



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

The UN system is rapidly self-destructing



The UN system is rapidly turning into a useless debating club whose membership rules have long since been so broken that few remember them.

The latest bizarre event occurred at the 76th World Health Assembly, at a plenary session of the World Health Organisation (WHO) on May 25. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was elected as one of the 10 new members of the Executive Board.

Dr Jong Min Pak, director of the Department of External Affairs in the North Korean Ministry of Public Health, will be Pyongyang's representative in the principal executive body of the WHO for the next 3 years.

Without going into the personal competencies of Dr Pak, the important fact is that a high representative of a completely isolated, autocratic state, which systematically endangers the health of its population, and at the same time does not participate in the basic mission of the organisation of which it is a member, will participate in the main operational body of the WHO.

The main task of this body, and the WHO as a whole, is to set and enforce standards and norms for global health care management and facilitate cooperation in health crises.

A hungry well-being promoter

Satisfied with this choice, North Korea announced that it would "contribute to the noble work of the WHO and its mission for the promotion of the health and well-being of all people across the world".

Could these promises be convincing to

anyone? In what way does North Korea think it can "promote the well-being of all people across the world"?

North Korea has experienced its worst mass hunger crisis, resulting in cases of death from lack of food since the 1990s in the past year. This happened because of international isolation and a huge drought, which has not been recorded since 1981.

The weather disaster coincided with a crisis in the supply of artificial fertilisers from Russia, and the result was mass starvation, the likes of which had not been recorded in 3 decades.

Mass hunger was preceded by 2 long years of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are not sure of the consequences in North Korea because this country does not participate in the international data exchange on infectious diseases.

What we do know, is that North Korea was one of the first countries to seal its borders hermetically in early 2020, as the regime used the epidemic as an excuse to implement even tighter self-isolation.

We also know that the Pyongyang authorities announced the first case of Covid-19 in May last year, when the entire world had already emerged from the crisis. Kim Jong Un declared victory over the virus soon after, in August, and started vaccination in September.

According to a report by another UN agency, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), more than 10 million North Koreans (more than 40%) suffered from malnutrition and hunger during the Covid-19 pandemic, and every fifth child suffered from stunted growth.

Through membership in the 34-member Executive Board, a high-ranking official of

such a country will promote the "health and well-being of all people across the world" for the next 3 years.

On the other hand, far outside the WHO, is Taiwan, which, due to China's opposition, is not even allowed to be an observer in this organisation, even though it has one of the most modern health systems in the world and is a leader in the field of medical innovation.

Iran promotes human rights

Just before North Korea entered the WHO leadership, another renegade regime, also a member of the UN, which has been a global leader in brutal violation of human rights, has now been awarded a significant position in the field of "human rights".

Iran's permanent representative to the UN, Ambassador Ali Bahreini, was elected in early May as the chairman of the UN Human Rights Council 2023 Social Forum, which will be held in Geneva on November 2 and 3.

This high-level forum will be dedicated to the contribution of science, technology and innovation in promoting human rights, particularly regarding post-pandemic recovery.

Choosing Iran to lead the organisation came at the same time as the authorities in Tehran executed 3 men for participating in anti-government protests, which the government has been treating as a "war against God".

With this, Iran surpassed its own record in the execution of death sentences, which in the past year was close to 600 - more than 200 since the beginning of this year.

Most are part of the Tehran regime's clash with pro-democracy protests, which have been ongoing since last September.

Russia's precedent source for UN self-destruction

There are no formal obstacles to the election of North Korea or Iran to UN system high bodies because those 2 countries are full members of the organisation, and can use all the rights arising from membership.

But the style cannot hide the substance. The UN authority has reached its lowest historical point, where, for example, one of its highest bodies (the Human Rights Council) has been investigating mass state executions in Iran whilst at the same time appointing a representative of that member to a senior position in the area of human rights protection.

For more than a year now, the UN system has not been able to respond to this bizarre situation.

One of the 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council has been repeatedly declared guilty by the overwhelming majority of UN members for violating the Charter, disrupting world peace, and committing aggression against a sovereign member of the organisation.

Russia's seat at the UN Security Council, while trampling on the fundamental principles of that organisation for 15 months, has opened the door to all other destruction of the UN's authority.

North Korea's and Iran's influence in the UN

are just the latest examples of the self-destruction of this organisation's credibility. There will be more in the future.