its overall staffing footprint, the United States is underrepresented in many institutions in the multilateral system, particularly the United Nations. Nevertheless, there is an incorrect assumption that the United States is overrepresented at multilateral. It goes without saying that international civil servants, regardless of their nationality, should be selected on the basis of objective criteria and should be expected to put the mission of their institution front and center. It is still the case that the United States should encourage qualified individuals with diverse backgrounds to pursue employment in these organizations and that it should seek to ensure that qualified Americans are fairly considered for appointment to senior staff positions.

Increasing U.S. representation can yield important benefits by preserving an organizational perspective of universal liberal values and the effective delivery of global public goods. Regardless of their political affiliation, U.S. employees in the multilateral system can help these institutions sustain their adherence to their founding values and contribute to transparency, accountability, neutrality, and integrity in their operations. In the long run, Americans who possess technical skills and acquire
experience in these organizations can also, in some cases, become qualified candidates for top leadership positions and senior roles as openings arise.

This study presents a series of recommendations on how to approach leadership changes and staffing of Americans at multilateral development institutions. This study provides strategic direction for the current and future U.S. administrations as they engage in the multilateral system. This engagement effort will require political will at the highest level of the U.S. government, as well as significant strategic planning, coalition building, and financial investments.

This report’s recommendations are of a long-term strategic nature, but they have immediate importance. The Biden administration has indicated that multilateral engagement will be a high priority, particularly to help achieve global economic and social recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The United States can have a strategic role in determining leadership and staff changes which will influence the effectiveness of the concerned multilateral organizations now and for years to come.

**Box 1: Multilaterals**

The report focused on approximately 200 international government organizations that provide developing countries with foreign aid, knowledge and data, technical advice, and sources of financing to foster development and subsequently grow a more prosperous world. The study’s definition of multilateral institutions is broad, since it includes political institutions and humanitarian agencies but excludes organizations and alliances that focus on defense, such as NATO. The multilateral institutions covered in this report are classified into three general categories: international financial institutions (e.g., the International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group, and regional development banks), standard-setting bodies (e.g., the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, World Trade Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, and International Labour Organization), and the UN system departments and agencies (e.g., the UN Development Programme). (See Appendix 1 for methodology.)
Executive Summary

In today’s complex global environment, multilateral development institutions are important forums for consensus building and decisionmaking that can positively impact human outcomes, deter conflict, and promote peace and security across borders. The United States has been at the helm of the multilateral development system since its inception nearly eight decades ago and continues to be a vital advocate for universal liberal values in these institutions. Historically, the United States has remained the single greatest financial supporter of international organizations. In 2019 alone, the United States contributed close to 30 percent of its foreign aid budget to multilateral organizations. However, U.S. influence in the multilateral system over the past 30 years has gradually decreased as developing countries increase their influence and footholds.

As competitors such as China have bolstered their leadership roles and staffing numbers and increasingly advocate for their interests in these institutions, the United States has played it safe and relied on its historical influence. However, China’s growing role in the United Nations and its network of specialized agencies and bodies threatens the U.S.-led international order. China now heads three of the fifteen UN specialized agencies, while the United States leads just one. At the staff level, China has been very strategic at placing young talent across these organizations. In 2019, the United Nations employed some 1,336 Chinese nationals, representing a 68 percent increase over a 10-year period. Since 2015, China has sponsored 32 UN Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) and 590 other professional staff. While this figure is below that of other member states overall, it is important to remember this
has been attained over the last five years alone. These trends indicate that there is a genuine risk that these institutions may come to be aligned with authoritarian norms and interests.

In contrast, the United States has been losing influence in multilateral organizations, specifically in its ability to compete in leadership races and place qualified Americans in top positions. The United States has ceded ground to China in key specialized UN agencies, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in the 2015 race and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the 2019 race, while narrowly avoiding another Chinese victory with the 2020 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) election. Moreover, U.S. representation (or the presence of qualified Americans) in staff positions in the multilateral system at large has declined. Despite being the largest funder of international organizations, the United States remains underrepresented at all levels of staffing in many multilateral organizations. The United Nations has classified the United States as one of 35 “Underrepresented Member States” in its January 2020 Geographical Diversity Strategy report. Present staffing levels reflect a continued decline of U.S. professional staff within these institutions.

If the United States really is “back,” as President Joe Biden has recently claimed, it needs to rebuild its influence in multilateral organizations and work with allies and like-minded partners. This rebuilding effort requires crafting a multilayered, long-term, and operational strategy to identify, support, and sustain U.S. and like-minded country representation at all levels in priority international organizations. There is a huge opportunity for the United States to reaffirm its universal values, equities, and priorities around the world and to rebuild multilateralism at its core. Of the over 200 multilateral institutions in the world, not all require U.S. leadership, but based on the selection of priority organizations—the so-called “commanding heights” of the multilateral system—the U.S. government can craft a multiagency strategic approach. Conversely, if the U.S. government remains passive on this front, the United States risks further ceding its influence and credibility in the multilateral system, as well as undermining the influence of its traditional network of alliances.

Many challenges impede U.S. engagement in the multilateral system, including:

1. An absence of a centralized U.S. government effort to monitor upcoming leadership elections;
2. A weak effort to work with allies and like-minded partners to put forward the best candidates; and
3. An uncoordinated system supporting Americans in mid- and entry-level positions.

To solve the aforementioned challenges, this study proposes the following recommendations:

1. **Coordinate a whole-of-government strategic approach to multilaterals by designating a “Multilateral Policy Council” within the National Security Council (NSC).** The Multilateral Policy Council would elevate and manage this strategy and policy process. The Multilateral Policy Council should be headed by the deputy national security advisor, with support from the NSC’s senior director for multilateral affairs and the assistant secretary of state for the Bureau of International Organization Affairs at the State Department. The Multilateral Policy Council should also be expected to coordinate with the Domestic Policy Council, NSC, and National Economic Council to ensure that multilateral policy strategy is in sync with other domestic and foreign policy objectives, as well as to provide a more strategic, systematic, and coordinated way to approach these positions.
2. **Conduct a Multilateral Aid Review (MAR).** Congress should task the NSC Multilateral Policy Council with conducting an MAR across U.S. government agencies. The Multilateral Policy Council should utilize the MAR to inform U.S. strategy toward the multilateral system and help prioritize its engagement and tasking across agencies. The MAR would serve as a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the multilateral institutions that the United States supports. If aligned against the objectives of a forthcoming National Security Strategy (NSS), the MAR could evaluate the gaps that exist in multilateral engagement.

3. **Craft a whole-of-government implementation plan for multilateral engagement.** To operationalize the strategy toward multilaterals, the Multilateral Policy Council would be based on the core leadership and direction of the NSS, harmonizing engagement across the U.S. government. It would work to engage the agencies in specific actions, including tracking multilateral aid, tracking and filling leadership and senior positions in multilateral institutions, enhancing interagency communication, and improving U.S. representation at the staff level.

4. **Work with allies and like-minded partners on a coordinated plan of action.** The United States should take an organization-specific approach to better compete in certain positions that are considered strategic, and it should “lead from behind” with allies and partners for the rest of the top leadership roles. Within each international financial institution (IFI), for instance, the United States needs to establish strong partnerships and alliances. The United States may not have full control over voting within IFIs, but it can use its influence to establish powerful alliances and incentivize cooperation from other large stakeholders. In the United Nations, the United States must recognize its special relationship with Japan, India, and Australia (“the Quad”) and work with them early and frequently, as these partners have been calling for more U.S. support. In addition to action at the top of the pyramid, the United States should also engage the G7 to create an ally supported JPO program which would then aggregate resources for recruitment, training, and placement.

5. **Find, attract, and place qualified and diverse U.S. personnel at all levels.** Within the U.S. Foreign Service, the incentive structure should be changed so that multilateral experience is factored in for career advancement. Within the State Department, the Foreign Service Officer (FSO) career could be redesigned, with multilateralism as a cross-cutting competency across the different career tracks. Within the civil service of the U.S. government, there could be a formal and coordinated process for qualified federal workers to pursue multilateral positions. One way would be to make use of Executive Order 11552 by designing a secondment program to encourage competent U.S. civil servants to work at these institutions. Likewise, the Treasury Department could second staff to IFIs. Such secondment programs would be managed by the technical agency that holds the relationship with the multilateral—but in order to ensure a U.S. harmonized approach, this would be coordinated with the proposed Multilateral Policy Council. Lastly, the United States needs to pay closer attention to its staffing footprint in multilaterals and encourage young and qualified Americans to pursue careers in international organizations. This could be accomplished through more frequent reporting of U.S. representation and accompanying efforts to increase representation; specific actions to attract young talent; and investments in sponsored internships, fellowships, and JPO programs.
Introduction

Multilateral development institutions have been a cornerstone of the liberal international order since their founding at the end of World War II. Institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have fostered peace, increased global trade, and created a more prosperous and freer world. These institutions remain one of the United States’ most effective soft-power tools, not only for confronting global challenges but also for advancing and protecting U.S. and allied interests.

Over the past 75 years, multilateral development institutions have provided numerous benefits to the United States, its allies, and developing countries, and they remain critical for addressing emerging global challenges. Inadequate infrastructure, non-state security threats, global pandemics, forced migration, and accelerating climate change all require multilateral approaches. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic illustrates the urgent need for a more coordinated international approach to information sharing, as well the importance of joint efforts to strengthen health security, fortify the global economy, and recover from the pandemic’s hardships, which have disrupted the lives of millions of people. Multilateral institutions play a crucial role by possessing expertise, data-collection abilities, financial resources, and political and civil society relationships that neither the United States nor any other country possesses on its own.
Moreover, U.S. engagement and leadership in the multilateral system has been critical for the financial durability and political relevance of these institutions. The United States remains the largest (or second-largest) funder or shareholder in most multilateral institutions, facilitating their daily operations. U.S. leadership and engagement help instill certain values in these institutions and encourage them to pursue reforms to increase transparency, accountability, and efficiency, as well as to improve the delivery of critical global public goods. When the multilateral development institutions were created, beginning in the 1940s, the United States and its allies controlled key posts to ensure that organizations promoted universal liberal values—for example, that human rights would be upheld by making funding conditional on adherence to such values, or that UN peacekeeping operations would be deployed to stabilize regions and protect vulnerable populations in times of conflict. To maintain their presence within these organizations and ensure the protection of liberal values, founding countries brokered a series of informal arrangements that sorted out the leadership positions in international organizations to their representatives, in an informal “gentlemen’s agreement” or “global spoils system” that reflected the geopolitical realities of that era.

Waning U.S. Leadership

In the last 30 years, however, the global order has shifted, placing U.S. leadership in multilateral development institutions in question. As membership in these organizations has expanded and developing countries have increased their muscle in the global economy, the central positioning of the United States in the multilateral system has diminished. The United States has ignored important leadership races and appointments to lead multilateral development institutions. In the 1990s, the United States lost the ability to name the administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a tradition that had previously been accepted by the international community and that had allowed the first five UNDP leaders to be from the United States. In 1999, after UNDP administrator James Gustave Speth completed his tenure, the Clinton administration allowed a non-American to be appointed to the job by the UN secretary general. Similarly, at the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the United States has lost the tradition of a U.S.-appointed chair. More recently, during the 2021 OECD secretary general race, the United States lost an opportunity to put forward a qualified American, although it was still able to rally behind a strong (and successful) candidate from Australia prior to the final vote. Understanding the unique requirements of elections and appointments and getting out in front of both processes is a prerequisite of success.

Across the U.S. political spectrum, critiques of these institutions have gained more traction in recent years, from the perception that the United States gets an unfair deal abroad to criticisms that the liberal order has favored corporations at the expense of workers. In particular, the United Nations has come under constant fire over its lack of effectiveness. Similarly, the IFIs—have come under attack because of overlapping programs and not working as a “system” with a clear division of labor as to their functions.

China’s rising economic power and political tactics—particularly in how it targets developing countries—has created a genuine risk that multilateral institutions may come to be aligned with authoritarian norms and interests. China has also looked to Russia as an ally on the UN Security Council, often coordinating their votes or vetoes. Both countries are also creating new international
institutions and regional forums in which the United States and its allies are not represented. Moreover, China is gaining more leadership positions within existing agencies, such as the FAO, and using these positions to advance their priorities. At the staff level, China has been very strategic at placing young talent across these organizations through the JPO and internship programs. China is also securing strong influence in UN agencies by having them enter into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with its massive Belt and Road Initiative.

Many policymakers in the United States have voiced concerns over the decline of U.S. leadership and influence in the multilaterals, especially at the United Nations. U.S. Senator Todd Young has recently expressed worry about “the changing landscape at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations where the United States and our allies are at risk of ceding moral and policy ground to those who do not share our conviction for standards and norms.” Similarly, former U.S. secretary of state Michael Pompeo has stated: “It’s not just the leaders that matter at these UN organizations. They have big bureaucracies underneath them. And we are, sadly, inadequately represented at every level.”

More importantly, the U.S. public favors multilateralism. According to a recent Pew poll, the public’s view of the United Nations has been favorable since 2004 (Figure 1). Despite the World Health Organization’s (WHO) inadequate handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, a 2020 poll shows that 85 percent of Americans back U.S. engagement in the United Nations, and 73 percent think the United Nations is a relevant organization that is needed in the world today. Similarly, in a 2020 Gallup poll, 64 percent of respondents believed that the United Nations plays a necessary role in the world today, although only 43 percent thought that the institution was doing a good job.

Figure 1: Americans Views of the United Nations

Given these trends, there is an opportunity for the United States to rebuild its influence and leadership in multilateral institutions—not only as a counterweight to rising authoritarian influence but as a means for pursuing U.S. and global interests. The United States should not distance itself from the United Nations or other relevant multilateral development institutions, but rather push for positive reforms and use these institutions as conduits for U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives. Continuing to influence the international order brings with it the ability to continue ensuring its original purpose of upholding human dignity. This does not mean that the United States should fund or play an important role in all multilateral institutions; rather, it should focus on those that are of strategic significance and which provide “value for money” to its citizens and their interests on the global stage.

**Personnel as Influence**

One way that the United States can better engage in multilaterals and influence these institutions is through personnel, by putting forward qualified candidates for leadership positions. Leadership matters: leaders set the direction and agenda of these institutions and have significant decisionmaking power, particularly over institutional priorities and staff composition. As Scot Faulkner, President Reagan’s former director of personnel, asserts: “Personnel is policy.” However, the United States does not always do a good job of “playing the long game” and using its influence in the multilateral system strategically. In particular, the United States has a mixed record of naming and campaigning for qualified and diverse U.S. (or like-minded) candidates for top jobs, all while U.S. staff representation in these institutions has dwindled over time. Compounding this problem, the United States has often failed to appoint its own representatives to the governing bodies of these institutions.

With a number of upcoming leadership changes at multilateral institutions, the United States has an opportunity to support diverse and qualified Americans to fill these roles. In the next two years, there will be more than 40 leadership transitions, including both elections for second terms and new leadership races (see Table A2 in Appendix 2). The United States needs to keep up with these vacancies and have specific plans about how it should approach each one of them. Although there are certain positions where the United States should encourage more participation from other countries, there are others where the United States should defend and actively campaign for. This process will entail working in tandem with like-minded partners.

This study analyzes the major challenges and opportunities for the United States to rebuild its leadership and increase its footprint in multilaterals. The report’s premise is that the United States can influence the multilateral system through personnel, specifically by placing qualified candidates in leadership positions. Section I of this study provides an overview of the multilateral organizations that the United States supports, be it through its funding, leadership, or staffing. Section II discusses the existing challenges in U.S. engagement with multilaterals, specifically in recruiting qualified citizens to work in these institutions. Lastly, Section III provides concrete actions and recommendations that U.S. policymakers should consider for regaining influence in these organizations going forward.
President Biden has recently stated unequivocally that the United States is “back” on the world stage. To match these words with action, the United States needs to craft a multilayered, long-term, and operational strategy to identify, support, and sustain U.S. representation in multilaterals that are of strategic interest to U.S. national security. There is an opportunity for the United States to reaffirm its values, equities, and priorities around the world and rebuild multilateralism at its core.
The origins of the current multilateral system dates to the 1940s. In the aftermath of World War II, the Allied victors—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union, among others—created an international architecture to safeguard global peace and security. Organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank were set up to maintain peace and reconstruct economies decimated by years of conflict. U.S. leadership was instrumental in designing, financing, and staffing the international architecture of the postwar period, which remains the foundation of modern multilateralism and the international governance system seen today.

Historically, the United States has remained the single greatest financial supporter of international organizations. In 2019 alone, the United States contributed close to 30 percent of its foreign aid budget to multilateral organizations (Figure 2).24 According to the most recent report by the U.S. Department of State, the United States contributes approximately $12.2 billion to a total of 183 organizations that encompass an array of regional and thematic mandates which collectively seek to achieve global prosperity, the promotion of human security and peace, and the broader realization of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda.25
U.S. Financial Support to Multilaterals

From the United Nations’ inception, the United States has remained the institution’s largest financial contributor in both assessed and voluntary contributions, supporting the United Nations’ six principal organs, 27 departments and offices, and 15 specialized agencies, not to mention its funds, programs, and regional bodies (see Figure A2 in Appendix 2). In 2019, the United States provided more than $11 billion to the UN system (out of a budget total of $56.9 billion), remaining its biggest donor (Tables 1 and 2). The United States also remains the largest contributor to the United Nations’ critical humanitarian agencies, providing $2.6 billion to the World Food Programme (WFP), 33.89 percent of its budget; $1.68 billion to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 40.2 percent of its budget; $672.9 million to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 10.5 percent of its budget; and $557.1 million to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 26.2 percent of its budget.
Table 1: Assessed and Voluntary Contributions to the United Nations, Top 10 Donors 2019

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<th>Top 10 Donors</th>
<th>$ billion</th>
<th>% of total</th>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2: U.S. and Chinese Contributions to the United Nations, Assessed and Voluntary, 2019 ($bn)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assessed</th>
<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>Revenue from Other Activities</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$3.3</td>
<td>$7.8</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>$1.5</td>
<td>$0.18</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>$38.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>$56.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly are the most recognizable organs of the United Nations, there are other highly important funds, programs, and specialized agencies in the UN system. This is the case of many of the standard-setting bodies that shape today’s global governance system. A notable example is the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). A self-funded UN specialized agency, WIPO operates as a global forum for intellectual property (IP) services designed to promote the global protection of IP and assist in the mediation of cross-border IP disputes. Another lesser-known UN entity is the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialized agency responsible for critical information and communication technology (ICT) standard setting and 5G regulatory activities. Organizations such as the these illustrate the broad range of activities, organizational dynamics, and national interests encompassed and integrated within the UN system. While the UN Security Council remains the most powerful mechanism within the institution by mandate, the United Nations’ specialized agencies, funds, programs, and regional and functional commissions maintain a defining role in U.S.-UN relations, as well as in U.S. domestic affairs.

The United States also maintains a unique and influential role within the IFIs that emerged in the 1940s (see Figure A3 in Appendix 2). At the World Bank Group, the United States stands as the largest shareholder, with 17.25 percent of the institution’s $268.9 billion in total subscribed capital, placing it ahead of Japan (7.42 percent), China (4.78 percent), Germany (4.33 percent), and the United Kingdom (4.06 percent). The United States also holds 16.5 percent of capital shares at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), 10.2 percent at the International Development Association (IDA), 21.9 percent at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and 18.4 percent at the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is similar, with U.S. shareholding standing at 16.51 percent, the largest among comparable single-country constituencies, such as Japan (6.15 percent), China (6.08 percent), Germany (5.32 percent), and France (4.03 percent). While the United States’ current position represents a steep decline from the 35.07 percent of capital holdings it held at the IMF’s creation in 1944, it remains acutely influential in the institution’s governance: the United States’ voting share remains above 15 percent, providing it a unique veto ability on any decision that requires an 85 percent voting majority.

The United States remains further engaged with the global financial architecture through its membership within regional development banks (Table 3). At the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), U.S. participation has supported the provision of technical and financial assistance—commonly in the form of loans at below-market interest rates and grants—to promote economic and social prosperity throughout the developing world. The United States maintains a significant profile within regional development banks as well as within several policy-specific trust funds administrated by the World Bank.

The current exception in U.S. participation stands with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Beginning operations in 2016, the AIIB is one of numerous Chinese-led initiatives—which include the Belt and Road Initiative, the Digital Silk Road, and the New Development Bank—to establish rival IFIs to those that remain influenced by the United States and its allies. While the United States and Japan refrained from joining the $100 billion initiative, many of the United States’ major allies—such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and France—retain voting rights and membership. With China holding 30.8 percent shareholding and veto power, there continues to be substantial concern regarding inadequate environmental, labor, and transparency standards emerging from the Beijing-headquartered institution.

Table 3: U.S. and China Shareholding at Regional Development Banks, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Development Bank</th>
<th>U.S. Shareholding</th>
<th>China Shareholding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)</td>
<td>30% (#1)</td>
<td>0.004% (#48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Bank for Reconstruction &amp; Development (EBRD)</td>
<td>10% (#1)</td>
<td>0.1% (#50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Development Bank (AfDB)</td>
<td>6.4% (#2)</td>
<td>1.2% (#18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Development Bank (ADB)</td>
<td>15.6% (#1)</td>
<td>6.4% (#3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)</td>
<td>0% (N/A)</td>
<td>30.8% (#1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Development Bank (NDB)</td>
<td>0% (N/A)</td>
<td>20% (N/A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSIS research based on RDB websites.

While both the UN system and IFIs illuminate a significant portion of the U.S. global engagement, there are countless other examples of high-value international organizations to which the United States contributes. The OECD, for example, plays a critical standard-setting role and operates as a policy forum and platform for best practices on topics such as taxes, education, governance, and international development. At present, the United States contributes $82.3 million to the OECD, corresponding to 20.5 percent of the organization’s 2019 received budget contributions. On the global
health front, the United States is also a top contributor to multi-stakeholder organizations such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which mobilizes more than $4 billion annually to public health programs in over 100 countries and stands as a critical funding mechanism for disease prevention and the strengthening of health systems within low- and middle-income countries.  

U.S. Government Responsibilities within Multilaterals

At present, the U.S. government funds more than 180 international organizations, each operating through a wide range of regional and sectoral mandates. There are 23 U.S. government agencies involved with multilaterals in some form (Figure 2). In some cases—particularly at the highest level—the National Security Council (NSC) of the United States, under the senior director for international organizations, is responsible for policymaking processes in support of U.S. multilateral engagement. Those processes inform agency action and operationalization based on sector. As a result, specific U.S. agencies—such as the U.S. Department of Treasury, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Trade Representative, and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN)—will manage the country’s direct relationship with specific UN institutions. While this makes sense on paper, in practice, the diffuse nature and evolving structure of the NSC create a lack of organizational cohesion between the numerous agencies within the senior director’s purview, making the task of strategic implementation and the guidance of day-to-day operations within international organizations exceptionally challenging.

In 1949, then-secretary of state Dean Acheson created the State Department’s Bureau for International Organization Affairs (IO) to manage the United States’ growing and complex relationships with the United Nations and other international organizations. The bureau is headed by an assistant secretary who reports to the undersecretary of state for political affairs. IO oversees and coordinates the U.S. interagency process and strategy for the multilateral system, except for the IFIs. Within the IO bureau, various officials are detailed to specific organizations or thematic areas. IO also manages the six U.S. diplomatic missions to the United Nations: Geneva, Montreal, Nairobi, New York (USUN), Rome, and Vienna. The budget for IO is approximately $3.5 billion, $3 billion of which goes to multilateral organization contributions.
Figure 2: U.S. Agencies Funding Multilateral Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>FY 2019 Obligations ($ millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of State</td>
<td>$6,372.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Agency for International Development</td>
<td>$4,906.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Defense</td>
<td>$565.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Treasury</td>
<td>$170.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</td>
<td>$111.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Energy</td>
<td>$21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Labor</td>
<td>$13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Justice</td>
<td>$13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
<td>$11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
<td>$7.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td>$4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission</td>
<td>$2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Agriculture</td>
<td>$1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Transportation</td>
<td>$0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Interior</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Academy of Sciences</td>
<td>$0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Postal Service</td>
<td>$0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Homeland Security</td>
<td>$0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Commerce</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Archives and Records Administration</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Endowment for the Arts</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There are overlapping mandates between IO and USUN. USUN is led by a cabinet-level official (currently U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield), while IO is headed by an assistant secretary. The prevalence of jurisdictional “turf” among these respective agencies has reduced the United States’ capacity for strategic and interagency cohesion, further complicating a critical area within the U.S. foreign policy apparatus.

On the other hand, the U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of International Affairs (IA) manages U.S. relations with IFIs such as the World Bank, the IMF, and regional development banks. Led by the undersecretary for international affairs, the office leads the process of staffing U.S. positions within IFIs. The Treasury Department is also involved in the selection process for presidential elections, as well as director- or vice-president-level positions, in IFIs. There is a high level of variation in the number and level of staff detailed to each bank. In addition to the Treasury Department, USAID provides staff to support the U.S. executive director at the World Bank. In FY
2020, the budget for IA was approximately $1.73 billion, with $1.69 billion specifically allocated for IFI contributions.\textsuperscript{42}

Besides the Treasury and the State Departments, there are 21 agencies involved in multilateral cooperation within the U.S. government, creating managerial overlap and confusion over which office should lead in the engagement. For example, the OECD receives funding from five different agencies: USAID and the Departments of Treasury, Education, Energy, and State. Similarly, the WHO receives funding from USAID, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as well as staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). USAID itself works with a high number of international organization partners, foremost of which are the UN World Food Programme ($1.8 billion), other UN organizations ($1.2 billion), and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria ($0.925 billion).\textsuperscript{43} These conflated mandates, relationships, and funding streams lead to an uncoordinated approach to multilateral engagement which hinders the U.S. government’s ability to play an effective role, especially in the UN system (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Main U.S. Agencies Funding Multilateral Organizations**

![Figure 3: Main U.S. Agencies Funding Multilateral Organizations](https://www.state.gov/u-s-contributions-to-international-organizations-2019/)

**U.S. Representation at Multilateral Organizations**

Although the United States funds a myriad of international organizations and remains the largest financial contributor to the multilateral system, U.S. representation among international civil servants and staff-level personnel remains limited. The discussion on U.S. representation within international organizations gets complicated quickly for two reasons. First, while the United Nation publishes data
on personnel by nationality, most of the IFIs and the OECD do not disclose this data publicly or in a transparent nature. Therefore, it is difficult to understand the complete U.S. footprint across these institutions. Secondly, the types of representation are as varied as the international organizations themselves. In terms of personnel, there are many “entry points” into these organizations which can be classified according to their seniority and recruitment modalities (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Potential Entry Points into the Multilateral System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Positions</th>
<th>Professional Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top Level and Senior Roles:</strong> Secretary General, Director General, Undersecretary General, and Executive Director-level</td>
<td><strong>Mid-level, and Entry-level Personnel</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elected</strong></td>
<td><strong>Seconded</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN specialized agencies utilize elections to select leadership. Which most elections follow “one country, one vote” majority rules, there is a high degree of variation around their rules and procedures.</td>
<td>Refers to both a detail and a transfer of civil service staff to UN agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appointed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Detailed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN programs and funds leadership are chosen by a secretary-general appointments process. While member states may suggest candidates, jockey for informal “ownership” over specific agencies, and veto each other’s suggestions, the secretary general makes the final decision.</td>
<td>A federal employee in detail is “assigned” or “detailed” to an IO and is accounted for and paid by the home agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Junior Professional Selection</strong></td>
<td><strong>Direct Hire</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates compete for a designated JPO spot and are hired directly by the United Nations while funded by the U.S. government.</td>
<td>A staff member at any level who competes for and is hired to work for the United Nations with no ties to the U.S. government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**A) STAFF REPRESENTATION**

The United States created the multinational system and supplied the personnel in many cases during the early history of these organizations. In the 1960s, “optimal representation” of U.S. staff was suggested to be between 18 and 25 percent of total staff. This led to a dramatic overcorrection, leading
to the United States’ overrepresentation. However, starting in the 1960s, as more developing nations joined these organizations, this led to an increased competition for top positions and available staffing, reducing the United States’ overall presence within the international system. For example, by 1973, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported an already-declining representation of Americans in the UN Secretariat, which was reduced to near 19 percent.

At present, the United Nations has classified the United States as one of 35 “Underrepresented Member States” in its January 2020 Geographical Diversity Strategy report. The representation gap is neither new nor partisan; the CSIS research team found similar evidence going back across both Republican and Democratic administrations for over 30 years. In 1979, a GAO audit called for the U.S. government to advance U.S. interests by “improving the quality of professional management staff in the UN system.” The audit recommended the State Department create a strategy for recruiting qualified U.S. candidates for vacant positions—a recommendation that could just as well be written today. Similarly, 30 years later, a 2009 GAO report to the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs found that the United States was widely underrepresented among a sample of five UN organizations: the UN Secretariat, WHO, FAO, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and UNHCR. While the GAO report put forth numerous recommendations, present staffing levels reflect a continued decline of U.S. professional staff within these institutions, with only the IAEA experiencing a proportional increase of 1.0 percent as of 2019 (Figure 5).

Today, employees of U.S. nationality at the United Nations represent 5 percent of the total staff (5,464 Americans out of 114,119 staff members) serving across 150 offices. In stark contrast, the United States contributes close to 20 percent of the United Nations’ total budget (in 2019). At the UNHCR, U.S. assessed and voluntary contributions amount to 40.8 percent of the organization’s total revenue, while only 2.2 percent of staff members are U.S. nationals. Similarly, at the WFP, the United States contributed a total of $3.37 billion in 2019—40.7 percent of the agency’s total revenue—with U.S. nationals comprising only 1.8 percent of total staff. The story remains consistent across the UN system, with the proportion of U.S. financial contributions far outweighing U.S. representation among general- and professional-grade personnel (Table 4).
Figure 5: Trends in U.S. Representation at Select UN Institutions by Percentage of Total Staff, 2000–2019

Table 4: U.S. Overall Representation at the United Nations: U.S. Contributions vs. % U.S. Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization (Headquarters)</th>
<th>Percent of Revenues (U.S.)</th>
<th>Percent of Personnel (U.S.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF (NYC)</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP (NYC)</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP (Rome)</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM (Geneva)</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO (Geneva)</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO (Geneva)</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO (Rome)</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR (Geneva)</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAIDS (Geneva)</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN (NYC)</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As discussed earlier, data on U.S. staff-level representation at IFIs is not publicly disclosed. Available data is currently sparse, and requests by the CSIS research team have seen a limited response. Anecdotal data shows that U.S. nationals currently represent a sizeable 19 percent share of total IMF staff, with rough estimates placing the World Bank in a similar position. At the ADB, U.S. nationals comprise 4 percent of total staff, despite the United States holding 15.6 percent of total capital shares. At other RDBs, such as the IADB, U.S. nationals remain underrepresented compared to U.S. shareholding, having actively declined over the last two decades. At the OECD, there are currently 256 Americans, comprising 8 percent of the Paris-based institution’s total staff vis-à-vis U.S. funding amounting to 20.5 percent of its budget.46

B) LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATION

Regarding leadership and senior roles, the existing international organization architecture and its modalities for leadership elections, appointments, and hiring are highly complex. For the purposes of this research, “leadership” is defined as positions at the undersecretary general and assistant secretary general levels in the United Nations system and the vice president and managing director levels within the IFI system. At IFIs, senior positions are generally at the officer, manager, specialist, or economist level.47

Many of the leadership processes rely on historical agreements and traditions, where certain states divide up top slots according to an informal “gentlemen’s agreement.” The United States and its European allies created this informal system at the end of World War II, reflecting the geopolitical realities of that era. This arrangement has been replicated in many of the world's multilateral organizations. In some institutions, it takes the form of reserved seats for certain countries or regions; in others, there is an informal understanding that more influential countries will have greater representation and rotations; and in still others, the vote shareholdings reflect the size of the contributions made by different states. For example, an American is historically president of the World Bank and a European is typically the managing director of the IMF, but this agreement is carried out through votes by each board. Meanwhile, the head of MIGA has traditionally been a Japanese national.48 At the United Nations, every UNICEF executive director has been from the United States, along with the last five WFP executive directors. However, traditions can be broken suddenly, as was the case with the recent selection of a U.S. representative to run the IADB—a position that is usually held by a Latin American.

The selection of leaders for these institutions is either done through an “election” process or a direct “appointment” process (Figure 4). At the UN system, for UN departments, funds, and programs, the secretary general is responsible for appointing heads of organizations, in consultation with member states. In the case of UN specialized agencies, these organizations have elections, mostly with a majority-rule, one-country-one-vote system. In the case of the IFIs, leadership is selected through executive board-only elections (see Box 2).

The type of selection process in these institutions shapes the candidates’ approach to the different leadership races. In appointment races, a select group of typically high-level representatives make the final decisions, usually with the future vision of the overall organization in mind. Thus, it may be important for candidates to clearly demonstrate a commitment to the organization itself. Furthermore, it may be important to champion policies that receive broad consensus among organization member states. On the other hand, in a majority-rule election, candidates may find greater success in targeting...
specific member state sub-groups through a series of targeted policy promises. It may also be more critical for candidates to devote resources in these races to consult with and pitch to individual member states. While these two strategies represent opposite ends of the spectrum, in practice, there is a mix of both.

**Box 2: Leadership Selection: Appointments and Elections**

The UN secretary general, in consultation with member states, is responsible for appointing heads of respective UN departments, funds and programs.\(^{49}\)

UN departments: At the UN Secretariat, the secretary general relies on an informal power-sharing agreement that results in the United States taking the top position at the Department of Political Affairs, while the United Kingdom takes the Office for Coordination in Humanitarian Assistance, and France leads the Department of Peacekeeping.

UN funds and programs: The UN secretary general also appoints executive directors that oversee the funds and programs. This includes UNICEF, where the United States has held the executive director post since 1947; the WFP, where the last five leaders have been from the United States; and the UNDP where an American served as administrator from 1966-1999.\(^{50}\)

On the other hand, the heads of UN specialized agencies are elected and not appointed.

However, the types of elections differ as much as the organization mandates themselves. Examples of election types include: consensus-based process, where member states are consulted by the appointed selection panel and candidates are slowly whittled down (such as the OECD); standard majority-rules vote through a series of ‘rounds’ (such as the FAO); board-only elections (such as the World Bank and other RDBS); and election-appointments where winners are appointed by small executive committees following an initial election to narrow the field (such as ICAO and the IMF).\(^{51}\)

The United States holds some of the senior management and operations positions across the UN system (Figure 6). This division of labor among the P-5 (China, France, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom) allows for the United States to oversee political affairs, the United Kingdom to hold on to the OCHA position, France to maintain peacekeeping, China to oversee the United Nations’ Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), and Russia to lead the UN Geneva HQ.

Special representatives and envoys oversee specific thematic and regional or national issues, and their reporting can be highly impactful. The positions are created “as needed” by each secretary general in consultation with the Security Council. The number of envoys depends on each secretary general. Currently, there are five special envoys.\(^{52}\) Two Americans currently serve as special representatives to the secretary general (for Libya and the Great Lakes), while only one currently serves as a special envoy of the secretary general (on Tuberculosis).
At IFIs, U.S. nationals maintain similar rates of representation at the senior level. At present, the United States holds one of five vice-president positions at the ADB, one of six vice-president positions at the AfDB, and five of ten vice-president positions at the IFC (Figure 7).

**Figure 6: U.S. Senior-Level Representation at Select International Organizations**

- **International Financial Institutions**
  - World Bank (3/34 Senior Positions)
  - International Monetary Fund (8/31 Senior Positions)
  - International Finance Corporation (7/15 Senior Positions)
  - Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (2/9 Senior Positions)

- **Regional Development Banks**
  - Asian Development Banks (1/6 Senior Positions)
  - Inter-American Development Bank (5/31 Senior Positions)
  - African Development Bank (2/23 Senior Positions)
  - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (3/16 Senior Positions)

- **UN System**
  - United Nations Development Programme (1/10 Senior Positions)
  - World Health Organization (2/19 Senior Positions)
  - Food and Agriculture Organization (1/13 Senior Positions)
  - UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (3/16 Senior Positions)
Figure 7: U.S. Senior-Level Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Senior Positions</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank (WB)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>President; Chief Economist; Vice President, Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary General; Director of the Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Development Bank (ADB)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vice President (Operations 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>President; Chief, Office of Institutional Integrity; Chief of Staff, Office of the President; General Counsel, Chief Ethics Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Development Banks (AfDB)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vice President of Private Sector, Infrastructure and Industrialization; Chief Information Security Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chief Evaluator; Chief Compliance Office; General Counsel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Existing Challenges with U.S. Engagement in Multilaterals

Despite its continued role in the multilateral system, the United States has lost its leadership aura in many institutions. There are notable instances where a lack of commitment or attention from the top has led to the United States squandering positions of influence (Box 3). At the same time, the United States does not always pay sufficient attention to the representatives it sends to high-level meetings. Although the U.S. president attends the UN General Assembly every year, this level of engagement from the top is not paralleled in the case of IFIs; the last time that a U.S. president addressed a World Bank Annual meeting was in 1998 (with President Bill Clinton). In comparison, the president of China, Xi Jinping, has attended the AIIB meetings since its founding, sending a strong signal of China’s commitment to this institution. This lack of attention is also demonstrated by the length of time that new U.S. administrations take to name representatives to key institutions. With some 1,200 political positions requiring Senate confirmation, most administrations prioritize leadership within the U.S. government (e.g., at the Departments of State, Defense, and others) as opposed to representation at multilateral institutions or other external roles. As a result, some positions, such as executive directors within the development banks, might be delayed up to a year after the new administration takes office, leaving a critical policy gap.

At the same time, developing countries and emerging powers are vying for leadership roles in the multilateral system. Geopolitical shifts, such as the rise of China and the cyber tactics of Russia, are threatening the liberal international order. Waning U.S. leadership in multilateral development
institutions has consequences, particularly as other countries take advantage of this void to assert their influence. China is using personnel vacancies strategically, gaining more leadership positions in existing international organizations. As a result, China currently holds the top job at three of the fifteen UN specialized agencies—important institutions in setting global standards for technology, labor affairs, and more. In contrast, the United States only leads one UN specialized agency—the World Bank Group. Overall, 18 multilateral organizations out of 200 in the study’s database are led by U.S. nationals. On the other hand, even though China and Russia’s financial contributions are a fraction of what the United States contributes, together these two countries lead 10 of these 200 organizations (Figure 8).

Box 3: Instances Where the United States Lost Leadership Positions

There are many instances where U.S. disengagement has led to losing positions of influence. Moreover, once the United States loses a position in the multilateral system, it may never get that position back. As a case in point, the IFC was created in 1956 by American Robert L. Garner and his colleagues, who firmly believed that the private sector was an important player in global development. Garner served as the IFC’s first CEO, and the next two IFC CEOs were also from the United States. In 1974, a European took the helm of the IFC, and no American has led the organization since.

In the late 1990s, the United States lost its top slot at the UNDP, where the first five administrators had been Americans. In 1999, after UNDP administrator James Gustave Speth completed his tenure, the Clinton administration allowed a non-American to be nominated to the job. Critics have pointed out that this happened as a result of the low priority given to multilateral engagement. Similarly, at the OECD, a U.S. national helmed the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) chair for the first nine terms. Since 1999, however, the position has rotated among DAC members—including one American, Brian Atwood, from 2011 to 2012.

During the 2010s, there was concern that the United States could “lose” the World Bank presidency. In 2012, the Obama administration delayed nominating a strong candidate, giving way for developing nations to enter the race and challenge U.S. prominence. More recently, at the IOM, the United States lost the director general position in 2018—a role held by only one non-American since 1951. It is yet to be seen if the United States will regain its leadership role following the conclusion of current Director General Antonio Vitorino’s tenure.

Fundamentally, the United States is underutilizing its potential of strategic placement and advocacy for Americans within the multilateral system. There is also no consistent method to monitor and report the percentage of U.S. representation across international organizations vis-à-vis budgetary contributions or shareholding status. Across categories (leadership, professional mid-level, and junior), levels (undersecretary general to P-2, which is minimum of 2 years or experience), and organizations (UN bodies, IFIs, and others), the current representation of U.S. personnel falls far below its percentage of funding.

Factors and Challenges Driving the Representation Gap

This representation gap is the result of a number of factors and challenges: (a) the absence of a centralized U.S. government effort to monitor upcoming leadership elections and identify staff to
nominate for those positions; (b) a weak effort to work with allies and like-minded partners to put forward the best candidates; and (c) an uncoordinated system to support Americans, including U.S. federal employees that might “rotate” in, and a lack of partnerships and similar endeavors with universities and NGOs to encourage young Americans into careers at multilaterals.

**Figure 8: Current Leadership of Select Multilateral Organizations by Nationality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Russia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank Group</td>
<td>International Telecommunications Union (ITU)</td>
<td>European Bank for Reconstructions and Development (EBRD)</td>
<td>UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)</td>
<td>UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPO)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Children’s Fund</td>
<td>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIB)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UNICEF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA/OECD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSIS Excel Dashboard.

**A) ABSENCE OF A CENTRALIZED U.S. GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO MONITOR UPCOMING LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS**

From a 30-year historical perspective, there have been few attempts across U.S. administrations to put in place a coordinated process to track, identify, and campaign for U.S. citizens to attain high-level posts in international organizations, through either elections or appointments (Box 4). A late-2020 effort was cut short by an administration transition, and while the Biden administration has indicated interest, there is not currently a coordinated process across the U.S. government to monitor upcoming elections and identify suitable candidates. Moreover, little energy is being spent on campaigning for U.S. citizens, nor are there notable efforts to work with like-minded nations to build coalitions to support candidates for high-level posts in international organizations. Advancing Americans for leadership positions, either through elections or appointments, are, in the words of an expert, “politics at another level.”

[^4: Reference source]
Box 4: U.S. Historical Initiatives to Monitor Leadership Positions

The CSIS research team has identified several attempts by various administrations to improve U.S. representation at multilaterals. In 1979, the Carter administration established the International Development Cooperation Administration, which included a process to recommend appointments and removals of senior officials in international organizations against the backdrop of a larger strategic vision. The agency was closed during the Reagan administration, at which time the IO Office of Management Policy & Resources (IO/MPR) was established. IO/MPR has since taken the lead in strengthening the relationships necessary to quietly identify and advocate for senior-level U.S. personnel within the system. It oversees the office for “American Citizen Employment,” with the mandate of providing guidance for U.S. nationals seeking jobs within the UN system.

During the Obama administration, then assistant secretary for international organization affairs Esther Brimmer established the Office of Policy, Regional, and Functional Organizations (IO/PRF) to enhance the interagency process and promote cross-bureau collaboration. The IO/PRF office was intended to connect U.S. bilateral and multilateral engagement, ensuring U.S. policy coherence and cohesion within international and regional bodies. While the office was defunded in 2017 under the Trump administration, there is still the necessity for improved collaboration between IO and bilateral-facing bureaus at the State Department.

The Trump administration also sought reform of IO to increase U.S. competitiveness in these organizations, particularly at the staffing levels (low, mid, and high). The administration nominated Ambassador Mark Lambert to serve as special envoy for United Nations integrity. Lambert’s work was supported by the new IO Office for Multilateral Competitiveness, which was focused heavily on China within the UN system. Lambert left the role—which no longer exists—in June 2021. During its short tenure, the office established an online portal that lists vacancies within the UN system. However, the site is complex and does little more than aggregate data from various HR portals. It does not provide support to Americans applying for positions. At the time of writing, the fate of the new office is not clear.

According to an expert, this lack of monitoring and coordination results in the U.S. government putting forward what can be described as a “Sunday-night” candidacy: the late realization of the importance of the positions and the subsequent scramble to find a suitable candidate. The exception to this coordination gap tends to be found with high-level regularized and expected appointment positions, such as the position of undersecretary general of political affairs, and legally required positions within IFIs, such as the president of the World Bank and the presidents of the RDBs.

Most nominees for international leadership positions are not career staff at these institutions. Instead, they are political appointees, and their access to political support back at home is critical to their success. Analysis of the recent OECD secretary general election found that an alliance with his domestic political party in Australia was a defining component of Secretary General Mattias Cormann’s victory. Before his nomination to the OECD post, Cormann served as Australia’s finance minister as part of the Liberal-National coalition and received the active support of Prime Minister Scott Morrison. This was a much different national relationship than his competitor, Cecilia Malmström, who had spent the past decade working in European politics as opposed to in her homeland of Sweden. While
Malmström was supported by the Swedish government, neither the prime minister nor the other ministers responsible for supporting her candidacy were from her political party. Malmström candidacy was described as an “EU candidacy,” which is inaccurate as multilateral institutions are managed and owned by individual countries. It could be said that while Malmström’s party was part of the coalition governing Sweden, the incentives of the Swedish government to campaign for her were far less strong than for the Australian government to campaign for the winning Australian candidate.

Of course, a government’s relationship with multilaterals can prove challenging if their political calendar does not align. In 2020, the U.S. presidential elections concurred with the important November 7 election for director general of the WTO. The United States did not put forward or endorse any candidate. The WTO case also illustrates the increasing professionalization of international elections and appointments. Candidates are being put forward by their governments earlier in the process; several candidates for the fall 2022 ITU secretary general election were declared in early 2021. In some cases, governments are also seeking professional advice, partnering with professional campaign consultants to design a winning campaign. The 2015 election for the presidency of the AfDB, for instance, was won by a candidate who leveraged the skills of a professional campaign consulting firm. Professional campaigns are savvy and approach the elections with the same sort of diplomacy of cities seeking Olympic bids. This trend is likely to continue.

The growing complexity of elections and appointments will require consistent monitoring and preparation for upcoming vacancies. This is true for regular processes, as well as when disruptions (such as the current Covid-19 pandemic) reshuffle schedules. Overreliance on existing norms and traditional divisions of labor leaves the United States in a vulnerable spot. For example, while most U.S. candidates for the World Bank presidency run unopposed, U.S. nominee Jim Kim faced several challengers in 2012. The Obama administration delayed nominating a strong candidate, giving way for developing nations to enter the race and challenge U.S. prominence. Finally, the new forward-leaning posture of strategic competitors to leadership appointments—as seen in recent cases such as the WIPO—will characterize future contests for the top spots.

The United States must have visibility on upcoming elections, key proceeding dates to nominate candidates, and modalities. Over the next 24 months, critical leadership elections and appointments will take place, including at the WFP, UNICEF, ILO, IAEA, and ITU. The CSIS research team has compiled an initial list that can serve as a map of upcoming elections and appointments (and their modalities, see Table A2 in Appendix 2). Based on this list, the U.S. government should further narrow priority organizations while also developing a pool of diverse, qualified, and vetted candidates and working with allies and like-minded partners on their intentions to nominate candidates.

**B) A WEAK EFFORT TO WORK WITH ALLIES AND LIKE-MINDED PARTNERS TO PUT FORWARD THE BEST CANDIDATES**

The current lack of coordination on leadership elections does not just harm U.S. candidates but compromises the coordination process between like-minded allies. U.S. strategic partners are looking for support for their candidates to hold top posts. This process of “leading from behind” can be incredibly effective, especially with European and Japanese allies that can exert influence to guarantee that the leaders of major international institutions hold a steadfast commitment to liberal values. The 2019 FAO and WIPO
cases provide important lessons in this regard (Box 5). The required timeline for establishing coalitions is remarkable, with many of the informal conversations around candidacy coming up to two years before the election itself.

Coordination on elections and appointments should also take into consideration the timing and regional requirements of a particular leadership position. While the United States may not be able to put forward a U.S. candidate for each position, it can throw its support behind that of a like-minded regional ally. For example, if a given UN leadership position is slated to go to a candidate from the Asia-Pacific region, the United States may support an allied regional nominee with the expectation that, when the rotation falls elsewhere, there will be added support for the United States’ preferred candidate. If timed and coordinated correctly, the United States can establish dynamic coalitions.

Box 5: A Tale of Two Elections: The 2019 FAO and WIPO cases

The 2019 FAO and WIPO elections provide valuable lessons in how to approach important leadership elections. Both FAO and WIPO are small and not well-known UN specialized agencies. However, they are both important global standard-setting bodies: FAO is responsible for global food security and agricultural regulations while WIPO regulates the world’s intellectual property ownership.

In June 2019, the election for director general of the Food and Agriculture Organization, by all accounts, caught the U.S. government off guard. The U.S. government was not organized and did not settle on a candidate to support until four days before the vote. At that point, the delegation backed a controversial and unpopular candidate, who split the vote (getting only 12 votes) and left bilateral partners unsatisfied. At the end, the Chinese candidate, Qu Dongyu was able to get the post of director general. This election provided important lessons for the United States in terms of planning ahead, supporting a qualified candidate and building coalitions.

A few months later, the September 2019 election of the director general at WIPO came down to a two-way race between Singapore’s Daren Tang and China’s Wang Binying. The election resulted in Daren Tang’s victory, with 55 votes for him and 28 votes for the Chinese candidate. This particular election yielded a number of lessons learned that can inform future U.S. efforts in these races. First, the United States recognized the importance of key standard bodies given the intellectual property protections at risk. Second, the United States worked efficiently with its political leaders, private sector, and international allies to act in favor of shared interests. Third, U.S. ambassadors (in particular Ambassador Andrew Bremberg in Geneva) and other diplomats quickly mobilized and collectively engaged their foreign counterparts who were going to be voting in the WIPO election. Fourth, the United States and its voting committee allies (Japan, Australia, Europe, and Canada) came to a collective consensus on a candidate for director general and garnered their ongoing support throughout the process. And finally, a sense of urgency arose around China’s possible leadership position at another UN specialized agency, and along with possible “China fatigue,” meaning countries were growing weary of China’s efforts to gain influence at the United Nations.
C) AN UNCOORDINATED SYSTEM TO SUPPORT AMERICANS IN MID- AND ENTRY-LEVEL POSITIONS

Leadership and senior roles are not the only avenue for Americans within international organizations. Just as important are professional mid- and entry-level staff that serve as the “next layer down” for influence and representation and the future of the organizations themselves (see Table 5). There are many entry points into these institutions such as internships, young professional programs (in the United Nations and in the IFIs) as well as other hiring avenues such as consulting jobs, term appointments, and specific program such as JPOs. Supporting Americans at professional mid- and entry-level positions supplies technical expertise in these institutions and cultivates a talent pipeline for future leadership positions. One need only consider the case of the current secretary general of the ITU, Zhao Houlin, who started in the organization as junior staff and worked his way up. Today, his overall direction favors Chinese firms and interests, which complicates policy processes within the ITU, with significant implications for the future of internet governance.75

Table 5: Mapping Staff Positions at Multilateral Development Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UN</th>
<th>World Bank</th>
<th>U.S. Government Civil Service Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior-Level</td>
<td>D-1 and D-2</td>
<td>GH–GJ</td>
<td>SES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Level</td>
<td>P-4 and P-5</td>
<td>GA-GJ</td>
<td>GS 14, GS 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry-Level</td>
<td>P-2 and P-3</td>
<td>GA–GD</td>
<td>GS 12 and GS 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled data from external sources.

However, the U.S. government currently does not systematically track U.S. representation across the multilateral system and has a limited number of ways to support Americans seeking employment in multilateral organizations. Specifically, there are five challenges in this area:

1. Weak monitoring and reporting of U.S. representation across multilaterals
2. Lack of incentives in the U.S. State Department
3. Absence of a formal system of details and secondments for the U.S. civil service
4. Lack of sponsored programs, such as internships and JPOs
5. Weak support for other methods of hiring, such as direct hires

**Weak monitoring and reporting of U.S. representation across multilaterals**

The U.S. government lacks an ongoing and systematic effort to monitor and report U.S. representation across all multilaterals. Staffing data is collected by many individual agencies within the U.S. government, and as a result, tracking U.S. representation is done in a decentralized way. For example, the U.S. executive director offices at each IFI track their own institution, while USUN tracks Americans working in the United Nations’ New York Headquarters, and so on. The Treasury Department tracks Americans in senior positions at IFIs but does not monitor U.S. representation at the staff level. And although the GAO has produced more than 100 audits on multilaterals since the early 1970, U.S. representation is not monitored and reported on an ongoing basis.

An additional challenge is that not all multilaterals publish information on their staff composition, which makes it hard to paint the true picture of U.S. representation. IFIs do not publicly disclose staff data by nationality; they only share this information privately, at the request of the executive director.
In comparison, the UN system discloses this information and is more transparent, publishing regular reports on its funders and personnel through a dedicated website.\textsuperscript{76}

- **Lack of incentives in the U.S. State Department**

Currently, career options at the State Department consist of five possible cones: consular, economic, political, managerial, and public diplomacy.\textsuperscript{77} There is no specialization—or “cone”—on multilateral engagement and the Foreign Service career path does not reward multilateral experience. The career ladder of an FSO is mainly driven by geographic expertise—to advance, FSOs seek appointments at regional bureaus or postings in embassies at national capitals. Working at international organizations, at U.S. missions in Geneva or New York City, or having multilateral experience is not a career booster—rather, it is viewed as a step to the side, or a “detour.” At the same time, there are currently no Foreign Service rotations to international organizations, although there are such posts for NATO and the office of the U.S. executive director of the World Bank. All factors deter staff at the State Department from seeking experience at multilaterals.

- **Absence of a formal system of details and secondments for the U.S. civil service**

At the same time, within the U.S. civil service, there are also no formal opportunities or coordinated processes for qualified federal workers to pursue positions at multilaterals. Technical agencies, such as the Treasury Department, Department of Agriculture, and others employ workers with specific subject matter expertise. Many of the jobs at UN specialized agencies and IFIs are technical positions that seek this expertise. For example, the WHO, as well as the World Bank and other RDBs, hire health experts in specific fields. Due to the specialized nature of some of these positions, they tend to be filled by internal hires or mid-career individuals already working as consultants to the institution. It is very hard to infuse mid-career blood from the outside.

One such avenue is through Executive Order 11552 (1970), which made it possible for U.S. federal government employees to “detail” into non-leadership roles in multilaterals for a period no longer than five years.\textsuperscript{78} While in a just detail, the staff retain their formal government salary and reemployment rights to return to their position. The government may also transfer the employee, for whom they have redeployment rights but who is paid directly by the receiving agency. Realistically, civil servant details to international bodies occur through formal and informal mechanisms. The CDC currently supports approximately 35 staff each year to work within the WHO. There is also a small cohort of staff from the Department of Labor that details into positions at the ILO each year. A Department of Energy program supports details to the IAEA, but it is not clear if it is operational.\textsuperscript{79} However, in most cases, the civil servant has to find and successfully compete for the position, at which point they then must get their supervisor to agree to the detail.

- **Lack of sponsored programs, such as internships and JPOs**

Qualified Americans can also join these institutions early on in their careers through internships, Junior Professional Programs (JPOs), and young professionals programs. However, the U.S. government does not sponsor many U.S. candidates through these programs. For example, the JPO is an entry-level program for the United Nations. Only two offices within the U.S. government have historically supported JPOs: the State Department’s Population Migration and Refugees Bureau and the USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.\textsuperscript{80} Because these bureaus supply the funding, the
JPOs are placed at the UNHCR, IOM, and WFP. While there are many other UN agencies that utilize a JPO workforce, the U.S. government has not supported placement in other bodies.\textsuperscript{81}

Moreover, across these programs there is limited “permeability” between U.S. government personnel and their counterparts in the international civil service. In other words, few personnel move back and forth between the two layers. This starts early, with a lack of representation of U.S. JPOs, and continues at mid-level positions. Additionally, while EO 11552 gave the State Department the authority to convene across agencies to create a strategy for placing staff into priority technical and standard-setting bodies, there is no coordinated planning or strategy at the U.S. government on placements in priority multilaterals.\textsuperscript{82}

- **Weak support for other methods of hiring, such as direct hires**

In addition to JPOs and detailees who retain their government salary, Americans are also hired directly by international organizations to serve as international civil servants. There is an application process which they have to undergo, featuring cumbersome websites and forms as well as long recruitment times. At the United Nations, employees are considered international civil servants and are expected to act independently from politics back at home. UN staff take an oath of office to “not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization.”\textsuperscript{83}

Similarly, the first priority of staff when conducting business on behalf of the World Bank is to respond to their client’s development needs.\textsuperscript{84} The founding articles of agreement state:

> The President, officers and staff of the Bank, in the discharge of their offices, owe their duty entirely to the Bank and to no other authority. Each member of the Bank shall respect the international character of this duty and shall refrain from all attempts to influence any of them in the discharge of their duties . . . In appointing the officers and staff the President shall, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and of technical competence, pay due regard to the importance of recruiting personnel on as wide a geographical basis as possible.\textsuperscript{85}

Having been hired directly by their organization, these Americans take their neutrality oath seriously.\textsuperscript{86} This is often in stark contrast to other member states’ citizens, who may see themselves as representing national interests.\textsuperscript{87} Research by Jeffrey Feltman, former UN undersecretary general for political affairs, identified the stark difference that exists for allied and competitive governments alike, citing the example of Chinese national Wu Hongbu, the former undersecretary general for UN DESA, who in an interview cited his representation of “Chinese interests inside the UN Secretariat,” specifically including efforts to remove the World Uyghur Congress from the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2017.\textsuperscript{88}

This is not to support the notion that Americans working in these institutions should be advocating for U.S. national interests. All employees, regardless of their nationality, should be hired for their merits and should put the mission of their institutions front and center. Otherwise, in the view of an expert, there is a risk of “weaponizing these institutions” in pursuit of U.S. national strategic interests.\textsuperscript{89}

While the United States should be mindful not to encroach on the neutrality of its international civil servants, there is a significant opportunity to increase engagement for the purpose of improving overall representation. Americans working within the system have critical knowledge on processes, including how to get hired through the rigorous “competency-based interviewing” and how to navigate promotions and transitions. Increasing U.S. presence in the UN system and across IFIs can yield
benefits to the United States in terms of preserving universal liberal values in these institutions. Regardless of their political affiliation, U.S. employees can sustain the values that these institutions were founded upon and advocate for institutional transparency, accountability, neutrality, and integrity. Moreover, U.S. personnel that possess technical skills and acquire experience in these organizations can be tapped for future leadership positions and senior roles in these institutions when they become available.

However, this is the category where the U.S. government has the least visibility or engagement. A 2010 GAO audit found that most U.S. citizens learn about UN careers through their professional networks, with little to no support from the U.S. government. Even once Americans are in these positions, the U.S. government does little to amplify their success through storytelling or mentor networks. Engaging this group can widen a diverse talent pool for future open positions.

Moreover, although a GAO audit from 2006 tasked the U.S. State Department to create a roster of qualified and interested American candidates for professional and technical positions at the United Nations, no roster seems to currently exist. Some countries pursue this practice of maintaining rosters of prescreened and qualified candidates as a strategy for promoting their nationals. A roster of qualified Americans would also be an excellent starting point for ensuring the diversity of U.S. candidates and improving awareness and access from diverse candidates for positions in international organizations (Box 6). Individuals would need to consent to being included, to ensure legal approval.

Box 6: An Opportunity for the United States to Advance Diversity

Recent high-level attention from the U.S. government to the need for improved diversity and inclusion has not yet fully extended toward Americans in international organizations. The pipelines of talented U.S. candidates that exist are often not unlike those pipelines into the U.S. government itself in that they lack critical representation across a number of categories. There has not been a cohesive, whole-of-government strategy toward U.S. broader interests and staffing in the multilateral system, much less one that places diversity and inclusion at the center of its approach.

The United States must catch up on representation at all levels, from high-level leadership positions to mid-level and junior staff appointments. It must do so in a diverse and inclusive way. For example, while there are currently five U.S. professional staff that serve in assistant secretary general positions within the UN system, none are persons of color. If you extend this to include executive directors of funds and programs (including UNICEF and the WFP) at the equivalent leadership level, the pattern remains the same. While the breakdown of professional-level staff is impossible to ascertain, it is likely to also follow a similar trend.

Attention to this challenge will require the government to apply what it is learning to enhance its internal diversity and equity efforts in an external-facing way. This is not an easy task, given that it requires improving the diversity of the U.S. civil service. In an international setting, it also entails accelerating the overall representation of the United States in multilaterals, as well as being attentive to the composition of that representative staff. For this vision to be realized, a talent pipeline should be established that reflects U.S. diversity and also includes formal mechanisms to ensure talent eventually reaches those organizations. This will clearly be a steep learning curve for the U.S. government and will involve significant time and investment.
Finally, an additional hurdle for recruiting Americans at some of the IFIs is the uneven tax treatment they receive while working in these institutions (Box 7). Multilateral institutions do not withhold taxes on any employee, yet Americans must file taxes with the IRS back at home. Most multilateral institutions compensate Americans on their taxes through a tax equalization system, except for the EBRD and ADB. The current tax treatment at the EBRD and ADB is a deterrent to U.S. nationals interested in working in these institutions, since they are receiving 25 to 30 percent less income than staff of other nationalities as well as Americans working at other multilaterals.

Box 7: Tax Treatment of Americans at the ADB, EBRD, and AfDB

Within multilateral institutions, U.S. nationals do not receive the same tax treatment and exemptions as other foreign nationals, creating financial disincentives. As a rule, international organizations do not withhold taxes on any employee: they consider that whatever obligations the employee has vis-à-vis their country is between them and their tax authorities. Therefore, for most nationalities, gross income basically equals net income. However, Americans, regardless of the institution they work in, are required to file income taxes with the IRS. This results in substantially different effective compensation rates for Americans relative to representatives of other states in identical positions, in effect a situation of “unequal pay for equal work” for Americans. To remedy this situation, some multilateral organizations have designed schemes to reimburse Americans for their taxes. However, this situation varies across multilaterals and across employment categories.

The United Nations has set up a tax equalization fund that partially compensates Americans for their income taxes. Americans are considered self-employed and must file quarterly taxes to the IRS. This in essence means that Americans at the United Nations earn a “tax-free” salary. However, this only applies to Americans that are recruited as “staff,” while Americans hired as “consultants” do not enter this scheme and are not reimbursed for taxes. The process is cumbersome and often dysfunctional. Within IFIs, there is also substantially different “take-home” pay for otherwise comparable American staff. These disparities also affect retirement plans.

Similar to the UN system, the Washington-based IFIs (the IMF, IFC, World Bank, and IADB) gross up the salaries paid to Americans in order to cover their tax payments. This practice was agreed upon when the IMF and World Bank were created in the late 1940s, and the IADB has since come under this practice as well. American employees then file and pay U.S. taxes quarterly as if they were self-employed. On the other hand, when the ADB, AfDB, and EBRD were created, no similar special provision for topping up the salaries of Americans was established. There is no differential treatment, so Americans receive on average 25 to 30 percent less in wages than employees of other nationalities in the same job. Although Americans are still attracted to these organizations, this differential tax treatment creates a disincentive vis-à-vis the Washington-based IFIs. Moreover, it leads to a decreased mobility of Americans across institutions. For example, the EBRD and ADB would have little problem recruiting a German national out of the World Bank from a tax perspective. However, the EBRD and ADB would have difficulty hiring Americans out of the World Bank, IADB, or IMF, since that would have to mean a substantial pay cut for those employees.
Learning from Allies and Competitors: Roster, Train, Mentor and Approach

Despite these challenges, there are many best practices demonstrated by other nations that the United States can learn from for identifying, placing, and advocating for leadership appointments and professional mid- and entry-level personnel in the multilateral system. Among allied governments, countries such as Australia, Canada, and Japan are effective multilateral actors: they tend to be more adept at building coalitions and using current systems to their advantage. The United States can learn and apply lessons from these strategic approaches.

Based on their experience during the WIPO election, the Australian government has recently established a nine-person unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to track upcoming elections and engage allies on coalitions.96 This unit focuses on identifying good candidates for upcoming leadership roles, both qualified Australians and like-minded allies, looking out three to four years in advance and creating a rolling database of professionals who would be suitable for managing complex organizations. The unit is also responsible for placing professional staff. France has a similar department—the Corps de compétences—to evaluate multilateral bodies and support processes to identify and place candidates.97

An example of a comprehensive approach to placing mid- and junior-level staff is the Swedish government’s “Strategy for Advancing Capacity Development, Partnership, and Methods.” It includes traditional tools, such as JPOs alongside higher-grade professional and senior-level mechanisms, such as a bilateral associate expert program and a specialist development program.98 A 2020 review of the strategy found that the programs were successful at “increasing the number of Swedes for special high level multilateral assignments.”99 Meanwhile, Canada has used creative modalities, working alongside nongovernmental organization Canadem to identify, roster, and place Canadian citizens into positions within international organizations, specifically overseas. This nongovernmental organization has placed more than 5,000 personnel into various positions and hosts auxiliary efforts such as training and skill-building.100

Japan’s comprehensive approach includes significant investments in building their talent pipeline. This includes an extensive JPO program which has sponsored some 1,800 young Japanese nationals to work in the UN system. Japan is proactive in thinking through which institutions to send JPOs in order to make the most of the limited numbers of candidates. In addition, Japan looks at a number of criteria for high-level leadership appointments, including the timing of the vacancy, its importance vis-à-vis other positions, candidate merit, and the norms around the appointment. The Japanese government also considers the importance of alliances and where trading candidate support can result in improved outcomes and enhance complementarity between partners.

Japan is currently infusing $24 million into the JPO program, after recognizing that half of the 900 current Japanese nationals within the UN system started as JPOs. To build the pipeline even further upstream, Japan has developed a graduate-level academy, the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC), that provides lectures and field mission experience with government financial support. The Japanese government has also enhanced permeability between international civil servants and their civil service, allowing for staff to easily move back and forth within the system. Finally, Japan is quick to highlight their best and brightest, telling the origin story of their most high-level national staff in the UN system. As a result, they become known entities, inspiring others to emulate their career paths.
The United States’ key competitors are also aware of the importance of their representation in the international system and have devised a more strategic engagement within these institutions. China has substantially increased its nominees for important elections, appointments, and professional posts, with a focus on standard-setting bodies. China currently heads three of the UN specialized agencies: the ITU, FAO, and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (Figure 9). A former Chinese official also heads UN DESA, the agency responsible for the JPO program which has recently aligned the Sustainable Development Goals framework to China’s Belt and Road Initiative. China has also made recent unsuccessful bids to run the UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WIPO.

Figure 9: Number of Organizations Led by Chinese Nationals per Year

At the professional level, China has established an International Organization Internship Programme through its Scholarship Council in order to coordinate JPO efforts and similar initiatives. The program works to build partnerships with nine international organizations (including the ICAO, ITU, and UNIDO) and has sponsored 32 JPOs and 590 other professional staff since 2015. While this figure is below that of other member states, it is important to remember it has been reached over the last five years alone. Research by the Heritage Foundation found that in 2019 the United Nations employed some 1,336 Chinese nationals—representing a 68 percent increase over a 10-year period (See Figure A1 in Appendix 2).
The United States has an opportunity to rebuild its leadership role within the multilateral system to influence the international response to major global challenges. Geopolitical shifts and waning U.S. leadership risk threatening the liberal international order. The United States should increase its engagement in multilateral development institutions, continue to push for positive reforms, and use these institutions as conduits for U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives. If the United States claims to be back at the international stage, it requires leadership and commitment at the highest level of the U.S. administration. This rebuilding effort will require political will at the highest level of the U.S. government, detailed planning, and a significant investment of resources. To aid in this endeavor, the CSIS research team proposes approaching this effort with five actions:

- Coordinate a whole-of-government strategic approach to multilaterals;
- Conduct a multilateral aid review (MAR);
- Craft a whole-of-government implementation plan for multilateral engagement;
- Work with allies and like-minded partners on a coordinated plan of action;
- Find, attract, and place qualified and diverse Americans at all levels.
1. Coordinate a Whole-of-Government Strategic Approach to Multilaterals

A “Multilateral Policy Council” should be designated within the NSC to coordinate the strategic approach to multilaterals across the U.S. government.

Increasing U.S. engagement does not mean that the United States should fund or play an important role in all the organizations of the multilateral system. The United States cannot be present everywhere: not all institutions are relevant or respond to current global challenges, nor are they effective in delivering development outcomes aligned with U.S. national security priorities. The United States needs to adopt a strategic and coordinated approach to its engagement in multilaterals across the whole of its government.

In practice, this means that the United States should prioritize certain organizations and positions and work with its allies and like-minded countries for the remaining top jobs in a way that does not undermine U.S. interests. The CSIS research team’s view is that in selecting priority organizations, the United States might focus closer attention to multilateral institutions that align with its national security priorities and provide “value for money”—that is, those that maximize the development impact of taxpayer resources. The National Security Strategy (NSS) would provide the initial thrust in terms of key U.S. priorities. In the current environment, key national security priorities that stand out are security, climate change, digitalization, pandemics, human rights, counterterrorism efforts, and antiproliferation. With regards to the institutions that provide “value for money,” a multilateral aid review could help answer this question.

Based on the selection of priority organizations—the so-called “commanding heights” of the multilateral system—the government can craft a strategic approach that coordinates among the varied U.S. agencies that manage multilateral institutions. By reprioritizing certain institutions, the U.S. government has an opportunity to reset roles and responsibilities and create an accountability mechanism for tracking objectives against a common guideline of their choosing.

The NSC would be best placed to convene, lead, and craft a strategy toward leadership in multilaterals, supported by other agencies such as the Treasury Department, State Department, Millennium Challenge Corporation, and USAID. As the president’s highest decisionmaking forums on national security and foreign policy and the main coordinating body across the federal government, the NSC is best suited for this role. To this end, this report recommends the creation of a Multilateral Policy Council to elevate and manage this strategy and policy process. The council should be headed by the deputy national security advisor, with support from the NSC’s senior director for multilateral affairs and the assistant secretary of state for IO. The council would also be expected to coordinate with the Domestic Policy Council, NSC, and National Economic Council to ensure that multilateral policy strategy is in sync with other domestic and foreign policy objectives.

The Multilateral Policy Council would elevate the work of the preceding Office of Multilateral Competitiveness and expand its mandate to include engagement across all multilaterals (not just the United Nations). The focus of this defunct office was to support qualified U.S. candidates in the United Nations, with the broader understanding that these candidates would put the interests of the organization first. It appears that the Biden administration will provide continuity to this office, as it would be in U.S. interest to build off this initiative to better engage in multilaterals. The Treasury
Department would still manage the IFI relationship; similarly, the State Department would do the same with the UN agencies, but in a manner directly supportive of the council’s direction. This council would provide a more strategic, systematic, and coordinated way to approach these positions.

The strategy would spell out the main institutions the United States should focus on as well as its key goals and approaches to regain influence. Front and center in the U.S. strategic approach to multilaterals should be questions such as: What are the “commanding heights” of the multilateral system for the United States? Which organizations should the United States focus on and prioritize having a “seat at the table?” What are U.S. goals in the institutions?

2. Conduct a Multilateral Aid Review

Congress should task the NSC Multilateral Policy Council to conduct a multilateral aid review (MAR) across U.S. government agencies.

As one of its first orders of business, the council should utilize an MAR to inform U.S. strategy toward the multilateral system and help prioritize its engagement and tasking across agencies. An MAR would serve as a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the multilateral institutions that the United States supports. If aligned against the objectives of a forthcoming NSS, the MAR could evaluate the gaps that exist in multilateral engagement. MARs have helped other donors make strategic decisions on funding and reforms aligned behind their national objectives. Several OECD countries have conducted such evaluations, including the United Kingdom (2016, 2011), Denmark (2013), the Netherlands (2015), Norway (2014), and Australia (2012) (see Box 8).

**Box 8: The United Kingdom’s MAR Process**

In the case of the United Kingdom, the government has conducted two MARs so far: in 2011 and 2016. The 2011 review evaluated 43 organizations and resulted in increases in funding for some, “warnings” to improve performance for others, and defunding for still others (organizations that showed poor value for money). Similarly, in 2016, the United Kingdom published its second assessment, noting: “the multilateral system as a whole is falling short of its considerable potential because agencies, and the wider UN family, are not working together. The UK will work with partners to ensure there is less competition and duplication between organizations, and more collaboration and coordination instead. Across all multilaterals, the UK will push for improved transparency, better value for money and greater accountability.”

In 2017, members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee introduced bipartisan legislation to review and improve the accountability and effectiveness of U.S. participation in international organizations, the Multilateral Aid Review Act of 2017. However, this bill did not advance and was not enacted. In the meantime, there were midterm elections in November 2018, and a new (116th) Congress was inaugurated. Owing to the WHO’s questionable response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Republicans from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reintroduced an MAR bill in May 2020 to assess the effectiveness of multilateral institutions in conducting their missions, serving U.S. interests,
and providing returns for taxpayers.\textsuperscript{110} However, the bill never received a vote and died with the 116th Congress in 2021.\textsuperscript{111} It has not been resuscitated.

In tasking an MAR, Congress can align broader U.S. interests while pushing for reforms in these institutions to make them more transparent, accountable, and efficient on their operations, as well as work to improve their delivery of critical global public goods. Congress should pass legislation on this effort and task a select group of U.S. government agencies to undertake this exercise. To ensure it remains apolitical, the MAR process should be grounded on a robust analytical methodology that follows a set of criteria to evaluate efficiency, development effectiveness, and alignment with U.S. national security priorities.\textsuperscript{112}

The MAR process can act as an “analytical anchor” for U.S. multilateral engagement, policy, and decisionmaking. Having data on organizational effectiveness, development impact, and delivery time will allow for a structured dialogue within the U.S. government and between the U.S. government and the multilateral organizations. To keep up with changing global conditions, such a comprehensive review needs to be conducted periodically (e.g., every five years) to respond to the changing world environment and shifts in national security priorities. This exercise could lead to a reprioritization of funding levels and U.S. engagement in these institutions. As a result, the United States would have to make difficult decisions across multilaterals.


The Multilateral Policy Council should track and prioritize upcoming leadership and senior-level positions, creating a roster or pipeline of qualified Americans for service at all levels and overseeing the process for running candidate campaigns.

To operationalize the strategy toward multilaterals, the NSC’s Multilateral Policy Council would be based on NSS direction and core leadership and would aim to harmonize engagement across the U.S. government. Based on the direction of the president and the NSS, the Multilateral Policy Council would be tasked with: (1) tracking and prioritizing upcoming leadership and senior-level positions; (2) creating a roster or pipeline of qualified Americans for service at all levels; and (3) overseeing the process for running candidate campaigns. To do this, it would engage directly with U.S. agencies and elevate issues of shared importance.

- **Track upcoming positions early.** It is important to track upcoming leadership and senior vacancies in multilateral organizations early on in order to prioritize positions and better plan and prepare for eventual candidate races. This would represent a significant endeavor, since it would require mapping out the positions that come open across 200 multilaterals within two to three years—equivalent to the U.S. Government Policy and Supporting Positions (“PLUM BOOK”) of international spots. The positions to follow include vacancies at the top (the heads of organizations) and the second layers of leadership, such as management roles at IFIs and senior positions in the UN system (e.g., undersecretary and deputy roles). The process would need to be carefully coordinated across the U.S. government and involve input from U.S. missions to multilateral organizations (such as the ones in New York and Geneva) and agencies such as the Departments of Treasury and State. Individual agencies and U.S. missions would be best placed to
provide the information since they often hold the relationship with the multilateral and have the knowledge of their day-to-day operations.

- **Develop a deep bench of qualified Americans.** The Multilateral Policy Council should provide direction to address demand- and supply-side issues related to recruiting and placing qualified Americans. Again, this would require coordinating across U.S. government agencies to create a pipeline of qualified candidates—that is, a “vetted list” of aspirants that could fill these roles. Similar to Mitt Romney’s “Readiness Project 2012,” the council would create a reservoir of qualified candidates. Having such a roster is, of course, just a starting point; the real test will be using it. Therefore, when crafting this pipeline, a balance needs to be struck between the technical qualifications and relevant experience of the candidate and their diplomatic and political skills to avoid over-politicizing high-level positions. Otherwise, the process risks damaging both the institution and U.S. interests and values.

- **Run professional campaigns.** The council needs a framework for selecting the best and brightest candidates and then running their campaigns. Campaigns are becoming more contested and complicated, and the United States needs to be prepared to invest more resources toward this effort. A possible route would be to work with the private sector who can directly hire firms or political consultants to help run better structured and more professional campaigns. This would also entail significant networking and relationship building with other nations and cooperating across sensitive or classified information. In the case that qualified U.S. candidates are not successful, the United States also needs to be prepared to build coalitions with other nations to support contenders who have the desired leadership attributes and align with U.S. national security interests.

### 4. Work with Allies and Like-Minded Partners on a Coordinated Plan of Action

The Multilateral Policy Council should quickly identify which positions would be best filled by like-minded allies and coordinate with partner countries early to guarantee influence.

It is in the best interests of the United States to maintain the informal “gentlemen’s agreement” (or the “global spoils system”) in order to compete better in those positions that are deemed strategic, investing more resources toward planning and campaigning for top jobs. For other non-strategic positions, the United States can “lead from behind,” working with its allies and partner countries to assist in filling the remaining top jobs. Within the United Nations, the United States must shift its current mindset and strive to work in broader coalitions. This requires building relationships in the UN Secretariat, from the staff level to the diplomatic level.

Within each IFI, the United States needs to establish strong partnerships and alliances to compensate for its minority shareholding. Unlike bilateral and unilateral arrangements, organizations such as the IFIs require a high degree of alliance building in order to guarantee influence. The United States may not have full control over the voting within the IFIs, but it can use its influence elsewhere to establish powerful alliances and incentivize cooperation from other large stakeholders (potentially coordinated through the interagency review process). For example, within the ADB, a strong U.S.-Japan alliance has been a continued benefit and has allowed the United States to project greater influence than would otherwise be possible.
In the United Nations, the United States must recognize its special relationship with Japan, India, and Australia (“the Quad”) and work with these nations early and frequently. These partners have been calling for more U.S. support; this could take the form of longer-term strategic engagements that reflect a more comprehensive mindset around shared values within the multilateral system. The Multilateral Policy Council should lead a “coalition” strategy with like-minded representation that relies on a shared calendar of upcoming elections of importance. Far from “vote trading,” this brings awareness and information sharing to the process of fielding strong candidates. This strategy might also allow allied countries to share the burden of heavier requests and to better distribute responsibilities for candidate advocacy.

In addition to action at the top of the pyramid, the United States should also engage the G7 to create an ally supported JPO program which would aggregate resources for recruitment, training, and placement. Together, the G7 might advocate within the UN system to ensure that JPOs are placed at advantageous positions in technical bodies.

5. Find, Attract, and Place Qualified and Diverse U.S. Personnel at All Levels

The U.S. government should build a cadre of professionals who seek and value multilateralism within the Foreign Service and civil service. It should also create incentives and opportunities to attract young U.S. talent into multilaterals.

Currently, multilateral experience is neither rewarded nor well-articulated within the foreign or civil service sectors of the federal government. There is little incentive or support for those who wish to create a career working across types of organizations. Within the Foreign Service, this requires changing the incentive structure so that multilateral experience is factored into career advancement. Within the federal government, this requires developing new partnerships with multilaterals so that qualified staff have a chance to serve outside their technical agency. By thinking ahead on this effort, the U.S. government can recruit a workforce ready to serve U.S. government interests in a variety of new capacities and locales.

• Change the incentive structure at the State Department. Within the State Department, the FSO career could be designed to have specialties, with multilateralism as a cross-cutting competency across the five “cones” of career specialization. Similar to the two tracks students undertake in college, an FSO could have a “major” (e.g., in a specific geographical region) and a “minor” (e.g., in multilaterals). In the words of an expert, “multilateral diplomacy should be a key component of U.S. diplomacy.”

One way to encourage this kind of career progression would be to change the FSO compensation structure. Promotions could be contingent on having served in a multilateral setting—for example, appointments at IO, the UN system, or U.S. missions to these organizations (such as those in New York or Geneva). As an additional incentive, a bonus could be offered to those officers that serve at multilaterals.

At the same time, FSO careers could be made more flexible, allowing officers to transition from agency jobs to a multilateral setting more easily. Currently, there is a program for civil
servants at the Department of State—a “separation transfer” managed by IO—that could be applied to FSOs. Under this program, civil servants at the State Department can take a job at an international organization for up to five years. The program has two key components that create flexibility: reemployment rights (granted by the supervisor) and pension rights (i.e., the years of employment at a multilateral count toward seniority for the federal pension). Such a program could be expanded to FSOs and allow multiple transitions during a diplomatic career. To ensure this is successful, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) should create new courses on multilateral structures to integrate into regular FSO training programs.

Another aspect to consider would be making it easier for U.S. executive directors and ambassadors at the IFIs to supersede Senate confirmation. Confirmations can be a lengthy process, and it can impact U.S. effectiveness at organizations if the positions are left vacant for an extended period. The U.S. government may consider changing the rank of U.S. executive directors at the IFIs to be named as “envoys” to expedite the confirmation process.

- **Develop new career opportunities for civil servants.** Within the civil service of technical agencies, there could be a formal and coordinated process for qualified federal workers to pursue multilateral positions. One way would be to make use of EO 11552 by designing a secondment program to encourage competent U.S. civil servants to work at these institutions. A staff secondment program would be a win-win strategy for the institutions and the United States. Multilateral organizations would benefit from the skills and knowledge of qualified U.S. technical staff. In turn, U.S. staff would gain exposure to the workings of these organizations and be able to return with institutional knowledge. Each bilateral U.S. government agency could work with a corresponding multilateral to devise an assignment of key technical positions for two or three years. For example, the CDC or HHS could craft an agreement with the WHO, and the USDA could do similarly with the FAO or WFP. Likewise, the Treasury Department could second staff to the IFIs. Such secondment programs would be managed by the technical agency that holds the relationship with the multilateral, but in order to ensure a harmonized approach, it would be coordinated with the Multilateral Policy Council.

- **Widen the talent pool to young, diverse Americans.** Lastly, the United States needs to pay closer attention to its staffing footprint in multilaterals and encourage younger and a more diverse range of qualified Americans to pursue careers in international organizations. There are several approaches that can be pursued to increase U.S. representation in international organizations:
  - **Ensure more frequent reporting of U.S. representation and the accompanying efforts undertaken to increase representation in multilaterals.** A more accurate and complete collection of data on overall U.S. representation across international organizations is needed, “so that the USG can better target its efforts, particularly in light of the many challenges that Americans experience while employed in the UN and other institutions.” In this regard, Congress could direct the GAO to conduct regular reports on U.S. representation across the United Nations and IFIs as well as the efforts that agencies such as the Departments of Treasury and State have undertaken to improve U.S. representation. Since 1960, the GAO has undertaken 102 assessments on multilaterals, covering diverse topics. However, reporting on U.S. representation has been sporadic. The last assessment for the United Nations dates back to 2010; for the IFIs, it dates back to 1980. Reporting can be expanded...
to include other multilaterals that the United States supports, especially the standard-setting bodies and should also encompass the IFIs.

- **Attract young talent.** The best way to recruit qualified staff and retain them is to start nurturing their interests early on, during their undergraduate and graduate studies. The United States has premier programs that are feeder schools for the UN system. However, young professionals in the United States need to be better informed about careers in multilaterals. Young professionals also need assistance in navigating cumbersome application processes and finding new opportunities to serve in a multilateral setting. For the purpose of identifying, recruiting, and placing staff at multinationals, the U.S. government should engage deliberately with the private sector, and a new public-private partnership (PPP) should be established to improve staff-level representation (Box 9). This dedicated PPP organization should also support education and outreach campaigns, advertise positions in a centralized way, and provide consulting services for young Americans interested in international careers.

**Box 9: An Example of a Current PPP**

The State Department’s Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs currently partners with Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE) to place qualified Americans in key slots in the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). There are a number of pre-identified positions held for U.S. candidates, who then compete (both through PAE and later the OSCE) for those positions. PAE manages the recruitment process, supports the logistics of getting the staff member in place, and works to backfill once the staff member has moved on. PAE recruits U.S. civilians, specifically technical experts in democracy and security issues, as opposed to only U.S. federal employees.

The PPP could carry out educational and outreach activities in college campuses on what is required for an international career, including technical requirements, language skills, and mobility. It could publish information guides and host recurring information sessions and webinars on multilaterals. Moreover, it could centralize the advertisement of jobs from multiple sites into one single platform. For example, it could partner with the www.unjobnet.org website, which posts jobs at international organizations through a centralized and dedicated online platform. Social media and online media outlets should also be targeted. In this regard, organizations such as the Better World Campaign and the UN Foundation could play a more prominent role in making multilateral careers more appealing and easier to pursue for young and talented Americans.

Setting up this venture would require significant investments in terms of funding and staffing. A portion of the funding could come from the U.S. government and U.S. universities. The PPP could also finance its activities by charging fees from consulting services. These services could include resume building, interview coaching, and facilitating the job application processes. It could also have a dedicated program to help candidates prepare for highly competitive programs, such as the young professionals programs in the United Nations and IFIs.
• **Invest in sponsored internships, fellowships, and JPO programs.** Internships and short-term consulting opportunities are oftentimes the starting point for careers in multilaterals. These short-term experiences can open the door to longer-term employment. Currently, Chinese nationals comprise the largest number of interns at the United Nations, with 652 out of a total 4,596 interns. The United States comes second with 510 interns.¹¹⁸ Through the China Scholarship Council, China has partnered with nine UN agencies to place nationals through programs such as JPOs, internships, and visiting experts.¹¹⁹ China has sponsored 590 nationals under this partnership since 2015.¹²⁰

In the UN system, however, most internships are unpaid experiences, so this acts as a deterrent, especially for those individuals that have few economic resources or are not located in the headquarters of these institutions. The U.S. government could devise more targeted programs for sponsored internships or fellowships. It could sponsor a select number of UN internships, providing a stipend and targeting qualified minorities, to increase the diversity within these institutions in the long run. As an example, the EBRD is in the process of designing an internship program targeted to African American students in historically black colleges and universities that could potentially be replicated across all IFIs.¹²¹ An effort led by the U.S. executive director’s office at the EBRD, the program is supported by cost-sharing by Clark Atlanta University. Additionally, existing scholarship programs for diversity—such as the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program and Payne Fellowship—might offer “experiences” working in the United Nations as part of their candidate service requirements or might recruit among those interested in multilateral diplomacy.

In terms of entry-level positions, donor countries have used programs to recruit junior professionals to gain better experience in the multilateral system. In the case of the JPO program in the United Nations, these are positions funded by specific countries targeting young professionals that hold an advanced university degree and have a few years of professional experience.¹²² Out of the 602 JPOs currently in the UN system, the United States has only 12—compared to smaller countries such as Germany with 143, France with 37, and Japan with 60. China, which has been aggressive about financing and supporting the hiring of numerous JPOs, sponsors 45 at the moment.¹²³

Although they are not permanent positions, “graduates” of JPO programs have come back to serve in senior positions at the United Nations. The Japanese JPO program, for instance, has been effective in not only placing Japanese nationals within the United Nations but also for setting them on a trajectory for senior leadership positions. Izumi Nakamitsu, the current undersecretary general and high representative for disarmament affairs, began her distinguished career at the United Nations as a JPO. Expanding the JPO program would be a high-value initiative for the United States to pursue by establishing a viable pipeline. Since JPOs are paid by their countries, Congress would have to authorize more funding in the foreign aid budget for this to materialize. For example, a line item could be dedicated to funding JPOs in the UN system; currently, the money that funds the JPOs originates from “pariah funding,” or those funds that are returned to the U.S. government as a “refund” on programs that operate in prohibited spaces, such as Iran.
Conclusion

The importance of multilateral development institutions in today’s world cannot be understated. In a time of global strategic competition, multilateral institutions are significant conduits of human development, standard setters, providers of global public goods, and diplomatic forums for peace and security issues. With a strong, U.S.-led multilateral system, malign actors can be held accountable for their activities, conflicts can be thwarted, and potential belligerents can be deterred. Goals that are bigger than any one country can be set and achieved, reverberating across borders—in the process improving living standards, addressing economic, gender, and racial inequities, and emphasizing good governance and rule of law. U.S. leadership is necessary to ensure that these goals and interests remain paramount in these organizations.

U.S. competitors are employing the multilateral system for their own gains, taking advantage of the relatively fragmented U.S. government interagency strategy. The United States, on the other hand, has relied on its de facto leadership role and influence level in these institutions, even though that reputation has waned over the past 30 years and does not carry the weight that it once did. China is openly exploiting the multilateral system to advocate for its own authoritarian, pro-surveillance norms that could shape important privacy, internet, technology, and human rights standards throughout the system in the coming years. A weakened U.S. engagement in the multilateral system will further empower China.
This is an opportune time for the United States to sustain universal liberal values toward global progress and to rebuild U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions in order to advance those values and interests. The complex global challenges of today require joint action from the United States and its allies. The United States should work alongside friendly and allied nations to further their shared objectives and to influence multilateral development institutions through leadership, staffing, and politics. The United States cannot and should not be a dominant voice for all issues and in all organizations. But at the same time, it cannot remain on the sidelines.

The purpose of improving influence and representation within the “commanding heights” of the multilateral system is simple: these systems must remain amenable to both U.S. and wider global interests, such as transparency, equity, and liberal values. By ensuring a strategic and pragmatic approach to engaging with all levels of the multilateral system, the United States can continue to shape the norms of the institutions responsible for global governance. This will allow the United States to maintain its leadership within the international system while also finding entry points for improving the experience of all U.S. nationals who work in or benefit from the system.

While there will be trade-offs and necessary prioritizations, maintaining U.S. leadership in the system and the ability to improve the quality of life for U.S. nationals and other citizens of the world will be a continually worthwhile endeavor.
Appendix 1: Methodology

To conduct this research, the CSIS research team employed expert interviews and desk research as the primary methods of analysis. By multilateral development institutions, the report refers to a set of international government organizations that provide developing countries with foreign aid, knowledge and data, technical advice, and financing in order to foster development and subsequently grow a more prosperous world. The study’s definition of “multilaterals” is broad, since it includes both political institutions and humanitarian agencies, but it excludes organizations and alliances that focus on defense (e.g., NATO). The research team classified these multilaterals into three broad categories: international financial institutions (e.g., the IMF, World Bank Group, and RDBs), standard-setting bodies (e.g., the OECD, WTO, WIPO, and ILO), and the UN system.

The project’s main research question was: How can the United States rebuild its leadership role in multilateral development institutions in a time of strategic competition? The authors broke this question down into further detail as follows:

1. What are the most important multilateral development institutions for the United States in terms of national security priorities? Which ones should the United States prioritize in the near future?

The CSIS research team examined key operational indicators that are entry points of U.S. influence in these institutions, such as:

- National security implications;
• Institutions with upcoming leadership changes;
• Amount of U.S. funding provided;
• Shareholder voting power; and
• Organizational effectiveness.

2. What are the concrete approaches and actions which the United States can take to exercise effective leadership and influence in these institutions?

The CSIS research team examined the following themes:
• Selection process of high-level positions within these organizations;
• Competency and skills required for these positions;
• Current U.S. selection process;
• Selection processes, approaches, and budgets used by other countries; and
• Selection process for mid-level positions within these organizations.

To conduct this research, the authors took a three-part approach. First, they undertook significant desk research, gathering facts and information present in the existing literature around the topic, including National Security Strategies, OECD Development Cooperation profiles, and MOPAN assessments, among others. They constructed an Excel dashboard of 200 multilateral development institutions, presenting different tiers of strategic importance based on a set of specific indicators and filters.

Second, the research team hosted two virtual, private, off-the-record roundtable discussions with 40 experts that provided inputs to the two related topics outlined above.

Third, through a series of off-the-record interviews, the research team sought inputs from 45 experts on the topic, such as individuals in leadership positions within multilateral organizations, staff at the U.S. executive director offices at the IFIs, and representatives of NGOs and allied governments (Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Australia). The team also interviewed officials in relevant divisions of the U.S. government, such as the Treasury and State Departments, NSC, and USUN.
## Appendix 2: Data

Table A1: UN System-Assessed and Voluntary Contributions ($ millions), Top 10 Government Donors, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Donor</th>
<th>Assessed Contributions</th>
<th>Voluntary Contributions (Unearmarked)</th>
<th>Voluntary Contributions (Earmarked)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of UN Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3,310</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>7,451</td>
<td>11,077</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>2,769</td>
<td>3,957</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>2,323</td>
<td>3,473</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>2,377</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,520</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1,698</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>1,569</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,569</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,216</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,241</strong></td>
<td><strong>41,026</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A1: U.S. Personnel vs. Chinese Personnel

![Bar chart showing the comparison of U.S. Personnel and Chinese Personnel across various UN organizations.]


### Table A2: Upcoming Leadership Changes (2022/2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Selection Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank for International Settlements (BIS)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Board of Directors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Food Programme (WFP)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Labor Organization (ILO)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Governing Body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombo Plan Council</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Telecommunications Union (ITU)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by ITU Plenipotentiary Conference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Customs Organization (WCO)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by WCO Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD - International Energy Agency (IEA)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Governing Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Conference of the Parties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Method of Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Investment Bank (IIB)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Board of Governors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Bureau for the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Administrative Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Health Organization (WAHO)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Authority of Heads of State)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Charter Conference (ECC)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Charter Conference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Appointment (by Board of Trustees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Election (by Member States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Closed Selection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by Member States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Health Organization (WHO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by Health Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by FAO Conference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Environment Facility (GEF)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by GEF Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Development Law Organization (IDLO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by Member Parties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Meteorological Organization (WMO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by World Meteorological Congress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Environment Programme (UNEP)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by UN General Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by the Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Maritime Organization (IMO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by IMO Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Grains Council (IGC)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organization for Legal Metrology (OIML)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by CIML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN University (UNU)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by Tribunal members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Secretary General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC Fund for International Development</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Election (by Ministerial Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO)</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Appointment (by Assembly)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSIS Excel Dashboard.
Figure A2: The UN System


Specialized Agencies are: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), ILO (International Labour Organization), IMF (International Monetary Fund), IMO (International Maritime Organization), ITU (International Telecommunication Union), UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), UPU (Universal Postal Union), WHO (World Health Organization), WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization) WMO (World Meteorological Organization)


About the Authors

Daniel F. Runde is senior vice president, director of the Project on Prosperity and Development, and holds the William A. Schreyer Chair in Global Analysis at CSIS. A global thought leader and change agent, his work centers on leveraging U.S. soft power and the central roles of the private sector and good governance in creating a more free and prosperous world. Mr. Runde has been recognized for influencing the debate on USAID-State Department relations, as an architect of the BUILD Act, and led the debate surrounding the role and future of the World Bank Group. Mr. Runde has also influenced thinking about U.S. economic engagement with Africa (of which he is in favor of much more) and domestic resource mobilization. Mr. Runde holds the Officer’s Cross in the Order of Isabel la Católica, a Spanish Civil Order.

Romina Bandura is a senior fellow with the Project on Prosperity and Development and the Project on U.S. Leadership in Development at CSIS. Her current research focuses on the future of work in developing countries and the United States’ economic engagement in the developing world. She has also conducted extensive research on enhancing the reach and impact of the Multilateral Development Bank system. Before joining CSIS in September 2017, she was a senior consultant at the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). She worked closely with clients to design research and manage projects that included index building, quantifying qualitative variables, policy analysis, and strategies for investment and growth. EIU flagship projects include benchmarking indices like the Global Microscope on Financial Inclusion and the Latin America and Caribbean Infrascope project. Ms. Bandura is
an economist with 20 years of experience in international development research, policy analysis, and project management. Before joining EIU, she was an economist at the International Labour Organization’s Washington office. In her previous capacity as a business manager at DAI’s Economic Growth Sector, she managed a $90 million private-sector development portfolio of projects in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. She has also served as a policy analyst for the UN Development Programme. Earlier in her career, she worked in the banking sector in Argentina. Ms. Bandura holds an MPA in international development from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government and a BA in economics from the Universidad Católica Argentina, Buenos Aires.

Kristen Cordell is a senior policy adviser on security and development policy for the Policy, Planning and Learning Bureau at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), where she works on the development response to Chinese foreign assistance, humanitarian coordination, and stabilization. She is currently on a one-year national security fellowship supported by the Council on Foreign Relations’ International Affairs Fellowship program. In her previous role at USAID, she supported the agency’s two largest development portfolios—Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 2016, she was detailed to the U.S. government’s participation in the World Humanitarian Summit and the presidents’ meeting on migration at the UN General Assembly. Prior to USAID, Ms. Cordell supported UN development programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Lebanon. She has authored several reports on the role of inclusive post-conflict reconstruction and has been a guest contributor for New America and the Guardian. In 2012, she was seconded to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna, Austria. She is a co-chair of the Term Member Advisory Committee at the Council on Foreign Relations and a fellow of the Truman National Security Project.

Shannon McKeown is a research assistant with the Project on Prosperity and Development (PPD) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where she coordinates events and supports the projects’ research agenda. Prior to becoming a program coordinator in June 2019, she was an intern at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Center for American Progress. Her research interests include human rights, gender equality, security policy, and education in lower-to-middle income countries. She holds a bachelor’s degree in international affairs from the George Washington University.
Endnotes


5 Of assessed contributions (which funds operations) and voluntary contributions (which funds programs).


7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.


14 Data compiled in the CSIS Excel Dashboard.


17 Igoe, “Pompeo claims ‘world will benefit’.”


21 Faulkner, “Personnel is policy.”

22 Data compiled in the CSIS Excel Dashboard.


authorized programs. Payment of such contributions is a treaty obligation accepted by a country when it becomes a member. Voluntary contributions, on the other hand, finance special funds, programs, offices, and other entities of the UN system. No member is required to provide such funding; governments may decide what, if any, contributions will be made during each budget cycle. Depending on donor preferences, contributions might be used to fund the core budgets of these bodies or may be earmarked for specific activities.


34 Nelson, Multilateral Development Banks.


42 “International Programs: Congressional Justification for Appropriations FY 2021,” U.S. Department of the


58 Runde, “Defending the ‘Global Spoils System.”


61 Ibid., 29.


64 Author interview with expert, 2021.


70 Runde, “Defending the ‘Global Spoils System.”

Runde, “Defending the ‘Global Spoils System’.”


Runde, Competing and Winning in the Multilateral System.

Hideaki Ryugen and Hiroyuki Akiyama, “China Leads the Way on Global Standards for 5G and Beyond,” Financial Times, August 4, 2020, https://www.ft.com/content/858d81bd-c42c-404d-b30d-0be32a097f1c.


Including new talent from the Department of Justice to support the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, for example.


The Future of U.S. Leadership in Multilateral Development Institutions: A Playbook for the Next 10 Years

Jeffery Feltman, “Restoring (Some) Impartiality to UN Senior Appointments,” Cairo Review of Global Affairs, October 29, 2020, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/restoring-some-impartiality-to-un-senior-appointments/. Some high-profile cases include China’s leadership in the FAO, which has resulted in the country taking on a major chunk of the organizational infrastructure.

Author interview with expert, 2021.


Melito et al., State Department Needs to Enhance Reporting Requirements.

Staff in these institutions still have to pay part of the self-employment tax.


Author interview with expert, 2021.


Author interview with expert, 2021.


Runde, Competing and Winning in the Multilateral System.
“Remarks by President Biden on America’s Place in the World,” White House.


“We have already announced funding increases to IDA and UNICEF. We stand ready to boost significantly our funding to GAVI, GFATM, the Private Infrastructure Development Group (the PIDG) and the Asian Development Fund. Exact amounts will be agreed in the following months as we negotiate and agree their commitments to results and reform. We are placing four organisations in ‘special measures’ and demanding they improve their performance as a matter of absolute urgency. These organisations are UNESCO, FAO, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Organisation for Migration. In four other cases the contribution to UK development objectives is so poor that DFID will withdraw our core funding altogether. These four are UN-HABITAT, ILO, UNIDO and UNISDR.” Department for International Development, *Multilateral Aid Review Taking Forward the Findings of the UK Multilateral Aid Review* (London: Department for International Development, March 2011), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224993/MAR-taking-forward.pdf.


Author interview with expert, 2021.

Data compiled by CSIS.


Author interview with expert, 2021.


“CSC’s Practice in JPO & Internship Selection,” China Scholarship Council.