



THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

June 21, 2018

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
United States Senate
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders,

Thank you for your letter regarding the report released on June 1st by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights. I welcome the opportunity to respond to your concerns regarding the critically important issue of Americans' economic well-being.

Poverty is an issue the Trump Administration takes very seriously. While there are many dimensions to poverty, the Administration's overarching view is that the best way to help people get out of poverty is to help them get a job. There is dignity in work, and being able to provide for one's self and family is empowering, both economically and spiritually. The United States is currently at its lowest unemployment rate in decades, and the Administration will continue to pursue the pro-economic growth policies that are helping so many people find work.

As Governor of the State of South Carolina, I faced this issue directly. We achieved record breaking job creation, moved thousands of people from welfare to work, and succeeded in changing the way we addressed public education, particularly by moving unprecedented resources into schools located in our state's most economically challenged areas.

Therefore, I am deeply disappointed that the Special Rapporteur used his platform to make misleading and politically motivated statements about American domestic policy issues. Regrettably, his report is an all too common example of the misplaced priorities and poor use of funds proven to be rampant throughout the UN system. The report categorically misstated the progress the United States has made in addressing poverty and purposely used misleading facts and figures in its biased reporting. There is no question that poverty in America remains a serious concern, but it does no one any good to inaccurately describe its prevalence or its causes.

It is patently ridiculous for the United Nations to examine poverty in America. In our country, the President, Members of Congress, Governors, Mayors, and City Council members actively engage on poverty issues every day. Compare that to the many countries around the world whose governments knowingly abuse human rights and cause pain and suffering of their own people. For example, according to the World Bank, in Burundi, the gross national income per person is \$280. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, over 60% of the entire population lives in

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grinding poverty. Rather than using his voice to shine a light on those vulnerable populations, and so many others, the Special Rapporteur wasted the UN's time and resources, deflecting attention from the world's worst human rights abusers and focusing instead on the wealthiest and freest country in the world.

Be advised that the Special Rapporteur is an independent individual whose reports are not endorsed by the United Nations. He was not following a UN assignment and made the conscious choice to visit the United States rather than visiting the poorest countries in the world. Many of the report's recommendations touch on matters of great interest in the domestic American political process, such as tax rates, criminal justice reform, and government-run health care—all issues that American citizens appropriately consider when casting ballots in our great democracy, none of which we will look to the United Nations for guidance.

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns. The Administration will continue to address poverty in numerous ways, most especially by continuing the remarkable improvements taking place in the U.S. economy. If you have any additional questions, please contact my senior policy advisor Maggie Dougherty at DoughertyMR@state.gov. God bless.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nikki R. Haley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nikki" being more prominent and stylized than the last name "Haley".

Nikki R. Haley