Beat: Politics

North Korea threatens fourth nuclear test after UN vote

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USPA News - North Korea on Wednesday threatened to carry out a fourth nuclear test after the UN`s human rights committee urged the United Nations Security Council to refer the human rights situation in North Korea to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Choe Myong Nam, North Korea`s delegate to the United Nations, categorically rejected Tuesday`s resolution, describing it as a plot against the reclusive state.

He rejected a damning UN report that led to Tuesday`s vote as groundless political accusations, saying the document was based on the testimonies of defectors who, he claimed, had committed crimes before abandoning their families. "We shall strongly respond without the slightest tolerance to any attempts on the part of hostile forces to abuse the human rights issue as a tool for overthrowing the social system of our country," Choe said. "The outrageous and unreasonable human rights campaign staged by the U.S. and its followers in their attempts to eliminate the state and social system of the DPRK is compelling us not to refrain any further from conducting a nuclear test." North Korea conducted its last nuclear test in February 2013, leading to a new round of UN sanctions that aimed to impede the country`s ability to further develop nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as its proliferation activities. Two other nuclear tests took place in 2006 and 2009. Choe also criticized the resolution`s co-sponsors, the European Union and Japan, for being "subservient" to the United States, and said Tuesday`s vote "closes the door" to future human rights dialogue. "We do not feel any necessity to appeal to anyone to come and see the reality of our country, where politics and social systems are all for the people and guarantee their human rights," he said. The UN report earlier this year documented wide-ranging and ongoing crimes against humanity in North Korea, including extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions, other sexual violence, persecution on political, religious, racial and gender grounds, the forcible transfer of populations, the enforced disappearance of persons, and prolonged starvation. "There is an almost complete denial of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as well as of the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, information and association," the UN report said, adding that propaganda is used by state-controlled media to manufacture absolute obedience to Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un and to incite nationalistic hatred towards other countries. In response, North Korea released its own assessment in September, calling itself "the world`s most advantageous human rights system" and claiming that all its citizens have access to free education, free medical care and free housing. The 53,000-word rebuttal claimed North Korean citizens lead happy lives, with all of them enjoying genuine freedom and rights. It was not the first time that North Korea responded to accusations about its human rights situation, which is widely accepted to be one of the worst in the world. North Korea released its own assessment of the human rights situation in the United States earlier this year, calling the United States "a living hell."

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