**Kick North Korea Out of the U.N.**

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Calls by the United Nations Security Council to isolate North Korea haven’t stopped Kim Jong Un from launching missiles over Japan or threatening America and its allies. This week President Trump told the General Assembly that the United States is prepared “to totally destroy North Korea” in the event of an attack. If the international community is serious about isolating the Kim regime, there’s a less drastic option not yet tried: expel North Korea from the U.N.

Since the U.N.’s founding in 1945, no member state has ever been expelled. The U.N. charter does, however, provide for eviction: “A Member of the United Nations which has persistently violated the Principles in the present Charter may be expelled from the Organization by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.”

North Korea never met the U.N. membership requirements to begin with. The charter says membership is open only to “peace-loving states” that promote “respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms.” North Korea was admitted in tandem with South Korea on Sept. 17, 1991. At the time, with the Soviet Union in the process of collapse, the rationalization was that finally bringing North Korea into the U.N. fold might induce it to give up its brutal and predatory ways.

Instead, the legitimacy and perquisites conferred by U.N. membership might have helped the regime survive. Expelling North Korea now could undermine Mr. Kim domestically. His regime would lose the international respect that accompanies a U.N. seat. North Korean diplomats would be forced to give up access to lavishly appointed U.N. offices and soirees in New York, Rome and Vienna. The U.S. and its allies pay most of the tab for these amenities, while Pyongyang avails itself of opportunities for spying, money laundering and illicit procurement.

From the start North Korea was intent on causing trouble for the U.N. As early as 1993 the Security Council was expressing “concern” that Pyongyang was out of compliance with U.N. nuclear safeguards. North Korea is now in violation of nine Security Council resolutions, after developing intercontinental ballistic missiles and carrying out six nuclear tests.

As for human rights, a special U.N. Commission of Inquiry concluded in 2014 that “the gravity, scale and nature of the violations committed by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea reveal a state that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.”

A bid to toss North Korea out of the U.N. would need strong U.S. leadership, and it could fail. China and Russia could block it with their Security Council vetoes. The despot-packed General Assembly, wary of setting a precedent, could balk.

It’s still worth a try. Even failure would better illuminate the perils of relying on a U.N. that values North Korea’s company above its own charter. Success could help undercut the Kim regime, and confer a measure of badly needed redemption on the U.N. itself.