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Finland's EU Presidency

UNITED NATIONS
UNGA 61
3rd Committee
SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
KOREA

Re-Introduction Statement on behalf of the European Union

Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

New York, 16 November 2006

(check against delivery)

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the European Union, Japan and all co-sponsors, I have the honour to introduce under agenda item 67(c) the draft resolution entitled "Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" contained in document A/61/C.3/L.37.

In addition to the cosponsors listed in L.37, this resolution has also been co-sponsored by Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Honduras, Iceland, Monaco, Nicaragua, Palau, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

Mr. Chairperson, the European Union again attempted to initiate a dialogue with the DPRK authorities regarding this resolution, as we would have welcomed the opportunity for constructive dialogue on it. We sincerely regret that our overtures were rejected. In the absence of any willingness to engage on the part of the DPRK, we ourselves have therefore endeavoured to present in this text as balanced a picture as possible about the situation of human rights in the DPRK. Thus, we have highlighted the developments welcomed by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, Vitit Muntarbhorn, in his latest report, in particular the DPRK's submission of reports to certain treaty bodies. We sincerely hope that that engagement will continue and intensify.

However, as the Special Rapporteur himself observes in his report, in the DPRK "there is still a huge gap between formal recognition of human rights and substantive implementation of human rights". You will therefore find that this draft draws attention once again to the continued reports of the systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights perpetuated by the absence of due process and rule of law.

The draft resolution also focuses on the Government of the DPRK's continued refusal to even recognise the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, far less to cooperate with him or act on any of his recommendations, or on any recommendations of the General Assembly or the Commission on Human Rights. We also regret DPRK's continued failure to engage in any technical cooperation activities with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and her Office, despite her efforts to engage in dialogue in that regard.

So long as the government continues to refuse the offers of advice, assistance and capacity-building from the UN system in the field of human rights, we in the international community have little choice but to continue drawing attention to the deplorable situation. It is only by this means that the plight of the people of the DPRK can be heard.

We urge member states to demonstrate their solidarity to the people of DPRK by supporting this resolution once again.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.