Statement of Greg Scarlatoiu, Executive Director, Committee for Human Rights in North Korea at the hearing of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission entitled "North Korea's Forced Labor Enterprise: A State-Sponsored Marketplace in Human Trafficking, April 29, 2015

Good afternoon, Co-Chairman McGovern, Co-Chairman Pitts, and members of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. On behalf of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, I would like to express great appreciation for inviting me to speak with you today about North Korea's forced labor enterprise and its state sponsorship of human trafficking. It is an honor and a privilege to have an opportunity to discuss these issues with you today.

North Korea's "Royal Palace Economy"

North Korea's nuclear and missile developments and other military provocations have continued to threaten international peace and security and challenge U.S. foreign and security policy. The Kim regime's ruthless prevention and suppression of dissent among its population, isolation of them from the outside world and denial of their fundamental human rights have also worked to undermine peace and security on the Korean peninsula. Meanwhile, the "royal palace economy" (a term coined by HRNK non-resident fellow Kim Kwang-jin) generating hard currency for North Korea's leaders has continued to enable three generations of Kims to stay in power. North Korea's exportation of tens of thousands of workers to foreign countries is an important part of the hard currency generating apparatus employed to sustain the Kim regime. Understanding this and the other building blocks of the "royal palace economy" will enable a better discernment of the reasons behind the longevity of the regime, and will allow the preparation of more effective sanctions to address the security and human rights challenges the regime poses.

The essential goal of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 and the Reauthorization Acts of 2008 and 2012 is to promote respect for the fundamental human rights of the North Korean people. Enhanced understanding of North Korea's quasi-licit and illicit international economic activities and their connection to human rights will enable experts, policymakers and the public to more effectively seek ways to improve the human rights of North Koreans, especially of workers sent overseas.

The international sanctions imposed on North Korea have been based on the threats it has posed to international peace and security, as defined in Chapter VII, Article 41, of the UN Charter. The sanctions have not always been fully effective, primarily due to lack of cooperation by UN member states in the arms area. Effectively documenting linkages between the supply chain of the "royal palace economy" and human rights violations can provide the basis for expanding and diversifying the ground for action beyond existing North Korea sanctions.

In December 2014, following a February 2014 landmark report by a UN Commission of Inquiry establishing that the Kim regime has been committing crimes against humanity and subsequent strong UN Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly resolutions on North Korean human rights, this topic was included in the permanent agenda of the UN Security Council, in December 2014. While fully

acknowledging the importance of the security challenges North Korea presents, a better understanding of the linkages between the "royal palace economy" and human rights violations, in particular those relating to North Korean workers residing in foreign countries, will continue to help shift international attention and the ground for action to human rights and labor violations committed by the North Korean regime, in particular the exploitation of workers, human trafficking, and forced labor.

The Current Situation in North Korea

In order to maintain itself in power—its main strategic objective, the Kim regime has ruthlessly prevented and suppressed dissent and denied North Koreans their most fundamental human rights. Since the death of Kim Jong-il in December 2011, North Korea has been undergoing its second dynastic transition. After the first three years of Kim Jong-un's rule, the human rights situation has not shown any signs of improvement. Under the new leadership, North Korea also appears to have chosen the same path of brazen provocations and threats to regional peace and security, including missile launches and a nuclear test, undertaken at a cost that could have fed millions of North Koreans for years.

Twenty-six years since the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, and despite sanctions imposed pursuant to UN Security Council Resolutions, the North Korean regime has managed a second hereditary transfer of power to Kim Jong-un, son of Kim Jong-il and grandson of Kim Il-sung. While the Kim regime has found the resources to produce nuclear weapons and while it appears that at least some elite residents of Pyongyang enjoy luxury goods imported in violation of UN Security Council sanctions, no fewer than 21 million North Koreans out of a population of 24 million live under dire circumstances.

The 2-3 million North Koreans who are privileged belong to the "core class" according to North Korea's social classification system, *Songbun*. Some of them enjoy cell phones, better apartments and much better living conditions than the 21 million. North Korea's "royal palace economy" is not intended to improve the livelihoods of ordinary North Koreans. Through exports of licit, but especially quasi-licit and illicit goods, the regime seeks to earn currency for itself and for its immediate supporters. This is the purpose also served by North Korean workers exported overseas, who are denied basic labor rights. Because the regime does not show signs of embarking on real reform, the "royal palace economy," including the system of sending workers overseas, can be expected to be relied upon and to expand further.

Overseas North Korean Workers

The North Korean government has earned significant amounts of foreign currency by exporting North Korean laborers. After the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the number of North Korean workers dispatched overseas declined. However, in recent years, the number appears to be on the rise, likely as the result of the Kim Jong-un regime's attempts to increase available sources of funding, as it grows more isolated due to its missile and nuclear developments and brazen military provocations combined with the impact of international sanctions.

The North Korean regime recruits workers for assignments overseas under bilateral contracts with foreign governments. North Korean workers arrive in the recipient countries on three to five year

contracts that can be extended indefinitely or not at all depending on the performance and loyalty of the worker. There are currently 52,300-53,100 North Korean laborers working overseas, earning the Kim regime USD 1.2-2.3 billion per year.[1] Available reports indicate that the first overseas North Korean laborers were loggers exported to the Soviet Far East in 1967.[2] Since the inception of the program, North Korean workers have been officially dispatched to 45 countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.[3] Currently, 16 countries reportedly host workers sent by the North Korean regime: Russia (20,000), China (19,000), Mongolia (1,300), Kuwait 5,000), UAE (2,000), Qatar (1,800), Angola (1,000), Poland (400-500), Malaysia (300), Oman (300), Libya (300), Myanmar (200), Nigeria (200), Algeria (200), Equatorial Guinea (200) and Ethiopia (100).[4] Although North Korea is not a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO), all but two of the 16 states officially hosting North Korean workers are ILO members.

Initially, North Korean loggers were sent to the former Soviet Union as part of a callous barter: North Korean slave labor in exchange for Soviet weapons and some goods for civilian use, such as rudimentary electronics. In the 1970s and especially in the 1980s, as the economic situation of North Korea was becoming dire, the workers "realized that Russia was a better place as soon as they crossed the border."[5] The regime realized that, however difficult the working conditions may have been even in the Russian Far East, the situation at home was worse, and the workers may have been tempted to defect. Thus, the regime decided to select male candidates of good *Songbun,* married with at least one child, but more often with two or more. One's belonging to the "core" class of certified loyalists and the family left behind is meant to deter defection. Certainly, none of them belong to the *crème de la crème* of highly privileged Kim regime loyalists. They are on the fringes of the "core" class, loyal and employed in "respectable" positions, but poor. Later, young women only would be sent overseas as restaurant workers. Most of them come from privileged "core" class families.

Their Motives

North Korean workers may volunteer to go overseas in hope of better opportunities; they may be sent by their state companies on their accord; or they may just be dispatched by their employers, regardless of their preferences.[6] Nowadays, as reliance on markets has increasingly replaced the Public Distribution System (PDS), money plays a more prominent role in North Korea, and more workers seek overseas positions hoping for better opportunities than those available at home.

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[1] International Network for the Human Rights of North Korean Overseas Labor (INHL*). The Conditions of the North Korean Overseas Labor.* INHL. Seoul. 2012.

[2] *Logjams in the Soviet Timber Industry.* A research Paper. U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Directorate of Intelligence. SOV 83-10206X. December 1983. Declassified in part, sanitized copy approved for release, January 26, 2012.

[3] Shin, Chang-Hoon and Myong-Hyun Go. *Beyond the UN COI Report on Human Rights in DPRK.* PP 21. The Asan Policy Institute. 2014.

[4] Ibid.

[5] HRNK interview with former North Korean logger in Russia. July 2013.

[6] *Pukhan Haewoe Nodongja Inkwon Shilthae* (The Current Human Rights Situation of North Korean Workers Dispatched Overseas). PP 41. Database Center for North Korean Human Rights. Seoul. 2015.

Previously, the ambitions of those dispatched overseas were modest. In the late 1980s, a North Korean worker chose to work as a logger in the Russian Far East for two years. He agreed to work in atrocious conditions for two years, hoping that upon his return he would be able to "improve his family's life, by offering them a color TV." Ultimately, he never saw them again. After defecting from the logging camp, he wandered around Russia for years, before finally finding his way to South Korea.[7]

The agencies in charge of sending workers overseas may differ. Some of the construction workers exported to the Middle East are sent through Pyongyang Overseas Construction Enterprise. Loggers are sent to the Russian Far East by the Forestry Department. Since "North Korea has to select the ones [workers] of good *Songbun,* the Social Safety Agency takes charge of the background investigation."[8]

If a worker wants to go overseas, he has to bribe those involved in the selection process. Some workers mentioned USD 100-200, a very hefty amount by North Korean standards. One of them said it cost him a carton of cigarettes and two high quality liquor bottles. In order to secure an overseas deployment of up to three years, the selection process can be rather complicated:

"The difficult thing was that we had to have seven people as guarantors, so I asked my wife, older brother, the president of my company, manager, the party secretary, the State Security Department agent in charge of managing my company, and a police officer (Ministry of Public Security agent) to do it for me. After I reported seven guarantors on the application document, they gave me the authorization stamp which allowed me to leave."[9]

Prior to their departure, the workers undergo indoctrination sessions and a physical examination. The physical examination, generally done no sooner than six months prior to departure, involves a blood test and eye, ear, and liver examination. The regime wants no medical expenses during their stay overseas, so only workers in excellent health are sent. As soon as they cross the border, their passports are confiscated by their minders. They will see them again only right before boarding the plane taking them back to North Korea, or right before crossing the land border from China or Russia.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the overseas workers did not receive money for their work. Instead, their families received coupons which they could in turn use to purchase food and coveted washing machines or color TV sets from special stores. As the great famine of the mid to late 1990s set in, this system collapsed, together with the PDS. However, loggers and other workers still had to work for no pay. Through the few letters received from home, they learned that families continued to receive the coupons, but they were useless, as stores were now empty. As their families starved, some of these hardened men, who had survived appalling working conditions, decided to assume the ultimate risk. They left the logging camps, desperate to find a way to help their dying families. Even most of those who ultimately found their way to South Korea or other third countries were never reunited with their families again.

[7] HRNK interview with former North Korean logger in Russia. July 2013.
[8] HRNK interview with former North Korean construction worker in the Middle East.
[9] HRNK interview with former North Korean logger in Russia. July 2013.

Two of the former restaurant workers interviewed, graduates of both college and Sojo (performing arts "institute") stated that they wanted to work overseas "to see the world, and didn't think much about the pay."[10] Secluded to their living quarters and workplace almost the entire time, they only seldom got away for a few hours, to shop at local markets, under the constant surveillance of colleagues and minders.

During and after the great famine, the number of overseas North Korean workers declined. As the number began increasing again during the final years of the Kim Jong-il regime, at some locations, in particular in the Russian Far East (Khabarovsk and Vladivostok) and the Middle East, North Korean workers gained very limited access to opportunities to make a little money for themselves. In order to do that, one has to be cleared by the three supervisors: the Workers' Party secretary—90 percent of the workers are party members, the State Security Department (SSD) agent, and the worksite manager.

The reason why some of the most trusted workers are cleared is that supervisors are increasingly corrupt, and interested in extracting some profits for themselves. If so, a worker may be allowed to be "subcontracted" by other foreign workers at the same site. Other North Korean workers at the site have to increase their already overwhelming level of effort to make up for his absence. South Asian workers working construction in the Middle East "subcontract" him to do their job. Another foreign worker getting paid USD 40 a day hires the North Korean to do his job, paying him only half the daily wage. The respective foreign worker is free to work another job, thus increasing his income. The North Korean is left with very little, as he has to share the USD 20 with the three supervisors. The North Korean worker ends up being exploited by his government, by the recipient country—which is ultimately responsible for enforcing the labor rights of foreign workers within its territorial jurisdiction, by his three worksite supervisors, and even by other foreign workers. The loyalist pauper is now at the bottom of the heap, and the Kim regime knows it. Upon their return to North Korea, the SSD keeps the workers under strict surveillance for at least three years.

Working Conditions

As a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), North Korea legally takes upon the responsibility of avoiding forced labor or servitude.[11] The international community expects North Korea to observe ICCPR Article 8, 3 (a) – that "no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour."[12] North Korea should also observe ICCPR Article 8, 1 prohibiting "slavery" and Article 8, 2 prohibiting "servitude." Newspaper investigations, research reports, testimony from defectors and businessmen, and additional empirical evidence indicate that North Korea violates internationally accepted labor standards in its labor export program. High-profile North Korean defector Kim Tae Sun testified before the European Parliament that the coercive nature of North Korea's

[10] HRNK interviews with former North Korean restaurant workers. July 2013 and August 2014.
[11] "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm.
[12] Ibid.

international labor practices amounted to "21st century slave labor."[13] Even if North Korea's overseas workers did choose to work of their own accord, they are nevertheless made to accept sub-par, coercive working conditions and stay in their jobs through tactics and policies that would be beyond questionable almost anywhere else.

The situation of North Korean workers exported to other countries ranges from atrocity to ruthless exploitation. At worst, one may end up as a corpse inside a sealed coffin, decaying for months before being repatriated. At best, one may be allowed by the worksite supervisors to moonlight or do a side job and be left with a little money, after having paid the requisite bribes to those in charge.

Former loggers and a former logging camp truck driver told HRNK a terrifying story: When a worker dies at the camp, the body is not automatically repatriated. The cost of fuel is high, so management waits until ten corpses have piled up. Sometimes it takes five months or so. In most cases, the families receive decomposing or already decomposed bodies. The truck driver mentioned the most frightening sound he'd heard: water sloshing inside the ten sealed coffins he had loaded onto his truck, thawing corpses inside.

Freedom of Association/Collective Bargaining

The European Parliament's 2010 resolution on North Korea asserted that "the government subjects the population to forced labour as part of labour mobilization campaigns, and does not permit free association of labour or collective bargaining."[14] The ILO's Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention affirms that these rights are fundamental characteristics of a clean supply chain.[15] Available evidence indicates that North Korean workers abroad do not have the freedom to associate with groups and individuals as they choose, or to engage in minimal collective bargaining practices that are prevalent around the world.

Preliminary conclusions based on desk research and 25 interviews recently completed by HRNK for an upcoming publication on North Korean overseas workers indicate that they have no right to freedom of association or collective bargaining. Any attempt to protest their working conditions, to strike or organize would result in their swift repatriation and harsh punishment:

"They put plaster casts on both of the worker's legs and send him back. The casts are taken off after they cross the border. They let the workers go home if it's a minor problem, but for bigger issues they are sent to the kwan-li-so (political prison camp)."[16]

[13] Demick, Barbara. "N. Koreans Toil Abroad under Grim Conditions." The Los Angeles Times, http://articles.latimes.com/2005/dec/27/world/fg-slaves27.
[14] "European Parliament Resolution on North Korea ". The European Parliament, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=B7-2010-0446&language=EN.
[15] "C87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948". 1948. International Labour Organization. 02/15 2012. <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C087>.
[16] HRNK interview with former North Korean logger in the Primorsky, Tinda, Amur Oblast, Russian Federation.

In most cases, the working conditions amount to forced labor. It is only the scale that may differ, depending on the recipient country, industry, or specialization. Differences in the scale of forced labor are circumstantial, rather than intentional.

Gender Discrimination

The selection of young women only for restaurant jobs overseas is indicative of deeply embedded gender discrimination. Although working conditions are harsh, temporarily leaving North Korea may still be an opportunity to have a glimpse of the outside world and send a little money to the family left behind. It is only those of good Songbun who have access to this opportunity, which amounts to blatant discrimination against those belonging to the "wavering" or "hostile" class based on their perceived lack of loyalty to the regime. Since families are held hostage in North Korea to prevent defection, single men are precluded from access to overseas jobs.

Health and Safety

Health and safety violations are widespread at overseas North Korean worksites. The scale of health and safety violations may depend on location, industry and specialization. Logging camps in Russia may be hours away from emergency care. Such facilities are much closer for those working in urban areas in Russia, China or the Middle East. In the case of female restaurant workers, most of whom are daughters of the elites, the North Korean government will reportedly pay only for appendectomies. If health issues are too serious to be resolved through self-medication, the workers are repatriated.

The frequency of workplace accident-related injuries and fatalities depends on industry and specialization. The fatality rate is high among loggers, in particular among truck drivers—who often have to drive on slippery surfaces—and the teams tasked to cut down the trees. Loggers work at night, with no illumination other than the moonlight, and sometimes truck headlights. Safety training is minimal, and basic safety procedures are often not observed.

Protection of Wages

North Korea most blatantly violates international labor standards regarding wages. The International Labour Organization's Protection of Wages Convention stipulates that wages should generally be paid directly in legal tender.[17] The Protection of Wages Convention gives some leeway to governments to apply provisions within the limits of "national laws and regulations," and Article 4 does allow for partial payment of wages in the form of allowances. However, it stipulates that these allowances should be "fair and reasonable" and that "such allowances are appropriate for the use and benefit of the worker and his family." North Korea's unwillingness to protect wages against steep deductions that limit the freedom of its workers is the clearest pattern that emerges from an analysis of North Korea's

[17] "C95 Protection of Wages Convention." International Labour Organization, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:PgvIF9y7KnkJ:www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dlr/dlr.nsf/All/3ACF8961A5D513F2C2256EF200370888/$file/%25CE%25A3%25CF%258D%25CE%25BC%25CE%25B2%25CE%25B1%25CF%2583%25CE%25B7%2520095%2520(%25CE%2591%25CE%25B3%25CE%25B3%25CE%25BB%25CE%25B9%25CE%25BA%25CE%25AC).pdf?OpenElement+&hl=en&gl=us.

international labor practices. Wage violations affecting overseas workers are rampant. Workers are not paid directly by the foreign employers.[18]

A former construction worker in the Middle East told HRNK: "We were slaves. […] Bangladeshi workers doing similar work got paid 450 dollars a month on average. We also did earn the same amount, but it just all went to the Worker's Party… […] But our families at home are still waiting in the hope of getting at least get one TV when the fathers come back."

Another witness said:

"The system is so strict that no one in North Korea can ever criticize Kim Jong Il. That is why we continued working unpaid even after five months passed. The managerial staff would tell us, 'Back in our homeland people are starving and participating in the *Arduous March.*[19] We are blessed by the General to be out here and have white rice and beef soup every day. We should thank him for everything we have here.' That was our life at the construction site in the Middle East."[20]

Overtime violations are so egregious that the workers simply don't understand the concept. While overseas, North Koreans work between 14 and 16 hours a day, with no holidays, except perhaps one day a month, depending on location and industry:

"My morning shift was from 7am to 12pm. I had a lunch break from 12pm to 1pm. My evening shift was from 1pm to 6pm, and then I had a dinner break from 6pm to 7pm. After that I worked for three to four hours more. So it was 13 to 14 hours in total. There were no holidays."[21]

The overtime violations may be slightly less severe, if the workers have more specialized skills. A former construction welder in Russia told HRNK that he could leave earlier than other North Koreans, at about 7 or 8 pm. However, his life was harder than that of Russian co-workers. While he reported for work at 6 am, they did not show up until 9 am. They all got off by 5 pm, two or three hours before he did.

The evidence in every nation listed above indicates that North Korean workers abroad face steep and unfair deductions from their wages. Often, the workers do not receive the full income directly, and anecdotal evidence, defector testimonies, and government investigations indicate that the partial amount that the workers receive does not constitute a "fair and reasonable" allowance pursuant to Article 4, (2)(b) of the Protection of Wages Convention.

Forced Labor

The analysis may face difficulties when attempting to identify "forced labor" in North Korea's international economic activity. The information from the countries above strongly suggests that many of the workers were personally attracted to work overseas by the possibility of improving socioeconomic

[18] HRNK's findings on this topic concur with those of the Asan Institute of Policy Studies and the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights.
[19] Euphemism used by Kim regime propaganda to describe the great famine of the 1990s.
[20] HRNK interview with former construction worker in the Middle East. July 2013.
[21] Ibid.

status in North Korea, or the relative misery of the situation within North Korea itself. Furthermore, neither the ICCPR or the ILO provides a specific definition of forced labor that fits this analysis. However, forced labor may not necessarily mean that a worker was initially forced into employment. It may mean that the work environment is coercive and the employer/government prevents the worker from leaving on his/her own terms.

If this is the definition of forced labor, North Korea's workers abroad are victims of forced labor. In every situation, the North Korean government provides minders, ideology sessions, and barriers (even physical ones, as seen in Kuwait) to associating with other individuals and groups or leaving employment. Freedom of association is a fundamental labor right. It is clear that North Korean workers abroad do not have this essential freedom, much less the right to organize or bargain collectively for better terms.

Future Direction: The Global Supply Chain

The term "global supply chain" aptly identifies both the challenges and opportunities inherent in handling North Korea's international economic outreach. North Korea's international labor force encompasses tens thousands of workers in many different countries and involves many businesses and consumers.

This new global outreach means that Pyongyang can no longer play solely on its own terms. North Korea may not be a party to most agreements governing human rights and labor, but the North Korean government is dealing with an increasingly globalized world in which all of the countries that employ North Korean workers are highly enmeshed in a body of international organizations and law – a world where legitimacy is one of the highest forms of power.

In the case of North Korea's international labor force, NGOs may be tactically more effective, because there may be no need to target North Korea directly. Pressuring host countries that are more accountable than North Korea under international law and more exposed to the international economic system and thus more vulnerable, the odds to facilitate real change may be reasonable.

NGOs may endeavor to take effective action by tracing goods and services in the global supply chain to North Korean workers abroad. Simon Ostrovsky's article in *The Independent* on North Korean workers in Mongolia traced products from UK clothing labels such as Edinburgh Woolen Mill to North Korean workers.[22] Supply chains depend on global consumption, and NGOs may effectively reduce demand for goods and services produced by North Korean workers.

Efforts aiming to improve the labor rights of overseas North Korean workers could target governments, employers' associations, labor unions, NGOs, consumer groups, media organizations and the general public in countries hosting North Korean workers, and could also aim to present a persuasive case to the North Korean authorities that improving the labor conditions of these workers may ultimately be in the best economic interest of North Korea.

[22] Ostrovsky, Simon. "Profit from Its People: North Korea's Export Shame." The Independent, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/profit-from-its-people-north-koreas-export-shame-2370220.html.

Despite the great difficulty in finding information on North Korea's international economic activity, let alone the status of its workers, by now there is sufficient evidence to argue that goods and services produced by North Korean workers abroad do not constitute part of a "clean" supply chain. Further, since supply chains that produce clothes, or industrial goods are typically international, it is perfectly legitimate to use the conventions of the International Labour Organization as a standard for a clean supply chain. The ILO does not have to deal with North Korea directly; it can evaluate and publicize the situation of North Korean workers in its 183 member states.

Recommendations

To improve the working conditions and human rights of North Korean workers officially residing overseas, the following recommendations are offered:

First, North Korea should be urged to abide by its obligations under the ICCPR and its own domestic legislation to protect the rights of its workers, at home and abroad.

Second, the eight ILO Core conventions on fundamental labor standards should be the minimum standard applied to determine the status of exported North Korean workers and to hold both North Korea and receiving countries accountable.

Third, a set of standards inspired by the Global Sullivan Principles should be developed. Companies along the supply chain tainted by violations of the rights of exported North Korean workers should be encouraged to apply those standards.

Fourth, further investigation of the situation of exported North Korean laborers should be conducted, and the cooperation of host countries should be sought.

Fifth, a determination should be made if the presence of tens of thousands of North Korean citizens overseas may provide opportunities for access to improve the human rights situation of North Koreans at home and abroad, despite their being subjected to draconian control and surveillance by the North Korean authorities.

Sixth, awareness campaigns at home and abroad should inform the American public and other nations on the severe labor rights violations occurring at overseas North Korean worksites, with the aim to stimulate grassroots advocacy.

Seventh, North Korea should be urged to join the ILO and apply internationally accepted minimum core labor standards to protect its workers, at home and abroad.

Eighth, countries where North Korean laborers are exported should be reminded to abide by their international obligations and take steps to protect the rights of all foreign workers, including North Korean workers, in particular those relating to wages and working hours.

Ninth, hosting states should be persuaded to conduct scheduled and surprise inspections of worksites employing North Korean workers, pursuant to their international obligations.

Tenth, hosting states and employers should be encouraged to seek direct access to North Korean workers and distribute material informing them on their rights derived from their physical presence within the territorial jurisdiction of that respective country

Eleventh, violations of the labor rights of North Korean workers residing overseas should be included in future legislation pertaining to sanction regimes.

Twelfth, the exportation of North Korean labor should be terminated through concerted international action, if the North Korean regime refuses to act upon calls to improve the working conditions and the overall human rights situation of these workers.

Thank you, Co-Chairman McGovern, Co-Chairman Pitts, and members of the Commission. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.