



# The United Nations Association of the United States of America Columbus Chapter



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## The U.N.: Beginning of a Revival?

*Vincent Kavaloski, Ph.D.  
UNA-USA Dane County, WI, Chapter*

With a new Secretary-General, a new moderate American ambassador and a host of innovative initiatives -- including several on global warming -- modest hope is once again arising for the 62-year-old organization. Will it be able to shake off the cloud of corruption, bureaucratic ineffectiveness and political bickering that has bedeviled it especially for the past few years?



The recently confirmed U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Zalmay Khalilzad, replaces the bombastic and belligerent John Bolton, who in only two years had managed to alienate -- if not enrage -- most of the other 191 member states. Khalilzad, a former U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan and Iraq, is considered intelligent, capable and politically moderate. He advocates paying our U.N. dues and supporting the ongoing process of administrative reform begun by Kofi Annan, especially increasing financial transparency and accountability through the new U.N. Office of Internal Oversight and also, for the first time, an outside auditor. In his recent Senate confirmation

hearings Khalilzad acknowledged the U.N. as “the most successful collective security body in history” and pledged to re-build bridges with other member states.

The new U.N. Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, recently returned from a six-nation Middle East tour where he vigorously (but diplomatically) exerted his immense moral authority -- the only real power he possesses -- in trying to resolve complex crises in Darfur, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, and Iran.

According to the U.N. Charter, the Secretary-General is not the CEO but rather the Chief Administrative Officer and hence unable to either make or enforce policy. He serves at the pleasure of the member states, or as Kofi Annan often said: “I have 192 bosses”. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says that his number one priority is administrative and fiscal reform, thus continuing Annan’s “quiet revolution.”

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