Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much for being here.

I just want to underscore the point that Senator Wicker made at

the beginning of this hearing about the two journalists, and I

understand the limitations of this hearing.

I think most of us believe this is just another example of the

gross human rights violations by North Korea in taking human

pawns to use in some way for negotiations with the United States

in regards to their other issues. This is something that we just

need to continue to raise, to point out how outrageous that type of

action is.

Now, North Korea’s human rights record is deplorable generally.

The State Department’s 2008 Human Rights Report documents a

laundry list of the regime’s oppressive practices. I have the opportunity

to chair the Helsinki Commission and we deal on a regular

basis with human rights. One of our points is how we can use those

reports in a more effective way to try to help the people of these

repressive regimes.

I just want you to perhaps share with us what we can do to try

to advance human rights in North Korea. I know we have a long

list, but I hope part of it is to try to improve the government’s functioning

as it relates to basic rights of the people of North Korea.

My question was more general than just the two

journalists. I certainly want you to do everything you can to secure

their releases and I think most of us have expressed our views on

it.

But it goes beyond just these two journalists. I mean, the human

rights record of North Korea is just outrageous; one of the worst

countries in the world.

Yes.

Let me raise one more issue in my time and

that is, obviously, the risk of North Korea becoming more sophisticated

in nuclear weapons and testing to try to deliver that type of

a nuclear weapon. This is a major concern.

But it’s also the transfer of that technology or weapons to terrorist

organizations or to nonstate actors that have to be a major

concern.

Now, I heard you, in response to Senator Kerry’s question, talk

about potential sanctions that would block the export of weapons.

I just really want to get a sense from you as to how effective we

can be to make sure that that type of technology is not exported

to terrorist organizations or nonstate actors.

Well, I certainly agree with that. If they have

the capacity, the proliferation issue is going to be there, and we

know that. The best way to deal with that is the stated policy of

the peninsula being without nuclear weapons.

So I fully agree with you. I just wanted to underscore the point.

It’s not only the direct threat of North Korea having nuclear weapons

capacity but what it could be as a supplier to other regions and

other organizations, including terrorist groups.

We know that there’s already been some smoking guns here, and

we just need to understand the risk factors and need to take the

appropriate actions. I think proceeding through the United Nations

Security Council makes a great deal of sense, and working with our

partners and trying to get more effective help from the major countries

in the region, including China, is our best chance to secure

an effective policy to accomplish our goals of removing this threat.