

The US Withdraws from UNESCO, Due to “Continuing anti-Israel Bias at UNESCO”

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US domestic law takes precedence over international law, just as it was recently decreed is the case for Russia as well, so no matter how controversial it may be that Washington is pulling out of the globalist body for naked political reasons, it nevertheless has the sovereign right to do so in pursuing its interests as it sees fit.

The Mainstream and even Alternative Medias are in uproar over the US’ decision to withdraw from UNESCO, with the former slamming it for being a violation of globalist principles while the latter is opposed to its stated pro-“Israel” reason in boycotting an organization that supports Palestine. [According](#) to State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert:

“On October 12, 2017, the Department of State notified UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova of the US decision to withdraw from the organization ... This decision was not taken lightly, and reflects US concerns with mounting arrears at UNESCO, the need for fundamental reform in the organization, and continuing anti-Israel bias at UNESCO.”

From this terse statement, it’s clear that the US is also doing this in order to pressure the UN to submit to Trump’s “[Lead From Behind’ reforms](#)” in having other members do more of the “heavy lifting” (in this case, simply pay more), as well as of course hoping that this move will compel the body to reconsider its support of Palestine. As the clichéd saying goes, “money talks”, and by suspending [approximately 22%](#) of the organization’s funding, Washington wants to force its Security Council and G20 counterparts to either pay much more for the indefinite future in compensating for this sudden budgetary deficit, or to submit to its political will in order to “turn the tap back on”.

Trump, being the consummate businessman and author of “The Art of the Deal”, has emphasized on numerous occasions that he will no longer tolerate the US’ partners, and especially the UN for that matter, refusing to “pay their fair share” in whatever multilateral organization it may be and depending on the US to “foot the bill” for them instead. With this in mind, it makes sense why he wants to hit UNESCO where it hurts by withdrawing 22% of its funding, just like what happened in 2011 in protest against the group admitting Palestine as a full member. At that time, [Reuters](#) reminded their audience that:

“U.S. legislation prohibits funding to any UN agency that grants full membership to any group that does not have “internationally recognized attributes” of statehood.”

This is significant to keep in mind because it forms the “legal” basis for the US’ actions. The US considers that its domestic law takes precedence over international law, and while this principle was neglected and sometimes outright violated by previous administrations, Trump is trying to make sure that it’s abided by as a means of promoting the US’ interests. To this end, although it may be unethical and immoral for the largest funder of an international organization to withdraw nearly a quarter of the said group’s annual budget as a power play for advancing its own agenda, the fact remains that this is the reality in which the decision is playing out, and the US does indeed desire to shape UNECO according to its own designs by virtue of the country being the body’s largest funder.

No value judgement is being made about this observation, but it deserves to be mentioned that the US isn’t the only country which places its domestic law above international one. President Putin signed legislation at the end of December 2015 decreeing that the Russian Constitution is more important than whatever international agreements Moscow had previously entered into in response to the “European Court of Human Rights’” [politicized decision](#) to “award” former jailed billionaire and energy tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky’s Yukos over \$2 billion. As [RT](#) reported at the time:

“President Vladimir Putin has signed into law the bill allowing the Constitutional Court to overrule the decisions of international courts if such decisions contradict the principle of supremacy of the Russian Constitution.

The new act published on the government website on Tuesday reads that the Constitutional Court will look into every decision of any intergovernmental body based on an international treaty and find if it matches the Russian Constitution and the rights and freedoms guaranteed by it. Upon such consideration the Constitutional Court can allow the decision to be executed in Russia, in full or in part, or ban its execution – also in full or in part. The ban would automatically cancel any national acts allowing the execution of the unconstitutional ruling.

The law has been developed and drafted in order to fulfill the mid-July ruling of the Russian Constitutional Court reading that the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) must be individually approved and only carried out if they do not contradict basic Russian law.

In late 2013, the Russian Constitutional Court ruled that it had the right, but not an obligation to decide on the execution of contradictory ECHR decisions in Russia. The July decision expanded the supremacy of the Constitutional Court over foreign judiciaries and international treaties, and established the priority of the Constitution in general.”

This pro-sovereignty move proves that Russia also pursues its own national self-interests at the perceived expense of its supposed international “commitments”, which is similar in a sense to the US’ move to withdraw from UNESCO for related reasons. Moscow, however, wasn’t in a position to essentially blackmail the ECHR when it refused to abide by its decision, unlike Washington’s power in being able to do just that to UNESCO in crippling the organization. In this sense, Russia’s actions didn’t have any tangible “collateral damage” in the state-to-state international sense, while the US’ deliberately seeks to inflict such consequences in order to pressure its counterparts to do its bidding.

This is a crucial distinction to make, as it means that Russia’s execution of pro-sovereignty decisions in the framework of international bodies isn’t aimed against any of its state peers

and carries with it no pecuniary punishment against them, whereas the US' employment of the same appears in this case to be an exercise in international blackmail. Nevertheless, both Russia and the US have the sovereign right to formulate policy based on the presumption that national law takes precedence of its international counterpart, with neither action being objectively "good" or "bad", but being simply an expression of the Neorealist paradigm of International Relations in proceeding from the basis that the only true motivator of state behavior is self-interest, however it's subjectively perceived and ultimately plays out.

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