

# DAILY NEWS

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HEADLINE: UN'S CASH WORTH THE UN'S TRASH

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MAYBE you don't like what the United Nations stands for.

Perhaps you think its members abuse their diplomatic immunity - or tie up the city whenever the General Assembly is in town.

But whatever you think, there apparently is little dispute that the UN brings money to the city.

A lot of it.

The UN and its 35,000 diplomats, staffers and their families pump \$2.5 billion into the city economy, said city Economic Development Corp. spokeswoman Janel Patterson.

At that price, let 'em say what they want, Mayor Bloomberg said on his weekly WABC radio show yesterday.

"This is a good business for us," he said. "What is said in the UN, I find most of it to be despicable. But whether they say it here or in Bonn, Germany, doesn't change that. Why have the Germans make all of the money off it?"

Still, when Venezuelan crackpot Hugo Chavez calls President Bush "the Devil," and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad lobs verbal bombs at Israel and the U.S. from a UN podium, as they did earlier this week, some say it is time for the corruption-plagued agency to find new digs.

"We could rent that space out in a heartbeat," said state Sen. Martin Golden (R-Brooklyn), who has been a frequent critic of the UN. "I have no problem hosting the UN, but we shouldn't be putting out the red carpet for people to beat up on us - no matter how much business it accounts for."

But Mitchell Moss, professor of urban policy and planning at NYU's Wagner school, said Bloomberg has a good point.

"The UN is a vital part of New York City's economic and cultural life," Moss said. "Most of the UN business is done in the restaurants of the city, and the principal activity of people at the UN are talking and eating - which brings in money."

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