

### UN Resolution: Refer North Korea to Criminal Court Associated Press 9 October 2014

The European Union and Japan are encouraging the U.N. Security Council to follow the recommendations of a groundbreaking inquiry into North Korea's human rights and refer the country's situation to the International Criminal Court.

Their draft resolution for the U.N. General Assembly's human rights committee, obtained Thursday by The Associated Press, also presses for targeted sanctions after the U.N. commission of inquiry report earlier this year was harshly critical of the impoverished, reclusive regime.

(...)

The commission of inquiry's report sharply increased international pressure on North Korea's authoritarian government over its human rights situation, and a North Korean briefing this week at the U.N. on human rights was seen as an effort to get ahead of the expected General Assembly resolution.

The EU-Japan draft resolution is non-binding and also needs approval by the 193-member General Assembly. Even if the more powerful Security Council takes up the recommendation to refer North Korea's situation to the ICC, the effort is expected to fail because China, North Korea's most powerful ally, would likely use its veto power as a permanent council member.

The draft resolution urges the Security Council to consider the scope "for effective targeted sanctions against those who appear to be most responsible for crimes against humanity." It doesn't include names, but the commission of inquiry warned leader Kim Jong Un in a letter saying he may be held accountable for orchestrating widespread crimes against civilians including systematic executions, torture, rape and mass starvation.

The EU and Japan have teamed up in recent years on General Assembly resolutions on North Korea's human rights, but the call to consider an ICC referral is new.

The U.N. commission of inquiry's 372-page report is a wide-ranging indictment of policies including political prison camps with up to 120,000 people and state-sponsored abductions of North Korean, Japanese and other nationals. "We dare say that the case of human rights in the DPRK exceeds all others in duration, intensity and horror," commission head Michael Kirby told the Security Council, using North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. (...)

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