



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



PERMANENT MISSION
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to the United Nations



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Permanent Mission of Switzerland
to the United Nations

Statement on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland
at the Meeting of the UN Security Council in Arria format

“Briefing of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK”
New York, 17 April 2014

Mr./Madame President,

I have the honor to speak also on behalf of my colleagues from Liechtenstein and Switzerland. We are grateful for the opportunity to offer our views on the report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, put together under the able leadership of Mr. Kirby. We welcome the convening of the members of the Council to listen to the presentation of Mr. Kirby, after the Human Rights Council has taken action on the Commission’s report, and hope that this meeting will result in formal action by the Council in the near future. We also wish to applaud the leadership of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the establishment of the Commission and the presentation of its findings.

Mr./Madame President,

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry illustrates that the situation in the DPRK is one of the worst human rights crisis in the world. The violations of human rights in the country are horrific, committed in a systematic way and seem to amount to crimes against humanity in many cases. We certainly agree that the Human Rights Council is primarily competent to act with respect to this situation as it has established the Commission and will continue monitoring the situation. But we also believe that the Security Council has an important responsibility. The commission of crimes against humanity at the scale documented in the DPRK poses both a threat to regional stability and underlines the need to protect the population of the DPRK, which the Commission has concluded we have failed to do so far. The regime in the DPRK has so far refused any form of cooperation with the Human Rights Council, thematic or country-specific. And its participation in the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review has amounted to a similar refusal to engage and essentially made a review of the situation in the country impossible. There is obviously no willingness on the part of the regime to bring about improvements or in fact to acknowledge the existence of the problem.

Mr./Madame President,

The Commission’s report, through its detailed, well-founded and well-documented findings and recommendations is a unique call for action on a situation that has been going on for decades, without any sign of response from the regime in Pyongyang. We will continue to support efforts in the General Assembly and in the Human Rights Council, notably during the upcoming Universal Periodic Review of the DPRK that is due to take place on 1st May, to improve the situation in the DPRK. But on one key recommendation it is only this Council that can act: The need to refer this situation to the International Criminal Court. Our countries are strong supporters of the ICC and of the view that it is precisely the most appalling situations where the most serious crimes under international law are committed that warrant the attention of the Court. This Council has twice made use of its competence to refer a situation to the International Criminal Court. The situation in the DPRK warrants the same attention and offers the opportunity to illustrate the global reach of the Court whose jurisdiction has been accepted by almost two-thirds of the membership of this organization. The evidence of crimes against humanity in the DPRK is overwhelming and does not allow us to look away.

I thank you, Mr./Madame President

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