



Security Council briefing on the situation in the DPRK (Human Rights) 12 June 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank High Commissioner Turk and Special Rapporteur Salmon for their insightful briefings. We are particularly thankful to Mr Kim for sharing his moving personal experiences, which are invaluable for our understanding of the situation.

Malta welcomes the holding of this important meeting. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the landmark report of the Commission of Inquiry on human rights in the DPRK. The report recommended that Security Council take action with regards to the human rights situation in DPRK.

These findings are all the more relevant today. Over the past years, the human rights situation in the DPRK has continued to deteriorate. The regime is responsible for a wide range of systematic and gross human rights violations, many of which may amount to crimes against humanity.



These systematic human rights violations are essential components of a totalitarian system that seeks to dominate every aspect of people's lives to achieve political goals.

Furthermore, many of these violations have serious implications with regards to international peace and security. Through forced labour and the diversion of resources, the regime has rapidly advanced its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile program.

Malta strongly condemns all human rights violations perpetrated by the DPRK's regime and we deplore the continued prioritization of military spending over the real needs of the people.

President,



As Special Rapporteur Salmon noted in her report, restrictions on freedom of expression and other fundamental rights have been further restricted by Pyongyang. We also share her concerns that escapees from the DPRK were forcibly repatriated and have subsequently been subject to torture and other inhumane treatment. In this regard, we echo her call on all member states to adhere to the principle of non-refoulement.

Moreover, in his report, the Secretary-General highlighted that the DPRK increasingly relies, and I quote, “on forced mobilization of men and women, without remuneration” end quote. The use of forced labour, including abroad through overseas workers, is aimed at meeting State-set economic and military targets. In this connection, the Committee on the Rights of the Child also expressed serious concerns about extensive practices of child labour. This is unacceptable and Malta strongly condemns it.



Most worryingly, the DPRK's regime continues to blatantly violate its people's right to adequate food. The UN and other humanitarian agencies estimate that over 40% of the population in DPRK is food insecure and in need of assistance. Yet, the regime continues to divert its scarce resources towards its unlawful and dangerous WMD program. With every ballistic missile test conducted, the regime actively chooses to deprive its people of essential nutrition. This is unconscionable, it must stop.

We call on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile program and allow the re-entry of international humanitarian staff into the country, including the UN Resident Coordinator. Only then will they be able to carry out a rapid needs assessment and provide the people of North Korea with much needed humanitarian assistance.

President,



It is high time to move beyond awareness and pursue accountability for these violations. In this regard, we fully align with the Special Rapporteur's recommendations. We echo her call to support initiatives by victims and civil society organizations and to adopt legislation that enables the exercise of universal jurisdiction.

We must promote a principled and sustained engagement with the DPRK on human rights and the rule of law, since these are the essential foundation for any political solution. In this regard, we encourage all Member State to support and actively engage with OHCHR.

To conclude, addressing gross human rights violations in the DPRK is not only a question of justice. It is also one of security. We can no longer allow systematic violations that contribute to the advancement of the regime's unlawful WMD program. This violates multiple Security Council resolutions, undermines the non-proliferation regime, and threatens peace and stability in the Peninsula and beyond. We call on this Council to shoulder its responsibilities and take collective action.



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I thank you.