I welcome the leadership of Tom Lantos. I look forward

to the transition. I know the two of you have worked so well

together over the few years that I have been here.

So while I take it as a positive sign that North Korea has agreed

to return to the Six-Party Talks, the fact is that the world has

failed in preventing nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula.

The world cannot afford another failure that would allow North

Korea to then proliferate its nuclear weapons and material to the

world.

While I believe that Six-Party Talks to denuclearize North Korea

should continue and every effort should be made to disarm North

Korea of its nuclear weapons, I fear that the resumption in talks

will result in what can simply be described as ‘‘deja vu all over

again.’’

It is fortunate for us that North Korea appears to have a long

way to go before developing full capacity for mass production of nuclear

weapons. It clearly does not have the level of investment and

support to acquire a mass production capacity. It is a country that

is isolated financially as well as technologically. However, North

Korea’s deficits have not prevented it from developing a fairly sophisticated

missile program. The combination of a nuclear weapons

program and missile program is an extremely disturbing scenario.

The North Korean nuclear test is another example of an international

nonproliferation regime that is not functioning well. North

Korea is the ninth country to process nuclear weapons. Two of the

most recent countries to acquire nuclear weapons, India and Pakistan,

are allies of the United States. In the case of India, we will

soon reward its nonconcurrence with the NPT with a new pact. I

believe it is long past time for the Administration and Congress to

undertake a thorough and careful review of the NPT, with the goal

of constructing a nonproliferation regime that meets the needs and

the demands of the 21st century.

So, Mr. Ambassador, we welcome your thoughts not only on the

return to the Six-Party Talks but also your thoughts on how our

Nation can work to strengthen the NPT.

Thank you; and thank you, Mr. Chairman.