I welcome yesterday’s strong statement by

the Korean Peninsula Energy Development

Organization (KEDO) on the need for North

Korea to eliminate its nuclear weapons program

and its decision to suspend further

shipment of fuel oil to North Korea beginning

in December. We are working closely

with our partners in KEDO and our friends

around the world to address this shared challenge.

North Korea has acknowledged that it is

actively pursuing a nuclear weapons program

based on enriched uranium. This program

undermines regional and international security

and the international nonproliferation regime.

North Korea is also in direct violation

of the North’s commitments under the

Agreed Framework, the Nuclear Nonproliferation

Treaty (NPT), its International

Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Agreement,

and the Joint North-South Declaration

on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea’s clear violation of its

international commitments will not be ignored.

The United States hopes for a different

future with North Korea. As I made clear

during my visit to South Korea in February,

the United States has no intention of invading

North Korea. This remains the case

today. The United States seeks friendship

with the people of North Korea.

In June 2001, we offered to pursue a comprehensive

dialog with North Korea. We developed

a bold approach under which, if the

North addressed our longstanding concerns,

the United States was prepared to take important

steps that would have significantly

improved the lives of the North Korean people.

Now that North Korea’s covert nuclear

weapons program has come to light, we are

unable to pursue this approach.

North Korea’s nuclear weapons program

is a challenge to all responsible nations. The

leaders of the Asia-Pacific region made clear

in a unanimous statement in October that

North Korea’s potential to benefit from participation

in the international community

rests upon the prompt and visible dismantlement

of this program. We are united in our

desire for a peaceful resolution of this situation.

We are also united in our resolve that

the only option for addressing this situation

is for North Korea to completely and visibly

eliminate its nuclear weapons program.