



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0728-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 728

Resolution to support the United Nations Development Corporation's expansion plans to refurbish the Secretariat and expand its overall headquarters, which involve a small city park in Turtle Bay.

By Council Members Barron, Reed and Seabrook

Whereas, The United Nations is an essential institution in the world for promoting international peace and security and the rule of law. Its charter is the legal cornerstone of international relations; and

Whereas, The original plans for the U.N. headquarters buildings were designed by an international team of architects chaired by New Yorker Wallis Harrison with Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer. The cornerstone was laid in 1949, the Secretariat building was completed in 1951, and the General Assembly and Conference Building in 1952; and

WHEREAS, IN 1968, IN RESPONSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS' EXPANDING NEEDS, THE STATE OF NEW YORK PASSED LEGISLATION CREATING THE UNITED NATIONS' DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (UNDC) WITH A MANDATE TO DEVELOP MORE OFFICE, HOUSING, HOTEL SPACE, AND OTHER ESSENTIAL FACILITIES CLOSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS; AND

Whereas, Since its inception, UNDC has developed and operated approximately 1.8 million square feet of space in the U.N.'s vicinity; and

Whereas, One and Two U.N. Plaza are both 40-story office towers that contain more than 700,000 square feet of office space for U.N. agencies and missions and a luxury hotel facility. Three U.N. Plaza contains

the worldwide headquarters of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and apartments housing U.N. and mission staff; and

Whereas, The development of One, Two, and Three U.N. Plaza has also served as a catalyst for the commercial and residential revitalization of the surrounding area, creating housing and employment opportunities for New Yorkers; and

Whereas, In 1998-99, a team of architects and engineers thoroughly examined the condition of the U.N. Headquarters complex and concluded that, despite the high quality of the original construction, many building elements have deteriorated due to age, or do not meet current standards of safety or energy efficiency; and

Whereas, The direct economic benefits to the City of New York generated by the presence of the United Nations are as follows: U.N. Headquarters, agencies, missions and consulates directly employ about 16, 400 people and the extended U.N system employs roughly 31,000 people. This makes it one of the twenty largest employers in our City; and

Whereas, The United Nations is one of our City's main tourist attractions; since 1952, approximately 40 million visitors have taken guided tours of U.N. Headquarters' buildings, and the U.N. is in the process of building a Visitor's Center that will generate even greater tourist traffic; and

Whereas, The United Nations contributes over a billion dollars to the economic life of New York City, and its expansion, as well as the upgrading of the Secretariat, will undoubtedly be of great benefit to our City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York support the United Nations Development Corporation's expansion plans to refurbish the Secretariat and expand its overall headquarters, which involve a small city park in Turtle Bay.

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