Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And again I especially

welcome Assistant Secretary Hill again before our Subcommittee

and I am certainly looking forward on hearing his comments.

As always I would like to recognize, Mr. Chairman, our senior

Ranking Member of our Committee, the gentleman from California,

Mr. Lantos, that is here with us this morning.

And especially also my colleague from the Territory of Guam,

Congresswoman Bordallo, and we are very pleased and happy that

she is here with us as a Senior Member of the House Armed Services

Committee, and turning also to a proposed resolution that she

and Congressman McCotter has proposed before our Committee

hopefully that we will have a chance to review the substance of this

proposed resolution.

Mr. Chairman, for the past few years now this Subcommittee has

been keeping a close eye on the North Korean situation. To be honest,

I am deeply troubled as I am sure with other Members of the

Committee, current intelligence estimates indicate that North

Korea could have material from maybe 6 to maybe 13 nuclear

weapons and now North Korea has announced it may be preparing

for a long range ballistic missile capability to be launched from

North Korea and potentially hit any part of the United States, and

of course in the process putting not only our allies in Korea, the

Territory of Guam, the State of Hawaii, San Francisco and Los Angeles

all at risk if in fact North Korea now has the capability of

launching an ICBM from North Korea directly to these areas where

American citizens reside.

Mr. Chairman, experts are divided about as to the motivations

behind North Korea’s recent announcement.

Our Nation has intensified its consultations with friends and allies

in the region, including members of the Six-Party Talks.

Washington has warned North Korea a launch would be a provocative

act that further isolates North Korea. Japan has warned

it will consider all options against North Korea, including sanctions

on oil and food sales.

China and South Korea have also expressed serious concerns. It

is my understanding that the United States is committed to a diplomatic

solution still. But in light of these developments, several

questions have to be raised. While a diplomatic solution is our preferred

solution, is it still possible given North Korea’s current actions

and statements? How can the United States overcome these

stalling tactics? What is the Administration’s preferred plan to

lower tensions in the region? And what are the Administration’s

plans to increase the involvement of our allies in the region?

As you had indicated earlier in your statement, Mr. Chairman,

the last, according to media reports, former Secretary of Defense,

under the Clinton Administration, Mr. Perry, has now advocated

the doctrine of preemption that we ought to go ahead now and

launch whatever capability that we have militarily to get rid of

these launching pads where North Korea may plan to launch an

ICBM missile.

Question of preemption now comes into play again. Do we have

evidence sufficient enough that this doctrine now becomes a reality

or is it still in theory? It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to realize

that it isn’t just aimed at U.S. cities in the West Coast or even to

the State of Hawaii or even the Territory of Guam.

The situation and the fact of the matter is in Seoul, Korea alone

reside some 10 million people in South Korea and with a distance

of only 30 miles from the North Korean border line. I don’t think

we have to come to Hawaii or the West Coast to see what considerable

harm, if in fact the capability that North Korea now has nuclear

weapons in its possession.

We can also look to the fact that Tokyo is only about 700 miles

with a population of some 13 million people. So if you want to talk

about maximizing the capability and the threat that North Korea

now poses not only to our strategic and our military interest is the

fact that the lives of millions of human beings are at risk if we

should do something that will provoke North Korea to conduct an

all out military response, what we may consider in our national interests,

but certainly it would be against the national interests of

our allies in this region.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to hearing from secretary

Hill and again thank you for calling this hearing and hope-

fully we will find some solutions to this very serious problem now

before us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was listening

closely to Mr. Lantos’ earlier statement about the capability or the

ability of our chief negotiator, as is Secretary Hill, to meet directly

with the North Korean counterparts. My question is and I think in

line with what Mr. Lantos has expressed concern about, while it

is good that Mr. Hill is given the assignment to meet with our

counterparts, but is there a higher directive from the Administration

telling Secretary Hill, well, meet with them but you cannot do

this, you cannot do that? I just wanted to ask Secretary Hill what

are the parameters of your ability to show flexibility in how you

can negotiate with North Korean negotiators?

My point is there, is that while we give some indication, we are

willing to negotiate on a bilateral basis but before even meeting

with them your hands are tied by a higher authority within the Administration.

And I just wanted to know from Secretary Hill if you are given

complete flexibility to negotiate on that basis or what is the sense

of meeting with the North Koreans if your hands are tied, or is

there a different policy from what we are doing as opposed to

maybe the other members of the Six-Party Talks, China, South

Korea, and Russia? I just wanted to kind of get that, solicit that

from you, Mr. Secretary. What kind of flexibility are you really

given by Secretary Rice or other members of the Administration in

reference to your ability to negotiate directly with the North Koreans?

You have indicated earlier that probably

your greatest concern in these ongoing negotiations with them has

gone on now for 3 to 4 years, is North Korea serious about this negotiation

process? If my memory serves me correctly, I think it was

North Korea who initiated the idea, we want to conduct bilateral

talks with the United States.

What was our response? We advocated the idea of

multilateralism by dragging China and South Korea and Russia

and a couple of other countries as part of our response to North Korea’s

desire to have bilateral relationships.

And I suppose North Korea’s perception in taking this initiative

on wanting to meet just with our country was the fact that we had

exercised unilateral action in our dealings with the country like

Iraq.

And this was some of the concerns also that have been expressed

by some of our policy makers. While we exercise unilateralism toward

Iraq, we have taken the policy of multilateralism toward

North Korea. And as you know, both countries are very—we have

a crisis in our hands obviously.

I strongly support the concept of a Six-Party Talks. Recently, we

have somewhat been critical of the fact that South Korea really is

bent on the idea that they want to deal with North Korea. These

are the same people. They have families there, even though politically

divided, but as you know, as a result of the Korean War, the

separation between North and South Korea is a real issue with the

Korean people whether they are from North Korea or from South

Korea. And obviously, 6 years now, this idea of multilateral negotiations,

we don’t seem to have—we have not been very successful.

And I just wanted to solicit your thoughts. You say that we are

frustrated. I suppose North Korea is probably just as frustrated

given the fact you have one country having to deal with six nations

in the negotiating process. So I am not trying to advocate a support

of North Korea, but as a negotiator, what do you do if you are the

one there and you have six other countries saying, well, we want

this and we want that? Don’t you think that North Korean leaders

are just as frustrated in the process? We initiated that process, not

North Korea.

You indicated earlier that one of the concerns

that we have expressed to North Korea is about the counterfeiting

of our currency and several other things that we are concerned

about. As I recall, when the former President, Kim Dae

Jung, was advocating strongly the sunshine policy of trying to reestablish

good relations between South Korea and North Korea irrespective

of the defenses, immediately, immediately this Administration

condemned this whole idea of being friendly with North

Korea; and we have had some very serious problems with that.

There was an article yesterday that came out of the Wall Street

Journal where now South Korea is urging us to have direct talks

with North Korea, and that, to me, is another indication that South

Korea seems to be taking a different tack in how we can best approach

and deal with North Korea. And for us not to insist that the

six-party multilateral talks was the only way to proceed, I wanted

to ask your comment, because it seems that we don’t——

I will wait for the second round, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry; I did not mean to be so long.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to make sure there is no misunderstanding on the

line of questions that I had raised and some of the statements that

I had made—I am sorry that my good friend from Indiana is not

here—but seemingly to imply or to expressly state that my position

is that of the vast majority of Members of Congress, I have never

given any indication of that whatsoever. This is just an opinion of

one Member who happens to be a Member of this Subcommittee

and no more.

I respect the views of the gentleman from Indiana. If—in his

opinion, if a vast majority of Members of Congress support the Six-

Party Talks, that is fine. I respect that. But I think for him to

imply that I am speaking on behalf of the majority of the Members

of this institution, I don’t think I have ever given such indication—

neither to imply that the Subcommittee, as well as the Full Committee,

has the view.

I am just simply raising these issues or questions that have been

troubling to me, because we have been seeming to have a yo-yo relationship

with this country for 6 years. Seemingly, we don’t seem

to find a solution to some of the problems that we have raised with

North Korea.

I—as I have indicated earlier, yes, I am sure that South Korea

has taken a very strong position in aligning itself with our given

position as members of the Six-Party Talks. But at the same time

there are indications that the South Korean leaders and the people

want very much to establish close relationships with North Korea

irrespective of the problems that we have in dealing with the nuclear

issue.

The issue of the capability of North Korea to fire a missile is

nothing new. This is not a new issue; I mean, this happened a couple

of years ago. The North Koreans fired a missile that went toward

Japan, it went even closer to Guam or close by a State like

Hawaii.

So the difference here is the fact that they seem to be making

every effort to perfect the capability of using an ICBM. We expended

$34 billion in trying to improve our own missile defense

system that has not proven very successful.

So I just wanted to express that concern.

And, please, Mr. Secretary, I wish you all the success in the efforts

that you are negotiating and your efforts to negotiate with the

North Koreans. But I—at the same time, the purpose of this hearing

is to probe and to raise some issues or questions that perhaps

you are aware of, that perhaps we are not aware of. I just wanted

to make that statement for the record.

We all know that North Korea’s economy depends entirely on its

current relationship with China. We all know that the coming of

China and Russia and the other countries to be part of the Six-

Party Talks was our initiative; it wasn’t something that the Chinese

initiated or were wanting. And, of course, they are very careful,

too, and say North Korea is an independent, sovereign nation

even though it is on a nondemocratic basis.

So I just wanted to make those observations clear for the record

and make sure that there is no misunderstanding of my position

in this issue.

With that, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Secretary, I wish you all the

best in your negotiations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think there is no question about our national

interest involved in the current negotiation and the status

of negotiating with North Korea or any other country for that matter.

But over the years it has been my observation—and I make

this as perhaps the most profound moral issue that I consider to

be of the highest importance, and that is the relationship between

North and South Korea. These are the same people, the same culture,

the same families; the same everything there is, other than

the fact of their political division.

But I really honestly believe that sometimes in the equations of

factoring in this element that we ought to encourage in all possible

ways to make sure that the people of North Korea and South Korea

find a medium or some way or somehow that these people could relate

to each, despite their political differences. And that, to me, is

probably one of the most important issues that is missing in our

efforts to try and to find a solution to the current problems of the

ICBMs or the nuclear issues or security or military forces.

I just wanted to add that for the record, Mr. Chairman. And

thank you.

I thank Secretary Hill. I sincerely hope that we could advocate

more strongly for efforts to see that the people and leaders of North

and South Korea find a solution and they would be working in a

much better economic and cultural way, that these people have

been separated for 50 years now, since we drew that 38th Parallel—

something that we don’t hardly talk about. But I would be

one to strongly advocate a greater, closer relationship between

North and South Korea because, after all, they are the same people.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.