

UN General Assembly Committee Votes to Send North Korea to ICC



United Nations, November 19 (RHC) — A United Nations General Assembly committee Tuesday voted in favor of a draft resolution referring North Korea to the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity as well as “targeted sanctions” for rampant human rights abuses.

The resolution was adopted with 111 UN member states in favor. 19 countries, including Russia, Belarus, China, Cuba and Syria, voted against it and 55 countries abstained.

The document condemns what it calls the “long-standing and ongoing systematic, widespread, and gross violations of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.”

The move is merely a recommendation. The General Assembly does not have the power to refer the North Korean government or its leader Kim Jong Un to the ICC.

The non-binding measure will come up for a vote by the General Assembly in December. The authority to refer a country to the ICC lies only with the UN Security Council, a 15-member body charged with maintaining global security. The five permanent members at the core of the Security Council, including China and Russia, wield veto powers.

Opponents of the resolution -- including China, Russia and Cuba -- said the measure was politically manipulated and would set a precedent for other nations to be targeted in the future.

Furthermore, North Korea, known officially as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), flatly denied the commission's findings and issued a counter-report, declaring that North Koreans "feel proud of the world's most advantageous human rights system."

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