

RELEASE IN FULL

Palau's Voting Coincidences in the 64th United Nations General Assembly (2009)

Each year, the United States publishes "Voting Practices in the United Nations." This publication reviews the voting practices of the Member States for the prior calendar year and evaluates the responsiveness of those governments to US policy on issues at the United Nations. Emphasis is placed on issues of special importance.

The most recent version, "Voting Practices in the United Nations 2009" was published by the Department of State on 31 March 2010.¹ The report shows that Palau's percentage of voting coincidence with the United States in 2009 on 12 important issues was 100%. This is the highest voting coincidence of any country and indicates that Palau is the best friend of the United States at the United Nations.

Part I. Voting coincidence with the US in the 64th UNGA

For the 64th UN General Assembly in 2009, the United States identified 12 resolutions as important votes, based primarily on their consistency with the State Department's Strategic Goals.

The table that follows summarizes the performance of five countries, which have highest voting coincidence with the United States at the 64th UNGA on the 12 important votes. Palau is the only country in the world to cast its votes exactly the same way as the United States for all the twelve resolutions.

	Twelve important votes	Note
Palau	12	AGREE 12, DISAGREE 0, ABSTAIN 0, ABSENT 0.
Israel	11	AGREE 11, DISAGREE 0, ABSTAIN 1, ABSENT 0. * ABSTAINED ON TOWARD THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
FSM	10	AGREE 10, DISAGREE 0, ABSTAIN 1, ABSENT 1. * ABSTAINED ON U.S. EMBARGO OF CUBA
RMI	11	AGREE 11, DISAGREE 0, ABSTAIN 1, ABSENT 0. * ABSTAINED ON U.S. EMBARGO OF CUBA; ABSENT ON TOTAL ELIMINATION OF RACISM
Nauru	8	AGREE 8, DISAGREE 1, ABSTAIN 0, ABSENT 3. * DISAGREED ON EMBARGO OF CUBA

Part II. Important votes: the resolutions are listed in clusters**A. Cuban Embargo Resolution**

A/RES/64/6 U.S. Embargo of Cuba 187-3(US)-2

Text: Called on all states to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures such as the "Helms-Burton Act," whose extraterritorial provisions affect the sovereignty of other states, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation; urged states to repeal such laws.

Position: For eighteenth consecutive year, the General Assembly adopted this resolution to call for an end to the United States economic and trade embargo against Cuba. When the General Assembly overwhelmingly condemned the American trade embargo, Palau was the only country, besides Israel, to stand with the United States. The Marshall Islands and FSM abstained.

¹ Voting Practices in the United Nations 2009, Report to Congress Submitted Pursuant to Public Laws 101-246 and 108-447, March 31, 2010, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/c36010.htm>

B. Israel Related Resolution

In this cluster, the resolutions are introduced and supported by Arab countries to promulgate a one-sided view of Israeli-Palestinian issues. The United States actively lobbies to vote against those resolutions, which are bias against Israel. Palau does not believe those resolutions contribute constructively to efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thus, voted against them with the United States.

A/RES/64/16 Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People 109-8(US)-55

Text: Requested the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people to continue to exert all efforts to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and to support the Middle East peace process.

A/RES/64/17 Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat 112-9(US)-54

Text: Requested the Secretary General to continue to provide the Division with the necessary resources and to ensure that it continued to carry out its program of work as detailed in other relevant earlier resolutions.

A/RES/64/91 Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 92-9(US)-74

Text: Demanded that Israel, the occupying power, cooperate with the Special Committee in implementing its mandate; expressed grave concern about the critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and requested the Special Committee to continue to investigate Israeli practices.

A/RES/64/148 Global Efforts for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Comprehensive Implementation of and Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Program of Action 128-13(US)-43

Text: Called on states to formulate plans of action to combat racism and related intolerance; and decided that the Durban Review Conference's outcome should be undertaken in the same framework as the outcome of the 2001 World Conference.

C. Nuclear Weapon and Non-proliferation

The new U.S. administration plans to seek U.S. Senate ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Therefore, the United States continue its effort toward the ultimate aim of a world without nuclear weapons in supporting these two resolutions to strengthen the global nonproliferation regime. These resolutions gained extensive supports from the Member States.

A/RES/64/47 Renewed Determinations Towards the total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons 171(US)-2-8

Text: Called for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile materials cut-off treaty at the 2010 session of the Conference on Disarmament and its early conclusion; called upon all

states to redouble efforts to prevent and curb the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

A/RES/64/69 Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty 175(US)-1-3

Text: Stressed that a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constituted a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation; stressed the vital importance and urgency of signature and ratification, without delay and without conditions, to achieve the earliest entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

D. Human Rights Country-specific resolution

In the 64th General Assembly, there are three countries to be single out, namely DPRK, Iran and Myanmar, for its grave violation of human rights. These votes are mostly very contentious due to its sensitivity. The United States lobbied actively for these resolutions. It is the U.S. belief that countries should take responsibility of their wrongdoing, and the resolutions keep world pressure and attention on the regimes that disregards the basic rights and universal freedom of people.

A/RES/64/175 Situation of Human Rights in the DPRK 99(US)-20-63

Text: Expressed serious concern over the human rights situation in the D.P.R.K., the desire to hold the government accountable for its human rights violations, and to improve the situation of human rights in the D.P.R.K.

A/RES/64/176 Situation of Human Rights in Iran 74(US)-49-59

Text: Expressed deep concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran and the government's failure to uphold its obligations under its own constitution and international human rights law.

A/RES/64/238 Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar 86(US)-23-39

Text: Strongly condemned the systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Myanmar (Burma); urged the government to release all prisoners of conscience without delay or conditions and with full restoration of their political rights, and to ensure necessary steps be taken toward a free, fair, transparent and inclusive electoral process.

E. Other

A/RES/64/156 Combating Defamation of Religions 80-61(US)-42

Text: Emphasized that freedom of expression carries special responsibilities, and might be subject to limitations as provided by law, and which are necessary for respecting the rights of others and protecting national security or public order, health or morals.

Position: Over the past decade, members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference have been working through the UN system to introduce the problematic concept of "defamation of religions." It is not agreeable that prohibiting speech is the way to promote tolerance. Therefore, United States, with Palau's supports, has consistently voted against this resolution. The United States advocates its position extensively through out the years. As a result, the number in support of the resolution is decreasing steadily every year.

A/RES/64/197 Agricultural Technology for Development 146(US)-1-32

Text: Called on member states and relevant UN organizations to make greater efforts to develop and disseminate sustainable agricultural technologies and to support national efforts to make use of local expertise and agricultural technologies.

Position: This resolution is the effort of the Israeli engagement in the United Nations and it has received extensive support from the Member States. However, in spite of the apolitical nature of the text, Somalia still called for a vote on the resolution for the Arab or Islamic countries to either abstain or to be absent on the vote.