Mr. President, I rise today

to discuss recent events in North

Korea. On April 5, the North Koreans

tested a long-range Taepo Dong 2 missile,

which traveled nearly 2,000 miles

before falling into the Pacific Ocean.

This test, which the North Koreans described

as an attempt to launch a satellite

into orbit, represented an improvement

in the range of North Korea’s

missiles. In 2006, the Taepo Dong

2 only traveled 1,000 miles and did not

successfully reach a second stage, as

the most recent missile did.

U.N. Security Council Resolution

1718 prohibits the country’s use of ballistic

missile technology, and the

United Nations Security Council issued

a statement on April 13 condemning

the recent launch and calling on member

states to implement existing sanctions

against North Korea.

In response, North Korea abandoned

the six-party talks, promising to reactivate

its nuclear program and never to

return to the six-party negotiating

table.

Less than 2 weeks later, North Korea

conducted a nuclear test. Between the

Taepo Dong 2 test and the nuclear test,

North Korea also launched at least five

shorter range missiles. Intelligence reports

also indicate another long-range

test is in the offing for later this

month or early July.

So far, world response to this latest

illicit behavior has been one dimensional,

with leaders around the globe

issuing condemnations of varying

strength. President Obama issued a

clear condemnation of North Korea’s

action, stating:

Secretary Clinton echoed the President’s

remarks and emphasized, as the

President did in his April speech in

Prague that—and I am quoting—

The

question is, it is unclear what consequences

the administration has in

mind. And Susan Rice, our Ambassador

to the United Nations, has been reluctant

to commit U.S. support for the inclusion

of sanctions in the U.N. resolutions

currently being drafted.

Despite North Korea’s detonation of

a nuclear device and test of long-range

missiles designed to threaten us, the

relationship between the United States

and North Korea has not substantially

changed. There are, however, several

things that the United States could do

to back up its condemnation of North

Korea’s reckless actions. Thankfully,

we have a number of options available

to us, and we are not faced with the

‘‘shoot first, ask questions later’’ approach

that former Secretary of Defense

William Perry advocated in a 2006

Washington Post editorial, when he argued

that the United States had no

other option than to destroy North Korea’s

missiles on their launching pads.

First, the United States could return

North Korea to the state sponsor of

terrorism list. North Korea was removed

from this list when it agreed to

a series of measures related to the disablement

of its plutonium production

at the Yongbyon reactor. Now that

North Korea has renounced that agreement

and restarted its nuclear program,

there is no reason it should not

return to that list.

President Obama indicated his support

for this type of strategy on the

campaign trail, saying:

Second, the United States could reimpose

financial sanctions on highlevel

North Korean officials and banks

affiliated with the North Korean Government.

In March 2007, the U.S. Treasury

ordered U.S. companies and financial

institutions to terminate their relationships

with Banco Delta Asia over

alleged links between the bank and the

Government of North Korea and froze

certain funds of high-ranking North

Korean officials.

Third, the United States could expand

defense and nonproliferation initiatives.

President Clinton’s Secretary

of Defense William Cohen recently argued

in the Washington Times for reversing

President Obama’s deep cuts to

missile defense programs. I agree with

Secretary Cohen that the President’s

$1.4 billion of cuts do not send the right

signals to those who seek to threaten

us, especially those who tout ballistic

missiles as the chief element of their

threats.

President Obama, in direct support of

U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1695

and 1718, could also expand interdiction

and intelligence cooperation under the

Proliferation Security Initiative with

our new partner, South Korea.

As the President said in Prague:

These commonsense steps would send

a clear message to the North Koreans

and their partners in proliferation that

the United States is serious when it repeatedly

refers to consequences and is

willing to employ all measures and its

full leverage in order to influence

North Korea and avoid conflict.

Of course, the United States should

work with the international community

to enlist its support for increasing

pressure on the North Koreans, and the

administration has signaled its support

for a multilateral approach through its

focus on working through the United

Nations. But this approach is already

limited by North Korea’s history of disregarding

U.N. action and by continued

Russian and Chinese waffling. I am not

convinced new U.N. resolutions would

be treated any differently by North

Korea than the ones it has already ignored.

Its record has led some to question

whether a regime so willing to

wreak famine and destruction on its

own people is not beyond the traditional

application of ‘‘carrot and

stick’’ diplomacy.

Moreover, our effort to work with

other nations does not excuse us from

the responsibility to act ourselves. If

Russia or China will not sanction

North Korea, is that any argument

that the United States should not? Of

course not. We can offer nations attractive

terms for their support, such

as help in dealing with increased flow

of North Korean refugees, trade incentives,

or enhanced military-to-military

cooperation, such as revoking the misguided

Obey amendment and allowing

Japan to purchase an export variant of

the F–22 fighter. However, if other nations

conclude that holding North

Korea accountable is not in their interest,

then we must not let that prevent

us from doing what is best in our interest.

The gravity of events in North Korea

is only increased by the similar disagreement

between the international

community and Iran on the subject of

its nuclear program. If strong words

are followed by weak and ineffective

action toward North Korea, why should

Iran expect different treatment? Conversely,

if we display resolve and fortitude

in confronting a belligerent

North Korea that uses nuclear explosions

and ballistic missiles as foreign

policy tools, we send a powerful message

to the rest of the world of our sincere

commitment to nonproliferation

and regional stability. This is doubly

important considering the well-known

cooperation between North Korea and

Iran on a variety of illicit programs.

While some debate the proper U.S. response,

I believe one thing is certain:

Past negotiations have not been successful.

North Korea has not been an

honest negotiator, preferring to use,

instead, ‘‘missile diplomacy’’ to spark

international panic and extract a concession—

typically fuel or grain shipments—

from a worried international

community. This process, in various

permutations, happened in 1993, 1994,

1998, 2006, 2007, and it may repeat itself

in 2009.

For those who would not repeat the

blunders of the past, North Korea’s actions

have forced an unwelcome choice

on the world: either North Korea is a

threat and we must take actions across

all fronts to isolate the regime and defend

our Nation and our allies against

its considerable capabilities or these

actions are the benign outbursts of a

misunderstood regime.

The President has clearly said that

North Korea poses a threat to world

peace and security. It is now a question

of matching action to rhetoric.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a

quorum.