

NORTH KOREA: ONGOING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AN ERA OF CHANGE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED AND TWELTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C.

The Commission met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m., in Room 340, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Frank R. Wolf [cochairman of the Commission] presiding.

Mr. WOLF: The hearing will come to order. I want to thank everyone for being here, particularly two of our witnesses who have traveled great distances to testify. I also want to specifically recognize Suzanne Scholte for her tireless efforts and dedication to the cause of the North Korean people year after year. For years and years and years, the people of North Korea have been repressed under the totalitarian rule of Kim Jong Il. Following his death at the end of last year, his son, Kim Jong Un, took reins of power. Despite this transition, a majority of North Korean citizens still live in poverty, and many others remain trapped in horrific prison camps as the oppressive regime continues to maintain an extensive network of Soviet style gulags across the country.

Since 2001, the State Department has designated North Korea as a country of particular concern, a designation reserved for the worst violators of religious freedom and human rights in the world. Religious freedom violations are just one of the regime's many human rights abuses. Arguably North Korea is the darkest place on the earth. Families are torn apart, future generations brutally punished for the crimes of their forefathers through starvation and gulag. Just last week, I met with Dr. Oh, a prominent North Korean defector who longs to be reunited with his two daughters who remain today in North Korea, their whereabouts unknown.

While these realities paint a bleak picture of life in North Korea, we continue to hope for a day when the people of North Korea will be able to enjoy the freedoms that we as Americans enjoy. Unfortunately, neither this administration or the Bush administration have elevated human rights in U.S. foreign policy, notably North Korea.

I was particularly disappointed that requests to provide a State

Department witness for this hearing for something as simple as a written statement went unfulfilled. Scheduling conflicts aside, I think the Department had an obligation. And so we make this clear, I think neither the Bush administration certainly in the close, nor this administration has elevated the issue of human rights and religious freedom in North Korea. I think most of the emphasis has been with regard to the nuclear issue.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses, especially those courageous individuals who can provide firsthand accounts of life in North Korea. May their testimony compel us to act. I hope and pray that in my lifetime we will see a day when the Korean peninsula is free of gulags and oppression and that when that day comes, America will be on the right side of history.

Before I recognize Mr. McGovern, my good friend who cares about these issues more than just about anybody else in the Congress, let me ask the witnesses to provide us, too, with some constructive solution as to what can be done. I know they are going to spend a lot of time saying how bad the situation is, and as you know, Ms. Scholte, we have met with a number of defectors, we met with a gentleman the other day. We know now, we have read the reports, and I have read Blaine Harden's book, which is a very powerful book, but we would like to see what ideas can we honestly do in a constructive way that really can alleviate, to deal with the problem. Maybe it is to put together a quiet diplomacy of experts and groups who are dealing now in North Korea with regard to -- sort of make an entree to this regime to see really.

So I would hope we don't only talk about how bad it is, because having read the book and having read all the literature that I can and having spoken with all the people who have defected, many that were brought by, we now know, I guess what I would like to see us come out with is something constructive and positive which could honestly be done that would change the dynamics and change the situation in North Korea.

[The Statement of Rep. Wolf Follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE FRANK R. WOLF, A REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

I would like to thank everyone for being here today, particularly two of our witnesses who have traveled great distances to testify.

I would also like to specifically recognize Suzanne Scholte for her tireless efforts and dedication to the cause of the North Korean people year after year.

For years the people of North Korea have been repressed under the totalitarian rule of Kim Jong-Il. Following his death at the end of last year, his son Kim Jong-Un took the reins of power.

Despite this transition, a majority of North Korean citizens still live in poverty and many others remain trapped in horrific prison camps as the oppressive regime continues to maintain an extensive network of Soviet style gulags across the country.

Since 2001 the State Department has designated North Korea as a Country of Particular Concern, a designation reserved for the worst violators of religious freedom in the world.

Religious freedom violations are just one of the regime's many human rights abuses.

Arguably, North Korea is the darkest place on the earth: Families torn apart, future generations brutally punished for the "crimes" of their forefathers through starvation and gulags.

Just last week I met with Dr. Oh, a prominent North Korean defector, who longs to be reunited with his two daughters who remain in North Korea—their whereabouts unknown.

While these realities paint a bleak picture of life in North Korea, we continue to hope for a day when the people of North Korea will be able to enjoy the freedoms that we as Americans enjoy.

Unfortunately, the current administration has failed to elevate human rights in U.S. foreign policy, notably in North Korea.

I was particularly disappointed that requests to provide a State Department witness for this hearing, or something as simple as a written statement, went unfulfilled.

In fact, it fundamentally calls into question this administration's commitment to defending and promoting human rights. Scheduling conflicts aside, why would the department decline to provide written testimony for a bipartisan Congressional hearing?

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses, especially those courageous individuals who can provide first-hand accounts of life in North Korea.

May their testimony compel us to act.

I hope and pray that in my lifetime, we will see a day when the Korean peninsula is free of gulags and oppression—and that when that day comes America will be on the right side of history.

Mr. WOLF: With that, I recognize Congressman McGovern.

Mr. MCGOVERN: I want to thank my colleague, Congressman Wolf, for his leadership and for arranging this hearing today. I have an opening statement which I would like to ask unanimous consent to have it appear in the record.

I would just want to echo what Congressman Wolf has just said. We have -- we are all well aware of the horrendous human rights situation in North Korea. I mean, it is astounding how bad things are. And the challenge has been how do you influence that situation to open things up, to encourage a greater respect for human rights, to help improve the quality of life for the average citizen who lives in North Korea. And so

we are particularly interested in any advice or guidance on concrete things that we might be able to do that might have a positive impact. You know, we are going to continue to raise our voices about the horrendous human rights situation, but we have been doing that for a long time, and, you know, is there an approach that we are not taking that we should pursue in whatever form that may be in?

But I appreciate your attendance here, I appreciate your courage and your leadership on this issue and look forward to this hearing. Thank you.

[Statement Submitted for the Record]

Mr. WOLF: Thank you, Jim. I would like to welcome all the witnesses. The first witness, Suzanne Scholte, president of the Defense Forum Foundation. The next witness would be An Hyuk, producer of the film 48M and survivor of Yoduk political prison camp. The third witness, the final one, will be Pack Kwang Il, representative of the Youth and Students Forum for North Korean Democracy and a former North Korean teacher and defector. With that, we can go in that order.

STATEMENTS OF SUZANNE SCHOLTE, PRESIDENT, DEFENSE FORUM FOUNDATION; AN HYUK, PRODUCER OF 48M, SURVIVOR OF YODUK POLITICAL PRISON CAMP; AND PACK KWANG IL, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YOUTH AND STUDENTS FORUM FOR NORTH KOREAN DEMOCRATIZATION, FORMER NORTH KOREAN TEACHER

STATEMENT OF SUZANNE SCHOLTE

Ms. Scholte. Well, first of all, Congressman Wolf and Congressman McGovern, I just want to thank you so much for your care about North Korea in organizing this hearing today because North Korea continues to be the worst human rights tragedy occurring in the world today. While we haven't seen a return to the famine-like conditions that occurred in the past, we do know that the majority of North Koreans are still suffering, most spending their days trying to feed their families. In fact, we have heard recently from a high ranking defector that defected that between 10- and 20,000 people have starved to death in South and North Hwanghae provinces in recent months. As the Kim Jong Un regime has worked to consolidate power, we have seen an increasing number of executions, purges, and a growing number in the political prison camps. Amnesty International reported last year that the political prison camps, which already imprisoned 200,000 people, were growing in size and scope.

Kim Jong Il's death in December led the regime to order that three generations of a family would be executed if one family member fled during the mourning period. The regime issued a shoot-to-kill policy for North Koreans trying to flee to China. Meanwhile, the government of China has continued their illegal, cruel, and inhumane practice of forcing North Koreans back to North Korea, knowing they will most certainly face torture, imprisonment, and even execution for fleeing their homeland.

China's brutal and unlawful repatriation policy has led to the exploitation of North Korean women who in their vulnerability become the victims of traffickers and has created a lawless environment in China. We have seen Americans, Japanese, Chinese, and South Koreans imprisoned in China for helping North Koreans, and most recently, a South Korean citizen named Kim Young Hwan was imprisoned and tortured in China while last year, a South Korean missionary Kim Chang-Whan was murdered by North Korean agents, and another, Kang Ho-Bin, survived an assassination attempt only to be killed this May in a suspicious head-on car crash.

How ironic that China allows North Korean assassins to operate freely in their country, but will not allow the U.N. HCR any access to these refugees.

North Koreans are the only people in the world that do not enjoy one single human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. How ironic that this document was passed in 1948 by the U.N. in reaction to the atrocities that were committed by Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, and 1948 is the same year that Kim Il Sung came to power to ensure that no North Korean would enjoy a single one of these universally accepted human rights.

We now have the eyewitness testimony of over 25,000 North Koreans who have fled to confirm these facts. We know from the testimony of Shin Dong Hyuk that children are not only imprisoned in the North Korean political prison camps, but are born there and can spend their entire lives there. Is there a chance for reform under the dictatorship of Kim Jong Un? I will submit that Kim and his regime will never take action that will benefit the people of North Korea but only their regime. Their recent pronouncements about Kim's economic reforms and a possible opening up are nothing more than illusion. However, Kim Jong Un's North Korea is not the North Korea of Kim Il Sung or Kim Jong Il. There have been dramatic and unprecedented changes that have occurred as a result of the resiliency of the North Korean people.

Two major ways that the regime has maintained power are completely gone. One, the public distribution system in which the regime distributed food and goods, has broken down completely, broke down completely during the famine years. This system made the entire population dependent on the regime for survival, but the resiliency of the North Korean people led them to start trading and selling among themselves, leading to an explosion of private markets throughout North Korea to such an extent that the majority of the population now survives on their own, through these markets.

Capitalism is thriving in North Korea, and attempts by the regime to shut down these markets have repeatedly failed. The last attempt in December 2009 to curb this economic activity with the currency devaluation led to such a public outcry that the regime actually backed down and apologized, something that is unprecedented. The famine not only led to these private markets, but it also led to the people no longer trusting this regime. Defectors tell us that in the past, it was every citizen's strong desire to become a member of the Korean Worker's Party because this was the path to success in North Korea. But now their goals have changed. Their desire now is to survive by making money and providing for their families.

Another powerful tool of the regime to maintain control is also gone. That is isolation. The ability to cut the North Korean people off from the rest of the world is no longer possible. Decades of propaganda which had convinced the North Korean people that they were the most advanced Nation and lived in a wonderful paradise has totally unraveled as so much information is getting into North Korea. More and more North Koreans are listening to radio broadcasts, watching South Korean soap operas and Western films that they now realize the regime has been lying to them about South Korea and the rest of the world. In fact, Titanic became so widely watched in North Korea that the regime felt compelled to inform its people that the movie Titanic was actually a depiction of the failure of capitalism. The great ship Titanic symbolizing capitalism actually sunk on the same day as Kim Il Sung's birthday.

Perhaps one of the greatest changes is the fact that over 25,000 North Koreans have fled and most are residing in South Korea and many are communicating with their family members, providing another source of information from the outside world.

There is so much that we can do to help the North Korean people. First, because they can hear us, our governments must make our human rights concerns the most important policy regarding North Korea so that North Koreans know the truth, that we are not the Yankee imperialist wolves trying to destroy them, but the United States and other countries

have spent billions of dollars trying to feed them and save them from starvation.

Additionally, we must cut off the hard cash that flows into that regime that allows Kim to buy the loyalties of his elites. Enforcing sanctions against those banks doing business with North Korea is absolutely critical. Additionally, we have to expose the exploitation of North Korean workers that is occurring in countries all over the world right now, from Kuwait to Mexico, from Russia to the Netherlands. Right now it is estimated that the regime earns over \$110 million in cold cash by exploiting its own citizens with the complicity of these countries that should know better.

Finally, our greatest hope is to invest in those who work to bring change to North Korea, and we know what works best by simply looking at what the North Korean regime attacks. The most targeted defectors for assassination have been Kim Seong Min of Free North Korea Radio, and Park Sang Hak of Fighters for a Free North Korea. What do these two defectors have in common? Both are devoted to getting information into North Korea; Kim through radio broadcasting, and Park through balloon launches in which he is sending in pamphlets of true history and facts about South Korea, DVDs of movies and USB sticks filled with information, radios, but also money, is basically their economic stimulus to help these private markets.

I want to thank you so much for your care and concern that you have shown for the people of North Korea by organizing this hearing, and I would like to request some testimony that Kim Seong Min had prepared for the committee also be submitted.

Mr. WOLF: Sure, without objection.

[The statement of Ms. Scholte follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUZANNE SCHOLTE, PRESIDENT, THE DEFENSE FORUM

Congressman Frank Wolf and Congressman James McGovern, thank you so much for organizing this hearing on North Korea, which continues to be the worst human rights tragedy occurring today. While we have not seen a return to the famine conditions that led to the death of at least 3 million people, the majority of North Koreans are still suffering, most spending their days trying to ensure their next meal for themselves and their families. In fact, we have heard from a recent high ranking defector that between 10 to 20,000 people have starved to death in South and North Hwanghae Provinces. As the Kim Jong Un regime works to consolidate power, we see an increasing number of executions, purges, and growing numbers in the political prison camps. Amnesty International reported last year that the political prison camps, known to already imprison 200,000 men, women and children, were growing in size and scope.

Kim Jong il's death in December led the regime to order that three generations of a family would be executed if one family member fled during the mourning period. The regime issued a shoot to kill policy for North Koreans trying to flee to China. Meanwhile the government of China has continued their illegal, cruel and inhumane practice of forcing North Koreans back to North Korea knowing they will most definitely face torture, imprisonment and even execution for fleeing their homeland.

China's brutal and unlawful repatriation policy has led to the exploitation of North Korean women who in their vulnerability become the victims of traffickers and has created a lawless environment in China. We have seen Americans, Japanese, Chinese and South Koreans imprisoned in China for helping North Koreans and most recently South Korean citizen Kim Young Hwan was imprisoned and tortured in China, while last year a South Korean missionary Kim Chang-Whan was murdered by North Korean agents and another, Ho-Bin Kang, survived an assassination attempt only to be killed this May in a suspicious head on car crash. How ironic that China allows North Korean assassins to operate freely in its country, but will not allow the UN High Commissioner for Refugees any access to the region.

North Koreans are the only people in the world that do not enjoy one single human right as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. How ironic that this document was adopted in 1948 by the United Nations in reaction to the atrocities committed during World War II by Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, as 1948 is the same year that Kim Il Sung came to power to ensure that no North Korean would enjoy a single one of these universally accepted human rights.

We now have the eyewitness testimony of over 25,000 North Koreans who have fled to confirm these facts. We know from the testimony of Shin Dong Hyuk that children are not only imprisoned in the North Korean political prison camps, but are born there and can spend their entire lives there.

Is there chance for reform under the dictatorship of Kim Jong Un? I will submit that Kim and his regime will never take action that will be in the best interest of the North Korean people, only action that maintains their power. These recent pronouncements about Kim's economic reforms and a possible opening up are nothing more than an illusion. However, Kim Jong Un's North Korea is not the North Korea of Kim Il Song or Kim Jong-il. There have been dramatic and unprecedented changes that have occurred as a result of the resiliency of the North Korean people.

Two major ways in which the regime has maintained power are gone: the public distribution system (PDS) and isolation.

The PDS, in which the regime distributed food and material goods, broke down during the famine years. This system made the entire population dependent on the regime for survival, but the resiliency of the North Korean people led them to start trading and selling among themselves leading to an explosion of private markets throughout North Korea to such an extent that the majority of the population now survives on their own through these markets. Capitalism is thriving in North Korea and attempts by the regime to shut down these markets repeatedly failed. Their last attempt in December 2009 to curb this economic activity with a currency devaluation led to such a public outcry that the regime backed down and actually apologized –something unprecedented.

The famine not only led to these private markets but it also led to the people to no longer trust the regime. Defectors tell us that in the past it was every citizens' strong desire to become a member of the Korean Worker's Party, the path to success in North Korea. But, now, their goals have changed: their desire now is to survive by making money and providing for their families.

Another powerful tool of the regime to maintain control is also gone ---isolation. The ability to cut the North Korean people off from the rest of the world is no longer possible. Decades of propaganda which convinced the North Korean people that they were the most advanced nation and lived in a wonderful paradise has totally unraveled as so much as information is getting into North Korea.

More and more North Koreans are listening to foreign radio broadcasts, watching South Korean soap operas and Western films that they now realize their regime has been telling lying to them about South Korea and the rest of the world. The film TITANIC became so widely watched in North Korea that the regime felt compelled to inform its people that the movie was a depiction of the failure of capitalism -- the great ship, Titanic, symbolizing capitalism sunk on the same day as Kim Il Sung's birthday.

Perhaps, one of the greatest changes is the fact that over 25,000 North Koreans have fled and most are residing in South Korea and many are communicating with their family members providing another source of information about the outside world.

There is so much that we can do to help the North Korean people. First, because now they can hear us: our governments must make our human rights concerns the most important policy regarding North Korea, so that North Koreans know the truth: that we are not the yankee imperialists wolves trying to destroy them, but the United States and other countries have spent billions of dollars trying to feed them and save them from starvation.

Additionally, we must cut off the hard cash that flows into that regime that allows Kim to buy the loyalty of his elites. Enforcing sanctions against those banks doing business with North Korea is critical. Additionally, we must expose the exploitation of North Korean workers that is occurring in countries all over the world from Kuwait to Mexico, from Russia to the Netherlands. Right now it is estimated that the regime earns over \$110 million in cold cash by exploiting its own citizens with the complicity of countries that should know better.

Finally, our greatest hope is to invest in those who work to bring change to North Korea and we know what works best by simply looking at what the North Korea regime attacks. The most targeted defectors for assassination have been Kim Seong Min of Free North Korea Radio and Park Sang Hak of Fighters for a Free North Korea. What do these two have in common? Both are devoted to getting information into North Korea, Kim through radio broadcasting and Park through balloon launches in which he is sending in pamphlets of true history and facts about South Korea, DVDs of movies and USB sticks filled with information, radios, but also money -- money as their "economic stimulus" to help boost the private markets.

Thank you for the care and concern you have shown for the people of North Korea by organizing this hearing.

STATEMENT OF AN HYUK, PRODUCER OF 48M, SURVIVOR OF YODUK PRISON CAMP

Mr. An. *[The following testimony and answers were delivered through an interpreter.]* Honorable Representative Wolf and Mr. McGovern and distinguished members of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I would like to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity to speak about the human rights and democratization of North Korea here at the political center of the world. Furthermore, I would like to express my deep admiration and gratitude to President Suzanne Scholte of the

Defense Forum Foundation, someone who has dedicated her heart and soul for the North Korean defectors and for the democratization of North Korea, and who has made possible this opportunity to speak here today.

My place of birth is North Korea. I was born there and I grew up there, and the moment that I was suddenly taken away to the Yodok political prison camp was in January of 1986. I was incarcerated there for 3 years for utterly ridiculous and incomprehensible reasons.

After I was released from the political prison camp in Yodok, I felt so aggrieved at the unfair treatment I had received that I attempted the challenge of going to South Korea, and I did succeed in that challenge, having entered South Korea in 1993. After entering and resettling in South Korea, I formed and started an organization called The Headquarters to Abolish the North Korea Political Prison Camps in 2003. I am still active in my efforts to close down the political prison camps of North Korea.

And I am visiting Washington, D.C. because I have brought with me a human rights-based movie that is based on the heartbreaking and sad reality of the escape of North Koreans along the border of North Korea and China and the forced repatriation carried out by the Chinese government of these refugees. The movie contains the truth and reality of what is going on right now along the shortest distance in the North Korea-China border on the Yalu River, which is about 48 meters, or 157 feet.

This film shows why the North Korean people are leaving their hometowns which they are so attached to and to where they were born and risking their lives to escape, why the North Korean people believe that their lives are happy despite living without any rights, much like animals, and why despite dying from starvation and from the cold, a sibling must die at the hands of another sibling, and this is what the film portrays.

There are other reasons also why we brought the film 48M to Washington, D.C. North Korean defectors who bear the immense pain of escape and forced repatriation who do not have any other recourse to appeal what they went through came together and planned the film and produced it as well because this film carries the precious experience and the shouting out to the world of over 23,000 North Korean defectors.

Just a few years ago, it would have been unimaginable for North Korean defectors to make a movie. Another thing that would have been unthinkable and unimaginable in the past is the fact that now North Korean defectors are producing and sending radio broadcasts into North Korea aimed at the North Korean citizens and also sending leaflets via

balloons into North Korea.

The reason why we are able to rise up and continue our efforts for the democratization of North Korea, despite the terror threats from the North Korean regime and the threats in the past from the South Korean government that colluded with Kim Jong Il and from the pro-North Korean organizations is because of the determination to go back to our homeland, even if we were to die, and most of all, because no matter what anyone says, there is justice in this world and the faith that justice will always prevail. That faith has brought us to where we are now, and faith is what makes us to be able to indict the dictatorial regime of North Korea to the international community.

First of all, we want to shout out and declare that the third generation succession regime carried out by Kim Jong Un will soon face its end. On the outside, it seems like there is smooth transition of power to Kim Jong Un, but in North Korea right now what is being carried out is a politics of guardianship because Kim Jong Un is someone who has nothing except for the fact that he is the son of Kim Jong Il.

Kim Jong Un's uncle, Jang Seong Taek, and his comrades from the past are now in total control of all power in the regime of North Korea, and those who do not agree with their views, no matter who they are, disappear overnight, and now a politics of purges is being carried out.

The fact that there is another person substituting for the dictator in the dictatorship and of a guardian planning the political actions of the dictator are actions that go directly against the fundamental characteristics of a dictatorial regime. This also means that as Kim Jong Un gets closer to having real power, he himself becomes the target of removal. So what Jang Seong Taek and his inner circle are worrying about now is whether to get rid of Kim Jong Un before he matures and becomes aware of everything or to wait and see and watch Kim Jong Un act stupidly like the young prince that he is made out to be.

Kim Jong Un, without knowing the full circumstances of what is going on, has been selected as the successor and is now causing a disturbance in North Korea and the rest of the world through his vigor in trying to do something new and through acting out in insubordination against his dead father who did not really hand over true power to him, and through the control and support of Jang Sang Taek.

If we look into North Korean society with a little bit more interest, the organized and the impeccable North Korea we saw in the past under Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il is gone and is now replaced with the desires of a young dictator who is intoxicated with vigor, confidence, and

arrogance, and this is reflected directly in North Korea today.

The North Korean people, however, are showing complete indifference and turning a cold shoulder towards the Kim Jong Un regime. This indifference of the people and the competition for loyalty by the members of the political elites has led to a North Korean society that no longer looks like a triangle or a pyramid with the people's loyalty at the bottom of the triangle sustaining the regime at the top but, rather, an upside down triangle or pyramid that seems to lose its balance at the slightest shock and which looks like a weak and feeble regime.

As such, the North Korean regime is one that right now can see its demise and collapse happening soon, but if the world is careless and shows inattention, this regime can go on for half a century and become far worse than what was under Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il and the North Korean people will suffer even more. That is why we are working so hard and putting so much effort into working for the democratization of North Korea. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. An follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AN HYUK, PRODUCER OF 48M, SURVIVOR OF YODUK POLITICAL PRISON

Dear Honorable Representative Wolf, and distinguished members of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I would like to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity to speak about the human rights and democratization of North Korea, here at the political center of the world. Furthermore, I would like to express my deep admiration and gratitude to President Suzanne Scholte of the Defense Forum Foundation, someone who has dedicated her heart and soul for the North Korean defectors and for the democratization of North Korea, and who has made possible this opportunity to speak here today.

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After I was released from the political prison camp, I felt so aggrieved at the unfair treatment I received, that I attempted the challenge of going to South Korea. And I succeeded in that challenge, having entered South Korea in 1993. After entering and resettling in South Korea, I formed and started an organization called 'The Headquarter to Abolish the North Korean Political Prison Camps' in 2003. I am still active in my efforts to close down the political prison camps of North Korea.

And I am visiting Washington DC because I have brought with me a human rights-based movie that is based on the heart-breaking and sad reality of the escape of North Koreans along the border of North Korea and China, and the forced repatriation carried out by the Chinese government. The movie contains the truth and reality of what is going on right now along the shortest distance in the North Korea-China border which is 48 meters.

This film shows why the North Korean people are leaving their hometowns which they are so attached to and where they were born, risking their lives to escape; why the North Korean people believe that their

lives are happy despite living without any rights, much like animals; why despite dying from starvation and from the cold a sibling must die at the hands of another sibling.

There are other reasons also why we brought the film '48M' to Washington DC. North Korean defectors who bear the immense pain of escape and forced repatriation who did not have any other recourse to appeal what they went through, came together and planned the film, and produced it as well, because this film carries the precious experience and the shouting out to the world of 23,000 North Korean defectors.

Just a few years ago it would have been unimaginable for North Korean defectors to make a movie. Another thing that would have been unthinkable and unimaginable in the past is the fact that now North Korean defectors are producing and sending radio broadcasts into North Korea aimed at the North Korean citizens, and also sending leaflets via balloons into North Korea, something that used to be done by the South Korean government.

The reason why we are able to rise up and continue our efforts for the democratization of North Korea despite the terror threats from the North Korean regime, and the threats in the past from the South Korean government that colluded with Kim Jong Il, and from the pro-North Korean organizations, is because of the determination to go back to our homeland, even if we were to die, and most of all because no matter what anyone says there is justice in this world and the faith that justice will always prevail. That faith has brought us to where we are now, and faith is what makes us to be able to indict the dictatorial regime of North Korea to the international community.

First of all, we want to shout out and declare that the 3rd generation succession regime carried out by Kim Jong Un will soon face its end. On the outside it seems like there is smooth transition of power to Kim Jong Un, but in North Korea right now what is being carried out is a politics of guardianship because Kim Jong Un is someone who has nothing except for the fact that he is the son of Kim Jong Il.

Kim Jong Un's uncle, Jang Seong Taek and his comrades from the past are now in total control of all the power in the regime of North Korea, and those who do not agree with their views, no matter who they are, disappear overnight and now a 'politics of purges' is being carried out.

The fact that there is another person substituting for the dictator in the dictatorship, and of a guardian planning the political actions of the dictator, are actions that go directly against the fundamental characteristics of a dictatorial regime. This also means that as Kim Jong Un gets closer to having real power, he himself becomes the target of removal. So what Jang Song Taek and his inner circle are worrying about now is whether to get rid of Kim Jong Un before he 'matures' and becomes aware of everything, or to wait and see and watch Kim Jong Un act stupidly like a 'young prince'

Kim Jong Un, without knowing the circumstance of what is going on, has been selected as the successor and is now causing a disturbance in North Korea and the world through his vigor in trying to do something new, and through acting out in insubordination against his dead father who did not really hand over true power to him, and through the control and support of Jang Sang Taek.

If we look into North Korean society with a little more interest, the organized and impeccable North Korea we saw in the past under Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il is gone and is now replaced with the desires of a young dictator who intoxicated with vigor, confidence, and arrogance, and this is reflected directly in North Korea today.

The North Korean people however, are showing complete indifference and turning a cold shoulder towards the Kim Jong Un regime. This indifference of the people, and the competition for loyalty by the members of the political elites, has led to a North Korean society that no longer looks like a triangle with the people's loyalty at the bottom of the triangle sustaining the regime at the top, but rather an upside down triangle that seems to lose its balance at the slightest shock and which looks like a weak and feeble regime.

As such, the North Korean regime is one that right now can see its demise and collapse happening soon, but if the world is careless and shows inattention, this regime can go on for half a century and become far worse than under Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il and the North Korean people will suffer even more; that is why we are working so hard and putting much effort into working for the democratization of North Korea.

We earnestly plead with you to continue to take interest in and support the North Korean defectors – we who lived under regime not as humans but rather as animals – the movie made by the North Korean defectors, the radio broadcasts done by the North Korean defectors, and the leaflets sent into North Korea via balloons by North Korean defectors.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF PACK KWANG IL, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
YOUTH AND STUDENTS FORUM FOR NORTH KOREAN
DEMOCRATIZATION, FORMER NORTH KOREAN TEACHER**

Mr. PACK: *[The following testimony and answers were delivered through an interpreter.]* First of all, I would like to extend my deep gratitude and appreciation to the Honorable Frank Wolf and James McGovern and the members of this Commission, and also to President Suzanne Scholte and for everyone that is gathered in this room for this meeting today.

I was born in Hamheung City in South Hamkyung Province in North Korea. I lived in North Korea for 24 years since my birth as the only son out of three children in the family, and my parents were teachers. And because I was the only son to my father who was a teacher, he wished me to be a teacher as well. Thus, after I graduated from high school in my home town, I studied at Kim Hyung Jik University of Education from 1990 to 1995, and after graduation in 1995 I came back to my hometown and worked as a high school teacher in my old school in Hamheung City.

The incident that made me flee North Korea happened when I was working as a high school teacher in Hamheung City after my graduation. That was around September of 1998. By chance, I obtained a videotape of a very popular South Korean-produced TV drama called Hourglass or Morae Shigae in Korean, and I watched it with several friends of mine. And at that time, I watched it very seriously because it was -- the TV drama, Hourglass, reflected the reality of South Korea of the 1980s very well. Perhaps watching that TV drama was the very first opportunity for me to experience what South Korean society was really like.

After watching the drama, friends of mine who had so much fun watching it begged me to lend the videotape to them, and after sincerely requesting to them to be very careful, I gave them the video. However, I never imagined that that incident would completely change my destiny and my life, as someone who was born and raised in North Korea. Friends of mine who borrowed the South Korean TV drama videotape from me started to make copies of it, and as a result, while I was not aware of it, the videotape began to spread around town in Hamheung City, and within 25 days it was discovered by the State Political Security Department.

And that happened the last week of September in 1998. And at

that time, it was such a serious offense that this incident was reported directly to Kim Jong Il. It was due to the fact that there were rumors that South Korean movies were spreading in North Korea, and my case was the first incident that was actually caught by the State security bureau. And at that time, Kim Jong Il, who received the report, gave an order to "to completely destroy the rotten capitalism of the yellow culture that is spreading all over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea."

Since then the North Korean government has been controlling the inflow of the cultures from South Korea, America, Japan, and Britain that are the enemies of North Korea with the mission to wipe out the capitalism of yellow culture.

At that time the Department of Counterintelligence of the National Security Bureau in South Hamkyung Province where this happened defined the first person who distributed the video of the South Korean drama as a spy and tried to find and arrest that person. The Department of Counterintelligence in the National Security Agency is the one responsible for searching for spies, and the people who watched the drama Hourglass were arrested one by one and went through brutal torture. Luckily, some of my father's former students who worked for the security bureau notified him about it, and thus I was able to escape to China and avoid getting arrested.

When I first fled to China was October 1, 1998. Even though I succeeded in fleeing North Korea, within 15 days, I was arrested by the Chinese security police in Yanbian, the autonomous -- the Korean autonomous region in China because I did not know my way about China at all. And after I was arrested by the Chinese police, I was repatriated back to North Korea. After being repatriated, I underwent 60 days of unbearable torture and investigation that literally killed me by the National Security Agency officers who were in charge of the entire area of the Tumen River region.

At that time the North Korean officials accused me of being guilty of three things: The first one was the circulation of the culture of capitalism. It was because I spread the enemy of South Korean TV drama into North Korean society. And the second crime was that I harmed the reputation of the superiority of socialism, meaning that I caused damage to what was created by Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il. And the third crime was that I illegally crossed over into China. Instead of facing the law, I escaped.

People who receive such charges must receive the death penalty. It was not an ordinary crime but a political crime, which meant that it was a political offense. I suddenly became a political criminal, and again, had to

experience 60 days of brutal torture by the National Security Agency in the underground interrogation room in North Hamkyung Province. I experienced daily what is called a pigeon torture, whereby I was hung by my wrists and my ankles were twisted and tied to the ceiling in the interrogation room.

And I went through countless times of what is called water ghost torture whereby my head was plunged into water for 3 minutes at a time. And I was beaten daily all over my body with a piece of thick lumber. And I was also tortured with -- when they kicked all over my body with their military boots. I also went through many other forms of torture. And if I was about to die due to the torture that I suffered, then they put me in solitary confinement and left me there, which basically meant that they just left me there to die.

If anyone is arrested by the National Security Agency, he or she has to give up being a human being. The officers are allowed to kill people by torturing them in the interrogation room, and they are not responsible at all for the deaths of anyone during interrogation.

Even today, as I speak, the unbearably painful torture that I experienced is practiced on so many North Koreans in countless interrogation rooms throughout North Korea. The 60 days of torture that I went through in the underground interrogation room was just total hell and nightmare that I don't even want to remember at all.

For 60 days, I was tortured endlessly, and even, not only my physical but my mental state was crushed as well. I was just basically skin and bones. I had no strength to cry out for help at all. When about 40 days of torture passed, I began to hallucinate, and I could feel that there was death waiting for me just around the corner. Due to the malnutrition and severe pain, the torture that I experienced, my body became so weak and my anal cavity became distended, and I was getting extremely weak. However, they paid no attention to me whatsoever, and I was becoming a living corpse.

Then on December 24th of 1998, I was transferred from the North Hamkyung Province National Security Agency bureau to the South Hamkyung Province. I didn't know why I was being transferred, but after walking through the coldness of the North with my weak body, I was escorted by the officers and got on the train on my way to being transferred. They were not escorting a human being, but a walking corpse.

In the moving train, I briefly fell into deep thought, and soon after, I determined to commit suicide. I thought about more torture that I had to face in the new interrogation room of the National Security Agency in

South Hamkyung Province where I was being transferred to, and even thinking about torture caused such fear in me.

I decided to kill myself by jumping off the moving train. Then I waited for a chance to jump, and when I found the opportunity, I jumped off the running train with all my strength, but I didn't die. But after I jumped, I did not die, and I wanted to flee to China one last time. But it was a mere foolish attempt to do that because I was so physically and mentally destroyed and incapable of actually trying to run away to China. Despite my weak situation, I continued to move. I crawled and crawled. During the day I hid myself in the mountains. At night, I came out of the mountains and crawled again.

Finally, in early January of 1999, I finally crossed the Tumen River and was able to flee to China. For me, it was another miracle that I was able to successfully cross. However, as soon as I reached the road near the border, due to the effects of torture, I collapsed. I thought I died, but I didn't die actually. For exactly the next 60 days, I was in a vegetative state. I was literally in a coma for 60 days. It has to be a miracle that I survived and I was able to regain consciousness. However, the incident where I collapsed on the road in China turned out to be another opportunity that changed my life once again.

The person who discovered me lying on the cold road was a Korean-American missionary. He brought me to his place and provided intensive care. And the missionary told me later that he sincerely prayed to God to bring me back to life and he prayed to God to, quote, save this poor soul so that he would devote his soul to God, and that is the prayer that the missionary prayed for me. God listened to his prayers, and the Almighty God gave my life back, and he gave me a new life and a new soul. I sincerely believe that if it were not for God's sovereignty and grace, I would have died on that road in China.

After 60 days, I completely recovered. Moreover, the missionary's prayer became a reality because later on in my life I became a minister. I also received a prayer of blessing by the missionary in China. After that I prayed to God myself that I was going to devote my life to God, who saved my life. I then lived in China for 2 years, and then I was able to enter South Korea with God's blessings on March of 2001. After that I obtained my graduate degree from the Presbyterian Seminary and was later ordained as a minister in 2009.

Dear distinguished Members of Congress and all the people that are here in this meeting today, I believe that every human being has a right to be respected as a human being. I believe that is so because God created humans with his holiness and God gave us life that is the most precious

gift to us. But there is a power of malice, evil that mercilessly infringes upon those human rights, and that is the North Korean regime of Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and now Kim Jong Un, three generations of hereditary dictatorship.

Dear distinguished Members of Congress and those gathered here, I sincerely would like to request all of you here to listen carefully. Please lend your ears and listen to the groans and the painful cries of the North Korean people. I sincerely ask that you would turn your attention to North Korea where the wrath of God is. And I respectfully would like to ask you to pay attention and to care for those hopeless North Koreans who are perishing now due to famine, illness, torture, and forced labor even at this moment. Just 60 years ago, North Korea was a prosperous land that God blessed. The land in the North used to be called the Jerusalem of the East.

However, now it has become a barren land where there is no good news of the gospel. It is a blind spot that has the worst human rights situation in the world. And the 23 million North Koreans who are groaning due to the pain and hopelessness are desperately pleading to all of you here today. They are pleading that as long as Kim Jong Un's third generation of hereditary power lasts, its human rights violations will continue. They are also pleading that Kim Jong Un's regime that does not respect human rights will be judged by God accordingly. And they are also pleading, those 23 million North Koreans are pleading with all of you to punish the Kim Jong Un regime on their behalf.

And today this morning, I sincerely would like to ask all of you to help North Koreans find their freedom. Please pray that North Korea will become a place where there are no diseases. I beg all of you to help North Koreans who are fleeing to China right now to find their life and freedom. And I also implore all of you to protest against the Chinese government. I would like to ask you to continuously push China to stop arresting and repatriating North Koreans in China. And please remember to continue to pray for them as well.

I would like to say that North Koreans today, it is a thirst for freedom that they have right now. If they have no freedom in their soul, their life, even though alive, their life is one that is dead. That is why they need freedom for their soul. That is why I believe measures such as broadcasts into North Korea that will help North Koreans find their freedom is so important. And I sincerely urge and request until the day of Kim Jong Un's regime collapses that you will continue to show your support and help for that cause. And I also would like to say that the North Korean defectors in South Korea are working hard for that day when that freedom, when that spring of freedom comes to the land of North Korea as well. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Pack follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PACK KWANG IL, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YOUTH AND STUDENT FORUM FOR NORTH KOREAN DEMOCRATIZATION, FORMER NORTH KOREAN TEACHER

“The reality of North Korean human rights situation that I personally experienced.”

I was born in Hamheung City in South Hamkyung Province, North Korea. I lived in North Korea for 24 years since my birth as the only son out of 3 children in the family, and my parents were teachers. Because I was the only son to my father who was a teacher, he wished me to be a teacher as well. Thus, after I graduated from my high school in my hometown in Hamheung City, I studied at Kim Hyung Jik University of Education from 1990 to 1995. In 1995, after I graduated from the university, I came back to my hometown and worked as a high school teacher at my old school in Hamheung.

The incident that made me flee North Korea happened when I was working as a high school teacher in Hamheung City after my graduation in Pyongyang. It was September in 1998. By chance, I obtained a videotape of a South Korean-produced TV drama called "Hourglass (Morae Shigae)". I watched it with several friends of mine. At that time, I watched it very seriously. It was because the TV drama "Hourglass" reflected the reality of South Korea of the 1980's. Perhaps, watching the TV drama was the very first opportunity to experience what South Korean society was like.

After watching the drama, friends of mine who watched it with me begged me to lend the video tape to them. After sincerely requesting them to be very careful, I gave them the video. However, I never imagined that the incident could completely change my destiny, and my life, as someone who was born and raised in North Korea. Friends of mine who borrowed the South Korean TV drama from me started to make duplicates of it. As a result, while I was not aware of it, the South Korean TV drama started to spread in town, and within 25 days, it was discovered by the State Political Security Department.

It was the last week of September in 1998. At that time, it was as serious as to be directly reported to Kim Jung Il. It was due to the fact that although there were rumors that South Korean movies were spreading in North Korea, my case was the first incident that was caught by the State Political Security Department (SPSD). At that time, Kim Jong Il who received the report gave an order "To completely destroy the rotten capitalism of the Yellow Culture that is spreading all over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea." Since then, the North Korean government has been controlling the inflow of the culture from South Korea, America, Britain, and Japan that are the enemies of North Korea, under the mission to wipe out the capitalism of yellow culture.

Back then, the department of counterintelligence of the SPSPD in South Hamkyung Province defined the first person who distributed the video of South Korean TV drama in the area as a spy and tried to arrest me. The department of counterintelligence in the SPSPD is responsible for searching for spies. The people who watched the South Korean drama "Hourglass" were arrested one by one and went through brutal torture. Luckily, some of my father's formal students worked for the SPSPD and notified him about it. Thus, I was able to escape to China and avoided getting arrested.

It was October 1st, 2001, when I fled to China. Even though I succeeded in fleeing North Korea, within 15 days, I was arrested by the Chinese security police in Yanbian, in the Korean Autonomous region. It was because I did not know my way around China at all. After I was arrested by the Chinese security police, I was repatriated to North Korea. After the repatriation, I underwent 60 days of unbearable torture and investigation that literally killed me, by the SPSPD in Hamkyung Province that controls the entire area of Tumen River region.

At that time, the SPSD accused me of being guilty of three things. The first one was the circulation of culture of capitalism. It was because I spread the enemy South Korean TV drama into North Korean society. The second is that I harmed its superior socialism, meaning that I caused damage to the superior socialism that was created by Kim Il Sung and Kim Jung Il. The third is that I illegally crossed over into China; instead of facing the law I escaped to China.

One who receives such charges must receive the death penalty. It was not an ordinary crime but a political crime, which meant that it was a political offense. I suddenly became a political criminal and had to experience 60 days of brutal torture by the SPSD in the underground interrogation room in North Hamkyung Province. I went through what is called the pigeon torture. I was hung while my wrists and ankles were twisted and tied in the ceiling of the underground interrogation room. Then I had to go through the 'water ghost' torture. My head was plunged into water for 3 minutes each time. They hit all over my body with a piece of thick lumber. They kicked all over body with their military boots on. I also went through many other forms of torture. If I was about to die due to the torture, they put me in solitary confinement and left me there, which meant that I was to die there.

If anyone is arrested by SPSD, he or she has to give up being a human being. The officers of the SPSD are allowed to kill people by torturing them in the interrogation room. And they are not responsible for the death of anyone in the interrogation room.

Even today, the unbearably painful torture that I experienced is practiced on so many North Koreans in the interrogation room. Back then I also was a victim. The 60 days that I underwent in the underground interrogation room of the SPSD was just total hell that I don't even want to remember at all.

For seven days, I was tortured in the interrogation room of SPSD. If I was conscious and opened my eyes, I was tortured again. If I screamed due to the pain, they tortured me more just because I screamed. If I begged for forgiveness, they tortured me more just because I begged. If I cried due to the pain, they tortured me more just because I cried. The interrogation officers who tortured me were not human beings. For them I was just another person to be tortured. They didn't have souls that ordinary people had. In my eye, they seemed to be beasts since they didn't possess human being's souls.

After the 7 days of torture, finally the investigation started. However, the process of the investigation was a continuation of the torture that I had received prior to it. For them, why would they need the investigation? To this day, I think about this. The investigation was a mere formality. The goal of the officers in the SPSD was to torture someone and thus get a false confession that he or she had made contact with South Korean intelligence personnel and received assignments from them. They had to turn someone like us into a spy. In order to accomplish their goals, they could do anything. However, I could not agree to what they asked me to do. As a result, I had to face even more harsh and intense torture.

During the 60 days of torture, my body was totally wrecked. My soul also was destroyed. There were only skin and bones left. I could not even stand by myself. When about 40 days of torture passed, I was hallucinating. I could feel that there was death waiting for me just around the corner. Due to malnutrition and severe excruciation, my anus became distended and I was getting extremely weaker. However, they paid no attention to me whatsoever. I was becoming a living corpse.

But then on December 24th of 1998, I was transferred from the North Hamkyung Province of the SPSD to the South Hamkyung Province of the SPSD. I didn't know why I was transferred. After walking through the coldness of the North with my weak body, I was escorted by the officers of the SPSD and got on the train. They did not escort a human being but a corpse. In the moving train, I briefly fell into thought. Soon after, I determined to commit suicide. I probably thought about more torture that I had to face in the new interrogation room of the SPSD in South Hamkyung Province that I was being transferred to. Even thinking of torture caused fear in me.

I decided to kill myself by jumping off of the moving train. Then I waited for a chance to jump, and I had a chance. I jumped off of the running train with all my strength, but I didn't die. Thus, I wanted to flee to China one last time. However, it was a mere foolish attempt because I was physically and mentally

destroyed and incapable of doing so. Despite my situation, I continued to move. I crawled and crawled. During the day, I hid myself in the mountains. At night, I came out of the mountains and crawled.

Finally on January 8th of 1999, I finally crossed the Tumen River and fled to China. For me it was a miracle. However, as soon as I reached a road near the border, due to the effect of torture, I collapsed. I thought I died, but I didn't. For exactly 60 days, I was in a vegetative state. I was in coma for 60 days. It has to be a miracle that I survived and regained consciousness. The incident where I collapsed on the road in China turned out to be another opportunity that changed my life once again.

The person who discovered me lying on the cold road was a Korean-American missionary. He brought me to his place and provided intensive care. And he sincerely prayed to God to bring me back to life. He prayed to God to "save this poor soul" then to "devote my soul for God." God listened to his prayers. The Almighty God gave my life back. He gave me a new life and a new soul. If it were not for God's sovereignty, I would have died on the road in China.

After sixty days, I completely recovered. Moreover, the missionary's prayer became a reality because I became a minister. I received a prayer of blessing by the missionary in China. After that I prayed to God that I was going to devote my life to Him, who saved my life. I lived in China for 2 years. Then I entered South Korea with God's blessings March, 2001. After that, I obtained my graduate degree from the Presbyterian Seminary and was ordained as a minister in 2009.

Dear distinguished members of Congress, every human being has a right be respected. It is due to the fact that God created humans with his holiness. God gave us life that is the most precious gift to us. But, there is a power of malice that mercilessly infringe upon human rights. That is the North Korean Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jung Un's three generations of hereditary dictatorship.

Kim Jong Un's dictatorship is one that kills its people because they believe in God. It's such an evil power that it kills its own people because they begged for food.

It is the Kim Jong Un regime that kills its own people because they left North Korea in order to survive from starvation and illnesses. Today, it is North Korea that kills its own people because they tried to go to democratic countries such as South Korea and America to obtain the very fundamental human rights. There is no life. There is no love. There are only corpses left. Because if there are no souls and freedom, then there is no life.

Dear distinguished members of Congress, I sincerely would like to ask you to listen carefully: Please listen to those groans and painful cries of the North Korean people. I sincerely would like to ask you to turn your attention to North Korea where there is the wrath of God. I respectfully would like ask you to pay attention to those hopeless North Koreans who are perishing due to famine, illness, torture, and forced labor even at this moment. 60 years ago, North Korea was a prosperous land that God blessed. It used to be called Jerusalem of the East.

But now, it has become a barren land where there is not Good News of the Gospel. It is a blind spot that has the worst human rights. The 23 millions of North Koreans who are groaning due to the pain and hopelessness desperately plead to you all. The plea is that as long as Kim Jong Un's third generation of hereditary power lasts, its human rights violations will continue. They also plead that Kim Jong Un's regime that does not respect human rights will be judged by God accordingly. Moreover, those 23 millions of North Koreans plead to you all to punish the Kim Jong Un regime on their behalf.

Dear distinguished members of Congress, today, through this opportunity, I sincerely would like to ask you to help North Koreans find their freedom. Please pray for North Korea to become a place where there are no diseases. I beg you all to help North Koreans who flee to China to find their life and freedom. Please protest against the Chinese government. I would like to ask you to continuously push China to stop arresting and repatriating North Koreans in China. Please pray for them.

I also respectfully would like to ask you support and help us until Kim Jong Un's regime finally collapses and God's blessing appear again in North Korea. Again, please advocate for us until there is freedom just

when the spring of freedom comes to the land of North Korea. We all also will pray to God and work harder for that day.

Thank you.

Mr. WOLF: Well, thank you very much for your very, very powerful testimony. I have a couple questions based on the testimony and some thoughts, but why do you suppose -- and anyone can answer -- why do you suppose that the world has not focused on this issue the way that we did in the 1980s with regard to Romania, the way that we did to the dissidents in Russia? Why do you think the world is really not focused?

Ms. Scholte. I am going to make a couple of comments. Part of the problem I think is the lack of access, being able to get in there. And especially trying to get the media to pay attention. They always want to talk to somebody who actually speaks English. Many defectors don't speak English. They want to have footage of the political prison camps. They want to have, you know, footage of the refugees being bought, the women being bought and sold, and because of the lack of access to get that kind of hard-hitting documentation, I think that is one of the challenges that we face, and certainly that is what happened with Laura Ling and Euna Lee, the two reporters. They actually went to China to film women being bought and sold in these markets in China, and we know what happened to them, they ended up in Pyongyang. So I think that is a huge problem that we have.

Mr. Wolf. Did they cross the border and then they were --

Ms. Scholte. Yes, they were taken to Pyongyang. But they were in China specifically to report about the trafficking of North Korean women. The fact that we have women being bought and sold in markets in China is just appalling, but that is happening right now, and that is why they went there. All of their, all their footage, all their information, of course, was taken. The big dispute was whether did they cross into North Korea intentionally or were they tricked and they ended up in Pyongyang. But it also shows the level of collusion between the Chinese agents and the North Korean agents, the level of collusion between the two. They don't want -- China does not want people to know the horrible things that they are doing.

This policy is absolutely horrible, and they really want to prevent people from being aware of what is going on. So I think that that is a big challenge that we have. And I think that when I have met with you before, you have told me how important it is to break into the popular culture, and that is one of the reasons why An Hyuk has devoted 2 years of his life to this film 48M in order for people to see through this film what is

happening.

Mr. Wolf. Does the film have English subtitles?

Ms. Scholte. Yes, yes. It is going to be shown today at 6:00 in 2172 Rayburn House Office Building. But the defectors realized exactly what you are saying.

Mr. Wolf. Can the committee get a copy of the film? Can we get a copy of the film?

Ms. Scholte. You can definitely get a copy of the film.

Mr. Wolf. Is it subtitled, is that what it is or --

Ms. Scholte. Yes, sir, it is in Korean but it has English subtitles.

Mr. Wolf. Why do they think the world has not focused on this issue?

Mr. Pack. Well, what I would like to say is that quite a few of the North Korean human rights organizations, the defector groups, we are looking at cases of what happened in countries like Romania like you mentioned and other eastern European countries that did go through the democratization process and studying and looking into how they went through the process and to apply that to what North Korea went through. And we are planning and talking with other North Korean human rights groups and North Korean defector groups to establish networking connections with groups and people who are based in Eastern Europe, former Eastern bloc countries so that we can work together and raise awareness regarding what is going on in North Korea throughout the world. So we are attempting to do such a thing as you raised the question about.

Mr. Wolf. But I think it is deeper than that. I think Suzanne probably covered a lot of it. We, during the 1980s I would go into Romania and we would see and come back out and tell, and so since there is not the visitations back and forth. Why do you suppose -- and let me make it clear so this does not become a partisan Republican and Democratic issue. I think it is fair to say that the last couple years of the Bush administration, they did not raise this big issue. Would you agree? Just yes or no.

Ms. Scholte. I absolutely think the last, that all the momentum that was built up was totally lost during the last years.

Mr. Wolf. And Chris Hill fundamentally failed, would you not agree?

Ms. Scholte. And now he realizes that we were right, but he fundamentally failed.

Mr. Wolf. Is he telling his students at the University of Denver that he failed?

Ms. Scholte. I don't know. But back to delta Asia where we had really squeezed them --

Mr. Wolf. Well, let me -- but just a minute. But you would also agree then if the Bush administration failed and Chris Hill failed, this administration is failing big time?

Ms. Scholte. Yes. Again, Clinton, Bush, Obama, it is always this focus on the nuclear issue and sidelining human rights, and that totally plays into the regime's hands because the regime has convinced its people that we don't really care about them.

Mr. Wolf. And yet if you do a parallel with the Reagan administration during the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union had nuclear weapons also, but the emphasis that President Reagan had, and then Secretary Shultz and others was on human rights and religious freedom, they would go to Moscow, they would meet with the dissidents. So it was a balanced policy whereby I think in the closing years of the Bush administration under Chris Hill and under this administration, it is not a balanced policy, even the media when they pick up, it is always the nuclear aspect and the starvation and nothing with regard to human rights and religious freedom. I assume you read Blaine Harden's book.

Ms. Scholte. Absolutely.

RPTS MERCHANT

DCMN HERZFELD

[11:05 a.m.]

Ms. Scholte. Well, exactly the point that you are making. And Bush, his heart was with these people. This is a President, the only President, he met with --

Mr. Wolf. I know his heart was with it. And that is not enough, though, because the State Department wasn't with it.

Ms. Scholte. Right. But he cared about it.

Mr. Wolf. I know he did. And I think he cared deeply about China. But they didn't do a very good job on China, and this administration has a miserable job on China. I mean, they get an F, period. But the Bush administration -- and I know President Bush cared deeply about the North Korea. But the State Department and Chris Hill, I almost never heard Chris Hill say anything. Now, you said he now believes that you were right. Has he said something public?

Ms. Scholte. I say "I," but I mean the whole policy that is human rights -- that the six-party talks were a farce, and that the North Koreans were never going to --

Mr. Wolf. Has he said that?

Ms. Scholte. He inferred -- I am trying to remember. There is a quote that he realized that all of the talks -- that the North Koreans basically were not serious; that they were taking us for a ride, something to that effect, that they were not serious.

Mr. Wolf. And, of course, though, if they never heard us speaking out about it, they were getting a conflicting message, because I don't know if they were saying anything privately, but they were certainly not saying anything publicly. And so, therefore, the North Koreans would take the attitude that all they care about is the nuclear, and that is where we can have our emphasis.

My sense is that you really need to do a -- the Korean community, and the dissidents, and those who care about freedom, the human rights, religious freedom, amnesty, Human Rights Watch, all of the groups, ought to come together. And this ought to be in every church, this ought to be in every synagogue, this ought to be in every mosque. There ought to be programs emphasizing this, focusing on this like a laser beam, because if

-- while the world is so evil in so many other places, if this is the worst, then to use this as an example ought to be.

And so every church ought to be involved. I mean, you should be talking to the National Council of Churches. You should be talking -- has Rick Warren said anything about this? You should be talking to all those groups, insisting that this be an issue, and one that I think both Republicans and Democrats can get interested in, and excited about and worked up about to do something.

Why isn't Christianity Today carrying major stories about this? Why aren't -- so, I mean, I think that is really where you have to get -- can all of you say a little bit about China, why China is so complicit, and what the problem and what the conditions are with regard to dissidents who leave North Korea and go to China and are sent back, the conditionalities of, as you mention with regard to the women, Suzanne -- but give us 2 or 3 minutes each on China and their involvement with regard to North Korea. China, the same country that Apple makes your iPhone, and your iPad and your iPod; the same company that Jeff Immelt, President Obama's jobs guy, who has signed business deals to create jobs in China. Tell us a little bit about the impact to China with regard to this issue.

Ms. Scholte. Well, I would say that with the refugee situation, it is clear that the U.S. Congress unanimously -- bipartisan passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act several times -- wanted to see more refugees be able to come here. And I think that the fact that there has only been 150 North Koreans that have been able to resettle in -- is an indication of the failure of the administration to follow through on that. I bring that up because that is related to the China issue.

I think the problem is that the regime in China doesn't want to see a unified Korea because a unified Korea as a democracy would be just an amazing economic power. I think that the people in China are on our side on this issue of the refugees, because whenever we speak out about this at college campuses where there is Chinese students, they are shocked and horrified that their government is doing this. And I think the reform-minded people in China know that a united Korea would be a huge benefit to China, because it would be a great trading partner, and they would both rise together economically. But I think that it is still a Communist regime, that we fail to remember this is still a Communist system, still a Communist Party that is in power in China. And I do believe that fundamentally they fear a unified Korea because they know that it would be a terrific economic power, and obviously a very strong ally.

And we just look at what the Korean people did from 1953, the

ashes of the Korean War. They built the eleventh largest economy in the world. So I think that that is the Communist Party in China that is continuing to partner with this regime, and it is the problem.

Mr. Wolf. And can they tell us, too, the conditions, the reality of what happens and what is taking place in China when someone from North Korea escapes to China and how they are treated and sent back, the conditions of the women and the conditions of people sent back?

Mr. Pack. I would like to answer that question as from the perspective of a North Korean defector. The reason why China, when it comes to North Korea, why it continues to provide help, support and economic aid while it remains silent on the North Korean human rights issue is because I believe that China looks at the closeness between South Korea and America and also the issue of North Korea as a very important issue for them to deal with politically in the region.

I believe China is using North Korea as a strategic geopolitical tool to contain what it sees as a threat in the region. And also, that is why China fears North Korea, as Suzanne mentioned, being peacefully unified with South Korea.

And regarding your secondary question of what North Korean refugees go through when they are arrested in China, what I can tell you is that after the death of Kim Jong Il in November of 2011, what I know -- what I have heard is that once the North Korean defectors -- once they are arrested and repatriated back to North Korea, from the North Korean regime's perspective, their treatment has become far worse of these refugees, of these citizens that have been sent back to North Korea. And the situation has become far worse for North Korean refugees who are arrested in China and repatriated by China to North Korea, because after Kim Jong Il died and during the 100 days of mourning, Kim Jong Un issued an order that anybody who is caught escaping from North Korea, the families up to three generations will be arrested, and executed and punished.

Mr. Wolf. Meaning if, let us say, someone 25 escaped, explain what he means.

Mr. Pack. So these are refugees who are sent back to North Korea. In the past they were punished and sent to a forced labor camp, reform labor camp. But now I understand that almost all of them are sent to the political prison camps, which is a far worse place than just a labor reform camp.

And starting from this year, what I know is that along the North Korea-China border, in the past where there used to be areas where guards

would patrol a certain area and a certain area was not patrolled, now even in the areas that were not patrolled in the past, the regime has set up equipment and sent personnel to monitor even these gaps within the border area so that they can catch and arrest citizens who are trying to escape.

So I can say that the regarding Kim Jong Il's policy regarding citizens who escape, who try to defect from the country, he is closing off and trying to cut off all the defection routes from North Korea. And regarding the refugees, people who are sent back to North Korea, the treatment and punishment is far severer than what was done before.

Mr. Wolf. Suzanne, can you explain -- you talked about when the sisters were there. What are the conditions with regard to women in China that they were trying to disclose?

Ms. Scholte. Well, we know that for decades China has had this one-child policy, so there is a severe shortage of women in China. Then you have the vulnerable population. It is the women in North Korea that are ones that provide for their families.

So a trafficking market started where women would be lured from North Korea with a promise perhaps that they were going to work in a restaurant or work as a maid. And once they got across the border, a hood was put over their head, and they were hauled off to a market where they were sold. And depending on how young they were, they would -- obviously if they were younger, they would be sold for more money. But I know women that have been sold -- were sold repeatedly because they are completely vulnerable because China refuses to recognize them as refugees.

Mr. Wolf. And how common is that?

Ms. Scholte. Well, the figure was 80 percent of women, but I think it is high as 90 percent now of females that are being trafficked. It started out being sold as bribes, then it was bribes and also into -- forced to work in brothels. Now we are hearing more and more in the last several years that they are forced to do Internet pornography. But they are completely vulnerable, and they end up in these horrible situations.

Mr. Wolf. And is the Chinese Government aware of that, complicit in it?

Ms. Scholte. Yes. And that is why I say they have created a lawless environment by not following international law. This is a situation -- the refugee situation is one that could be solved overnight if only China

would comply with international law with their own conventions they signed, because this is the only refugee population in the world that has an immediate place to go for resettlement.

Mr. Wolf. Now, has this been raised? Has the administration raised it, or has the Special Envoy raised this?

Ms. Scholte. They have told us that they have, that they have repeatedly raised this. I know --

Mr. Wolf. Ever publicly or only privately?

Ms. Scholte. I know that Ambassador King has repeatedly raised this issue with the -- in his meetings.

Mr. Wolf. How about Ambassador Locke, has he raised this?

Ms. Scholte. I don't know. I don't know. I just know the Special Envoy in North Korea human rights has spoken out.

Mr. Wolf. Now, has he been to North Korea? Will they allow him in?

Ms. Scholte. Ambassador King?

Mr. Wolf. Yes.

Ms. Scholte. I don't believe so.

Mr. Wolf. Has he asked to go?

Ms. Scholte. I am sorry?

Mr. Wolf. Has he asked to go?

Ms. Scholte. I don't know. I don't know.

Mr. Wolf. Have you all met with him?

Ms. Scholte. I know that --

Mr. Wolf. Have they all met with Ambassador King?

Ms. Scholte. We weren't able to -- on this particular trip we were not able to, but the last time we brought refugees over -- Ambassador King has been very willing to meet with any defectors that we have been able to bring over. He has been very willing. This particular trip he happened to be traveling.

Mr. Wolf. Okay. A couple other questions before we end. You were talking about American banks. Are there any American banks involved? They were talking about banks who were doing business. Are there any American banks involved?

Ms. Scholte. None that I am aware of. And I would also like to point out that I don't know of any single incident of anybody -- worker being exploited here in this country, but I was shocked to find out that there was countries in Europe.

For these workers to come from North Korea, they have to get, obviously, visas from that government. I know that there is thousands of construction workers, for example, in Kuwait. And this is an ally, you know, who -- a country that we saved. The fact that they are allowing the regime to exploit their own people.

What happens in these situations is these workers are sent abroad. And we know this has been going on for decades in Russia and Siberia in the lumber mills. They are given jobs, and they are isolated from the population, and they are basically slave laborers. Most of their wages go back to the regime. In some cases they don't get any pay at all, and in some cases they get like a very small portion of it.

But this is something that we are researching and trying to get more of a handle on, but it is widespread. And this is a way for the regime to get cold cash and completely avoid sanctions, because this is not something that is being tracked.

Mr. Wolf. If you could let us know countries and circumstances, we would get the committee to follow up.

Ms. Scholte. I am working on a report on it, and I would be glad to submit that to you.

Mr. Wolf. Okay. One other -- a couple other questions. I have so many. But what do you tell the groups -- and I met with some who have said, Mr. Wolf, you are speaking out, and this could be a problem because we don't want to do anything. We are just quiet, we go in, we feed the people. It is not appropriate for us to make any comments on human rights and religious freedom; all we are interested in is food. Can you maybe, Suzanne and one of them, sort of talk about the quandary, the problem, the dilemma; who is right, who is wrong? Is anyone wrong? How do you handle it? Do you follow what I am talking about?

Ms. Scholte. Do you mean about the food aid?

Mr. Wolf. Yeah. But without mentioning groups, they say, you know, we can't say anything, we just want to bring food in, we don't want to -- we know some of the food goes to the army, we know some of the food -- but it is still a good thing. And what is -- why don't you answer and let one of them.

Ms. Scholte. Yeah. I think it is really important that they answer that question about the food aid.

My view is I would make a public announcement and I would broadcast it in North Korea that we want to fully intend to provide all efforts, food, medical assistance, that is needed in the country. All we ask is that we are there to see it consumed. And that is a critical point: We have got to see it to the point of consumption, because otherwise it is diverted. It is absolutely diverted.

I think that we -- that is the kind of message we should broadcast to the North Korean people. They don't -- I believe they are starting to realize no one needed to starve, no one needed to starve. Everybody in North Korea was affected by that famine. The average citizen, every average citizen was affected by the famine, and I believe they are coming to realize that no one needed to starve. There was so much humanitarian aid that was being provided. But instead what we ended up doing was ensuring the regime's survival, the group that was making these people have to live under these kinds of conditions.

But I think the key thing is absolutely we should talk about giving humanitarian aid, but only if we are able to stay to the point of consumption.

Mr. An. As a North Korean defector, we left the North Korean regime, and we are now fighting against the North Korean regime, and now we are living in freedom. But regarding people who desire to help and give aid and help to North Korea, we think that is a good idea, and we actually support that.

But regarding aid to North Korea and different organizations and groups that work inside North Korea, there must be complete and verifiable monitoring and making sure that whatever aid, food or medicine, whatever is meant to go to the people, will actually go to the people, and that that must be completely 100 percent verified.

Mr. Wolf. Does he believe that there is a verification now, or how effective is the verification?

Mr. An. I believe no, currently there is no system set in place for

groups that are working in North Korea to be able to completely verify and check.

What I know is that even now there are many groups that work in North Korea and provide aid to children or people who are senior citizens of North Korea, but whatever materials or resources that they receive that the regime thinks can be used for possible military use or diversion, when the workers of the groups or the monitors are there, yes, they will do sort of a show of receiving the goods and give it to the people that it is intended for, but once the monitors and the workers leave the area, then they will actually take everything back and divert it for the regime's use.

Mr. Wolf. Meaning what percentage do you think gets to the people?

Mr. An. I am not able to give you an exact or approximate figure of what percentage does go to the people. I met one person who worked for an NGO that works in North Korea, but he provides milk and other food, nutritional items for children of North Korea, and what he said to us and other North Korean defectors was that he helped these children for 1 year in North Korea, but their nutritional or health did not improve at all. So what I said is, if you spent that 1 year eating, sleeping, feeding and clothing them yourself, you would have actually seen them change for the better. And he himself admitted that he was actually only at the location for 1 hour only to deliver the goods and had to leave the area.

Mr. Wolf. Well, I guess I have been troubled. I have had groups come in and tell me basically that they are -- and I know some of these are very good groups -- that the price that they pay is in order to get food to a certain element, they know that a portion of it goes to the army or to the government, and it is a very difficult choice. And they seem to be saying that if they speak out, or say anything, or push too hard, then they will not be permitted into the country. And we obviously can't solve that moral dilemma here.

I would like to go to North Korea. Have you been there, Suzanne.

Ms. Scholte. [Nonverbal response.]

Mr. Wolf. No.

I wonder if they would grant me a visa if I asked. There are groups that go in periodically.

The last question I would ask is what do we do, not just to have a hearing whereby people can know how bad the conditions are for the

refugees, for the dissidents, for the people who were sent back, but for the average person? What is the best approach that honestly really brings about change? Is it attempting to put together a high-level, off-the-radar group to push with regard to the government to open up, or is it to push for regime change? Is it to -- what do you honestly do? Because it is very easy to have a hearing and tell about how bad the conditions are, but I think the important thing is to try to find some constructive way that you can honestly do something that improves the life of the people and the average person in North Korea. So what would your recommendation be that would be the most effective for the Congress, but for the United States Government to do? Why don't you all take a shot at that.

Ms. Scholte. Well, I think absolutely that we have to make this argument about the refugee situation with the Chinese. And I think that we have some very compelling arguments that we can make to convince the Chinese to change the repatriation policy, number one.

Also, number two, I think that we -- because they hear us, they hear us now.

Mr. Wolf. Well, how do they hear us?

Ms. Scholte. Because there is so much information getting in. And they are listening to programs like -- well, Free North Korea. We have the director of Free North Korea here. They are listening to it. And according to independent surveys, Free North Korea is the most popular among the refugees. They interviewed people in China that have escaped. It is the most popular radio station broadcasting there even though it has got very limited resources. But they are hearing us --

Mr. Wolf. Does Voice of America or BBG, do they do a very effective job?

Ms. Scholte. Yeah. VOA and RFA are outstanding. They are outstanding. But we know that the figures have just grown dramatically as far as the percentage of people that are listening. And now I believe it is as high as 70 to 80 percent that are getting access to outside information.

Mr. Wolf. Is the VOA or Radio Free -- is somebody here from the VOA?

Ms. Scholte. I am sure.

Mr. Wolf. And will this hearing be broadcast back to the people of North Korea that this hearing was held and what these individuals said?

Voice. It will be broadcast right in the afternoon today.

Mr. Wolf. Thank you.

Ms. Scholte. But we know they are listening to VOA, RFA, KBS from South Korea. I think KBS is also here. The regime can't stop the flow of information that is coming in. They are also -- he is indicating the South Korean soap operas are so popular, and that this kind of information is spreading.

So I think it is really important when I say that they can hear us. That is why we need to send a message. We know you are -- directly to the people. We should be talking directly to the people, which is exactly what President Ronald Reagan did. We need to speak directly to the people with our message that we really care about them, and that we are trying to -- we are trying to come up with creative means to get food to you, but your regime keeps stealing it. And we need to partner, you know, with the defectors that are the most effective in articulating information to the North Korean people and continue to support the efforts that they are doing.

And I just want to mention, too, we are also protesting at the Chinese Embassy on Saturday to continue -- we have got demonstrators showing up at noon, or all around the world at noon, just basically calling for China to stop.

Mr. Wolf. What time is that?

Ms. Scholte. At 12 o'clock noon. And we are doing the Chinese consulates on Saturday. And embassies, we have got about 10 to 13 countries involved and about 15 to 16 cities. Mexico is involved and Canada.

Mr. Wolf. I can look at it. I am out all day Saturday doing, but if I -- I would love to. My good friend the Chinese Government, you know.

Ms. Scholte. We are trying to -- basically the petition that we are delivering is basically saying just comply with the law.

Mr. Wolf. How many people do you think you will have at the embassy?

Ms. Scholte. Well, we are hoping from about 80 to 100.

Mr. Wolf. And the request will be with regard to this one issue on

Ms. Scholte. Yes. We are simply saying follow the law. You have got plenty of people that want to partner with you; what you are doing is creating a horrific human rights tragedy for people; and that we are just pointing out what they are doing is illegal, it is cruel, it is inhumane, it is barbaric, and the future is with South Korea, it is not with this dictatorship in North Korea.

And I do want to say, too, that we know the animosity that the North Korean regime has against the Chinese, and the right to -- we are not going to -- this isn't going to be in the letter that we are delivering, but we do like to remind the Chinese Government that Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, Kim Jong Il, specifically, issued an order that pregnant women that were repatriated from North Korea -- from China back to North Korea, that their bellies would be beaten so that they would lose that child, because, quote, "they were half Chinese."

So this North Korea regime has established this racist policy against the Chinese people, and why they continue to bail out this dictator is beyond me. And that is why I say the Chinese people, I think, are with us on this issue. It is the Communist regime.

Mr. An. I first want to thank Suzanne for giving a great answer regarding your question, sir. From the time period of 1997 to now, there are over 100,000 North Koreans living outside of North Korea, and specifically in South Korea there are 24,000 North Korean defectors living in South Korea right now.

Mr. Wolf. Of the 100,000 and 25,000, where are the rest now mainly?

Ms. Scholte. The rest are in China, in countries in Southeast Asia living as refugees in hiding, and there are quite a few here in the U.S. and other countries as well.

For the past 10 years or so, we have traveled to the U.S., Europe and various other countries and gave countless talks and testimonies regarding the North Korean human rights situation. I believe that even the people of North Korea, through the influx of outside media and other forums, now know more than before about what is going on in the outside world.

And the one thing that a lot of us North Korean defectors worry about and think about is even though we left North Korea, we are still risking our lives dealing with or fighting for North Korea, and how can we change the mind-set and the thinking of North Korean people that are still in the country? And so one of the things that a few of the North Korean

defector elites did was we debated and talked, and we decided that we will gather our own money, and we will make a movie and produce this motion picture. And so through this film, I believe that many people, as many as possible, should see the content of this film, such as the pain of a North Korean citizen escaping and defecting to China, and what the North Korean refugee in China -- the suffering and mistreatment they go through when they arrive in China.

A lot of us North Korean defector organizations are in a difficult situation right now, and we sincerely request your help regarding the difficulties that we face.

Mr. Pack. It is estimated that there are a little bit over 100,000 North Korean refugees living in China right now. And as Suzanne mentioned before, a lot of the female North Korean refugee women are sold into sexual human trafficking rings. The male refugees are sometimes forced to work in manual labor, forced labor jobs.

Even if they are in China, their human rights does not improve for the North Korean refugees. And there are some churches in South Korea that are calling for some sort of a refugee camp, refugee facility for the North Korean refugees in China. And obviously this refugee facility will not be built in China, but in neighboring countries such as, for example, Mongolia. And if something like this were to be built, then this will provide the North Korean refugees in China an opportunity to seek freedom, a place of -- a sanctuary and a place for them to find their freedom.

And regarding helping the North Korean citizens in North Korea, yes, life is very important, to sustain life, so things such as food aid is important, in my opinion. But regarding the North Korean regime's policies regarding the food that comes into the country provided by the foreign groups, regarding the distribution and the control, those things must be strictly set in place so that the food will be given to the people that need it the most.

And I believe that when it comes to the food aid given to North Korea, that it should not be from political posture or political status, but human rights should be at the forefront first and foremost when dealing with the food aid to North Korea. And so if the principle is enforced regarding putting human rights first, then I would like to say perhaps the North Korean regime will change from the past regarding how they accepted and distributed the food aid that came into the country -- that comes into the country.

And I also believe -- and I did mention that that I am active in

human rights for North Korea work in South Korea, and so I would like to say that we have received much help and cooperation from the United States. And I would like to say that regarding the help that we receive, some of the requirements or the regulations are really difficult for us North Korean defectors to follow and to keep, so regarding that, I would like to ask your help in making it easier for us North Korean defectors and organizations to be able to get that help from the American Government.

Thank you.

Mr. WOLF: Well, I want to thank you all for your testimony. I appreciate it very much. And I will do everything I can to see what we can do. Ultimately I think this administration, this regime will collapse, the same way that the Romanian regime collapsed and others. I appreciate your testimony.

Hearing adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the Commission was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

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**Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (TLHRC)
Hearing**

North Korea: Ongoing Human Rights Violations in an Era of Change

**Wednesday, September 19, 2012
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
340 Cannon House Office Building**

Please join the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for a hearing on the status of human rights in North Korea.

Following the death of Kim Jong-Il, his son, Kim Jong-Un, has taken over as the leader of North Korea. Despite the transition of power, a majority of North Korean citizens still live in poverty and many others remain trapped in horrific prison camps. In fact, according to a January 2012 *Los Angeles Times* article, "In North Korea, a new Kim may be in command but the same old human rights violations are still in play, including a renewed lethal crackdown on defectors, according to South Korean media reports." Additionally, severe shortages of food and medical supplies, have led to outbreaks of famine and disease that the government is unable to combat alone.

This hearing will explore human rights conditions in the country including abuse in prison camps, the current status of the North Korean regime and potential responses by the U.S. and the international community.

The following witnesses will testify:

- **Suzanne Scholte**, President, Defense Forum Foundation
- **An Hyuk**, Producer of *48M*, survivor of Yoduk political prison camp
- **Pack Kwang Il**, Representative of the Youth and Students Forum for North Korean Democratization, former North Korean teacher

If you have any questions, please contact the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission at 202-225-3599 or tlhrc@mail.house.gov.

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, TLHRC

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, TLHRC

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES P. MCGOVERN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Good Morning. I want to thank everyone for being here today for this important hearing on human rights in North Korea. Massachusetts

In particular, I want to thank Congressman Wolf for holding this hearing, and our witnesses for their leadership in working to improve human rights conditions in North Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea systematically violates the basic rights of its population. It does not allow organized political opposition, free media, functioning civil society, or religious freedom. Arbitrary arrest, detention, lack of due process, and torture and ill-treatment of detainees remain serious violations of human rights.

The authorities impose severe restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly despite constitutional guarantees of these rights. Criticism of the government and its leaders is strictly curtailed, punishable by arrest and incarceration in a prison camp. Entire families, including grandchildren, are incarcerated for even the most minor political statements. These camps are notorious for abysmal living conditions and abuse. Due to the combination of forced hard labor, inadequate food, beatings, lack of medical care and unhygienic living conditions, many prisoners fall ill and die in custody or soon after release.

A combination of poor economic policies and management, adverse weather conditions, and reduced international aid left millions of people without sufficient access to food. Essential medicines remain beyond the reach of millions of people. UNICEF has stated that each year some 40,000 children under the age of five become acutely malnourished with 25,000 needing hospital treatment.

North Korea criminalizes leaving the country without state permission. Those who leave face harsh punishment upon repatriation, including interrogation and torture. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have crossed the border into China in search of food and economic opportunity. Despite its obligation to offer protection to refugees under both customary international law and the refugee convention, China has forcibly repatriated refugees to North Korea where they face detention, interrogation and torture.

In March the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution against North Korea for the sixth straight year, citing member states' serious concerns about continuing reports of "systemic, widespread, and grave violations of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights" and concerns about "all-pervasive and severe restrictions on the freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association." In the same month, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution against North Korea for the fourth year in a row for abysmal, systematic human rights violations. Both resolutions condemned North Korea's failure to state whether it accepted any of the 167 recommendations made by a Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review in December 2009.

These are encouraging steps, but much more needs to be done to ensure that these recommendations are fully implemented, to address the pervasive problems of corruption and impunity, and to advance respect for human rights.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KIM SEON-MIN, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF FREE NORTH KOREA

North Korea: Ongoing Human Rights Violations in an Era of Chance

Dear Honorable Congressman Frank R. Wolf, and the members of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I would like to thank you all for giving me this opportunity today to talk about the human rights situation in North Korea and the democratization issue, at the center of the world politics. Also I would like to appreciate Suzanne Scholte, the President of Defense Forum Foundation, for her endless effort for the democratization of North Korea and for North Korean defectors.

Today, we came here to Washington DC to show you the film on the brutal reality of North Koreans who have to risk their lives to cross the border to China, and the inhumane repatriation policy perpetrated by Chinese government. The title of movie '48M' stands for the closest distance between North Korea and China and the stories of North Koreans en route trying to cross the border.

The film will show you why North Koreans have to leave their hometown where they were born and raised and forced to defect risking their lives, why they still believe that they are living happy lives even though their rights are exploited and are treated like animals, and why they are forced to kill each other knowing that everyone is dying out of starvation and cold.

The reason why we bring the movie '48M' to here in Washington DC is not simply that we want to state these kinds of facts. It is because we, the North Korean defectors, have been through the plight of defection and repatriation but never allowed to have a place to talk about these agonies. That is why we planned and directed this film by our own hands and tried to tell those stories to the world out loud in representing 23,000 defectors in South Korea.

Only a few years ago, it seemed impossible for defectors to make movie by ourselves. For us, it was unimaginable thing to produce and broadcast shortwave radio program to North Korea to inform North Korean public about outside world, and send balloons with flyers which was believed to be South Korean government's work.

However, despite the incessant terror threats not only from North Korean regime but also from pro-North South Korean government and groups which stood by the dictator's side, we have never stopped working for democratization of North Korea since we have the strong hope that someday we would go back to our hometown, and the faith that the justice always wins.

And that faith is what makes us stand here in front of you, and that faith allows us to denounce the faltering dictatorship of North Korea in front of international community.

Most of all, I would like to declare that the hereditary power succeeded by the third generation Kim Jong-un will not last long.

In spite of seemingly smooth handover of the power to Kim Jong-un, North Korea, as a matter of fact, is ruled under the guardianship due to the incompetency of Kim Jong-un who has become the leader of the nation only because he is the son of Kim Jong-il.

Jang Seong-taek, Kim Jong-un's uncle and his followers hold the political control of North Korea, and purge anyone who opposes or has different opinion from them. Anyone opposes him disappears overnight and is sent to a political prison camp.

The fact that there is a guardian who can substitute the power of the dictator under the absolute dictatorship like North Korea directly contradicts the fundamental characteristics of dictatorship. That is, that guardian is the first one that should be removed for Kim Jong-un to seize complete control over the country.

So for Jang Seong-taek and his followers, it is a question when it would be the best time to get rid of Kim Jong-un; before he learns and understands the dynamics of power? Or they should wait a little bit longer and enjoy watching their 'little prince' playing stupid.

Without knowing such circumstances, Kim Jong-un continues to make the world as well as North Korea question about his spontaneous actions which are seemingly out of rebellion against his late father who did not hand practical power to the successor before he died, reckless to try new things, and controlled by Jang Seong-taek and other puppet masters.

If we look at North Korea carefully, we can realize that the allegedly well-organized and perfectly controlled society under Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il is now gone, but filled with the futile ambition of a reckless and arrogant young dictator.

These days ordinary North Koreans have become totally indifferent and cynical about the Kim Jong-un regime. Their indifference and lack of loyalty which contradicts the so-called 'loyalty competition' among political elites make the power structure of North Korean society very fragile which has larger top than the bottom in terms of level of support to the regime, so that the slightest shock can destroy the whole system.

We see that the end of the dictatorship is coming, however, we work harder than ever for the democratization of North Korea since we know that the suffering of North Korean people can be worsened than under Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il's reign if we are off guard at any moment.

Free North Korea Radio, which has been in existence for seven years until today, informs North Koreans about the preposterous scheme of the North Korean government faster than anyone else. At the same time, we advertise the superiority of democracy and the fundamentals of capitalism to the North Korean public who have begun to understand the values of a market-based economy since the failed currency reform.

We are informing the people of North Korea of the end of Kim Jong-un, who makes the Korean Workers Party work for the deification of his late father and grandfather and has only inherited the aftermath of failure and disgrace from his father, that they should instead be the frontiers of the revolution and create another Jasmine Revolution inside North Korea.

As we continue our work unwearingly, on August 19th, North Korean regime which considers our work like a thorn in the side, intimidated Free North Korea Radio saying we plotted to destroy the statues of Kim Il-sung and they would blow up the station and hunt us down to the end of the earth.

During last 7 years, they kept threatening us by sending packages with bloody axes, giving calls and emails to demand to stop the broadcasting, naming our names in the newspaper and blackmailing to kill our family left in North Korea, but I and defectors working in FNKR would never have give in to those threats.

It is our strong will that we would never give in to the dictator, and hereby I would give my promise that until the day that our brothers and sisters in North Korea become liberated, we Free North Korea Radio would continue to broadcast.

So we are asking for the help and support from members of US Congress.

Once again, I would like to ask for your concern on the work of defectors; we who lived under inhumane conditions, whose rights were all deprived and treated like an animal under the dictatorship, now produce films, broadcast the radio program, and send flyers of hope back to North Korea. More than ever, we need your support.

Thank you very much.