Mr. Speaker, I rise

today to strongly condemn the Syrian

regime’s recent hostility towards both

the United States and the Syrian people.

The courageous visit by U.S. Ambassador

Robert Ford to Hama, the site

of massive antiregime protests, demonstrates

that the United States stands

by those who advocate for democracy

and freedom.

Days after Ford’s visit, the American

Embassy in Damascus endured several

violent pro-regime demonstrations, resulting

in considerable damage. Had

the Syrian security forces acknowledged

their international obligations,

these rioters in support of President

Assad would not have been able to approach

the embassy. By responding

poorly, Assad has conveyed disrespect

towards the United States.

I applaud Secretary of State Clinton’s

recent tough stance toward

Assad, declaring that his regime ‘‘has

lost legitimacy.’’

Time and time again, Assad, like his

father before him, has turned to arresting,

torturing, and killing anyone who

would stand in the way of his tyranny.

Therefore, with the best interests of

the Syrian people in mind, I call on

President Assad to resign as President.