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July 2, 2008

Sam Kim  
Executive Director  
Korean Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom  
5661 Beach Blvd. #200  
Buena Park, CA 90621

Dear Mr. Kim:

I commend the Korean Church Coalition and all those who have attended the vigils in solidarity with the victims of human rights violations in North Korea and China. I stand with you in your efforts to call attention to this tragedy and to end their suffering.

Protection of human rights is a struggle that extends beyond borders and across religions. It is our obligation, not only as Koreans and Americans, but above all as human beings to stand up in defense of others.

I am appalled by the treatment of many thousands of your compatriots both domestically and abroad. I join you today in your demand for the respect of the political, civil and religious liberties of North Koreans. I, too, urge the Chinese government to end the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees forced to flee their homes. These individuals must be accorded the safe asylum entitled to them under international law.

This vigil comes at an opportune moment when the world's eyes fall upon both North Korea and China. As the United States lifts economic sanctions and extends food aid to North Korea and as China prepares for the Summer Olympics, let us not forget what befalls the unfortunate.

Sincerely,



Eliot Engel  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS