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Divesting NYPD resources from the United Nations General Assembly and ending street closures in Manhattan and Queens during UN Week

Draft Proposal by Theo Chino, January 4th, 2026

Every year in September, the United Nations convenes its General Assembly in New York City under a security model that operates in near-total isolation from the city itself.

This approach generates extraordinary overtime costs for the New York Police Department, placing an excessive and recurring burden on the New York City budget and on Upper East Side residents who bear the brunt of the disruption.

The situation has reached an unacceptable level.

In 2026, conditions deteriorated to the point that the President of France was physically blocked by the motorcade of the President of the United States—an incident that symbolized the dysfunction and absurdity of the current system.¹

Since the terrorist attacks of 2001, security measures surrounding the General Assembly have expanded continuously without proportional accountability. As a result, street closures now affect not only Manhattan but the entire metropolitan region, with cascading consequences for working- and low-income families as far away as Pennsylvania.

For residents of the affected neighborhoods, this annual event has become a suspension of normal civic life: blocked streets, disrupted public transportation, restricted access to homes and businesses, and a level of police presence that extends far beyond ordinary crime prevention.

In 2022, the Social Democrats of America formally reached out to António Guterres, as well as to the President of the Socialist International, Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou, and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, seeking dialogue on how to bridge the widening gap between local residents and this international institution. No response was ever acknowledged.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000010416097/french-president-stopped-trump-motorcade.html>

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We are therefore calling on our Mélenchonist and Progressive International comrade, Mayor Zohran Mamdani, to initiate a public discussion with the community boards most directly impacted by the United Nations General Assembly.

This discussion must address two immediate issues: first, ending New York City's practice of providing and funding NYPD services beyond regular public safety patrols for foreign delegations; and second, refusing the routine closure of public streets to accommodate diplomatic motorcades.

If the United Nations is unable—or unwilling—to conduct its General Assembly without imposing extraordinary costs and disruptions on New York City residents, a viable alternative already exists. A sister United Nations compound has been built in Geneva, and the organization is fully capable of holding its 2026 General Assembly there.

New York City should not be required to indefinitely subsidize an international institution at the expense of its own residents.



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His Excellency António Guterres,

United Nations Secretary
405 E 42nd St
New York, NY 10017
United Nations

Your Excellency,

I want to request that you invite the 2,000 members of the New York City County Committee at the United Nations to present the upcoming 2024 General Assembly agenda.

These 2,000 low-level Democrats and Republicans represent every neighborhood in the city. To them, the only thing the United Nations represent is inconvenience.

The United Nations have yet to reach out to them to explain why it is essential for them to be inconvenienced. These 2,000 New Yorkers have a great deal of influence on the national policies of the United States.

As the leader of the Social Democrats of America, I think it's essential for your institution to reach out to them and present your agenda.

In solidarity,
Hasta la victoria, ¡siempre!

Theo Chino

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