

NORTH KOREA: HUMAN RIGHTS UPDATE AND INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION ISSUES

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN
RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

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NORTH KOREA: HUMAN RIGHTS UPDATE AND INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION ISSUES

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS
AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building. Hon. James A. Leach [Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific] presiding.

Mr. LEACH. The Committee will come to order. Chairman Smith and I, and Mr. Faleomavaega, are pleased to call this meeting to order, and while these proceedings represent our fifth hearing focused on North Korean human rights issues, and our third timed to coincide with the annual events of North Korea Freedom Week, today's schedule contains two notable firsts.

First, we are pleased to welcome Mr. Jay Lefkowitz in his inaugural appearance before the Congress as Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea. That position was created when President Bush signed the North Korean Human Rights Act into law 18 months ago.

The act, which was a key legislative initiative of this Committee, was intended to promote human rights, humanitarian transparency, and refugee protection for the people of North Korea.

As emphasized in our last two oversight hearings and a February letter to Secretary Rice, many in Congress have been dissatisfied with the pace and extent of the implementation of that law. As of today the United States still has not accepted a single North Korean refugee for domestic resettlement, notwithstanding the requirements of Title 3 of the act.

Similarly, the Administration has not requested a specific appropriation for any of the activities authorized by the act. We hope that Special Envoy Lefkowitz will have more encouraging news to share on these fronts, and we look forward to hearing his plans for the months ahead.

Second, this is the first Congressional hearing to focus on North Korea's abduction of foreign citizens. We are fortunate to have such a notable panel witnesses, all of whom traveled from overseas to be here today.

Reports from defectors and returned abductees have indicated that North Korea may be holding abductees from as many 12 coun-

tries. The abduction of foreign citizens and particularly of children contravenes the most basic tenets of a civilized society.

These kidnappings are not primarily national, international, political, or strategic issues. They are issues pertaining most fundamentally to the human family. Every abductee was a person—a son, daughter, mother, father, brother, or sister—whose absence is painfully felt by those left behind.

On that basis the American people stand in complete solidarity with the abductees and their families who so deeply desire to be reunited. That solidarity was the basis for the overwhelming House vote last July in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 168, which calls on North Korea to release all kidnapping victims and POWs, and to provide a full accounting for all other abducted foreign citizens.

One recent, unexpected convergence in the abductions saga has led some to hope that perhaps efforts to resolve these abduction cases could present an opportunity for humanitarian cooperation between South Korea and Japan at a time when other deeply felt issues of history threaten to overshadow the shared interests of two of the United States' closest Asian allies.

It was reported earlier this month that DNA tests indicate that the father of the daughter born to a Japanese abductee, Megumi Yokota, in North Korea was likely Kim Young Nam, a South Korean citizen who was 16 when he disappeared from a South Korean beach in 1978. North Korea's criminal acts have entwined the fates of those families who share a grief more primal than any nationalist ideology.

Because we are subject to fairly rigorous time constraints today, I would appreciate whatever efforts my colleagues could make to keep their opening remarks appropriately brief.

We note with gratitude the presence of so many esteemed visitors, including former abductees, family members, and parliamentarians. I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses, and I have quite a bit of a longer statement that I would request unanimous consent to place in the record, as well as unanimous consent that any other statements be placed in the record. First, let me turn to Chairman Smith.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Leach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES A. LEACH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IOWA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

I am pleased to convene this joint Subcommittee hearing with Chairman Smith. While these proceedings represent our fifth hearing focused on North Korean human rights issues, and our third timed to coincide with the annual events of North Korean Freedom Week, today's schedule contains two notable firsts.

First, we are pleased to welcome Mr. Jay Lefkowitz in his inaugural appearance before the Congress as Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea. That position was created when President Bush signed the North Korean Human Rights Act into law eighteen months ago. The Act, which was a key legislative initiative of this Committee, was intended to promote human rights, humanitarian transparency, and refugee protection for the people of North Korea. As emphasized in our last two oversight hearings and a February letter to Secretary Rice, many in Congress have been dissatisfied with the pace and extent of the implementation of that law. As of today, the United States still has not accepted a single North Korean refugee for domestic resettlement, notwithstanding the requirements of Title 3 of the Act. Similarly, the Administration has not requested a specific appropriation for any of the activities authorized by the Act. We hope that Special Envoy Lefkowitz will have

more encouraging news to share on these fronts, and we look forward to hearing his plans for the months ahead.

Second, this is the first Congressional hearing to focus on North Korea's abduction of foreign citizens. We are fortunate to have such a notable panel of witnesses, all of whom traveled from overseas to be here today. A longstanding subject of speculation and denial, the abduction issue was suddenly thrust upon the attentions of the world in September 2002, when Chairman Kim Jong Il unexpectedly admitted to Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi that North Korea had been responsible for kidnapping 13 Japanese citizens during the 1970s and 1980s. Of that number, five living abductees returned to Japan the following month, while North Korea claimed that the other eight had died. Among those eight was Megumi Yokota, who was only 13 years old when North Korean agents kidnapped her in November 1977. Those admissions provoked widespread outrage among the Japanese public, which has subsequently focused on securing a credible accounting from North Korea, and on allowing the North Korean family members of the returned abductees to join them in Japan, neither of which has yet occurred.

Although they have not received the same level of public or governmental attention as the Japanese cases, South Korean abduction victims are far more numerous. Of the tens of thousands of South Koreans forcibly taken to the North during the Korean War, the South Korean government estimates that approximately 600 POWs are still alive and held in North Korea, in violation of the 1953 Armistice Agreement. Many South Korean civilians have been abducted to the North in the years since the war, and Seoul estimates that around 485 remain there today. They have included fishermen and sailors kidnapped at sea, hijacked airline passengers, students, teachers, and others. More recently, North Korean agents apparently have abducted South Korean pastors working to assist North Korean refugees inside China, including one U.S. permanent resident, Rev. Kim Dong Shik, in January 2000. Last April, the Seoul Central District Court reportedly convicted a North Korean agent for his involvement in Rev. Kim's kidnapping.

Reports from defectors and returned abductees have indicated that North Korea may be holding abductees from as many as twelve countries. The abduction of foreign citizens—and particularly of children—contravenes the most basic tenets of a civilized society. These kidnappings are not primarily national, international, political, or strategic issues; they are issues pertaining most fundamentally to the human family. Every abductee was a person—a son, daughter, mother, father, brother, or sister—whose absence is painfully felt by those left behind. On that basis, the American people stand in complete solidarity with the abductees and their families, who so deeply desire to be reunited. That solidarity was the basis for the overwhelming House vote last July in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 168, which calls on North Korea to release all kidnapping victims and POWs, and to provide a full accounting for all other abducted foreign citizens.

One recent, unexpected convergence in the abductions saga has led some to hope that perhaps efforts to resolve these abduction cases could present an opportunity for humanitarian cooperation between South Korea and Japan, at a time when other deeply felt issues of history threaten to overshadow the shared interests of two of the United States' closest Asian allies. It was reported earlier this month that DNA tests indicate that the father of the daughter born to Japanese abductee Megumi Yokota in North Korea was likely Kim Young Nam, a South Korean citizen who was 16 when he disappeared from a South Korean beach in 1978. North Korea's criminal acts have entwined the fates of those families, who share a grief more primal than any nationalist ideology.

Because we are subject to fairly rigorous time constraints today, I would appreciate whatever efforts my colleagues could make to keep their own opening remarks appropriately brief. We note with gratitude the presence of so many esteemed visitors, including former abductees, family members, and parliamentarians. I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Chairman Leach, and I will ask my full statement be made a part of the record as well.

Mr. LEACH. Of course.

Mr. SMITH. And just to touch on a few highlights. First of all, I want to welcome the Special Envoy, Jay Lefkowitz, who is an extraordinary and very capable diplomat. He worked very honorably and very effectively in the Bush White House for a number of years as deputy assistant to the President for domestic policy.

He was a member of the U.N. and delegation to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. He was also a member of the United States delegation to the International Conference on Anti-Semitism sponsored by the OSCE, of which I Co-Chair, and he did a very, very fine job on that, and is doing a fine job as our Special Envoy.

He is a good man for an extremely tough and demanding job. Mr. Chairman, as you know, North Korea's human rights abuses are a nightmare of epic proportions. The Government of North Korea is a totalitarian Stalinist regime. Its dictator, Kim Jong-il, brain washes citizens into following a cult of personality that demands god-like reverence.

He enjoys a decadent omnipotent lifestyle, while hundreds of thousands of children and their parents starve to death. Inside North Korea there is no genuine freedom of speech, religion, or assembly.

And now Kim Jong-il is threatening international security through his reckless nuclear weapons program. President Bush was clearly correct in labeling North Korea as part of the axis of evil.

Persecution and starvation in North Korea have caused many thousands of North Koreans to flee their homeland, primarily to China. Yet, despite China's obligations as a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the status of refugees, and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees, China forcibly returns North Koreans seeking asylum to North Korea, where they routinely face torture and imprisonment, and sometimes execution.

Eyewitnesses have testified before Congress and before our Subcommittees and have told horrific stories of savage torture, forced abortions, and persecution of Christians. Mothers have seen their newborn children killed in front of their very eyes by North Korean prison guards.

Last October, I chaired a hearing on the horrific problem of North Korean's trafficked into China. Mrs. Chao told us how a food distribution center in Pyongyang stopped distributing food at the end of June 1995.

In 1997, she jumped into the Tuman River to find her daughter who had gone to China looking for food. Much later, she found out that all Chinese living close to the border were involved in human trafficking.

They bought and sold North Korean girls, and with the help of North Koreans, Mrs. Chao was hired as a maid, she and several other North Koreans were regularly raped during that terrible ordeal.

Another man bought her and eventually she found her daughter and then made their way to asylum in South Korea, and then came and testified about her unbelievable ordeal. Not content with forcing his own citizens to live in hell on earth, the North Korean regime since the end of the Korean War over 50 years ago has engaged in a heartless, and in an absolutely barbaric policy of kidnapping South Korean and Japanese citizens.

There have been credible reports that North Korea may have abducted citizens from many other countries as Mr. Leach noted a moment ago, in addition to South Korea and Japan, including persons from China, Europe, and the Middle East.

Last year we passed H. Con.Res. 168, and our hope is that the Senate will soon take up that legislation. North Korea's abductions are integral to espionage and terrorist activities. Abductees have been kidnapped to work as spies, to train North Korean agents in language, accents, and culture, and to steal identities.

Thousands of South Koreans and hundreds of Japanese have suffered and died as pawns of this twisted regime. The families of the abductees have suffered untold grief and suffering and waited years, if ever, to learn the fate of their loved ones. Often they are never seen again. Rarely do abductees escape, and rarely are they set free.

Their families are tormented with false reports of death, false remains of deceased abductees, and unbelievable tales of their fates. According to a 1956 survey conducted by the Korean National Red Cross, 7,034 South Koreans were abducted during the Korean War, between 1950 and 1953.

Pyongyang has refused to allow the release of a single wartime abductee, despite a provision allowing civilian abductees to return home in the Korean armistice agreement, a document signed by representatives of the United States, North Korea, and China, in 1953.

Seoul estimates that approximately 485 civilian abductees remain alive and detained in North Korea. For more than 50 years, North Korea has held South Korean prisoners of war captured during the Korean War, in clear violation of the agreement.

The South Korean Minister of National Defense estimated that 542 captives were still alive in North Korea. We must also remember the names of over 8,000 United States servicemen from the Korean War remain unaccounted for in North Korea.

We must never relent in our efforts to bring home all of our soldiers, alive or dead, or to provide them with a dignified burial place. The United States was compelled for reasons of safety to suspend our joint field operations with North Korea to identify and recover the remains of United States servicemen lost in North Korea.

These activities are unfortunately not likely to resume anytime soon. This is a very, very important hearing as I think my colleagues understand, and I do want to thank all of those who have taken the time, especially the family members of missing abducted children and family members, for making their way to be here. We must begin a new day in trying to recover and to get them to safety. I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Thank you, Mr. Leach. I would like to note that this is the third joint hearing in two years we have co-chaired on human rights and North Korea, and on the implementation of the *North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004*, which Congressman Leach authored, and of which I am proud to have been an original co-sponsor. Our previous hearings were on October 27, 2005, *Lifting the Veil: Getting the Refugees Out, Getting Our Message In: An Update on the Implementation of the North Korean Human Rights Act*, and on April 28, 2005, *The North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004*.

Congress passed the landmark *North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004* during the last Congress. While President Bush has publicly stated his concern for human rights in North Korea (and reportedly raised the case of one North Korean refugee

with Chinese President Hu last week), the testimony we heard at our previous hearings raised serious concerns among us in Congress about the slow implementation of the Act. The U.S. has not yet accepted a single North Korean refugee for domestic resettlement since passage of the Act. *The Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007*, which I authored, and which passed the House overwhelmingly (351–78) with bi-partisan support, would require the Secretary of State to submit a detailed description of the measures she has undertaken to secure the cooperation and permission of the governments of countries in East and Southeast Asia to facilitate United States processing of North Koreans seeking protection as refugees. While the Senate has failed to act on the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, we hope to include this important provision in appropriate legislation in the near future.

This will be the first appearance before Congress of Jay Lefkowitz as Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea, since his appointment by President Bush last year. I was greatly encouraged by Jay's appointment. I have known him for a long time, and we worked together very well when he was Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy at the White House, when he was a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, and when he was a member of the U.S. delegation to the International Conference on Anti-Semitism sponsored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. He is a good man for an extremely tough job.

North Korea's human rights abuses are a nightmare of epic proportions. The Government of North Korea is a totalitarian, Stalinist regime. Its dictator, Kim Jong-Il, brainwashes citizens into following a cult of personality and demands godlike reverence. He enjoys a decadent, opulent lifestyle while hundreds of thousands of children and their parents starve to death. Inside North Korea, there is no genuine freedom of speech, religion, or assembly. And now Kim Jong-Il is threatening international security through his reckless nuclear weapons program. President Bush was clearly correct in labeling North Korea as part of the "axis of evil." Persecution and starvation in North Korea have caused many thousands, of North Koreans to flee their homeland, primarily into China.

Yet, despite China's obligations as a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, China forcibly returns North Koreans seeking asylum to North Korea, where they routinely face torture and imprisonment, and sometimes execution. Eye witnesses have testified before Congress and told horrific stories of savage torture, forced abortions, and persecution of Christians. Mothers have seen their newborn children killed right in front of their very eyes by North Korean prison guards.

Last October, I chaired a hearing on the horrific problem of North Koreans trafficked in China. Mrs. Kyeong-Sook CHA, told us how the Food Distribution Center in Pyongyang stopped distributing food at the end of June 1995. In October 1997 she jumped into Tumen River to find her daughter who had gone to China looking for food. Much later, she found out all Chinese living close to the border were involved in human trafficking. They bought and sold North Korean girls with the help of North Koreans. Mrs. Cha was hired as a maid in Hwa Ryong City along with several other North Korean women who were regularly raped. Another man bought her daughter for 4,000 Yuan (about \$400), and they worked for him as servants at his house. They escaped again, but were eventually kidnapped by human traffickers two months later. Eventually Mrs. Cha and her daughter were sent by the Chinese police to a North Korean detention center, where she found out her second daughter had also been trafficked. Mrs. Cha and her three children finally found her way to South Korea in June 2003.

Not content with forcing its own citizens to live in its hell on earth, the North Korean regime, since the end of the Korean War over fifty years ago, has engaged in a heartless and barbaric policy of kidnapping South Korean and Japanese citizens. There have been credible reports that North Korea may have abducted citizens from many other countries in addition to South Korea and Japan, including persons from China, Europe, and the Middle East. Congressman Leach and I are among the cosponsors of H. ConRes. 168, which condemns the North Korea for the abductions and continued captivity of citizens of the Republic of Korea and Japan. It rightly brands these kidnappings as acts of terrorism and gross violations of human rights. The House passed this resolution overwhelmingly (362–1) in July 2005, and it now awaits Senate action. We urgently hope the Senate will act soon on this important bill.

North Korea's abductions are integral to espionage and terrorist activities. Abductees have been kidnapped to work as spies, to train North Korean agents in language, accents, and culture, and to steal identities. Thousands of South Koreans and hundreds of Japanese have suffered and died as pawns of this twisted regime.

The families of the abductees have suffered untold grief and suffering, waiting years, if ever, to learn the fate of their loved ones. Often they never see them again. Rarely do abductees escape, rarely are they set free. Their families are tormented with false reports of death, false remains of deceased abductees, and unbelievable tales of their fates. According to a 1956 survey conducted by the Korean National Red Cross, 7,034 South Korean civilians were abducted during the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. Pyongyang has refused to allow the release of a single wartime abductee despite a provision allowing civilian abductees to return home in the Korean War Armistice Agreement, a document signed by representatives from the United States, North Korea, and China in 1953. Seoul estimates that approximately 485 civilian abductees remain alive and detained in North Korea.

For more than fifty years, North Korea has held South Korean prisoners-of-war captured during the Korean War, in clear violation of that agreement. The South Korean Ministry of National Defense estimated in 2005 that 542 captives were still alive in North Korea. These South Korean POWs served under the United Nations Command, fighting alongside their American and Allied fellow soldiers. These are brothers in arms, whom we and are other allies must never forget. POWs who have successfully escaped from North Korea have testified that South Korean POWs have been forced to perform hard labor for decades, often in mines, and are harshly treated by the Pyongyang regime.”

We must also remember that the remains of over 8,000 U.S. servicemen from the Korean War remain unaccounted for in North Korea. We must never relent in our efforts to bring home all our soldiers, alive or dead, or to provide them with dignified burial places. The U.S. was compelled for reasons of safety to suspend our Joint Field Operations (JFAs) with North Korea to identify and recover the remains of U.S. servicemen lost in North Korea. These activities are unfortunately not likely to resume any time soon. We earnestly hope and pray that North Korea will create the necessary conditions to allow us to resume this sacred duty.

This will be the first Congressional hearing on North Korea’s abduction of foreign citizens. We will hear testimony from those who have been kidnapped, and from those who have lost loved ones. They will help us to convince the American people, and the world community, of the enormity of the evil we confront in North Korea.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, very much, Mr. Smith. Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to associate myself with the comments for the record made earlier by you, Mr. Chairman, and also Chairman Smith, for this very important hearing.

I also would like to offer my personal welcome to Mr. Lefkowitz for his presence and testimony that we are looking forward from hearing from him. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding today’s hearing, which I am pleased to associate myself with, with the Members of both of these Subcommittees.

Eighteen months ago, President Bush signed the North Korean Human Rights Act into law. Facilitating the implementation of the law, the act directed the appointment of a Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea. Today’s hearing marks the first Congressional appearance of Mr. Jay Lefkowitz as Special Envoy since his appointment by President Bush last August, 4 months after the act’s deadline for an initial Congressional report from the envoy.

While President Bush has publicly affirmed his concern for human rights in North Korea, as was noted in a February letter to Secretary Rice, signed by the Members of this Committee, including myself.

In the year-and-a-half since the enactment of the North Korean Human Rights Act, the Administration has not yet requested the appropriation of any of the \$24 million in annual funds authorized by this act, and the United States has not yet accepted a single North Korean refugee for domestic resettlement.

The Committee has requested that Special Envoy Lefkowitz provide us with an update on the implementation of the act, and hopefully that we will find some resolution to some of the problems have been expressed in the provisions of the act.

I would also like to offer my personal welcome to some of our friends who have traveled all the way from Japan to bear as witnesses in some of the problems that we are faced with in that current relationship with human rights abuses in North Korea, and some of the citizens that have been abducted, especially in the country of our good friends from Japan who are here as well. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from witnesses this morning.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Faleomavaega follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. Chairmen, Ranking Member Payne:

I thank you for holding today's hearing and I am pleased to associate myself with your efforts in promoting human rights in North Korea. Eighteen months ago, President Bush signed the North Korean Human Rights Act (P.L. 108-133) into law. To facilitate implementation of the law, the Act directed the appointment of a Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea.

Today's hearing marks the first Congressional appearance of Mr. Jay Lefkowitz as Special Envoy since his belated appointment by President Bush last August, four months after the Act's deadline for an initial Congressional report from the Envoy. While President Bush has publicly affirmed his concern for human rights in North Korea, as was noted in a February letter to Secretary Rice signed by a number of Members (including Chairmen Hyde, Leach, Smith, and Royce, and Ranking Members Lantos and myself), in the year and a half since enactment of the North Korean Human Rights Act, the Administration has not yet requested the appropriations of any of the \$24 million in annual funds authorized by the Act, and the United States has not accepted a single North Korean refugee for domestic resettlement.

The Committee has requested that Special Envoy Lefkowitz provide us with an update on implementation of the Act and on his action plans for the months ahead and I look forward to his testimony.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you, Eni. Ed, do you have a statement?
Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Than you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think the world faces a very grave humanitarian challenge on the Korean peninsula, and it is one that I am afraid the international community has been far too relaxed about.

I have taken several tours of the DMZ and during those tours I have seen the United States and the Republic of Korea's best soldiers. And I remember looking across to see the North Korean outposts, and noticing that the soldiers there were very small, much, much smaller than their South Korean counterpart.

And of course we asked why. What doctors tell us is that after years of malnutrition, the growth of these soldiers was stunted. But you have to put this into perspective, because a North Korean guard who is patrolling the DMZ will be the best trained and best fed of their force.

So where does that leave the average North Korean citizen? I think we all know and fear the answer, and for me I have seen that answer when we sat down with people who have escaped from North Korea. Some of the most malnourished people I have ever seen in my life. Some of the most stunted cases of growth that I

have seen has been among those children and their parents who have escaped.

As we know the North Korean regime apports and withholds resources based upon perceived citizen loyalty, and from 1994 to 1998, at least two million North Koreans perished from starvation and related diseases, while nearly 50 percent of North Korean children are malnourished to the point that it threatens their physical and mental health.

A recent study found that 13 million people, over half of the population, continue to suffer from starvation and malnutrition, and this is intentional policy by North Korea. I have spoken with the previous minister of propaganda who defected, and he told me how the resources the government felt were to go into weapons systems and into the military, but not to feeding the people.

And due to these conditions, North Koreans have fled their country by the thousands to their neighbor, China. And this act of fleeing from North Korea speaks volumes. Ironically, many of these defectors seek a taste of freedom in China, where there is not much freedom, but there is more there than in North Korea, and at least some can get food there.

And despite the human rights abuses, they flee because the situation is so intolerable in North Korea. Everything is relative, but sadly most of these refugees do not find the safety that they desire because they are repatriated with North Korea, where they face a harsh condition of going to a gulag because—and going to a gulag often is a death sentence, but sometimes they are simply put to death because it is a crime to leave North Korea.

I talked to one young woman whose brother was captured when she fled, and he was shot. To that end, I am convinced that a concentrated international focus on the North Korean regime is necessary, and I would also like to briefly mention that for the first time Free North Korea Radio, a program driven completely by North Korean defectors, will be transmitted into North Korea on medium wave transmission, giving many North Koreans a much needed source of outside information.

I have long been a supporter of Freedom Radio, and I am glad to see this program getting under way, and Mr. Chairman, I really thank you for holding this hearing, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you very much, Mr. Royce. Ambassador Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and I, too, want to join my colleagues in thanking you for holding this hearing. North Korea's abduction of Japanese, South Koreans, as well as citizens of other nationalities, represents in my mind an incredible heinous and despicable violation of the fundamental rights of man.

Kim Jong-il's incredible admission that North Korea has been responsible for the abduction of 13 Japanese citizens during the 1970s and 1980s lays bare the stark reality of a failed state that stoops to an indescribable low level in an effort to prop up a government that has failed its people absolutely on both a physical and spiritual level.

So I welcome Special Envoy Lefkowitz, as well as the second panel of witnesses, who will focus on these abduction issues. The implementation of the North Korean Human Rights Act, or some would say the lack thereof, will be, and I am certain a topic of much discussion.

I, as other Members of the two Subcommittees, am concerned about the reports that the United States Embassy personnel have denied access to North Koreans who are seeking political asylum.

It is my understanding that only a little over a dozen North Korean asylum seekers are currently in the United States. Many of them are located in the Los Angeles area. I do represent all of Koreatown in Los Angeles.

And I would think that one way to create change in North Korea, the so-called hermit kingdom, is to open its doors so that the world can see what is really going on there. Also, I would be interested in learning what efforts our country is making to settle North Korean refugees in the United States, as well as in third-world countries, and also what role the abduction issue has played in the Six-Party Talks.

So again I welcome you, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to the testimony.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you very much, Ms. Watson. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ambassador Lefkowitz, thank you very much for your service, and I am very grateful, Mr. Chairman, that we are having this hearing on the very important issues of North Korea. I appreciate your service, Ambassador, to promote a better lifestyle and human rights for the people of North Korea.

My perspective 3 years ago, thanks to the leadership of Congressman Kurt Weldon, I had the opportunity to visit Pyongyang. I saw the struggling society there. We later left for Seoul, and I saw a vibrant society there. Never a more greater contrast that could ever exist on earth. So I am just really hopeful for the future.

Additionally, I want to thank our visitors who are here from Japan and South Korea. On the global war on terrorism, we gratefully appreciate our partnership, our alliance. My wife, Roxanne, who is here today, we are very proud that one of our sons served for a year in Iraq with the troops from Japan, and we greatly appreciate the support of Japan in the war on terrorism.

I have also had the extraordinary opportunity to visit with the South Korean troops in Afghanistan, and I have seen the tremendous work of the provincial reconstruction teams helping build in Iraq and Afghanistan civil societies that will help us win the war on terrorism, protect the people of America, protect the people of Japan and Korea. Thank you, and God bless you, and appreciate you being here today.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you, Joe. Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be very brief in my remarks. I want to thank the Chairman for holding this hearing again today. I had the distinct honor to meet with the families in my office a couple of days ago, and I want to thank them for coming all the way here to the United States, to once again make sure that not only the Congress and the United States people, but

the world, is aware of this tragedy that has been visited upon your families by North Korea.

We had had the honor to meet with you a number of times in the past, but you have to go through this over and over again, shows what an awful thing this is, but it also shows your courage to stick with this, and ultimately hopefully to prevail.

The behavior of North Korea in this matter and many other matters, but this one in particular, is so hard. It is so bizarre as to be almost incomprehensible by most people in America and around the world.

There is just no excuse for North Korea not fully cooperating with the families to reunite or at least give every effort to get information relative to what has happened if there are family members that are not alive still, and to fully cooperate, and to allow experts to go in and use the latest technology, whether it be DNA or whatever, to find out for sure where these people are.

There is just no excuse that North Korea is not cooperating with the families, and the Congress has in the past condemned North Korea's behavior, and we urge them to cooperate in this effort.

And the gentlelady from California mentioned about their acknowledgement of the 13 abductees. Let us not ever lose sight that there may be far more abductees than just those 13 from Japan and from other countries, South Korea and others as well.

And the world needs to shine a light on this tragedy and to do everything possible to put pressure on North Korea to finally fully cooperate and reunite families if at all possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, sir. Mr. Boozman.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to thank you and Chairman Smith, and the Ranking Members, for holding the hearing.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you, sir. If there are no further comments, let me turn to Ambassador Lefkowitz. The Ambassador is Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea at the United States Department of State.

He was appointed by President Bush in August 2005. He is the first to fill that position, which was created by the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004. Previously, he served as deputy assistant to the President for domestic policy, and as general counsel to the Office of Management and Budget. Ambassador Lefkowitz, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAY LEFKOWITZ, SPECIAL ENVOY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Smith, and Members of the Committee. I am also very honored to share in this hearing today with the brave members of the families, the Japanese families who have suffered really the most brutal form of state-sponsored terror; the abduction of loved ones, young children, from their own homes, and from their own communities, and to have them taken to a far and distant land by a regime that brutalizes its own citizens.

And we can only imagine with terror and shudder at what they must be doing to those whom they abduct. So I am honored to share this platform today, and I want to thank all of you on the Committee for your leadership on this issue, for really being the driving force behind the North Korea Human Rights Act.

There is a direct link between the prevalence of freedom in the world and the prospects for security and peace. President Bush articulated this idea, which has a long heritage in America's view of the world very clearly in his second inaugural address.

As the President's Special Envoy, my mission is to help one of the world's most oppressed people secure recognition for their inalienable rights, including ultimately their right to government by their own consent.

The other concerns that we and our allies have with North Korea, the counterfeiting of our currency, the smuggling of drugs, the trafficking in human beings, the effort to build a nuclear arsenal, and to threaten their neighbors with war. These are not merely coincidental to the human rights issue.

Rather, they are the predictable conduct of a government that possesses no apparent respect for the rights of its own citizens. A key way to empower the North Korean people is to force a ray of light through the veil that Kim Jong-il has drawn over North Korea.

The propaganda that he uses to suppress his people can be countered only by information about the outside world, and information about what is actually going on in North Korea. This can be achieved through enhanced radio broadcasting and other means to disseminate the type of news and information that those of us who live in freedom take for granted, but which is hidden from the people of North Korea.

Most North Koreans cannot travel abroad or even domestically. All broadcasting is controlled by the State. Radios even come fixed to a single State propaganda channel. There are, however, some hopeful signs that information is beginning to reach the North Korean people.

Defectors' surveys suggest that many North Koreans have actually modified their radios, and know of others who have done so. And the same surveys indicate that the number of radios smuggled from abroad may in fact have increased substantially.

This presents the United States and its allies with an opportunity to empower North Koreans through broadcasting, both with traditional tools like Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America, and also importantly by supporting defector groups, and by supporting and sponsoring defector programming so that those democracy advocates who speak the language, who share a cultural heritage with the North Korean prisoners, can in fact speak directly to them about what lies behind their borders.

Defectors have told me that one of the most important things sustaining them in North Korea was the ability to have some link with the outside world. Just yesterday, I met with a North Korean defector, a former member of the North Korean military, who told me that he was first inspired to seek freedom and to defect when as a member of the military, he was able clandestinely to access South Korean radio.

And he heard the world of difference between the two countries. Broadcasting made the difference for him and it can make the difference for countless others. With more information the North Korean people will learn that just to their south there is a vibrant and free democracy, a country not long ago held again by despotic rulers, today boasting the twelfth largest economy in the world, and a great friend of the United States.

Another key objective of my duties as Special Envoy, as clearly directed by this Congress and by this Committee is to do more for the North Korean refugees. Somewhere between 20,000 and 50,000 North Koreans are currently in Northeast China, and indeed there are estimates from some of the NGOs that suggest that there may be well over 100,000.

Since the 1950s nearly 8,000 North Koreans have been resettled in South Korea, but most, indeed the vast majority, are living in China and living in hiding. They are neglected. They are not treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve, and indeed they are sometimes brutalized by that government, as well as by the North Korean Government.

Just recently a defenseless North Korean woman, Kim Chun-Hee, was sent back forcibly by the Chinese Government to her tormentors in North Korea. She had escaped North Korea bravely and sought refuge at a school in Beijing.

Her return occurred despite the pleas of governments and the United Nations that she be treated humanely. We are still looking for an accounting of Ms. Kim's whereabouts from the Chinese authorities.

President Bush raised this issue with President Hu Jintao last week during his visit, and we will continue to press China to uphold its international obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees, and its 1967 Protocol.

But we will also do more than that. We will press to make it clear to our friends and allies in the region that the United States is prepared to accept North Korean refugees for resettlement here.

The United States has a long tradition of being a refuge for vulnerable people seeking haven from despotic regimes. I know from my own personal experience as an advocate for the rights and freedom of Soviet Jews who were repressed in the 1960s, and 1970s, and 1980s, by the former Soviet Union, that the United States can play a very important role, not only in giving hope to people who live in oppression, but also to creating more international momentum to affect the policies in foreign governments.

And there are steps that we can take in the United States, and I am hopeful and confident that soon we will be able to welcome into the United States and perhaps before this Committee, defectors from North Korea who have resettled in the United States.

There are steps that we can take to help the North Korean people, and we must do that, but there are also steps that we need to avoid, policies that we and our allies and friends need to avoid. Donor nations ought to ensure that our actions will help bring about change in North Korea, and not merely perpetuate the existing intolerable conditions.

For example, we need to ensure that the delivery of humanitarian aid is adequately monitored. If it is not adequately mon-

itored, it may be sold on the black market. It may be used for military purposes. It certainly may not reach the people whom we intend to have humanitarian aid reach.

And if humanitarian aid does not reach the people that it is intended to reach, it is not serving a humanitarian purpose. There are countries in the region who are currently providing largely unmonitored and unrestricted aid to North Korea.

The United States is very proud of the humanitarian aid that we have provided, but now that the North Korean Government has suspended the World Food Program food distribution, reduced the Food Program's monitors from 47 to 10, we have grave concerns about the ability to deliver humanitarian aid effectively.

We have made it clear that we would like to do so, but our delivery of humanitarian aid is going to be conditioned on genuine and responsible monitoring conditions. In addition, press accounts lately have focused on labor practices in the Kaesong industrial complex.

Near Kaesong, a city just north of the DMZ, a city that you can literally look out on from the hills in the DMZ, 11 of 15 companies from South Korea have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to set up a joint economic project that would use North Korean labor.

So far we don't know exactly what is going on in Kaesong. A South Korean official has enthusiastically described it, and I quote, "as a cooperative project, benefiting both the North and the South."

And at the same time a peace project overcoming the wall of the Cold War through economic cooperation. Some day that may be the case, and I have little doubt that today it may in fact be better to be a North Korean worker in Kaesong than elsewhere.

But the question for us, and the question for our allies is whether or not when we invest hundreds of millions of dollars in North Korea that we should be insisting on direct linkage with human rights progress and human rights reform.

And in light of North Korea's track record, what is going on in Kaesong today requires scrutiny and requires international scrutiny. According to some reports, the companies pay a base wage of less than \$2.00 a day per worker, and even part of that is confiscated.

It is paid to the North Korean Government, and not to the workers themselves, and the government then deducts a social wage. We do not know how much money the North Korean workers actually receive.

Finally, on the broader issue of building international support for North Korea human rights, we have seen some positive signs, but not enough. Last fall the United Nations passed with broad support a resolution at the Third Committee condemning the regimes conduct.

But there were some notably exceptions to support for that resolution, and this fall, if we go back and are successful in raising at the United Nations another resolution addressing the conduct of the North Korean regime, I would hope that all of our friends and allies, and particularly our friends and allies in the region, will join in condemning unequivocally the conduct of this regime.

A test of the new United Nations Human Rights Council's effectiveness will be when it reviews all of the rapporteurs carrying over from the Commission on Human Rights, and in particular whether the Special Rapporteur for North Korea will be even maintained.

And if he is maintained, then counsel members should pressure the North Korean Government to let him into the country for the very first time. There are some encouraging signs. When I was in Seoul in December, it was clear to me that many citizens of the Republic of Korea cared deeply about their brethren in the north.

We need to energize people like this at home and abroad to get involved in this issue. Government officials clearly have a role to play in this, but the true leaders of this movement will come as inevitably as they always do from the outside, from the grass roots.

On behalf of the President, I can pledge that the United States will work with other democracies toward the day when North Koreans are free. We will strive to give them hope and to help them assert their inalienable rights.

As President Bush said in a speech in Kyoto last November, "We will not forget the people of North Korea. The 21st century will be freedom century for all Koreans." Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lefkowitz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAY LEFKOWITZ, SPECIAL ENVOY FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

There is a direct link between the prevalence of freedom in the world and the prospects for security and peace. President Bush articulated this idea—which has a long heritage in America's view of the world—very clearly in his second inaugural address.

As I see it, my mission is to help one of the world's most oppressed people secure recognition for their inalienable rights including, ultimately, their right to government by their own consent. The other concerns that we and our allies have with North Korea—the counterfeiting of our currency, the smuggling of drugs, the proliferation of weapons, the effort to build a nuclear arsenal and to threaten their neighbors with war—are not merely coincidental to the human rights issue; rather, they are the predictable conduct of a government that possesses no apparent respect for the rights of its own citizens.

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY

A key way to empower the North Korean people is to force a ray of light through the veil that Kim Jong Il has drawn over North Korea. The propaganda that he uses to suppress his people can be countered only by information about the outside world and information about what is actually going on inside North Korea. This can be achieved through enhanced radio broadcasting and other means to disseminate the type of news and information that the rest of the world takes for granted but which is hidden from the people of North Korea. Most North Koreans cannot travel abroad or even domestically. All broadcasting is controlled by the government. Radios come fixed to a single state propaganda channel.

However, there have been some hopeful signs that information is beginning to reach the North Korean people. Defector surveys suggest that many North Koreans have modified their radios, and know of others who have done so. The same surveys indicate that the number of radios smuggled from abroad may have increased substantially. This presents an opportunity to empower North Koreans through broadcasting: both with traditional tools like Radio Free Asia and Voice of America, and by supporting defector groups and democracy activists who can speak directly to their fellow Koreans.

The National Endowment for Democracy has taken the initiative in this area by funding a pilot program to train North Korean defectors and South Korean democracy activists in journalistic and broadcasting standards, and then supporting the broadcasting cost so that they can go on the air for a period of time each day to transmit information into North Korea. We support this project and view it as a pos-

sible precursor to a more robust broadcast platform that creates an open window to North Korea. We have also engaged the Broadcasting Board of Governors to examine ways to increase the quality and the quantity of information transmitted into North Korea by Radio Free Asia and Voice of America.

Defectors have told me that one of the most important things sustaining them in North Korea was the ability to have some link with the outside world. On April 26, I met with a North Korean defector, a former military officer, who said he was inspired to seek freedom based on radio broadcasts from South Korea. Broadcasting made the difference. With more information, the North Korean people increasingly will learn that just to the south, there is a vibrant and free democracy. They will learn that they do not live in a socialist paradise.

Another key objective is to make clear that we need to do more—and we can and will do more—for the North Korean refugees. Approximately 20,000 to 50,000 North Koreans are currently in Northeast China; some NGOs estimate the number is much higher. Since the 1950s, nearly eight thousand North Koreans have resettled in South Korea (nearly 1,400 in 2005 alone). Most refugees are in China. There is no question that they are neglected. They are not treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. Just recently, a defenseless North Korean woman, Kim Chun-Hee, was sent back to her tormentors in North Korea by the Chinese. She had escaped from North Korea and sought refuge at a school in Beijing. Her return occurred despite the pleas of governments and the United Nations that she be treated humanely. We are still looking for an accounting of Ms. Kim's whereabouts from the Chinese authorities. President Bush raised this with Hu Jintao during his visit. We continue to press China to uphold its international obligations under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

We will press to make it clear to our friends and allies in the region that we are prepared to accept North Korean refugees for resettlement here. The United States has a tradition of being a refuge to vulnerable people seeking haven from despotic regimes, and we will do our part to help this vulnerable population.

These are steps that we can take to help the North Korean people but there are also policies that we need to avoid. Donor nations ought to ensure that our actions will help bring about change in North Korea, not just perpetuate existing conditions. For example, we need to ensure that the delivery of humanitarian aid is adequately monitored. The United States is very proud of the humanitarian aid that we have given to North Korea over the last decade to try to help alleviate the conditions of suffering and deprivation by famine. We must continue to insist that any humanitarian aid we provide is monitored to make sure that it is not sold, exported or used for the military or other state-favored constituencies.

When countries provide unrestricted humanitarian aid without proper monitoring, they are not necessarily helping the situation. In the past, we have stated to the North Koreans that the U.S. is willing to increase its food contributions if the North allowed increased monitoring to ensure that the food reaches the people. The North rejected this proposal. We call on countries to provide productive humanitarian aid, but to do it only in a way that clearly serves the humanitarian objective. This is especially necessary since the North Korean government has suspended WFP food distribution for the last four months and reduced the World Food Program's monitors from 47 to 10. The circumstances created by the government leave the future of WFP food assistance in doubt.

Press accounts have focused on labor practices in the Kaesong Industrial Complex. Near Kaesong, a city just north of the Demilitarized Zone, 15 South Korean companies have recently leased space for manufacturing. Eleven of the 15 companies are up and running; another four have projects under way. All would use North Korean labor. So far, the project has pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the North with more to come. A South Korean official enthusiastically described it as "a cooperative project benefiting both the South and the North, and at the same time, a peace project overcoming the wall of the Cold War through economic cooperation." Some day, that may be the case, and I have little doubt that it may be much better to be a North Korean worker in Kaesong today than anywhere else in North Korea. But the real question for the international community is whether we should be insisting on fair treatment for the workers who make goods that will ultimately be sold internationally.

In light of North Korea's track record, what we know about what goes on in Kaesong bears greater scrutiny now of wage practices and some labor conditions. According to some reports, the companies pay a base wage of less than two dollars a day per worker. Many receive more with overtime. These wages are paid to a North Korean agency in U.S. dollars, not to the workers themselves. The North Korean government deducts a 30 percent "social fee" from the wage, and then pays the workers in North Korean won at the official exchange rate. We do not know how

much the workers actually receive. It is governed by its own law as a special economic zone, with specific regulations determined by a North-South management committee. We encourage the ROK to press the DPRK for the highest standards of transparency and accountability at the Kaesong project and underscore that the international community fully supports efforts by the ROK in this area.

On the broader issue of building international support for North Korean human rights, we have seen some positive signs. Last fall, the United Nations passed with broad support a resolution at the Third Committee condemning the regime's conduct. We would welcome a clear 'yes' vote on any future resolution from all UN members. Nonetheless, the resolution won with broad support, and we expect that there will be even more support this fall if there is another resolution. A test of the new UN Human Rights Council's effectiveness will be when it reviews all rapporteurs carrying over from the Commission on Human Rights, and whether the Special Rapporteur for North Korea will be maintained. If he is, Council members should pressure Pyongyang to let him into the country for the first time.

There are some encouraging signs. When I was in Seoul in December it was clear to me that many in South Korea care deeply about their brethren in the North. We need to energize people like this at home and abroad to get involved in this issue. Government officials clearly have a role to play in this, but the true leaders of this movement are likely to come from outside of government.

The U.S. will work with other democracies toward the day when North Koreans are free. We will strive to give them hope and help them to assert their inalienable rights. As President Bush said in a speech in Kyoto last November, "We will not forget the people of North Korea. The 21st century will be freedom's century for all Koreans."

Mr. LEACH. Thank you very much, Ambassador. Let me first begin by saying that I appreciate very much your statement that you hopefully would be providing a haven for North Korean refugees in the near future.

As you know, we have not as yet, and this is a very awkward circumstance because the law is very firm. Do you believe that adequate resources are being applied to the issue?

And, for instance, the Administration, despite its commitment to this area, did not request funds. Do you have any reasoning that you want to give behind that?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think on the issue of refugees and refugee assistance, the question is not principally one of funding. When I was sworn in to my position in one of the very first discussions that I had with both the President and the Secretary, it was made clear, and the President gave me his full support for moving our policies toward a position where we will be able to accept refugees.

It is a complicated issue. There were domestic issues that we had to address. Obviously there are security concerns, and we need to adequately evaluate people before they come into the country. And I believe that we have successfully cut through any of the bureaucratic hurdles that existed when I assumed my position last August.

In addition though to the domestic hurdles, there are also foreign hurdles as well. The refugees who bravely escaped from North Korea primarily do so into China, and as you know, China has not been at all cooperative in trying to help us or help the High Commissioner for Refugees facilitate the movement of these refugees.

And so we have faced challenges both in gaining access to refugees and in screening them for security purposes. I believe that we have made some significant progress in the last couple of months with our friends and allies in the region, and I believe that we are in a position now to begin to process refugees in an appropriate way and in a safe way without jeopardizing their security.

And I am confident, Mr. Chairman, that we will be in a position relatively soon to welcome some North Korean refugees into the United States.

Mr. LEACH. I appreciate that. Before turning to my colleagues, let me note that there is a statutory requirement under Section 107[d] of the Human Rights Act that requires an annual report to Congress on the activities, plans, and funding recommendations that was due on April 15. When can we expect to receive it?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. We had, Mr. Chairman, requested that our legislative affairs bureau consult with Congress to request a brief delay, in part because I was expecting to have the opportunity to come and to testify before the Congress, and to begin to talk about some of our activities.

I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that within the next 6 to 8 weeks that we will be able to prepare a report and submit it, in which we can address in concrete detail some of these issues, both with respect to refugees and also with respect to some of the activities to promote broadcasting that are very much front and center on my agenda.

Mr. LEACH. Well, I appreciate that. I just want to be as clear as I can, because there are differences of judgment on thousands of issues in the world, and I think this is one in which there are shared concerns.

But statutory requirements are not to be taken lightly, and as a legislator, I am obligated to make that as clear as I can. Chairman Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Chairman Leach. Let me ask Mr. Lefkowitz a couple of questions if I could. First, beginning with raising the issue of the abductees. Yesterday, I chaired a hearing on the horrific problem of abductees in Northern Uganda, and the fact that the Lord's Resistance Army under a terrorist by the name of Joseph Kony, has probably kidnapped approximately 38,000 children and turned many of those children into killers in that part of Africa.

My point is kidnapping and abductees is a very, very—and as you pointed out—a very special and heinous crime that is being committed regrettably by the Government of North Korea. And to do so by not just with South Koreans, but also with the Japanese and others.

It just raises the question is anyone safe knowing that this government has engaged in this egregious practice, and has done so for so long. So my question is have they given it the kind of weight that it really deserves?

I would note that it has been raised—and as a matter of fact it has been pointed out—that at the G-8 summit, in the Chair's summary, there was language that was included that said that action is also long overdue for North Korea to respond to the international communities concern over its human rights record and the abductions issue.

It seems to me that while that is a helpful inclusion, it is in the Chairman's statement, it does not have that sense of punch that this is an outrageous crime against humanity being committed by Pyongyang, and that something has to be done much more forcibly. And there is an upcoming summit as we know at the G-8 in July

in Moscow, and the Japanese, the Americans, and all of us will be there. I would hope that you would use your good offices to encourage the President to raise this issue to Putin and all the members of the G-8 to help our friends and our allies, the Japanese, and the South Koreans, and others, to finally at long last get their loved ones back.

It seems to me that very often that such things as the nuclear issue, which is obviously a serious and pressing issue—Iran will probably be a center stage issue there. But this issue shouldn't just be reduced to, helpful as it is, a statement in the Chairman's final recommendation.

The abduction issue is like I said an issue that really needs I think a real push at the G-8 Summit in July in Moscow and is a golden opportunity. Along those same lines if I could, the Human Rights Council.

I was one of those who thought that we should have joined. I understand fully that the Human Rights Council is a flawed follow-on to the Human Rights Commission regrettably, and so much more could have been done.

I think the United Nations has done a disservice to the abuse victims all over the world. Human Rights abuse victims deserve much better than what they have gotten, but that being said, there is at least some good to the Human Rights Council, and I hope that even though we are not running, we would do everything that we can as you have clearly indicated to make sure that the rapporteur system, especially as it relates to North Korea, is conveyed to the new council in a beefed up effort.

This hearing hopefully is a launching pad for more going forward. So on those two issues, the G-8 Summit and the Human Rights Council. And finally the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, as you know visited China last month in part to emphasize China's obligations toward fleeing North Koreans.

And we have held hearings on that as you know, Mr. Leach and I. Are you aware as to whether or not his visit resulted in any kind of progress? It seems to me that the Chinese, and especially with the visit of President Hu Jintao just a few days ago, provided a golden opportunity to say look, China, you have profound obligations that you freely entered into to care for those who are fleeing tyranny in North Korea.

Why are you abrogating your responsibilities and doing so in the clear light of day, and making matters worse as I pointed out earlier? China has also facilitated the problems with the trafficking problem, but because of their non-compliance for the Refugee Convention and other pertinent obligations. That is an egregious violation of freely entered into obligations by China.

And if you could, did President Bush raise the case of Kim Chun Hee, an escaping North Korean that was forcibly repatriated by China, when he met with President Hu Jintao?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, President Bush did raise the issue of Kim Chun Hee, her case directly. As you know, she was the woman forcibly repatriated, and the President raised the issue directly and made it clear that we do ex-

pect China to hold its own end on its international obligations which it signed.

China, like every other country, has to be held accountable to the solemn international obligations to which it commits. I could not agree with you more, Mr. Chairman, that the key test of the United Nations, and indeed any United Nations entity, is how it will be an advocate for human rights.

That is the fundamental question because as Andrei Sakharov said, the famous former Soviet dissident, as Senator Scoop Jackson said many years ago, the best way for us to understand how a country will treat other countries is to look how it treats its own citizens.

And so the issue of human rights is a national security issue for us, and while we have lots of issues to address with North Korea, and we have lots of issues to address with China, the prism through which we evaluate their conduct is very much a human rights prism.

Mr. SMITH. If you could on the G-8, and let me just add to that. As you know so well, and I think it is shared by Members on both sides of the aisle, there are no better friends on the face of the earth than the Japanese and the South Koreans.

The people themselves, the governments, we work very closely on so many issues, and it seems to me that this is a place where we could very significantly enhance our efforts on their behalf and on behalf of their people who have suffered the plight of abductions. And the G-8 is a golden opportunity for that.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, I could not agree with you more, and it is certainly an issue that we will address internally. I know that the President's commitment to this issue is very sincere.

I have spoken on several occasions with him about it. I know that he cares deeply about the issue of Japanese abductions, and again although there are many, many real atrocities being committed by the North Korean regime, the question of international kidnappings is really an exemplar.

And until the North Korean Government is accountable honestly for the whereabouts of every one of the abductees, not only from Japan, but from several other countries as well, it will not have any international legitimacy.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you. Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Chair, I want to thank you and the Committee for this hearing, and for also allowing a very special guest of mine to be up here today. We have Jasmine with us, who is a Girl Scout, and it is Take Your Daughters to Work Today, and my daughter is a little too old to take to work and far away in Minnesota, and so our office has Jasmine today with us.

And as you know, Girl Scouts is an international organization. So I think it is very appropriate to have Jasmine visiting us today at the International Relations Committee.

Sir, I am trying to figure a couple of things out here really quick, because this is a very important issue to be dealt with, and I want to thank the honored guests that we have here, both from South Korea and from Japan, for coming in and sharing what is a very

difficult family situation with us. Have you had an opportunity to travel to North Korea?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I have not had an opportunity to travel to North Korea. One of the issues that I am contemplating and that we are discussing internally is what if any direct contact would be appropriate given some of the activities of the North Korea regime recently, and in particular with respect to their counterfeiting of United States currency and other issues like that.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. In other words, you have not?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Right.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Have you been to South Korea?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I have. I have been to South Korea.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Japan and China?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I have not. I have a trip planned for this late spring, early summer, to Japan, and I am contemplating a trip to China as well.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. And how much time are you able to devote to be up to the United Nations to be working with the people up there who are working on this as Representative Smith pointed out?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I am spending a great deal of my time on these issues, both here in Washington, and in New York. I have an office at the State Department, and a staff at the State Department, and so I am working on this issue at various times throughout the week, meeting with Members of Congress, meeting with foreign officials, meeting with NGOs, and importantly working within our own Government to try to mobilize different parts of our Government, whether it is on solving the refugee issue or addressing broadcasting needs.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Well, about how many hours a week are you working on just this issue, let alone what you are trying to do with the broadcasting and everything else. What is your typical work day like, or work week like, working on this very important issue?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. When you say this issue are you referring to refugees?

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Refugees, everything that you are charged with doing, but refugees in particular. I mean, how many hours a week?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I probably spend somewhere between 25 and 30 hours a week working on this issue. I am a special Government employee, and so I am not a full-time employee of the State Department. But I probably spend about 25 to 30 hours a week on these activities.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Would it be helpful for you if we were able to convince everyone involved that this needs to have more time spent on it? Are you finding that slowly more time is evolving that you are working on these abductee issues in particular?

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I don't think the time is an issue. I think there are coordination issues and I am sure as you know that we have a large government, and a lot of different agencies and bureaus whom we have to work through to achieve different objectives.

I have got a very able staff at the State Department, and I think it is not a question of time or commitment. I think it is simply a question of breaking through various barriers, and trying to accomplish something which is relatively new.

We have never had a Special Envoy focused on North Korea human rights. Obviously when you are dealing with an issue like this it involves a lot of different countries.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Reclaiming my time because I am just about out of it, Mr. Chair, I am glad that you are having this hearing. My son lives in Japan on and off, and he is going back to be living and working there.

And I have had an opportunity to speak to many young Japanese adults, as well as Japanese my age, and very honored elders. This is an issue that is very important to them, as I know it is to the South Koreans.

And I think we show our commitment by the way we honor the people who have been captured, and kidnapped, and held hostage by the level of degree that we show our highest person working on it.

And I know that sometimes there can be cultural differences that aren't understood by us very well in showing respect to this issue. And I really believe that we are at a window of opportunity, both with Korea and China, working with our Asian partners in the area of peace and stability to move forward, and for human rights to move forward.

And so I would like to see us at the very highest level show our commitment and our support, and it is just my personal opinion that the office that you hold needs to reflect that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you very much, Ms. McCollum. Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes, I was going to ask you, Mr. Lefkowitz, if you were aware of a request that I had made to the State Department about American Pastor Philip June Buck, who is being held in China.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I am sorry. One more time?

Mr. ROYCE. Philip June Buck is an American pastor who is being held in China. I made a request to the State Department. He ran shelters for North Korean refugees. He is an American citizen. He was arrested there, and put into prison.

Because of some missionary work that he did in Russia, where he had an automobile accident, he has some severe health problems, and you can imagine what the conditions are like in Chinese prisons, where temperatures fall below zero. He is 68 years of age. And he was detained in May 2005.

And some of the reports that I get from human rights activists about the implementation of this act indicate a somewhat cavalier attitude on the part of some of our personnel concerning issues, how serious issues like this are taken.

And I can assure you that they are taken very seriously by us in Congress. I would like to find out what has happened to the pastor, and I was making that request.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I know that the issue has been raised, and it has actually been elevated to the deputy chief of mission, and I know that our Consular Affairs office has been in touch with him in prison. I will try to report back to you. I don't have any additional information at this point.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, let me make this point. There is a gathering momentum in this country between the AFL-CIO, and Christian groups, and legislators, and human rights groups, for trade sanctions against China unless we get some understanding that there is international norms of civilized behavior.

And one of the things that you do not do is when you have a father who has been shot, and a mother who has been sent to a prison camp, you don't round up the children and turn them back to face their fate in North Korea, where the penalty for leaving the fatherland is a criminal offense.

And frankly China does that, and when it is brought to the attention of our officials in the State Department, I would just like them to understand that there is a gathering storm on this issue.

And that one of the ways to be effective and to resolve it is to get the attention of the Chinese authorities that we are in fact serious about human rights abuses and that the world is serious.

I also mention in my opening statement my support for radio broadcasts into North Korea. Included in the North Korea Human Rights Act was a section authorizing the President to take such actions as may be necessary to increase the availability of information in North Korea.

This section mandated a classified report on actions taken pursuant to this section. To date, I am not aware that such a report has been completed along the lines of the observations made by our Chairman. I think that such a report will be useful to you, Mr. Lefkowitz, and to the Congress.

So I bring your attention to it, and we are waiting and I would just like to point out that in that legislation it says the President is authorized to take such actions as may be necessary to increase the availability of information inside North Korea by increasing resources, including sources such as radios capable of receiving broadcasting from outside North Korea.

The authorization is appropriated to the President of two million dollars for each of the fiscal years 2005 through 2008. Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the act, the Secretary of State, after consultation with the heads of the appropriate Federal departments, shall submit to the Congressional Committees a report in classified form on actions taken pursuant to this section.

As I say, I just would like your response. I mean, we have passed legislation, and we have given the authorization. We would like to see action, and I would like your response.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. I believe, Mr. Congressman, that the BBG has filed the required and requested report. I can certainly provide a copy of that report to your office. I want to say, however, thought that I agree completely with your sentiment and comments about the necessity for the United States to continue to make it absolutely clear to the Chinese Government that on the issue of human rights, particularly with respect to the human rights of North Koreans, that we need them to be accountable.

They are basically the elephant in the room here, and when thousands of North Koreans who are successfully able to break free and get into northern China, for the Chinese Government not to permit the UNHCR to have access, for them to repatriate these

people back to North Korea, where God knows what happens to them, that is a terrible human rights abuse in and of itself.

The President has addressed this issue, and I am sure that we will continue to address the issue with the utmost seriousness.

Mr. ROYCE. China is a member of the international community. By international standards, any North Korean who defects from his homeland is eligible for refugee status due to the fact that defecting itself is criminal.

In other words, if you defect from North Korea, it is an act of treason. But international law, under those conditions, you do not consider this a case of economic refugees. So we have got to figure out a way to take measures that make China understand that they have got to honor the status of these political refugees.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Well, on that score, one of the things that Chairman Smith raised was the visit by the U.N. High Commissioner, Mr. Guterres, to Beijing, and in answer to both of your questions really, while we are certainly glad that he went to Beijing, and we are glad that the Chinese met with him, we have not seen any modification in the Chinese behavior as a result of this visit.

And as long as they continue to ignore their obligations under the 1967 refugee protocol, we may want to start pressing the UNHCR to take things to the next step, and certainly one of the options available that should be on the table is the question of forcing Beijing into arbitration, which is an option under the terms of the refugee treaty.

So again this is something that we are considering discussing with the High Commissioner for Refugees and again we take this issue very, very seriously.

Mr. ROYCE. In closing, the BBG report, I will just say, is not the report that we are speaking of. We look forward to getting that report, but we are looking for the classified report. Thank you very much, Mr. Lefkowitz.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Thank you.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you very much, Mr. Royce. Chairman Smith, do you have anything else?

Mr. SMITH. No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Lefkowitz, thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony, and we wish you well.

Ambassador LEFKOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LEACH. Panel two will be composed of Mrs. Sakie Yokota, who is the mother of Megumi Yokota, a Japanese girl who was abducted by North Korean agents in 1977 at the age of 13. Mrs. Yokota was instrumental in the founding of the organization of the Families of Japanese Victims Kidnapped by North Korea, and I am pleased to have this second opportunity to host Mrs. Yokota here in Washington.

Mr. Koh Myung Sup is a South Korean citizen who was kidnapped by North Korea in 1975 and held for 30 years until he escaped back to the south 10 months ago.

Professor Yoichi Shimada is Vice Chairman of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, and a professor of international politics at Fukuoka Prefectural University.

Mr. Cho Chang-Ho is director of the organization of Korean POW Affairs, and a former South Korean officer who was held as a prisoner-of-war by North Korea for more than four decades until his escape in 1994.

Ms. Lee Mi-il is President of the Korean War Abductees Family Union, which she helped to found in 2000. Her father, whose whereabouts remain unknown, was among the more than 82,000 Koreans abducted to the north during the Korean War.

Let me say before you begin that with unanimous consent the full statements of any of the panelists will be placed in the record and each of you may proceed as you see fit. I would indicate to my colleagues that in terms of Floor action that I am informed that voting is likely to commence on the House Floor around 12:15. We will begin with Mrs. Yokota and you may proceed as you see fit. Mrs. Yokota.

**STATEMENT OF MRS. SAKIE YOKOTA, MOTHER OF MEGUMI
YOKOTA, JAPANESE ABDUCTEE**

Mrs. YOKOTA. Chairman Leach, Chairman Smith, honorable Members of the Committee, I would like to thank you for this valuable opportunity to speak to you today. I am Sakie Yokota, the mother of Megumi Yokota, who was 13 years old when she was abducted to North Korea in November 1977, 29 long years ago.

For 20 long agonizing years after Megumi disappeared while on her way home from junior high school, we did not know what happened to her. It was 1997 when we finally learned that she had been kidnapped by North Korean agents.

Naturally, we were immediately overjoyed with the thought that Megumi is alive and with the hope of being able to see her right away. Since then, 9 more years have passed and I feel so profoundly sad and humiliated when I think about why we still cannot rescue her.

After years of lies and denials at his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi in September 2002, Kim Jong-il suddenly reversed himself and acknowledged the abduction of just 13 Japanese. However, the number of Japanese citizens that North Korea has abducted goes way beyond 13.

Our list of suspected victims includes more than 450 cases. In the case of most victims, North Korea to this day refuses to acknowledge the kidnapping. Of the 13 Japanese that it has admitted kidnapping, North Korea claims that eight of the victims are dead. Among those are my daughter, Megumi, Ms. Yaeko Taguchi, Ms. Rumiko Masumoto, and Mr. Shu-Ichi Ichikawa, all four of whose family members are here with me today.

To support its contention of their deaths, North Korea handed Japanese officials several things, including a container of ashes it said were my daughter, Megumi, remains. All of these things were thoroughly examined by the Japanese Government and all were judged to be totally worthless and unreliable.

This is a picture of my daughter, Megumi, taken in North Korea soon after her kidnapping. It was given to the Japanese Government by North Korean authorities with the ashes in November 2004.

Megumi was a young girl who loved music and was always cheerful, but she looked so lonesome in this photograph that when I saw it, I could not resist caressing her picture and saying, oh, Megumi, you are here in this kind of a place. How frightened you must have been. Please forgive me for not rescuing you yet.

In 2002, we learned of the existence of Kim Hae-kyung, Megumi's daughter, and our granddaughter. Then in April of this year, another DNA test revealed that our granddaughter's father is actually a South Korean abduction victim himself by the name of Kim Young-nam.

Mr. Young-nam was a 16-year-old high school student when he was kidnapped by the north. Beyond this the victims of North Korean abduction include not only Japanese and South Koreans, but also citizens of at least 12 other countries, including China, Thailand, Lebanon, and France.

In the case of my daughter, Megumi, we learned about her abduction from a North Korean agent who later took asylum. He testified that when Megumi was kidnapped that she was held in a small dark chamber in the bottom of a special intelligence ship, where she scrapped the walls with her fingers while crying out desperately, "Mother, help me. Mother, save me." And that is how she was carried across the dark sea.

Even now my daughter, Megumi, and other abductees, must be alive somewhere in North Korea. We the families are fatigued both physically and mentally. Yet, we cannot stop as long as our own children are seeking our help.

We cannot recover the lost years for our children, but we can rescue the victims that were abducted from many countries of the world, and allow them to spend the rest of their life in the lands of freedom.

We must also not forget the North Korean people who suffered from the atrocities committed by their own government. I plead now for all countries of the world to join us in saying that we will not forgive the abductions. All of the victims must be returned immediately, or we will initiate economic sanctions. This is a sincere wish from the bottom of our hearts for all of the family members here.

Members of Congress, members of the Administration, and people of America, thank you for your strong hearts and thank you so much for your help.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Yokota follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MRS. SAKIE YOKOTA, MOTHER OF MEGUMI YOKOTA,
JAPANESE ABDUCTEE

Chairman Leach, Chairman Smith, honorable Members of the Committees, I would like to thank you for providing me this valuable opportunity to speak to you today.

I am Sakie Yokota, mother of Megumi Yokota who was 13 years old when she was abducted to North Korea in November 1977, 29 long years ago. For 20 agonizing years after Megumi disappeared while on her way home from junior high school, we did not know what had happened to her. It was 20 years later, in 1997, when we learned she had been kidnapped by North Korean agents and turned into a teacher for the "Japanization" of North Korean agents at the intelligence training school of the Kim Jong-il Political Military University on the outskirts of Pyongyang, North Korea.

Naturally, we were immediately overjoyed with the thought that Megumi is alive and hope of being able to see her right away. At the same time, we were also

plagued by doubts about why an incident of this proportion had not been known to us for so long. Since then, nine more years have passed and we are still unable to reach our daughter. It saddens me profoundly and I feel so humiliated whenever I think about why we cannot rescue her.

Kim Jong-il continually denied the abduction of Japanese until he suddenly reversed himself at the Japanese-North Korean summit meeting held in September 2002. At that time he acknowledged the abduction of just 13 Japanese. However, the number of Japanese citizens that North Korea has abducted goes way beyond 13. In the case of most victims, North Korea to this day refuses to acknowledge their kidnapping. We have listed the cases for more than 450 people whose family members or others requested to have investigated as suspected cases of abduction. Out of those, the Japanese government has confronted North Korea with the cases of more than 30 missing Japanese in diplomatic negotiations.

Of the 13 Japanese it has admitted kidnapping, North Korea claims 8 victims are dead, including my daughter Megumi, Ms Yaeko Taguchi, Ms Rumiko Masumoto, and Mr. Shu-Ichi Ichikawa, all four of whose family members are here today with me. To support its contention of their death, North Korea presented only paper, including eight death certificates with a medical doctor's signature, one book of dead patients from a hospital, and two traffic accident reports allegedly documented by the police. All of these were thoroughly examined by the Japanese government and all were judged to be worthless and unreliable.

In November 2004, North Korea gave to the Japanese government some ashes it claimed were my daughter Megumi's remains, but when advanced DNA testing was done in Japan, it was proven that these ashes were instead from 2 entirely different people whose ages were far apart from Megumi's. Other DNA tests also revealed that ashes claimed to be the remains of another abductee, Mr. Kaoru Masuki, likewise were those of entirely different persons.

Please let me show you a picture of my daughter Megumi taken in North Korea soon after her kidnapping. This was given to the Japanese government along with the false ashes in November, 2004. She looks so lonesome in this photograph that when I saw it I couldn't resist caressing her picture and saying, "Oh, Megumi, you were here, in this kind of place; how frightened you must have been. Please forgive me for not rescuing you yet." Megumi's younger brother Takuya, who is here with me today, and another brother, also stared at this photo and they wept.

In September, 2002, after the Japanese North Korean summit meeting, we learned of the existence of Kim Hae-kyung, Megumi's daughter and our granddaughter. Then, on the 11th of April this year, another DNA test revealed that Megumi's husband, the father of our granddaughter, is actually Kim Young-nam, a South Korean abduction victim. Mr. Kim Young-nam was kidnapped in 1978 when he was a 16 year old high school student. It was one year after my daughter Megumi's abduction. So far it has been established that as many as 5 South Korean high school students, including Yong Nam, were abducted around that time. The North Korean authorities, however, have not acknowledged kidnapping any of these South Korean nationals, including Kim Young-nam.

I feel a deep burning anger toward the North Korean regime. It has invented countless lies and deceptions while defiantly mocking us with its claim of innocence. We need to rescue the numerous abductees from as many as 12 different countries around the world who were innocent of any wrong-doing when they became victims of the outrageous state terrorism perpetrated by North Korea. They have been seeking our help from their confinement in that closed country for too many years now. We must also not forget the North Korean people who suffer from atrocious human rights abuses of their government.

In the case of my daughter Megumi, we learned about her abduction from a North Korean agent who later took asylum. He testified that when Megumi was kidnapped, "she was held in a small dark chamber in the bottom of a special intelligence ship where she scraped the walls with her fingers while crying out desperately, 'Mother, help me!', and that is how she was carried across the dark sea."

A quarter of a century has elapsed since then. We as well as the parents of other abductees are running out of time because of our advancing age. My daughter Megumi and other abductees must be alive somewhere in North Korea. And the whole world knows by now the savagery of that country and how lightly it makes of human lives. The description by your President George W. Bush, calling it the "axis of evil", is exactly right.

Numerous youngsters of Japan, South Korea and many other countries have been detained for several decades. They know they would be sent to a concentration camp or be executed if they don't behave as ordered. They are waiting for our help, even now. It is as if they are being drowned. If we see someone being drowned it is the

nature of our humanity that we would immediately jump into the water extending our hand to help, putting aside everything else.

We the families are fatigued, both physically and mentally, yet we cannot stop as long as our own children are seeking our help. I pray that the people of Japan and America, and all freedom-loving people of the world, in unison, will clearly demonstrate to North Korea that we are really "angry." I plead for all countries to join us in saying that "we will not forgive the abductions, all the victims must be returned immediately or we will initiate economic sanctions."

Last month in Japan, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Schieffer kindly inspected the site in Niigata Prefecture where Megumi was abducted. He himself obviously felt the cruelty of the kidnapping and remarked that "this is one of the saddest stories, if not the saddest, I have ever heard". We cannot recover the lost years for our children, but we can rescue the victims that were abducted from many countries of the world and allow them to spend the rest of their life in the lands of freedom. This is a sincere wish from the bottom of our hearts for all of the family members.

Members of Congress, members of the Administration and people of America, please render us your help.

Thank you very much.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you very much, Mrs. Yokota, and I am sure that I speak for the panel when I say that you are a model mother, and all of us wish you well. This is a problem of the world family, the American family, as well as the Japanese family. Now we will turn to Mr. Koh. Please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF MR. KOH MYUNG SUP, SOUTH KOREAN
ABDUCTEE HELD IN NORTH KOREA FOR 35 YEARS**

Mr. KOH. As I speak in front of this esteemed Committee about the sufferings that I have gone through and the people of North Korea, and all the abductees have gone through at this moment, I am full of wishes for solidarity about the various forces of the free world who would join together in rescuing the suffering peoples of North Korea.

I was on a fishing expedition as a fisherman on August 2 of 1975 when my boat was approached by a North Korean armed boat, and as they were firing blanks, and issuing orders for our boat to stop, and then I was taken to North Korea and into their custody.

As it happened all so suddenly that we were stricken with a tremendous sense of terror. We were unable to react in any meaningful way and then we just allowed ourselves to be taken by the North Koreans.

During a subsequent investigation, we demanded that we be repatriated to South Korea, but our plea went unheeded. I was abducted and taken to North Korea as a single man, but in 1977, I was married in North Korea, and then subsequently, I had two children, one boy and one daughter.

Initially, I subsisted on rationing that provided for very basic living, but due to worsening economic situations that began in the middle of the 1980s, food rationing stopped, and then it came to a very undescrivable suffering for me.

The words cannot describe adequately what we had to go through in an attempt just to stay alive. We tried to grow anything on any patch of land that was available, but that was way too short, and so we stooped down to digging for any edible roots or any piece of grass that we can find in Korea's nature.

So living was in my opinion much more difficult than dying in those 20 years of undescrivable suffering. So in the year 2002, word

reached me by a stranger, that I could perhaps have a reunion with my mother in a third-country.

As I reached the border area with China through all kinds of difficulties, I had to at the last moment give up my hope of ever crossing the border because of very, very tight security that had been reinforced.

And so I lived in limbo like that, but my health was becoming worse and worse. Finally, in the year 2002, I almost gave up any hope of continuing to live out of desperation. Then on March 21, 2005, a stranger reached me bringing word of my family in South Korea wanting to see me, and then at that juncture, I felt that as I was slowly dying of poor health and malnutrition, getting help from my own family in South Korea would be the only way for us to live.

So I had less hesitation about taking all kinds of risks to escape to China. And so through all kinds of difficulties, I managed to get across to China, and on March 30 of 2005, I knocked on the doors of the Republic of Korea Consulate in Shenyang, China.

But at that moment, I ran into tremendous inner conflict. Initially, I had hoped in escaping from North Korea, my first objective was to get assistance from my own parents in South Korea for living, and have a reunion after many, many decades with my own family in South Korea.

I was so torn between because even though not a single day went by in North Korea without my thinking of my own mother and my own relatives in South Korea, I had in the meantime started another family, my own family, in North Korea. So to now be rejoined with my family, old family in South Korea, would mean a separation from a family that I had started in North Korea.

And at the moment it just was very sobering to me to realize that I had already passed 10 days during which time you do not have to officially account for your presence away from your home, but we had already passed that grace period, and even if I returned to North Korea now, I would be subject to further prosecution.

At that crucial moment, I decided that my mother has been waiting for me every day for the past 30 years, and I am dying without food in North Korea. Only if I continue to live can I provide and be of some help to the family I started in North Korea.

So then I decided to go to South Korea so that I will stay alive to be able to help. Upon looking back, I think my life has been tremendously twisted in fates. In my youth, I had to go through the Korean War, and because of the prevailing tragedies of suffering, I had no education. I did not have sufficient food, and so my youthful years were spent in starvation in South Korea.

The only solace I have is that I made a contribution to resisting communism in Vietnam as a member of the South Korean troops stationed in Vietnam. And at this point, I would like to forget as much as I can of the 30 years of my life that has been wasted in North Korea, and if I can somehow conjure up and commit it to the deep of Take-tokdo, which is fishing grounds in Korea's eastern sea, I think I would be happier.

But I was very saddened to learn that treatment for me, a fisherman who had been abducted to North Korea, and who returned on

his own to South Korea, was worse than those North Koreans who escaped to South Korea.

To my surprise, when I returned home, my family told me that they had submitted an application for a reunion of separated family members to North Korea between the year of 2002 and 2004, and North Korea's response was that they could not verify whether I was living or dead.

Where could I get compensated for 30 years of my life that was wasted in the netherworld of North Korea against my will. Is this to be reconciled only as my personal fate? I feel especially very, very saddened because my escape from North Korea was arranged not by the South Korean Government, but through the help of my brothers and sisters in South Korea.

And as we speak, as I speak, there are many, many abductees, South Korean abductees in North Korea, who are still awaiting the help from their own government which is obliged to and obligated to protect its own people.

So much time has elapsed since I got abducted and I returned to where I used to live. Thirty years and a young man has returned as returned as a old man. If I were to begin a new life altogether in South Korea, I believe that I have become too old, and too weak physically, and so I am looking to the South Korean Government to provide a very systematic and institutional help in assisting us to be on our own again.

Upon my return, I learned from the members of my family, relatives, that during the Cold War years, even though I was abducted to North Korea, by definition because I was in North Korea, my family members and relatives suffered at the hands of South Korean security as suspected North Korean sympathizers or something.

So I was doubly ashamed to have caused so much suffering to my family and relatives in South Korea. They say that blood is thicker than water, and it is this blood, blood relations that rescued me out of North Korea, and rejoined once a very young son with a very aged mother.

But my joy at the reunion with my own family in South Korea was short-lived as I think about my own flesh and blood that I left in North Korea, and what they go through, just as my mother and brothers, and sisters, suffered in South Korea for the past 30 years, and the ones that I left behind in North Korea would suffer as much.

As I returned to South Korea, I have been so alienated from the realities in South Korea that I feel like a baby just trying to toddle, just trying to learn how to toddle. I appeal to you in tears that only the help of the United States, which champions our free world, and people of all other free nations, could come to a meaningful assistance to those who have been abducted to North Korea.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Koh follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. KOH MYUNG SUP, SOUTH KOREAN ABDUCTEE HELD IN
NORTH KOREA FOR 35 YEARS

ABDUCTION

On August 2nd of 1975, my fishing boat with thirty three crew onboard departed the Joomoonjin Harbor of South Korea for a fishing expedition.

Around the time of the ship's scheduled return on August 15th, our boat experienced a mechanical breakdown and was adrift for two days. We informed the other fishing groups of our situation and then were able to repair the ship and soon were on our way home.

On the morning of August 17th, North Korean vessel appeared out of nowhere and ordered our boat to stop at a gunpoint and abducted the vessel to North Korea.

Our communication was cut off and we were all fearful thinking that "we are now finished." We were completely helpless and our boat was towed to the Moonchun Harbor in North Korea.

We were briefly searched and locked up in a small inn and investigated for a week. During the investigation we repeatedly asked to be released on a humanitarian basis to no avail.

LIFE IN NORTH KOREA

After the investigation, we were transferred to the North Korean Communist Party's Communication Facility in Wonsan and from then on were subjected to endless educational processes including mental rehabilitation and field trips for easing into the North Korean society.

After one year of the forced education, we were secretly assigned to the Party's pre-designated living places and we were briefly hopeful that we may be able to return to South Korea based the assessment we made on the progress being made on the hitherto ongoing South North Red Cross Negotiation. The negotiation ended without any fruitful results and I felt I had no choice but give up my wishes to return after hearing the words from my instructor that "South Korea abandoned us and we would surely be put to death if we return."

We were separated from each other and assigned to different living places. I was assigned to a chicken farm in Pyungnam and have been living as a laborer since.

Any information regarding the fate of my other crewmates was limited to whatever bits of stories I picked up during the re-educational process I was subjected to every three to five years.

At the time I was unmarried and subsequently got married in 1977 and had a family with one son and one daughter.

Initially, basic necessities of life were met with rationing but worsening economic situations beginning from the mid 80's put a stop to the rationing and life was a struggle itself with a constant threat of starvation.

For food, we tried to cultivate forest land and we felt lucky to be even alive subsisting on tree barks and the hardship was simply indescribable.

I lived a life worse than death and twenty years passed by.

ESCAPE FROM THE NORTH AND RETURN TO HOME

As the 90's approached, the situation for the North Korean people turned for the worse and they would end up doing anything in search of food.

Around this time many rumors were about that if you can manage to cross the Chinese border, you can get to South Korea known to be a rich country by now and if you know of anyone in China or South Korea, you can ask for a financial help and as this became real for some around me, it reignited my will to convey the news of my existence to my parents and brothers.

Meanwhile, I learned in 1997 that my neighbor frequently traveled to China where he could meet his family from South Korea and receive assistance and through him I was able to find an opportunity to send a letter to my parents and brothers notifying them of my existence and needs for help.

However, I was not able to receive financial help and only heard about how my family was doing in South Korea and I missed my family even more and was broken hearted as time passed.

In 2002, through a messenger sent by my brother, I attempted to escape with a hope of meeting my mother in China. However, because of the reinforced North Korean border guards to prevent rampant escapes, I reluctantly gave up the idea of escaping at the border after sensing that I was being followed.

Fortunately, my travel to the border was not directly linked to an escape attempt by the authorities and I was able to return home but felt that I was constantly being watched from then on.

Several years passed and I was becoming weaker and from the autumn of 2004, I was spending most of the days sick in bed and was spending the days wishing to end my life. In 2005, I was again approached by a messenger and I realized that only the help from my brothers and parents will save my family in North Korea and this was the last chance and whatever danger I faced, I did not have a choice and I attempted to cross the Chinese Border.

After a great difficulty, I entered China and was directed to the Republic of Korea consular office on March 31st.

However, I was extremely ambivalent at this time. My initial purpose for escaping was to meet my parents and brothers in China and receive financial assistance and reenter North Korea.

Of course, there was not a day in thirty years I did not miss my parents and brothers. At the same time, I was tormented all night thinking about my family still living in North Korea. Will anyone understand the dilemma and the pain of someone facing another heart wrenching family separation?

The maximum number of days you can travel in North Korea without a permit is limited to ten days and it was well past my obligated return date and I knew that if I return to North Korea, I might as well be dead. Furthermore, when I heard my teary eyed mother's voice after having lost her own flesh and blood for thirty years, I was able to make a decision, "I will go! To my home . . . I will be able to retrieve my family in North someday only if I survive. I shall return to the Republic of Korea, the only place where my dream can be fulfilled."

LAST WISH

When I think back, my life has been series of twisted fates.

I experienced the tragedy of the Korean War as a child and having been raised in a poor family; I was hungry and did not have the opportunity for schooling.

One pride I have is of the contribution I made during my younger years to my country by fighting for peace and freedom in Vietnam War.

My lost thirty years! How I wish I can erase all my past pains and memories and purge them into the East Sea where I was abducted.

However, I feel so empty and betrayed when I realized that, as a former South Korean resident, I was worse off than other escapees not originally from the South. I am not an escapee from the North! I was the citizen of the Republic of Korea deserving all its rights of the citizenship and dutifully fulfilled its obligation.

I am also not one of the typical families separated by the North South Border. When I returned home, I was flabbergasted to find out that in 2002 and 2004, a request was made during the official family reunification negotiations and that the request was returned with "Unable to Verify" notification.

How can I explain in words my tormented thirty years of sacrifice that I was forced into by the reality of a country separated? Who will ever repay my losses?

Here I wish to express my last wishes.

First, I want to ask that the Government does its utmost to have my surviving crews still living in the North be returned as well as all other abducted citizens. Because my escape was accomplished not with the help of the Government but with the help of "Association of Families with abducted members" and my brothers, I beg you, while thinking of the torments and heart wrenching of many abductees still waiting for the helping hands of South Korean Government, to free them from the tyranny.

Secondly, I want to ask for a way to earn a living as the citizen of the ROK. Too much time has passed for me to return to where I started from. I lost my youth and returned as a weak old man. I don't feel I have enough time and I lack the necessary means to start anew. I need an institutional and systematic help in order to live the rest of my remaining life with some hope.

Thirdly, please don't spare government generosities to help out the families with abducted family members. It was heart wrenching to hear how the family members of my crewmates had to live all these years thinking about their fathers, sons, husbands and brothers in heart and how they were harassed during the Cold War era. Abductees have nothing to do with isms or ideology but simply were victims of the Government neglects and their human rights were forcefully repressed. I ask that abductees and their family members are no longer violated by the Government and that the Government does its utmost to restore their rights.

It is said that blood is thicker than water. Through countless tears of my mother and my brothers over thirty years, I am now able to return to the rightful place where I belong as the son of an old mother and as the citizen of the ROK

However, my joy is short lived. When I think of my loving wife and children still living in the North, I am despondent and saddened. As my mother and brother felt for me, I too am deeply attached to my own flesh and blood and I fervently desire to retrieve them.

I am just a just a toddler here barely learning to walk after three years and feel powerless to reunite with my own family and to live happily.

Only your continued love and attention will stop the pain felt by all abductees and their families and I ask you from the bottom of my heart to give us the reason for hope and courage.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Koh. We respect your testimony and all those years that you lost of your life. We will now turn to Professor Shimada. And let me say, sir, I apologize, but if we can be a little bit briefer than the last presentation it would be appreciated. Professor.

STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR YOICHI SHIMADA, VICE CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE RESCUE OF JAPANESE KIDNAPPED BY NORTH KOREA (NARKN)

Mr. SHIMADA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Committee Members. Thank you for giving me this precious opportunity to share my information and views on the North Korean abduction issue.

North Korean defectors have told us that in 1976, Kim Jong-il issued a secret order to use foreign nationals more systematically and thereby improve the quality of North Korea spy activities.

Although abductions have been conducted consistently by the North, it was after this order that the kidnapping operation went into high gear. In short, it now appears that the countries affected by that North Korean abduction apparatus allowed were at least 12; Japan, South Korea, Lebanon, China, Thailand, Romania, France, Italy, Holland, Jordan, Malaysia, and Singapore.

So I strongly urge those concerned, governments, relatives, and friends of missing persons, to reexamine their cases in light of the North Korean connection if there is even a remote chance of its involvement.

This is especially true for cases from 1977 and 1978, in which the missing persons were in their twenties or teenagers. Americans are no exception, I think. Naturally a question arises. Why do North Koreans abduct foreign citizens. Six patterns emerged from the past cases, and I think that North Koreans appear to abduct foreign citizens in order to, one, eliminate hapless witnesses who happened to run into North Korean agents in action.

Two, steal victim's identities and infiltrate agents back into the countries concerned. Three, force abductees to teach their local language and customs to North Korean agents.

Four, brainwash them into secret agents. Five, utilize abductees' expertise or special skills. Six, use abductees as spouses for unusual residents in North Korea, especially to lone foreigners, such as defectors or other abductees.

Megumi Yokota and other abductees have been found to have been forced to teach their own local language and customs to North Korean agents. So if released, they will be able to identify Pyongyang's agents operating in respective countries.

This, I believe, is the principal reason why North Korea is refusing to release them. In other words, if North Korea makes a decision to stop terrorist training and withdraw all secret operatives and sleeper cells hiding in various places in the world, then it could release all the teachers that it has abducted and foreigners that it has abducted at once.

The very fact that North Korea refuses to release these abductees is a sure sign that it has no intention of abandoning ter-

rorism. I think it is exactly the right approach to demand verifiable dismantlement of nuclear programs as a prerequisite for any financial aid to North Korea.

By the same token the verifiable renunciation of terrorism should also be demanded as a prerequisite for any financial aid. In short, so long as the abduction issue remains unresolved, we cannot help but assume that North Korea will not abandon its terrorist programs. We should act accordingly.

State-sponsored abduction of children is an especially unforgivable deed. Megumi is not the only 13-year-old child abducted by North Korea. There is another 13-year-old victim, a Japanese boy named Takeshi Terakoshi. Takeshi disappeared from a fishing boat, along with his two uncles.

According to a defector, the fishing boat was rammed by a North Korean spy ship in Japanese waters. North Koreans carried off the three Japanese fishermen to eliminate witnesses. The incident was confirmed as a North Korean abduction case when one of the uncles managed to send a letter to Japanese relatives almost 25 years after the incident.

But Takeshi then was forced to declare of not being abducted, but instead rescued by a North Korean ship and that he is living happily in North Korea.

The North Korean ship rescuing Takeshi is just a ridiculous story. Even if it were true, which it is not, rescuing a 13-year-old boy and not notifying his parents for several decades is nothing but kidnapping.

It is confirmed that at least five South Korean high school students were also abducted by North Korea. There are several suspected cases involving Japanese high school students, too.

In my opinion, it is a mistake to assume that North Korea's abduction of children is limited only to the Japanese and the South Koreans. A soldier, Robert Jenkins, who deserted to North Korea when he was a United Army Sergeant, testified that he shared harsh life in North Korea on an on-and-off basis with three other alleged United States Army deserters, Mr. James Dresnok, Mr. Larry Abshier, and Mr. Jerry Parrish.

All four American deserters married foreign abductees in North Korea. Ms. Mitomi Soga, who was a young woman when she was abducted from Japan, married Mr. Jenkins. Ms. Siham Shraiteh, a Lebanese, married Mr. Parrish. Ms. Anocha Panjoy, a Thai, who was kidnapped from Macau, married Mr. Abshier.

Several years after Mr. Abshier's death, Ms. Anocha Panjoy said to a friend that she was about to remarry a German. A Rumanian woman named Dona married Mr. Dresnok. After Dona's death, Mr. Dresnok remarried a woman named Dada, who is half-North Korean and half-Togolese.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Jenkins has suggested that North Korea spymasters would quite probably consider using the children of foreign couples and children of mixed race as secret agents, especially for work around United States military bases overseas, where mixed race marriage is not uncommon.

It seems that women abducted by North Korea are tormented by a double agony. First, as a young adult, each woman's promising life in her own country is suddenly destroyed by the kidnapping.

Then these victims become the mothers of children, who in turn are forced to become secret agents of North Korea, a regime that she detests.

The Chinese Government continues to hunt down hapless North Korean refugees and drive them back to Kim Jong-il's torture chambers. Among those forcibly sent back, there must have been, are, and will be abducted foreign nationals, their family members, and people who have valuable information on abductees' whereabouts.

So I have to say that the Chinese authorities are systematically obstructing our efforts to recover abducted victims. Moreover, Beijing appears to make no effort to rescue its own abducted nationals. My colleagues and I were able to confirm one case involving two Chinese residents' abduction.

Our organization tried to inform the staff of the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo about the abduction status of their citizens, but they refused to meet. Therefore, we mailed written materials on the cases to the Chinese Embassy. There has been no response at all.

Beijing is not only obstructing rescue efforts of abducted foreigners by sending refugees back to North Korea, but it is cold-bloodedly deserting its own nationals held in North Korea.

Referring to North Korea, it has been said that a system where you can't live, but you cannot leave, is a definition of hell. Yes, it is, and Beijing is the co-manager of that hell. Chinese communist leaders should be ashamed of themselves.

Finally, do I have a message for Kim Jong-il? No, I have none. He is hopeless. I just want him to fall into the ash heap of history as soon as possible. But I have a message for the people surrounding him. Eliminate Kim Jong-il, and secure the safety and freedom of the abductees, their family members, their friends, and their friends' friends.

That is, for all except Kim Jong-il and his henchmen. Then North Koreans can expect not only the lifting of sanctions, but also tremendous financial aid from all over the world. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shimada follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR YOICHI SHIMADA, VICE CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE RESCUE OF JAPANESE KIDNAPPED BY NORTH KOREA (NARKN)

AT LEAST 12 COUNTRIES AFFECTED

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, thank you for giving me this precious opportunity to share my information and views on the North Korean abduction issue.

The Japanese government has officially recognized 11 cases involving 16 Japanese nationals who were abducted by North Korea. This figure, however, is just the tip of the iceberg.

Along with violent kidnap, a number of people seem to have been lured to North Korea and then held. Although it's hard to be certain, I estimate that over one hundred Japanese have been abducted.

In addition to these Japanese victims, there are numerous South Korean abductees, on whom Korean witnesses before this committee will later elaborate.

North Korean defectors have told us that in 1976 Kim Jong-il issued a secret order to use foreign nationals more systematically and thereby improve the quality of North Korean spy activities. He dubbed it "localization of spy education." Although abduction had been conducted consistently by the North, it was after this order that the kidnap operation went into high gear.

At least eleven Japanese, including thirteen-year-old Megumi Yokota, were abducted in 1977 and 1978. Five South Korean high school students were also abducted in 1977 and 1978.

Four young Lebanese women were also kidnapped in 1978. One of them is still being held in North Korea.

It was also confirmed that at least two Chinese women and one Thai woman were abducted by North Korea from Macau on the same night in 1978. All of them were in their early 20s.

U.S. Army deserter Charles Robert Jenkins, who is now living in Japan, told us a Romanian woman named Dona was also kidnapped and forced to live in North Korea.

The Lebanese women, after having managed to escape, testified that they had been sent to a North Korean spy camp and given indoctrination lectures together with physical training, including Judo, Taekwondo, Karate, and eavesdropping exercises, among others. They recalled there had been 28 young female trainees in the camp, including three French, three Italians, two Hollanders, and other Western European and Middle Eastern looking women (Lebanese newspaper, *El Nahar*, November 9, 1979).

The renowned South Korean actress Choi Un-hee, who was abducted from Hong Kong in January 1978 and managed to escape in 1986, testified that in North Korea she had once exchanged brief words with a Jordanian woman.

Ms. Choi Un-hee also had heard about a French abductee lured by a "good-looking North Korean man." North Korean ex-agent Kim Hyon-hee told a similar story in her memoirs.

There is a case of five missing young women from Singapore in August 1978, four Singaporeans and a Malaysian, in which North Korean involvement is also highly suspected. Ms. Choi Un-hee said she had heard about the presence of Malaysian abductees.

It appears therefore that the countries affected by the North Korean abduction apparatus amount to at least 12: Japan, South Korea, Lebanon, China, Thailand, Romania, France, Italy, Holland, Jordan, Malaysia, and Singapore.

As this information becomes more widely available, I strongly urge those concerned—governments, relatives and friends of missing persons—to reexamine their cases in light of the North Korean connection if there is even a remote chance of its involvement. This is especially true for cases from 1977 and 1978 in which the missing persons were in their twenties or teenagers.

OBJECTIVES OF ABDUCTION

In attempting to recover Japanese missing persons I have also considered the question "Why do North Koreans abduct foreign citizens?" Six patterns emerge from the past cases. North Korea appears to abduct foreign citizens in order to:

- 1, eliminate hapless witnesses who happened to run into North Korean agents in action
- 2, steal victims' identities and infiltrate agents back into the countries concerned
- 3, force abductees to teach their local language and customs to North Korean agents
- 4, brainwash them into secret agents
- 5, utilize abductees' expertise or special skills
- 6, use abductees as spouses for unusual residents in North Korea, especially to lone foreigners such as defectors or other abductees

Needless to say, these six patterns are not mutually exclusive. In fact, "multiple-utilization" may be rather common.

Among these objectives, the first is old one and was consistently performed practice. Numbers 2, 3, and 4 derive from Kim Jong-il's above mentioned secret order in 1976, and contributed to his "localization of spy education." Actress Choi Un-hee's case falls into Number 5. The last, Number 6, is, so to speak, a crime-generates-new-crime category of deed.

VICTIM'S RELEASE AS "VERIFIABLE RENUNCIATION OF TERRORISM"

Considerable effort has been invested to learn why Pyongyang has not released most of its abduction victims. Megumi Yokota and other Japanese abductees have been confirmed to be forced to teach their own local language and customs to North Korean agents. So, if released, they would be able to identify Pyongyang's agents operating in Japan and elsewhere.

This I believe is the principal reason why North Korea is refusing to release them. In other words, if North Korea makes a decision to stop terrorist training and withdraw all secret operatives and sleeper cells hiding in various places in the world, then it could release all their teachers—abducted foreigners—at once. The very fact that North Korea refuses to release these abductees is a sure sign that it has no intention of abandoning terrorism.

I think it is exactly the right approach to demand verifiable dismantlement of nuclear programs as a prerequisite for any financial aid to North Korea. By the same token, the “verifiable renunciation of terrorism” should also be demanded as a prerequisite for any financial aid. The release of the abductees is an indispensable factor in this renunciation process.

In short, so long as the abduction issue remains unresolved, we cannot help but assume that North Korea will not abandon its terrorist programs. We should act accordingly.

CHILDREN ABDUCTED BY NORTH KOREA

Megumi Yokota is not the only 13-year-old child abducted by North Korea. There is another 13-year-old victim, a Japanese boy named Takeshi Terakoshi.

Takeshi disappeared from a fishing boat along with his two uncles in 1963. According to a defector, the fishing boat was rammed by a North Korean spy ship in Japanese waters. North Koreans carried off the three Japanese fishermen to eliminate witnesses.

The incident was confirmed as a North Korean abduction case when one of the uncles managed to send a letter to Japanese relatives in 1987.

Takeshi's mother at first worked hard with other victims' families to recover her son. But Takeshi was forced to declare he had not been abducted but instead “rescued” by a North Korean ship and that he is living “happily” in North Korea. Accordingly, his mother's attitude changed and she now asks the Japanese government not to include her son's name on the victims list.

The mother has been allowed occasionally to visit Takeshi at his apartment in Pyongyang. She is obviously afraid of antagonizing the North Korean authority and of being denied further entry into the country.

In my opinion, the Japanese government should have officially recognized Takeshi and his two uncles as abduction victims many years ago. Not doing so sent the wrong message to North Korea. The North Korean ship “rescuing” Takeshi is just a ridiculous story. Even if it were true, which it is not, rescuing a 13-year-old boy and not notifying his parents for several decades is nothing but kidnapping.

Three sons of one of Takeshi's uncles, who is claimed to be dead by North Korea, are active members of the Abductees Families Association and have demanded that the Japanese government officially recognize the case as abduction.

The U.S. House resolution condemning North Korean abduction as “acts of terrorism and gross violation of human rights,” which passed the House of Representatives on July 11, 2005, rightly referred to Takeshi's case as follows:

Whereas North Korean agents have abducted children, causing unimaginable anguish to parents who live decades with the uncertainty of what has happened to their child, as in the cases of Takeshi Terakoshi, a thirteen-year-old boy kidnapped from a fishing boat with his two uncles . . .

This resolution has given us great encouragement. Here, I want to say Thank You again.

I have pointed out earlier that at least five South Korean high school students were also abducted by North Korea. There are several suspected cases involving Japanese high school students too. In my opinion, it is a mistake to assume that North Korea's abduction of children is limited only to the Japanese and the South Koreans.

MARRIAGES WITH A HIDDEN PURPOSE: US DESERTERS AND ABDUCTED WOMEN

Charles Robert Jenkins, who deserted to North Korea in January 1965 when he was a U.S. Army Sergeant, testified after his repatriation to Japan in 2004 that he shared his harsh life in North Korea, on an on-and-off basis, with three other alleged U.S. Army deserters: Pfc. James Joseph Dresnok (August 1962), Pvt. Larry Allen Abshier (May 1962) and Cpl. Jerry Wayne Parrish (December 1963).

All four American deserters married foreign abductees in North Korea.

Ms. Hitomi Soga, who was a young woman when she was abducted from Japan, married Mr. Jenkins. She gave birth to two daughters who are now studying hard and enjoying campus life in Japan but Hitomi's mother, who was abducted along with her, is still missing. North Korea has claimed that her mother's entry into the

North had not been documented and they say they knew nothing about her. Their claim is entirely without credibility. Hitomi herself was a victim of abduction and is still the daughter of another abduction victim.

Ms. Siham Shraiteh, a Lebanese, who was deceived by a fictitious job offer in Japan and taken to North Korea in 1978, married Mr. Parrish and gave birth to three sons who are living in North Korea. Mr. Parrish died in August 1997.

Ms. Anocha Panjoy, a Thai who was kidnapped from Macau in 1978, married Mr. Abshier. Mr. Abshier died in 1983. Several years later, Ms. Anocha said to Mr. Jenkins that she was about to remarry a German. That was the last time Mr. Jenkins saw her.

A Romanian woman named Dona married Mr. Dresnok. Dona told Mr. Jenkins the following story just before her death.

Her mother was a Russian and her father a Romanian Army officer. She had once married an Italian. After divorce, she entered an Italian art school using her alimony to pay for it.

Subsequently another Italian man approached her and asked her to go to Hong Kong via Russia and North Korea to do some preparatory work for her possible solo art exhibition. She was then left stranded in North Korea and the Italian man disappeared.

Dona died from lung cancer in January 1997. As she had asked not to be buried in North Korean soil, Mr. Dresnok had her body cremated. Mr. Dresnok then remarried a woman named Dada, who is half North Korean and half Togolese.

Mr. Jenkins has suggested the North's spymasters would quite probably consider using the children of foreign couples and children of mixed race as secret agents, especially for work around U.S. military bases overseas where mixed race marriage is not uncommon.

Mr. Jenkins said that he felt depressed when North Korean authorities ordered his daughters to enter the Pyongyang Foreign Language College. As you may be aware, Kim Hyon-hee, a perpetrator of the Korean Airline bombing in 1987, was picked out as a secret agent by the authorities when she was a student of that college.

This and other evidence indicates that women abducted by North Korea seem to be tormented by a double agony. First, as a young adult, each woman's promising life in her own country is suddenly destroyed by the kidnapping. Then these victims become the mothers of children who, in turn, are forced to become secret agents of North Korea, the regime she detests.

BELJING OBSTRUCTS RESCUE EFFORTS

Beijing continues to hunt down hapless North Korean refugees and drive them back to Kim Jong-il's torture chambers in violation of the U.N. Refugee Convention, of which it is a signatory. Among those forcibly sent back, there must have been, are, and will be abducted foreign nationals, their family members, and people who have valuable information on abductees' whereabouts.

So, I have to say that the Chinese authorities are systematically obstructing our efforts to recover abducted victims.

Moreover, Beijing appears to make no effort to rescue its own abducted nationals. Let me give you an example.

Two Macau residents, 20 year old Ms. Hong Leng-ieng and 22 year old Ms. So Mio-chun, were abducted by North Korean agents on July 2, 1978. Macau was a Portuguese colony at the time but fell back into Beijing's control in 1999. The two abductees therefore are Chinese nationals now. Their family members also are Chinese nationals.

My colleagues and I were able to confirm this case as abduction through various interviews. For example, South Korean actress Choi Un-hee who was kidnapped from Hong Kong in January 1978 and succeeded to escape in 1986, testified that she temporarily lived with Ms. Hong Leng-ieng at a so-called "guest house" in Pyongyang.

Ms. Choi Un-hee remembered that Ms. Hong's Christian name was "Maria." We asked family members of Ms. Hong about this name. They knew that she had baptized as a Catholic but did not know her Christian name. They ran into the church to which she had belonged and found out that her baptized name in fact was "Maria."

Ms. Choi Un-hee said that in Pyongyang, Ms. Hong had been forced to teach Chinese language.

Our organization tried to inform the staff of the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo about the abduction status of their citizen but they refused to meet. Therefore, we mailed

written materials on the case to the Chinese Embassy. There has been no response at all. They have just ignored us.

Beijing is not only obstructing rescue efforts of abducted foreigners by sending refugees back to North Korea but it is cold-bloodedly deserting its own nationals held in North Korea. Is this kind of regime qualified to hold the Olympic Games?

Were the world degenerate enough to adopt a refugee hunt as an official sport, China would be the most suitable place to hold the event. And, no doubt, team China would win the Gold Medal. But common sense tells us that Beijing is not an appropriate place for the Olympic Games so long as it continues to brutally hunt down North Korean refugees.

Referring to North Korea, it has been said that a system where you can't live but you cannot leave is the definition of hell. Yes, it is, and Beijing is the co-manager of that hell. Chinese communist leaders should be ashamed of themselves.

REGIME CHANGE THROUGH ECONOMIC SQUEEZE

I've long since come to the conclusion that regime change is the only way to resolve the abduction issue, and the nuclear issue and missile issue, for that matter. Feckless half measures won't work.

The question, therefore, is how to achieve regime change.

There is no shortcut to victory. In my view an economic squeeze is the key. In this, not only Pyongyang should be pressured, but also Beijing.

To this end, the financial sanctions launched by the United States last September are exactly the right move. Those sanctions are targeting, among others, Chinese banks joining hands with Pyongyang. It is my hope that the United States will ratchet up these measures and that other countries will follow the U.S. lead.

The Japanese government, under the strong leadership of Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, recently has strengthened economic pressure against North Korea using the various tools at hand. This has been encouraging.

Two years ago, the Japanese National Diet passed two important bills. The first is the Revised Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law that enables the government to halt trade and monetary remittances to any country if the government judges that "it is necessary for the maintenance of the peace and safety of our country."

The second is a bill that would allow the government to prevent specified vessels from entering Japanese ports. Japan now can ban the entry not only of North Korean ships, but any ship, say a Chinese or even a Japanese flag vessel which stops at North Korean ports, if the Prime Minister in his discretion decides to do so.

In my opinion, the implementation of this powerful tool is long overdue. Now is the time for an all-out economic squeeze.

Do I have a message for Kim Jong-il? No, I have none. He is hopeless. I just want him to fall into the ash heap of history as soon as possible.

But I have a message for the people surrounding him: Eliminate Kim Jong-il and secure the safety and freedom of the abductees, their family members, their friends, their friends' friends. That is, for all except Kim Jong-il and his henchmen. Then North Koreans can expect not only the lifting of sanctions but also tremendous financial aid from all over the world.

Thank you.

National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea (NARKN)
North Korean Abduction Victims Worldwide

Nationality	the number of victims	sources notes
South Koreans	82,959 (civilian victims during the Korean War) 485 (after ceasefire)	ROK government ROK government
Japanese	16 over 100	Japanese government NARKN s accounts
Lebanese	4	abducted in 1978 and recovered before the end of 1979 one of them married to a US serviceman, a deserter
Thais	1	married to a US serviceman, a deserter
Romanians	1	married to a US serviceman, a deserter
Chinese(residents in Macau)	2	Choi Un-hee, a South Korean returned abductee, met and talked with one of them in North Korea
Malaysians	4	Choi Un-hee heard about that person. Four Malaysian women disappeared from Singapore all on the same date in August 1978. Mr. Jenkins saw one of them in Pyongyang later.
Singaporeans	1	A Singaporean woman disappeared along with above mentioned Malaysian women.
French	3	Abducted Lebanese saw them in 1978. Choi Un-hi and KimHyon-hi, a KAL bomber, heard about one of them.
Italians	3	Abducted Lebanese saw them in 1978.
Hollanders	2	Abducted Lebanese saw them in 1978
Jordanians	1	Choi Un-hee saw that person.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, Mr. Shimada. Mr. Cho.

STATEMENT OF MR. CHO CHANG-HO, FORMER SOUTH KOREAN OFFICER AND POW HELD IN NORTH KOREA FOR 43 YEARS

Mr. CHO. Chairman Leach, honorable Members of the Committee, it is my singular honor today to testify before you about Korean War POWs. I was taken prisoner in 1950, and I was a South Korean Army artillery officer, and in 1994, I escaped from North Korea, and for the record, I was the first South Korean POW who found his way out of North Korean captivity.

I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to all those United States soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice and tried to preserve peace and freedom of Korea during the Korean War. My gratitude is also expressed to Ms. Suzanne Scholte, who is the Chairperson of the Defense Forum Foundation, who has paved the way for me to speak here in front of you today, and also to Dr. Thomas Chung, who is chairman of the Committee for Early Repatriation of South Korean POWs, and is making all kinds of efforts to that end.

Dr. Thomas Chung has made a large amount of research on the issues involving South Korean prisoners of war, and I hereby formally request that his report be part of my testimony today.

As I was in North Korean custody as a prisoner of war, I had no information about a Korean armistice being signed in July 1953, and furthermore, I had no idea, no information about prisoner exchanges that took place subsequently. And that South Korean prisoners of war encountered the same thing in North Korea.

It has been 53 years that hostilities in Korea were ended in an armistice signed in 1953, and even as I speak, there are many, many South Korean prisoners of war still in North Korea awaiting a helping hand from the outside world.

Up to the year of 2005, a total of 62 ex-South Korean prisoners escaped from North Korea, and successfully returned to South Korea by various means, and it is their yearning for their native land, their country of their origin, that people often in old age and in very poor health, to make this escape, and a child of a prisoner who died in North Korea carried out her father's wish by bringing in the ashes of her father in a container to South Korea.

The latest Ministry of National Defense, MND, statistics show that even today there are as many as 540 surviving ex-POWs in North Korea. The South Korean POWs in North Korean captivity were put to use in coal mines and various other mines, living their lives in North Korea in servitude for the North Korean regime.

And a great number of them died because of their occupational hazard, and diseases that were rampant among them. The North Korean authorities held the South Korean prisoners of war in various other prison camps beside their regular prison camps, and they were scattered in Pyung-Nam Kang-dong, and Pyung-Buk Chun-ma, in the northwest regions of North Korea.

And beginning in 1952, their screening became even more severe, and so they sorted out what they thought were people who were bent on escaping, who were contemplating escape at that point, and people who had records of crimes, and they were put in a special prison, and they were sentenced from 10 to 20 years.

I was in a court-martial held at the North Korean People's Army First Corps. I was sentenced to 30 years, and I served that term, and then after that I was sent to Kang-ge and Ham-heung, an energy coal mine, and Ah-o-ji mine in Ham-Buk, and I was put to work at a North Korean munitions factory for 10 to 18 hours a day.

I don't think we could find any parallel to what prisoners go through in North Korea in their prisons—daily abuses and daily beatings, further abuses, and threats of physical harm—and so we were reduced to a subhuman existence because of the incessant treatment, bad treatment like this.

We were not allowed to use our names. We were only assigned numbers, and not allowed any personal effects. Even in the dead of winter, we were not allowed any underwear, and so we wore just prison cloth, very thin, and our cell rooms did not have any sleeping wear.

It did not have any covers, and it did not have any pillows. It only had an oil drum that was cut in half for our excrements. There was no medical attention to speak of, and we were exposed to all kinds of disease, and so people just dropped every day, and words cannot describe what we had to go through.

Simply, of those six South Korean officers who were taken prisoner, by 1958, five died and I was the only survivor. North Korea acted in flagrant violation of the Geneva Accords, and the treatment of prisoners of war, and furthermore, North Korea acted against human life protocols set aside by the United Nations.

Before I came here to testify before you, I spoke with a few former North Korean detained South Korean prisoners of war, and they were telling me that they looked for help. I am so saddened as I testify about my colleagues in North Korea, those prisoners of war still held in North Korea against their will, and I urge that their repatriation be effected at the earliest date because of their old age, and they may die any day now.

I urge the Government of the Republic of Korea to extend a helping hand to those who fought for the defense of South Korea, and were taken prisoner, and to extend a helping hand so that they could be rescued before their death. I urge that South Korea make this a number one priority.

I also urge that the South Korean Government does not look the other way when it comes to human rights conditions in North Korea, and I urge that South Korea stop not voting on the United Nations resolution for human rights and other international forums.

Chairman Leach and honorable Members of the Committee, once again I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude for this very golden opportunity to speak before you today. Thank you. April 27, 2006, Cho Chang-Ho. I am a First Lieutenant in the South Korean Reserve.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cho follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. CHO CHANG-HO, FORMER SOUTH KOREAN OFFICER
AND POW HELD IN NORTH KOREA FOR 43 YEARS

Dear Honorable Chairman, and Members of the Committee.

It is an honor for me to be here today.

I thank the Providence who guided me to this spot at this time to testify before the Committee. First of all, I'd like to express my gratitude for the U.S. Congress to pass the North Korean Human Rights Act unanimously.

And I'd also like to thank the U.S. soldiers who fought for freedom and the peace of the Korean peninsula. I will never forget those people who fought over there.

Here I'd like to thank madame Suzanne Scholte, president of the Defense Forum Foundation and Dr. Thomas Chung, president of the Korean POW Affairs who devotes himself to try to save the lives of those remaining prisoners of war still being held in North Korea.

My name is Lieutenant(Ret.) Chang Ho Cho who dramatically escaped from North Korea in 1994 after 43 years of captivity. I entered Korean War as an officer of an artillery unit and became a POW. I'm the first POW who escaped from North Korea in last 40 years since Korean War ended and the exchange of POW had occurred.

As a POW I didn't even know that the war ended and the exchange of POWs had been occurred, I've learned that fact long after war ended. All of returned POWs whom I've met were not much different. They didn't know that the exchange of POWs had been occurred either.

It has been 53 years since the war ended, but still there are surviving Korean POWs in North Korea who endure savage oppression in hope of returning to their homeland.

As of 2005, 62 POWs successfully escaped from North Korea and return to the arms of their homeland. They risked their lives and guided their old aching bodies in hope of coming home. One woman escaped from North Korea with the remains of her father who had died in North Korea as a POW.

According to Korea's Ministry of National Defense, at least 540 POWs are still alive in North Korea.

North Korean government violated the Geneva Convention about disposition of POWs. At the time UN sent about 75,000 POWs back to North Korea, but North Korean government only sent 13,444 and detained about 70,000 POWs.

The detained POWs including me worked and treated like slaves at coal and mineral mines. Many POWs died due to various diseases and accidents.

North Korean government kept POWs in various locations such as Pyung-Nam Kang-dong and Pyung-Buk Chun-ma as well as in official POW prison camps. After 1952, North Korean government went through strict examination to sort out criminals, and people who attempted to escape. They were treated as criminals and detained at political prisoner camp with special attention. The average sentence of inmates in political prisoner camp was 10 to 20 years.

I served 13 years in prison after I was tried at the court-martial of North Korean Army. Also, I worked 10 to 18 hours a day in factories of war industry at Ja-gang-do Kang-ge, Ah-o-ji mine in Ham-Buk, Ham-Nam Ham-heung, and etc.

They had barbarous prison system that you'll never find anywhere in the world. We were verbally abused, battered, detained, and even our lives were threatened. At that point, we just gave up to be treated as human beings.

Our names were replaced with numbers and possession of private property was prohibited. Even in severe cold, we only had thin clothes to wear. There were no beds, blankets, or pillows. There was only a drum can to be used as a toilet.

Conversations between inmates were prohibited. If we talk to one another, conversations were tapped and reported to the guards. We couldn't even wash our faces and brush our teeth. After 8 years of hell, an official prison camp was built and we could wash ourselves since then.

There were no medical facilities at all, so many people died from various diseases. Words can't describe what we have gone through. There were 5 other POWs like me at the facility, but everybody died before 1958 and I was the only survivor.

Before I came here today, I spoke with POWs who escaped from North Korea. They are currently living in South Korea and they wanted me to come here and testify North Korea's brutality on their behalf.

Jin Hwan Jang escaped from North Korea in April 20, 2000. He was a member of Regiment 16 in Division 8 of South Korean army. He was caught by Chinese army in March of 1952. He was trained for a month and put back into the war as a North Korean soldier. Like I said before, North Korea violated the Geneva Convention and put POWs back into the war as their army.

Three days later, he and 25 POWs were caught while escaping to South Korea. All of them received capital punishment at a military court and were executed except Mr. Jin Hwan Jang. Due to his young age Mr. Jin Hwan Jang saved his life, but he had to serve 17 years in prison before he was released in 1970's. After two and a half years of his release, he was caught again while trying to escape. He served another 5 years in prison and worked at Ah-o-ji mine for 10 years after his second release.

He was tortured unmercifully in prison by electric shocks and endless beatings. Also, he has gun shot wounds, scar from grenade splinters, and his legs were nearly torn off due to frostbite.

Mr. Young Il Oh was a POW who returned to South Korea after the war ended in August of 1953. He was detained at Pyung-Nam Do Seung-o Ri and Pyung-Buk Do Byuk-dong Chun-ma prison camp. When he was there he witnessed death of many people from severe malnutrition, dysentery, and typhoid fever. He also witnessed a half of deceased UN POWs and one-third of Korean POWs being thrown away without graves.

Soon Ok Lee returned to South Korea in 2004. He testified that sometimes only meal he got for a day was just 300 grains of corn. Also, when his fellow POWs died in winter, the guards just buried them in the snow.

I feel really wretched as I testify here today. I demand for quick and safe return of surviving POWs in North Korea. They are very old, so you never know when they will die. I would like to take this opportunity and pay my gratitude to American and UN soldiers who fought for freedom and democracy of S. Korea during the Korean War. I wish you can support my testimony that I made here today.

I also demand for quick and safe return of hostages who were kidnapped in Korea, Japan, and other places as of today. In addition, political prisoner camp in North Korea must be brought down and 100,000 political prisoners must be released immediately. Democracy must be restored in North Korea in near future and freedom of speech, travel, and residency must be guaranteed.

South Korean government shouldn't neglect their own citizens who became POWs while fighting for their country. The issue of bringing them back home must be the priority of South Korean government. Also, I'm urging South Korean government not to neglect human rights of North Koreans anymore and embarrass ourselves by doing things like giving up to vote on resolution of North Korea human right issues at the UN General Assembly.

I would like thank you again. God bless America!

(The article about the witness was excerpted from POW News) (July 1995).

**Department of Defense
POW/MIA Bulletin
American Debriefing Report of Former South Korean POW,
Lieutenant Cho, Chang-Ho**

On February 14, 1995, U.S. officials debriefed retired 1Lt. Cho Chang-Ho, a former Korean War POW who escaped from North Korea to South Korea in March 1994. During the debriefing, Cho confirmed earlier reports that he did not observe any American POWs after following his initial month of captivity in late May, mid-June 1952. However, Lt. Cho did report he had heard from South Korean POWs in late 1952 that there were large numbers of American POWs being held at various wartime POW camps.

Other significant comments from Lt. Cho concerned the location of POW burial sites. He stated that several POWs were buried at the foot of an unnamed mountain.

This burial took place while South Korean and American POWs were marching away from the front lines to the rear POW camps.

Lt. Cho was captured alone by Chinese Army troops on May 18, 1951, in Hyonni, Inju-gun, Kangwon-do (east coast of South Korea).

A week later, he was turned over to the North Korean Army's Fifth Corps headquarters at Changansa (a Buddhist monastery) in Kumgang-san, Kangwon-do (north of the DMZ on the east coast). When he arrived at Changansa, Lt. Cho observed approximately 700-800 South Korean Army POWs and approximately 70-80 American POWs at the Fifth Corps headquarters. Lt. Cho, who knew that the U.S. Army's 7th Division was deployed in that area, surmised that the U.S. POWs were members of the 7th Division. They were young, approximately one-third were black.

Later, all of these South Korean and American POWs were moved on foot from Changansa to Sinan, Kangwon-do (30-40 miles from Changansa).

En-route to Sinan, Lt. Cho observed several American POWs who died after suffering from malnutrition and diarrhea caused by eating raw corn.

Fellow prisoners buried them at the foot of an unnamed mountain in shallow graves approximately one meter deep, and placed a piece of straw mat over the bodies, and covered them with soil.

After arriving at Sinan, the American POWs were separated from the South Koreans and taken by truck to an unknown destination. South Korean and American POWs were not permitted to talk to each other. Lt. Cho did not observe any American POWs other than those mentioned above. In the summer of 1951, still at Sinan, Lt. Cho was debriefed at military reception centers in Moranbong-guyok, Pyongyang and in Kaesong.

In May 1952, he attempted to escape but was captured and sent to a prison in Wonsan. Later, Lt. Cho was moved to different prisons in Hoechang, Tokchon and Manpo.

In late 1952, while he was at the Manpo prison, many South Korean POWs were sent there from different POW camps to serve prison terms because they were North Koreans who served in the South Korean Army. At that time, Lt. Cho heard from South Korean POWs that there were large POW camps controlled by the Chinese in Usi, Ch'olma, Pyoktong, and Ch'olsan, all located in P'yongan-pukto.

He also heard from South Korean POWs that there was a large number of U.S. POWs, together with South Korean POWs.

TRAGIC EXISTENCE OF SOUTH KOREAN POWS IN NORTH KOREA

(excerpt from the article(June 22, 2005) of the Segye Times, Korea)

South Korean prisoners of war, detained in North Korea, lead a tragic life. Those who attempted to escape from detention facilities were executed, as traitors, by firing squad. Otherwise, they were forced to serve as slave-labor in hellish, inhuman coalmines.

For allegedly resisting “the War of Liberation,” they were framed as Reactionaries, placed under the penetrating scrutiny of the Security Agency and subjected to agonizing, involuntary servitude, as mining laborers, for their lifetime. Their offspring, unable to leave the confines of the mining area, due to discrimination in education and employment, must live their miserable lives at the lowest level of existence.

FROM THE DETENTION CENTER TO THE COAL MINES

The Prisoners of War Repatriation Agreement of June 8, 1953 between the United Nations Command and North Korea stated that within 60 days after the Armistice Agreement becomes effective, each side shall, without offering any hindrance, directly repatriate and hand over in groups all these prisoners of war in custody who insist on repatriation. It prohibits the use of force or threat of force to prevent or influence the repatriation.

However, the terms and conditions of this agreement were largely violated. The North Koreans forcibly detained tens of thousands of prisoners of war against their will and diverted them to the mines. Lee Sam Chool, POW returnee, age 76, stated that he heard in July, 1953 that the truce was signed and he believed they were being transported to Kae Sung for the purpose of POW exchange when he and his prisoners were loaded onto vehicles at Chil Pyung Detention Center in Ja Gang Do, North Korea. To his surprise, they found themselves in Sung Chun Mine in Pyong Nam Province, North Korea. “Still,” said Lee, “I did not abandon the hope of repatriation someday and counted each day with my fingers, only to realize 50 years had passed.”

Another POW, Huh Jae Suk, 74, who returned to South Korea, said, “Because the POWs were loaded on a train in Pyong Yang on April 25, 1954, we thought we were getting repatriated to South Korea. When the train stopped three days later, we found out that we had been transported to a POW detention center at Ah Oh Ji Coalmine in Ham Buk Province in North Korea.”

“The place was designated as a Construction Unit of the Dept. of Interior, a fake name, for the purpose of feigning non-existence of POWs in North Korea,” he reported. In order to maximize the use of the POW labor, North Korea refused to exchange the POWs, Huh pointed out.

THE BOTTOM-MOST LIFE OF THE LOWEST CLASS PEOPLE

North Korea closed the POW detention centers in June, 1956. However, although South Korean POWs were perfunctorily released and made North Korean citizens, no real changes took place. They were given no freedom in job selection or change of residence. They are still subject to forced labor at the coal mines or other mines, which are the lowest level jobs even in North Korea.

Even past the age of 70 years, South Korean POWs must still reside in the mining areas, factory facilities in controlled districts, or on collective farms. Registered in the national Security Agency, their every move is under constant surveillance.

Koh Eul Won, returned POW, age 74, explained, “South Korean POWs are the most mistreated class, and once assigned to coal mine, that is final. At the age 61, they are given so-called old age assistance, so they don’t have to work, but they still cannot move out of the coal mining area since a travel permit is never given to them.”

Huh Jae Suk further added, “After an issuance, in 1956, of the Cabinet Resolution #143, which allowed the citizen certificates to South Korean POWs and their release to the community, North Korea officially abolished the POW detention facilities. However, their list is kept at the People’s Unit, the Secret Agency, the Security Agency, etc. and they are continuously placed under surveillance.”

MISTREATMENT TO POWS' CHILDREN

The offspring of South Korean POWs in North Korea are discriminated against and disdained down through succeeding generations.

Koh Eul Won testified, "While one must complete the military service to be treated like a human being, their offspring were rejected both by the military and the colleges solely for the reason of being the children of POW parents. Therefore, even offspring, generation after each generation, had no choice but to work in the coal mine." Huh Jae Suk added, "The offspring of the subjects of the Cabinet Resolution #143 were not allowed to join the military or enroll into colleges in spite of their academic excellence."

Former POW Suh Byung Ryul also recalled, "My son ended up as a mining laborer due to the rejection by the military. Also, although my daughter was selected as a cultural official in the Secret Agency, her selection was quickly withdrawn once they discovered that I was a South Korean POW."

CHARGES OF CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY OVER ACCIDENTAL EXPLOSION

In 1958, at Yong Yun Gang Ah Oh Ji Coalmine in Ham Buk Province, North Korea, a massive accidental explosion took 36 lives. Over this accident, four or five POWs were charged as masterminds, and among them, Baik Nam Woong, was executed in public, by firing squad.

Former POW Choi Young Chan testified, "POWs were usually assigned to the most hazardous and strenuous tasks. Consequently, they harbored discontent." Huh Jae Suk, who worked at the same coalmine with Choi, stated, "Since the Ah Oh Ji Coalmine accident, the POWs were so intensely watched that one politically incorrect utterance would cause a POW to be taken to the Security Agency. "In some instances, entire families were taken to the Agency. Once taken, they never returned, so we presumed that they must have been executed." Huh explained, "Ham Buk Province Secret Agency Detention Center was located at Chang Pyung Ri, Wong Sung Gun, Ham Buk Province. There was a coalmine in the detention center, and the whole area was a huge detention facility."

THE FOILED ESCAPE AND THE PUBLIC EXECUTION

Where POWs were apprehended after a foiled escape, they were executed in most cases. Otherwise, they served time in prison then were banished to the coalmines for hard labor.

Former POW Kim Sung Tae, 74, whom the reporter met on the 25th of last month, was captured during his foiled attempt to escape, with his fellow POWs, from Hwae Ryung POW Detention Center, in Ham Buk Province, on July 18, 1953. Pursuant to Section 69 of the Military Law, he was sentenced for 13 years for treason and was incarcerated at Nam Po Prison, he recounted. Kim tried again to escape but was apprehended 24 hours later and served his time at Ham Heung Prison. Subsequently, Kim was expelled to Ju Won Coalmine. He stated, "The price of a foiled escape is execution."

COLLECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TESTIMONY OF 32 SOUTH KOREAN PRISONERS OF WAR WHO RETURNED TO SOUTH KOREA

(excerpt from the article(June 22, 2005) of the Segye Times, Korea)

79 SURVIVORS—43 DECEASED—THE FATE OF 125 UNCERTAIN—TOTAL SURVIVORS ARE ESTIMATED TO BE 600, INCLUDING THOSE UNIDENTIFIED

The names of 247 South Korean prisoners of war, still detained in North Korea, have been confirmed. As a result of combining the testimonies of 32 returned South Korean POWs by investigation team of the newspaper, the list of 247 South Korean POWs who were forcibly detained in 16 different mines over such localities as Ham Kyung Nam Province and Ham Kyung Buk Provinces, have been identified. Among them, 79 POWs have been ascertained as surviving and 43 deceased. The remaining 125 POWs were either relocated or apprehended by the secret service, and their fate remains uncertain.

This is the first time a large scale list of names of the South Korean POWs, still forcibly detained in North Korea, has been disclosed. Since the Korean War truce was signed, North Korea has been adamantly asserting until now that not a single South Korean POW has been detained in North Korea. Even though the South Korean Government has a partial list of South Korean POWs detained in North Korea, it has not disclosed the list for concerns over the personal safety (security) and/or

possible disruption of South-North Korean relations. However, this newspaper decided to publish the list to enable the families to ascertain the fate of their loved ones and not merely to presume them as dead or missing in action.

The fact that South Korean POWs were captured during the Korean War and spent over 50 years of their lives in incarceration in the mines of North Korea has been established by the testimonies of the returning POWs. They were incarcerated in those 16 mines, the most notorious for hard labor, including Ah Oh Ji Coalmine in Eun Duk Gun, Ham Buk Province, according to the returned POWs' accounts.

The names of 23 surviving POWs at the two mines (6.13 and Oh Bong Coalmine) were confirmed by the newspaper reporters after reviewing the lists secured. Furthermore, 14 POW survivors at Ha Myun Coalmine in Sae Byul Gun, Ham Buk Province and 10 survivors, each, at Hak Po Coalmine in Hwae Ryang Gun and at Sang Hwa Coalmine in Ham Buk Province, were also identified by name.

Additional survivors, identified by name, included:

- 8 at Yong Buk Coalmine, Sae Byul Gun, Ham Buk Province
- 5 at Moo San Mine in Moo San Gun, Ham Buk Province
- 3 at Ko Gun Won Coalmine in Sae Byul Gun, Ham Buk Province
- 2 at Joo Won Coalmine at On Sung Gun in Ham Buk Province
- 2 at Kum Duk Mine at Dan Chun Gun, Ham Nam Province
- 1 at On Sung Coalmine at On Sung Gun, Ham Buk Province, and
- 1 at Yong Ahn Mine at Dan Chun Gun in Ham Nam Province.

The highest number of POWs, identified by name, dead or alive, is 64, at Won Tan Mine of Koh Kun, Ham Buk Province. Among those three are still alive, one is dead, and the fate of 60 remains unknown.

At Ah Oh Ji 6.13 Coalmine, 44 POWs were confirmed by name. Of those 44, fifteen are known to be survivors, 12 deceased, and the fate of 17 remains unknown. While they cannot always remember the names of the survivors, the testimonies of the returned South Korean POWs has reasonably established the number of South Korean POW survivors currently detained in North Korea at more than 600.

Three-hundred-fifty survivors, the highest number, still were incarcerated at Koh Won Coalmine, according to a returned POWs. One hundred, plus, survivors at Ah Oh Ji 6.13 Coalmine, 50 or more at Kum Duk Mine and Yong Yang Mine, respectively. Returned POWs attested to 30 each, remaining at Hak Po Coalmine and Sang Hwa Coalmine, and 20 at Yong Buk Coalmine.

A returned POW, Hong, stated, "There were 350 plus POWs detained at Ko Gun Won Coalmine, including 50 plus officers from colonel down to lieutenant levels. "In the 1970s and 1980s, most of the officers were either executed by the Secret Agency or sent to the brain-washing center."

Through the help of refugees and returned POWs, by the end of December, 2004, the Defense Ministry of the Republic of South Korea had secured a total list of 1,369 South Korean prisoners of war, including 542 survivors, 636 deceased, and 191 POWs of unknown fate. The list has been classified as "Top Secret."

An official in the North Korea Unit of the Policy Planning Section of the South Korean Defense Ministry explained, "If the list of the names of the detained POWs was disclosed, their personal safety could be jeopardized. Therefore, it must be kept confidential."

THE STATUS OF SOUTH KOREAN POWS IN NORTH KOREA

(excerpt from the article(June 22, 2005) of the Segye Times, Korea)

The testimonies of the South Korean prisoners of war who escaped from North Korea revealed for the first time that 79 South Korean POWs are currently being detained against their will at over 16 various mines and coalmines in North Korea. The investigation by the news media team exposed that several tens of thousands of South Korean prisoners of war at North Korean Detention Centers were not allowed to be repatriated to South Korea through the POW exchange at the cessation of the Korean War. They were diverted to the mines and spent 40 to 50 years of their lives in involuntary servitude. Although, at age 61, they were given "the old age benefits" and released from forced labor, yet they are not relocated from the mining areas, lacking freedom to move about, thus continuing in lifelong hardship.

SIX-HUNDRED PLUS SOUTH KOREAN POW SURVIVORS AT VARIOUS MINES

Quite a few South Korean POWs the newspaper team met clearly remembered, in spite of being over 70 years of age, the names and hometowns of fellow POWs who spent several decades with them in the mines.

Mr. Uhm, who escaped to South Korea in the year 2000, provided the news media team with a clearly-prepared, three-page list of fellow POWs. The list contained, in detail, names, ages, birthplaces, vocations, and special comments concerning 59 fellow POWs.

Most of the POWs were placed en masse over the northern-most mining area in the distant hinterland, adjacent to the tri-nation border of Russian, China and North Korea. POWs were assigned as follows:

- 10 places in Ham Buk Province,
- 3 places in Ham Nam Province,
- 2 places in Hwang Buk Province, and
- 1 place in Pyong Nam Province,

placing them in a total of 16 mines.

An analysis of the total testimonies of those returning POWs indicated that Koh Gun Won Coalmine at Sae Byul Gun in Ham Buk Province with 350, had the highest number of South Korean POWs, and Ah Oh Ji Coalmine, was the second, with 100 plus, POWs.

Chang Jin Hwan, who returned to South Korea in February of 2000, reported, "When I was sent to the Ah Oh Ji area in 1972, there were 500 POWs at 6.13 Coalmine and Oh Bong Coalmine. Even at the time of my escape, more than 100 POWs were still living there." Chang added, "Ah Oh Ji Coalmine had 6.25 POW Detention Center where 800 plus POWs were detained at the early stage."

Huh Jae Suk, who escaped from North Korea in July, 2000, recalled, "On April 25, 1954, at Seung Ho Ri POW Detention Center, wounded POWs were loaded on trains for Pyoung Yang. I naturally thought that we were headed for POW exchanges. But after three days of travel, I was shocked to learn that we arrived at Ah Oh Ji Coalmine, not South Korea." "There were more than 500 POWs there at that time," he said.

SEPARATE DETENTION FOR OFFICERS

Most officer POWs were separately detained at the Ha Myun Coalmine and Koh Gun Won Coalmine in Sae Byul Gun. Ham Buk Province. Park, who returned to South Korea in November, 2001, produced for the news team, a list of 85 POWs he remembered: 62 at Koh Gun Won Coalmine and 23 at Ha Myun Coalmine. The list included 14 POWs at Koh Gun Won Coalmine, including Lieutenant Colonel Lee Joon and three POWs at Ha Myun Coalmine including 1st Lieutenant Lee Jong Kook. Out of three POWs, Major Shim Hyung Sik died of an ailment in the early 1980s, 1st Lieutenant Suh Chae Soo was executed in 1990, and only 1st Lieutenant Lee Jong Ku was still living at the time Park escaped.

Park added, "Out of over 2,000 miners at Ha Myun Coalmine, 30% was made up of South Korean POWs." Park spent his prior nine years at Koh Gun Won Coalmine where many detainees were former South Korean officers. Out of 700 South Korean POWs at Koh Gun Won, one-half of them have already died. Lee Soon Ok, age 77, who escaped in May of last year, substantiated the foregoing by reporting, "At Koh Gun Coalmine, 50 plus officers were among 550 South Korean POWs."

POWS GROUPED INTO FORCED LABOR ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS

An analysis of the POWs' combined testimonies revealed that South Korean prisoners of war detained at widespread detention centers were, immediately after the truce, reassembled at the Detention Center at Kang Dong Gun, Pyong Nam Province. Then, North Korea organized them into the so-called "Interior Department Construction Force." North Korea assigned one battalion (about 500 members) or two battalions in some instances, to mines and coalmines. The Interior Department Construction Force was made up of nine units, from Unit 1701 to 1709 as follows:

- 1701—Ah Oh Ji Coalmine
- 1702—Hak Po Coalmine
- 1704—Sung Chun Mine
- 1706—Ha Myun Coalmine
- 1707 and 1708—Kum Duk Mine (Part of these were later reassigned to Yong Yang Mine.)
- 1709—Koh Gun Won Coalmine

North Korea also organized such other troops as #210, etc. with the POWs.

Returning Former POW Uhm said, "While North Koreans gathered most POWs in Kang Dog Gun, Pyong Nam Province, but once they could get 200-300 POWs together, they made South Korean POWs put on North Korean army uniforms, and transported them to the mines and coalmines in either Ham Kyung Province or

Pyong Ahn Province.” Lee Soon Ok commented, “The POWs who were assembled at Kang Dong POW Detention Center in early October, 1953, were sent to Ah Oh Ji, Koh Gun Won, Ha Myun, Hak Po, Yoo Sun, and Koong Shim Mines, by groups of approximately 500 each.”

Park explained, “Immediately after the War, all POWs were sent to the Detention Center. Here, North Koreans altered the name of the detention center to Interior Department Construction Force and regrouped the into nine troop units from #1701 through #1709.”

THE HIGHEST SUCCESS RATE OF POWS ESCAPE AT HAK PO COALMINE IN HAM BUK PROVINCE

Former POW Oh Jin Sang, age 80, who returned in September, last year, reported that 23 to 30 POWs were still alive at Hak Po Coalmine, Hwe Ryong City in Ham Buk Province.

Former POW Park Dong Il testified, “On or about July 14, 1953, five-hundred soldiers of the Capital Division were captured at the Battle of Kim Hwa region, and most of them were sent to Hak Po Coalmine.” At the time of his escape, about 30 of them were still living, thus corroborating the facts in Oh’s testimony.

Suh Byung Ryul spent 23 years in captivity at Hak Po Coalmine until his escape in February, 2000. “About one-half of the 625 POWs passed away at Hak Po Coalmine,” he said. At the time he escaped, he was only able to confirm three living POWs.

The successful escapees were: six from Hak Po Coalmine, five from Ah Oh Ji Coalmine, and four from Ha Myung Coalmine. It appeared that close proximity to the Chinese border made escapes from these coalmines more feasible.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you very much, Lieutenant Cho. Ms. Lee, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF MS. LEE MI-IL, PRESIDENT, KOREAN WAR ABDUCTEES FAMILY UNION

Ms. LEE. First of all, ladies and gentlemen, and distinguished Members of Congress, I would like to convey my gratitude on behalf of our organization, the Korean War Abductees Family Union, for giving me this very precious opportunity to testify about the issue of Korean War abductees.

It is important to point out that North Korea abductions of civilians did not begin in the 1970s in Japan, but much earlier, with a large-scale kidnapping of South Korean civilians during the Korean War in 1950.

The number of Korean War abductees is a staggering 82,959 according to government documents of the Republic of Korea published in 1952. The Korean War, which started with a sudden invasion from the north, has yet to be fully concluded, despite a half-century of uneasy cease fire.

Because of this long state of limbo, the enduring images of fathers, husbands, and sons taken by force to the north during the war remain as unhealed wounds in the memories of abductees’ beloved families.

Many, both abductees in the north, and surviving family members in the south, are gradually passing away from age, exhausted by decades of waiting for news of their loved ones. Where else in the world can such a human tragedy be witnessed; no news at all of loved ones in 56 years?

Because of time limits, the detailed explanation of the plight of the Korean War abduction is given in the testimony document you have received, and will now allow me to focus on my father’s case, which starts on page seven.

As you can see, I am very short. My voice is also very small. It is because my spine got injured during the Korean War in 1950. When I was sick with a high fever during the wartime, my father had already been abducted to North Korea.

He was a young businessman in his thirties, and he loved my mother and his three daughters. My mother believed that she would be able to meet him after the war was over. She did her best to save me in order to show him that I was alive, safe, and sound.

My mother was a very beautiful and competent woman. She still is. However, the only love in her heart during the last 56 years has been my father. So she is still waiting for him at the same spot where he was taken, being single. She turned 84 already.

A few years ago, she had a stroke and it is difficult for her to speak or move around. Still, she is whole-heartedly supporting me with the repatriation movement to bring my father back if he is still alive, or at least his ashes if he is not.

My family has never forgotten about my father. We have consistently been praying for him. Sometimes I think that God spared my life so that I could do this work for my father. I could not attend elementary school until I became a fifth grader and the middle school I wanted to attend rejected me for my disability. But I survived with my mother's hope.

I believe that my father will make his way back since my mother never gave up on her hope. As I said earlier, my voice is very small. Some of you may feel uncomfortable because of my small voice. But I trust in God, who brought me here to the Congress of the United States to testify before you so as to find my father, even with my weakness. I rely on God's mighty hands to ask all of you here for your help.

My mother told me that after the United Nations and the Korean Army had recovered Seoul, she made up her mind to die with her three daughters upon finding my father's body. But when she went to the prison to which my father had been taken away, it was empty, and she became aware of the fact that my father had been abducted to North Korea. Because of hope that my father would be alive, she hoped to live again and she has led a life in that hope.

Honorable Members of Congress, I urge you to help us bring back the large number of people who have been abducted to North Korea, including my father. I feel that only country that could put pressure on North Korea wit nuclear issues or human rights issues is the United States.

I ask for your help, for the sake of the human rights of those who have ben abducted during the Korean War, which the United States and the United Nations have come together to support.

The remaining wives whose husbands have been taken away were put in tragic situations to leave their children with orphanages because they were not financially able. Even so, they did their best to find their husbands and sons back.

There was no progress, however, because North Korea kept on saying we have not abducted anyone. Lives that are stained with memories full of tears, sweat, and blood, are common to us, the families who have our loved ones taken away.

What we are hoping for is to be able to show those members of our dear families that we have been waiting for them and that we still love them. Our hope has always prevailed against despair.

Many people tried to stop me from coming here. Some said it is already a history and some others were doubtful of what the United States could do. But how can those become history while our voice is still so loud to find our lost ones?

In September 2002, Kim Jung-il said that he would try to find the missing during the war. However, there was no progress. As you know, he does not seem to keep his promises. However, we are very inspired by the fact that the Japanese brought their people back in their collaborative effort.

I believe that there is nothing impossible as long as we do not despair. It sounds like a cliché, but it is still the most important principle for us. It is difficult to overcome the despair sometimes when members of the families pass away one by one.

Last year, a 94-year-old wife passed away, who raised seven children alone, not knowing whether her dear husband was alive or dead. These days, people in my children's generation in their 60s and 70s, are breathing their last breaths as well. In a hurry, we have begun to put testimonies on record from last year. I would like to send them to you once they are translated.

The reason that our hearts are not filled with hope only is that we know that there is nothing much we will be able to do other than bring back the ashes as time goes by. Today as I speak, a 92-year-old mother is waiting for the news of her son, who was a student at the time of his abduction.

Please help the old lady to have a chance to touch the warm hands of her son, whom she sees in her dreams every night. I would also like to show my father how I survived through the horrific war and am well and alive. I would like to let him know how much my mother loved him, and still does, and she has led her life only for him.

My story is not so special. The number of abducted exceeds 80,000. We have been under surveillance and discriminated against from the South Korean Government as Korean peninsula became an extremely hard-fought field of the Cold War.

As South Korea became developed both economically and democratically, we are not concerned about such issues anymore. However, there are not many people who understand our issues as human rights issues and actively help out. Our Government is not active either.

I tend to run to where there is even a dim light. As I was running here toward the American Congress, I felt a light stronger than ever. It is because I know that there are at least many faithful servants of God, like House representative Mr. Hyde, who know the importance of one person and one family.

In conclusion, the Korean War has not yet come to an end. The United States probably knows this fact better than anyone. The war, including my own, for which many victims have shed their blood to protect freedom and democracy, will finally be over around the time when my father will come back to us.

I would like to work together with you, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, until the day where my father comes back, the nu-

clear issues are resolved, and political camps like Yo-deok vanishes in North Korea. I express my deepest gratitude to all of you for your patience with me and my small voice. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. LEE MI-IL, PRESIDENT, KOREAN WAR ABDUCTEES
FAMILY UNION

First of all, ladies and gentlemen and distinguished members of Congress, I would like to convey my gratitude on behalf of our organization, the Korean War Abductees Family Union (KWAFU), for giving me this very precious opportunity to testify about the long-forgotten issue of Korean War abductees. This is the first testimony of its kind, which will bring, I believe, historic momentum to the search for justice for Korean War abductees. I wish to say that the blood shed by American servicemen and women during the Korean War (1950-53) contributed enormously to laying the foundation of a free democracy in my country. I assure you that these heroic sacrifices were not in vain.

Allow me to reveal *the details of North Korea's pattern of abduction* that took place during the Korean War and *the plight of these abductees thereafter*. My information is based on government documents, testimonies of family members of abductees, members of KWAFU, records, biographies, letters, etc.

It is important to point out that North Korean abductions of civilians did not begin in the 1970's in Japan, but much earlier—with a large-scale kidnapping of South Korean civilians during the Korean War in 1950. The Korean War, which started with a sudden invasion from the North, has yet to be fully concluded, despite a half century of an uneasy cease-fire. Because of this excruciatingly long state of limbo, the enduring images of fathers, husbands, and sons taken by force to the North during the war remain as unhealed wounds in the memories of abductees' beloved families. Many, both abductees in the North and surviving family members in the South, are gradually passing away from age, exhausted by decades of waiting for news of their loved ones. Where else in the world can such a human tragedy be witnessed: no news at all of loved ones in 56 years?

The number of Korean War abductees is a staggering eighty-two thousand, nine hundred fifty-nine (82,959), according to government documents of the Republic of Korea (ROK) published in 1952. This official record, published in five volumes (at the recommendation of the then US Ambassador Muccho) reveals personal details of each abductee, organized by cities and provinces.*

Please permit me to explain why such an enormous number of South Koreans were abducted.

When Korea was liberated from Japan in 1945, the Korean Peninsula was divided along the 38th Parallel as a by-product of the Cold War between the US and the then-Soviet Union. North Korea reflected the Communist influence of the Soviet Union: private property was confiscated and landowners and were purged, Japanese sympathizers and religious believers, mainly Christians, were persecuted. As many as 3.5 millions North Koreans, mostly influential people, intellectuals, priests, landowners, flooded into the South seeking to preserve their life and freedom. KIM Il-Sung, well aware of the draining of human resources from the North, planned as early as 1946 to forcibly take necessary human resources from the South to provide the necessary professional base of North Korea's communist state.

When North Korea invaded the South on the 25th of June 1950, the ROK military proceeded on June 28th to bomb the single bridge over the Han River, the only route of escape, thereby leaving the citizens of Seoul people under communist control for three months until September 28 Reclamation, which followed General MacArthur's Incheon landing. During this 90-day period, the North Korean regime systematically sought out and imprisoned politicians, academics, government ministers, civil servants. The North's military then gathered this incarcerated multitude and abducted them by forced march to the North before the Reclamation of Seoul took place.* The various abduction routes were later testified to by escapees from the North.

During the North's military retreat, additional young people from the South as well as technicians were abducted to serve the North's purposes. Many of them were also enlisted for frontline duty as "forced volunteer" soldiers.

The objectives of their abduction were to meet the necessary human resources; to promote political propaganda of the North, and to create confusion in the South, in hopes of readying it for communist unification.

The war abductees taken for use in the North Korea are clearly nationals of the Republic of Korea. Consequently, they were considered the lowest class in the North

and were under constant surveillance. From the end of the 1950s, the abductees were literally persecuted, subject to the worst conditions, particularly when they did not cooperate with the tenets of communist ideology. These individuals were purged and banished to labor camps, remote mining areas, difficult labor in lumber camps, and political prisons. Post-war South Korea in the 1960s was one of the world's poorest countries, and as the Cold War persisted, military regimes in 1970s and 80s governed the South. During those dark decades, we did not dare to dream of publicly seeking out our lost ones who might be alive in the North Korea. It is our belief that the war abductees who had somehow survived were the likely first victims of the notorious food shortage that began in 1990s. Even so, we have not given up hoping that there are those who have survived. Even if a single abductee is alive in the North, we will look for a way to rescue him with his family, if he managed to make one in those hardships. For the thousands who've already died there, it is our filial duty to bring back their ashes.

MY FATHER'S CASE

Unfortunately, my mother who experienced the tragedy and witnessed the abduction of her husband could not come here. She is very weak and of advanced years (84 years), but to this day still waits for any news of her beloved husband, torn from her when she was 28 years. I was two years old at the time and do not remember the scene of abduction. However, I can vividly picture the scene of his abduction because my mother constantly talked about it to us, her three daughters.

When the Korean War broke out on 25 June, my father was 30 years-old, an entrepreneur that started a brassware factory in Cheongryonggri, on the eastern side of Seoul. Two days after the invasion, he, like everybody else, went to the Han River bridge with his family (his parents, me, my elder sister and his pregnant wife in her 9th month of pregnancy). When the bridge was suddenly cut off, he had to return home. Later we realized that it was providential that my mother was not on the road with other refugees when she gave birth to another daughter in August.

As mentioned above, Seoul was under the communists from June 28th. On September 4th, around 4:00 pm, a member of the 'North Korea Political Defense Bureau' came and asked my father to go with him to the police station for the purpose of investigation. The purpose was related to the activities of anti-communist group my father had joined. Later when my mother went to the police station and met him, he told her, "they said the investigation is yet to be completed. I have to go to their headquarters and may be back tomorrow." That was the last time my mother saw my father.

When my mother finally found him out at Dongdaemun police station, she was told that he was not guilty and would be released within a week. Then again, upon new instructions from the North, he was not released and taken to the North.

Upon hearing a rumor that the People's Army killed everybody they had taken on their retreat to the North, my mother went nearly insane with grief and desperation. She searched every heap of corpses but in vain. At that time my mother's only thought was to find the body of her husband, then die with her three daughters to join him beyond the grave.

Then yet another tragedy struck my mother: a babysitter accidentally dropped me, causing spinal caries. My mother rushed me to clinic to save me as I slipped in and out of consciousness. She cried, repeating over and over, "Don't die before we see your father." She prayed fervently. Thanks to her endless love and professional efforts (she was a medical doctor), I appear before you today and am able to stand as a witness, although I am a disabled person. Now I am a born-again Christian and pray that I live to return the love and grace I have received.

My mother continued to live with me in the very same spot where my father was taken, anguish and hope for reunion as our constant companions. More than 50 years have passed without news. Six years ago, my mother suffered a stroke, impairing her speech and mobility. It dawned on me that she may very well die suddenly without seeing or hearing a single stitch of news from her beloved husband whom she missed so terribly all her life. I decided that I simply could not sit and wait any longer for my government to take action. I launched an NGO family union with a group of abductees families in 2000 with its primary objective of finding some way to obtain news of our fathers' whereabouts.

KWAFU ACTIVITIES

The Korean War Abductees Family, the forerunner of the KWAFU, was actually formed during the war in 1951 in Korea's second largest city, Busan. They made a list of abductees and even held a rescue rally on city streets. Those wives of war abductees gathered and did their best to rescue their husbands, shedding bitter

tears. My mother was an active leading member in the rescue activities of those days. Then in 2000 when the South-North Summit took place in Pyongyang, seemingly arousing new hopes for peace on the Korean Peninsula, we, the abductees' families, gathered and inaugurated a new KWAFU. We focus on collecting extreme cases of human rights violations among the Korean War abductees, seeking confirmation of their whereabouts, their well-being and eventual repatriation.

In order to develop our activities more systematically, the KWAFU has established a resource center for Korean War abductions, as an affiliated organ, where it collects materials on Korean War abduction. The center started a new project last year: VTR filming and recording of witness testimonies on each abductee case. The results will be published soon entitled "Source Book of Korean War Abduction"

In solidarity with many North Korean human rights NGOs, we participated in the International Convention for North Korean Human Rights' held in Seoul last year and urged confirmation of whereabouts of the Korean War abductees. The 'Japanese Rescue Group for Abducted Japanese in North Korea' is one of our strong partner NGO's and we participate in their convention held in Japan every year.

Another result of our consistent efforts has been that the ROK Ministry of Unification included the names of four abductees under a different category, 'specially dispersed families' at a recent family reunion meeting between the South and North. This means that the four requests for confirmation of their whereabouts were officially forwarded to the North Korean authorities. The North's replies were identical: 'impossible to confirm.' It may be impossible because they are from the South, with no addresses in the North. This confirmed clearly that we need a different approach and separate negotiations at the South-North meetings.

In addition, last year a documentary on Korean War Abduction entitled "People of No Return" was finally completed after four years of preparation and its national premiere was held in downtown Seoul. It is submitted to the New York International Independent Film Festival and will be viewed in 9th of May.

THE HOPE OF ABDUCTEES' FAMILIES

Fifty-six years ago more than eighty thousand (80,000) South Koreans were forcibly taken to the North, Ever since, no one in the South knows what happened to them. Our longing to see them again one day has never died. That one day has unimaginably lengthened to fifty-six long years. Our abiding wish to see them again. If we cannot, we wish to know what happened to them, to receive any news about them, how longer they survived, the dates of their death, and finally, to obtain their ashes.

The United States government has invested a great amount of effort, money and time in excavating ashes of US Armed Forces, killed in action during the Korean War and repatriated their remains to their families. I envy your nation's iron will and attitude to protect your nationals to the end, regardless of outcome.

We in South Korea waited and waited. The first generation of abductees is quickly disappearing, passing away one by one even now. An old lady, whose husband, a public prosecutor in 1950 when abducted, had been sick and had waited long to see him again, passed away last year. An old mother whose son, then a high school student when kidnapped to the North, still waits for news of him. How much longer can we continue to wait? Time is running out.

Please remember the heartbreak and decades-long agony of our members, the families of Korean War abductees, and take up this issue in your next meeting with North Korea. We have great confidence in you. Your place at the negotiation table is the only one we can trust to resolve our abduction problems. Finally, I pray that the kingdom of God will soon be free to spread its words of truth and freedom, as well as healing in North Korea. Thank you.

MY FATHER

As you can see, I am very short. My voice is also very small. It is because my spine got injured during the Korean War in 1950. When I was sick with a high fever during the wartime, my father had already been kidnapped to North Korea. He was a young businessman in his thirties, and he loved my mother and his three daughters. My mother believed that she would be able to meet him after the war was over. She did her best to save me in order to show him that I was alive, safe and sound.

My mother was a very beautiful and competent woman. She still is. However, the only love in her heart during the last 55 years has been my father, so she is still waiting for him at the same spot where he was taken, being single. She turned 84 already. A few years ago, she had a stroke and it is difficult for her to speak or move around. Still, she is whole-heartedly supporting me with the repatriation

movement to bring my father back if he is still alive, or at least his ashes if he is not.

My family has never forgotten about my father. We have consistently been praying for him. Sometimes I think that God spared my life so that I could do this work for my father. I could not attend elementary school until I became a fifth grader and the middle school I wanted to attend rejected me for my disability, but I survived with my mother's hope. I believe that my father will make his way back since my mother never gave up on her hope.

As I said earlier, my voice is very small. Some of you may feel uncomfortable because of my small voice. But I trust in God who brought me here to the Congress of the United States to testify before you so as to find my father, even with my weakness. I rely on God's mighty hands to ask all of you here for your help.

My mother told me that after the United Nations and the Korean army had recovered Seoul, she made up her mind to die with her three daughters upon finding my father's body. But when she went to the prison to which my father had been taken away, it was empty and she became aware of the fact that my father had been kidnapped to North Korea. Because of hope that my father would be alive, she hoped to live again and she has led her life in that hope.

Honorable members of Congress,

I urge you to help us bring back the large number of people who had been kidnapped to North Korea including my father. I feel that the only country that could put pressure on North Korea with nuclear issues or human rights issues is the United States. I ask for your help, for the sake of the human rights of those who had been kidnapped during the Korean War which the United States and the United Nations have come together to support.

The remaining wives whose husbands had been taken away were put in tragic situations to leave their children with orphanages because they were not financially able. Even so, they did their best to find their husbands and sons back. There was no progress; however, because North Korea kept on saying, "we have not kidnapped anyone." Lives that are stained with memories full of tears, sweat and blood are common to us, the families who have our loved ones taken away. What we are hoping for is to be able to show those members of our dear families that we have been waiting for them and we still love them. Our hope has always prevailed against despair.

Many people tried to stop me from coming here. Some said it is already a history and some others were doubtful of what the United States could do.

But, how can those become history while our voice is still so loud, to find our lost ones? In September 2002, Kim Jung-Il, the chief of the state said that he would try to find the missing during the War; however, there was no progress. As you know, he does not seem to keep his promises. However, we are very inspired by the fact that the Japanese brought their people back in their collaborative effort.

I believe that there is nothing impossible as long as we do not despair. It sounds like a cliché but it is still the most important principle for us. It is difficult to overcome that despair sometimes when members of the families pass away, one by one. Three years ago, a 94-year-old grandmother died in waiting for her son. Last year, a 90-year-old wife passed away who raised seven children alone, not knowing whether her dear husband was alive or dead. These days, people in my children's generation in their sixties and seventies are breathing their last breaths as well. In a hurry, we have begun to put the testimonies on record from last year. I would like to send them to you once they are translated.

The reason that our hearts are not filled with hope only is that we know that there is nothing much we will be able to do other than bringing back the ashes as time goes by. Today as I speak, a 92-year-old mother is waiting for the news of her son who was a student at the time of kidnapping. Please help the old lady to have a chance to touch the warm hands of her son, whom she sees in her dreams every night. I would also like to show my father how I survived through the horrific war and am well alive. I would like him to let him know how much my mother loved him, and still does, and she has led her life only for him.

My story is not so special. The number of those kidnapped exceeds 80,000. The number of people working together to bring back the kidnapped exceeds 700. We have been under surveillance and discriminated against from the South Korean government as Korean peninsula became an extremely hard-fought field of the Cold War.

As South Korea became developed both economically and democratically, we are not concerned about such issues any more. However, there are not many people who understand our issues as human rights issues and actively help out. Our government is not active either.

I tend to run to where there is even a dim light. As I was running here, toward the American Congress, I felt a light stronger than ever. It is because I know that there are at least many faithful servants of God, like House representative Mr. Hyde, who know the importance of one person and one family.

In conclusion, the Korean War has not yet come to an end. The United States probably knows this fact better than anyone. The war, including my own, for which many victims have shed their blood to protect freedom and democracy, will finally be over around the time when my father will come back to us.

I would like to work together with you, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, until the day where my father comes back, the nuclear issues are resolved and political camps like Yo-deok vanishes in North Korea. I express my deepest gratitude to all of you for your patience with me and my small voice.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you, Ms. Lee. That was very profound. Let me begin by asking Mrs. Yokota. Madam, have you been allowed any contact with your granddaughter. And, secondly, have you had any contact with your granddaughter's family on her father's side?

Mrs. YOKOTA. Yes, when my granddaughter, Kim Hae-Kyung, appeared for the first time, she basically mentioned that grandma, I would like to meet you. There was this message that was sent by video, and of course as a grandmother, I would like to fly over at any time, and would really like to take my granddaughter's hands, but basically after all these struggles, and all these schemes that the North Koreans made, discussed this with my family of whether we should travel to North Korea to meet our granddaughter, but because of our learnings from these struggles, we came up with this decision that, okay, after we meet her, there might be this performance that we would have to meet in front of a grave yard of the alleged grave yard of Megumi Yokota.

And we were afraid that this might be used as a political tool to end this issue, so we decided that after all these struggles and grief, though we would like to meet our granddaughter, we rejected their offers and we decided, and we have not yet here, and the father, husband as well.

Mr. LEACH. Okay. Thank you. Lieutenant Cho——

Mrs. YOKOTA. And regarding the family of the father's side of for Kim Hae-Kyung, the granddaughter. Actually, we are basically in contact and we are planning to meet them next month.

Mr. LEACH. Lieutenant Cho, you indicated in your testimony that there are some 60 POWs that have escaped from the north to the south, and that there are others that still live in the north. Do you have any sense of just how many South Korean POWs are alive in North Korea today?

Mr. CHO. Yes. According to the latest statistics released by South Korea's Ministry of National Defense, MND, there are a total of 546 surviving South Korean prisoners-of-war.

Mr. LEACH. May I ask you, Lieutenant Cho, and you, Mr. Koh, the two of the panel who have lived in North Korea, are the POWs kept in one area and abductees in another? Did you ever meet any abductees from any other country that were not POWs?

Mr. CHO. Yes, because I can't recall a single incident of ever encountering an abductee while I was in North Korea, South Korean prisoners-of-war were held together in a special zone that was under strict administration by North Korea's authorities.

Mr. LEACH. Lieutenant Cho or Mr. Koh, did you have much interrelationship with North Koreans, and did you have a sense

that they understood what was happening in the outside world or did you have a sense that they were very single-minded in the way they looked at life and your imprisonment?

Mr. KOH. Yes, by definition, we were free to mingle with North Korean residents. However, because we are under a watch list as someone who had been taken from South Korea, and it is a primary duty for any North Korean resident to report any politically incorrect remarks or behavior on the part of South Korean abductees. So we did not have any chance of freely meeting North Koreans.

Mr. LEACH. Did Mr. Koh meet with any other abductees from other countries?

Mr. KOH. No, Mr. Chairman, I did not have any single opportunity to meet abductees from any other countries.

Mr. LEACH. Did Lieutenant Cho want to comment?

Mr. CHO. I did not have an opportunity to meet anybody from other countries who had been forced into North Korea. As I have tried to explain to you before, in North Korea, strict residence is kept so that you cannot leave at will where you are assigned to live.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me just say at the outset that, Ms. Lee, you are anything but a small voice. You are truly a very powerful voice, a voice of compassion, a voice and a witness frankly for your faith in Jesus Christ, and I find it very inspiring, and I hope that we don't disappoint you, in following up from our end as to what we might be able to do to be of assistance. So you are anything but a small voice. Very powerful.

Let me just ask Mrs. Yokota if I could a question. Did the agent who provided the information about your daughter and a picture of your daughter, Megumi, provide any care and assistance to her? Do others provide assistance once they have been abducted?

What becomes of an abductee? Are they brainwashed? Is the whole idea of Jo-jae? Do they try to impose that system of though on abductees?

Mrs. YOKOTA. As I mentioned in my testimony before, she was brought to North Korea by a spy ship. After she arrived, she was put into a residence for foreigners, and she was basically after that trained and educated on North Korean history, and science, and other you might say jo-jae ideals, but related histories of North Korea.

And after that, what I am told, is that she was ordered to give direct education to these operatives who could pretend like they are Japanese, such as with culture, and languages. So to answer your question, she has been educated after she arrived at these residences.

Mr. SMITH. You mentioned an estimated 450 case of Japanese abductions suspected. Could you tell us what kind of circumstances or evidence leads to suspecting that a missing person might be a victim of a North Korean kidnapping?

Mrs. YOKOTA. I think that it would be appropriate if Professor Shimada could answer that question.

Mr. SMITH. Yes, please.

Mr. SHIMADA. There are many family members who have reported to the authorities, or to NGOs like us, that missing family members cases would be an abduction by North Korea, and so specifically the 450 cases that have been so far reported to my sister organization, and they mentioned that in cases North Koreans were trying to steal the identities of the Japanese.

The North Koreans often target people who have not belonged to organizations, and who have not had many friends. So if they disappear, there is no one who would have noticed. In those cases, naturally family members, or there are no family members or friends who would report those cases to the authorities.

Also, concerning those patterns, I think that maybe 100 to 200 cases would be confirmed abductions in the future, but I don't know the exact number.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you. I appreciate that. If I could, Mr. Cho, I think you might be the one to answer this. You indicated that 62 South Korean POWs have successfully escaped from the North. My understanding is that the estimate is that there are some 600 remaining POWs. What would you speculate is the reason why North Korea continues to incarcerate them?

Is it spite? Is it retaliation? Is it a cheap source of slave labor? And, secondly, as you know, there were 8,100 American POWs unaccounted for in North Korea. Is there any evidence that some of those Americans are alive?

Mr. CHO. As for the first question regarding those who are still in captivity in North Korea, 500 and some North Korean prisoners of war, I think their prime years of offering labor are over now. They are in retirement.

The only reason that North Korea does not release them may be because they don't want all the facts of the mistreatment and cruelty known to the outside world. I did not have the opportunity to meet with any American prisoner of war, but when I was incarcerated in North Korea's prison camp at A-O-ji, which is located in Su-a-hre, one side of our camp was used for American prisoners, and the other side for Korean prisoners.

And it was my knowledge that half of American prisoners died because of malnutrition and treatment like that, and whereas one-third of South Korean detainees died for the same reasons.

The one who testified to the fact that only 50 percent of American POWs died is still—that person that gave that testimony is alive in Seoul. And the reason that accounted for so many American prisoners of war deaths was malnutrition, coupled with typhoid fever, and dysentery.

Mr. SMITH. If I could just ask one final question, and that is really a two-part, but if you could keep it succinct. Has the National Assembly and the Dias done enough in each respective country to promote the interest of the abductees?

And, secondly, as you heard perhaps earlier in the discussion, I asked Jay Lefkowitz, and we will initiate a letter from our part to the President of the United States, asking that the G-8 summit in Moscow, that this issue be given priority of the abductees in North Korea.

What would you say if we were members of the G-8 and do you think that this would be an important topic for them to take up?

Mr. SHIMADA. If I may answer that question. The United States Congress has done a great deal in support of our cause, and for that I am very thankful. The Japanese Congress has also passed several important laws which would pressure North Korea.

And I want to ask you one thing. I would like to say that this abduction issue is not a bilateral issue. There might be many other people, including Americans, and so I want you to launch a major information gathering, a major investigative works. Even a tiny NGO like us could find out several abduction cases, and even several cases.

So I think that a big powerful organization like the United States Congress, if you would launch a major information gathering campaign, I am sure that you would find many, many cases which were committed by North Korea, abduction cases committed by North Koreans.

Ms. LEE. Please allow me to show a picture of my 84-year-old mother. This is my mother, and she is still alive and is 84 years old, and this is my photo of my parents taken in 1944, and this is my father, and this is my mother. They are very young at that time.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you very much. And let me say that pictures sometimes speak more than words, and we appreciate that. Let me say that I apologize. We are going to have to bring the hearing to an end at this point, and so I want to thank all of our witnesses for very moving testimony, and very profound testimony. Thank you all very, very much. This Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:48 p.m., the Subcommittees were adjourned.]

