



Is this the stupidest thing the UN has ever done?

## Description

**NORTH KOREA:** Last week, North Korea assumed control as the chair of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, the U.N. forum for negotiating multilateral disarmament efforts across the globe. It's the latest in a string of questionable moves the U.N. has taken in putting nation officials in contradictory positions.

North Korea officially took over the U.N. disarmament conference on Monday, according to NK News. The U.N. move quickly drew criticism from nongovernmental organizations that noted North Korea's major nuclear weapons development efforts in recent months.

In March, North Korea conducted its first full intercontinental ballistic missile test in over four years. North Korea also conducted a ballistic missile test just days before President Joe Biden visited neighboring South Korea.

"North Korea has just taken over as chair of the Conference on Disarmament here at the United Nations in Geneva," tweeted United Nations Watch executive director Hillel Neuer. "This is not a joke. When they preside at tomorrow's meeting, our coalition of 40 UN-accredited NGOs is calling on all democracies to walk out."

Having the North Korean regime of Kim Jong-un preside over global nuclear weapons disarmament will be like putting a serial rapist in charge of a women's shelter.

Our appeal for countries to walk out, signed by 40 civil society groups worldwide: <https://t.co/NQeSiyfcOh> /2

— Hillel Neuer (@HillelNeuer) [May 30, 2022](#)

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will be like putting a serial rapist in charge of a women's shelter," Neuer added.

Neuer also circulated an appeal for countries to walk out of the U.N. disarmament conference. "Our appeal for countries to walk out, signed by 40 civil society groups worldwide."

"This is a country that threatens to attack other UN member states with missiles, and that commits atrocities against its own people," Neuer added in the statement. "Torture and starvation are routine in North Korean political prison camps where an estimated 100,000 people are held in what is one of the world's most dire human-rights situations."

According to U.N. Watch, North Korea will lead the disarmament conference from May 30 until June 24. While North Korea will only control the disarmament forum for about four weeks, it will have presiding authority over multiple arms control discussions, including the discussion topics of "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" and "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters."

The U.N. has faced criticism for other controversial picks to lead major initiatives.

In April 2020, the U.N. appointed Jiang Duan, the minister at the Chinese Mission in Geneva, to represent the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on the U.N. Human Rights Council's Consultative Group. Some groups have criticized the U.N. for giving China expanded powers on human rights panels despite carrying out human rights abuses against their minority Uyghur population.

In May 2020, the U.N. also named Chinese leader Xi Jinping's wife Peng Liyuan as a World Health Organization Goodwill Ambassador. Peng had been photographed in a Chinese military uniform singing for Chinese troops at Tiananmen Square in 1989 after they violently dispersed protestors in an event known as the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

The U.N. also named Chinese television anchor James Chau as a goodwill ambassador. Neuer noted Chau had broadcasted the Chinese government's forced confession of captured British national, Peter Humphrey, who was made to confess to stealing the data of Chinese citizens.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley has also criticized the U.N. Human Rights Council for including "murderers, dictators and thieves."

Featured image: Kim Jong Un overseeing North Korea's new tactical guided weapon system test in April 2022. (Korean Central News Agency/Released)

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