



**UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
San Francisco Chapter

Proclamation of the United Nations Association, USA, San Francisco Condemning the Storming of the United States Capitol Building on January 6, 2021

We the Members of the United Nations Association, USA, San Francisco, unequivocally condemn the January 6, 2021 storming of the U.S. Capitol Building as an attack on the foundational principles of our democracy.

On September 18, 1793 the cornerstone of the United States Capitol Building was laid by George Washington in an act that symbolically completed the link connecting the ideals of the U.S. Constitution, the essential leadership needed to steer the country toward these ideals, and the concrete institutions required to implement the ideals.

On January 6, 2021, these essential links were profoundly tested when the U.S. Capitol Building was stormed by thousands of rioters consisting of secessionists, insurrectionists, and every-day Americans unwilling to accept the results of a fundamental principle of the democratic process - an open and fair election. By the raw power of denial and malicious intent, the attack ultimately resulted in six deaths, scores of injuries, endangerment to the members of Congress, and the looting of the U.S. Capitol Building the likes of which have not been witnessed since the War of 1812.

The world was watching. The general response to the attack ranged from horror and condemnation on the part of our allies to euphoria on the part of our adversaries. The UN Secretary General António Guterres' statement expressing "sadness over the violence" was unusually muted, denoting the inherently difficult relationship between the United Nations and the United States, one of its founders, its host country, and its largest donor. The UN must do better.

The U.S. response to the siege could be nothing short of an immediate and overwhelming re-affirmation of democratic ideals. In defiance to the insurrection, the United States Congress reconvened just hours after the storming to complete the work they began that morning: the certification of the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election. On January 20th, two weeks after the storming of the Capitol, and on its very steps, the Inauguration of Joseph R. Biden took place without incident.

The power and speed of these actions are forever part of this nation's historical record and embody the resiliency of our democratic constitutional government. Within five hours of taking the oath of office President Biden signed 17 executive orders, two of which clearly voiced resurging U.S. support for the United Nations: the reinstatement of ties with the World Health Organization and U.S. re-entry into the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The United States survived an existential crisis on January 6, 2021. The Capitol storming is etched in history as a lesson for the world that the foundational links of even a major democracy such as the United States can be fragile and must never be taken for granted. Whether or not the United States can sustain its democratic ideals and institutions carries profound implications for the world at large. As Secretary General Guterres said recently at an event honoring the United Nation's 75th Anniversary, the UN "is only as strong as its members' commitment to its ideals." It's incumbent upon all of us to not only be vigilant about forces intent on undermining our democracy, but to be the force that supports the integrity of the democratic process across all levels of government, and among all nations of the world.

Approved by the unanimous vote of the Board of Directors of the United Nations Association, USA, San Francisco, on Tuesday, February 2, 2021.