Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, Ambassador Ford, thank you very much for your heroic

service. We watched what you were doing in Syria and I know the

international community was also, and it was a bright moment, I

think, for United States leadership. So we thank you very much for

that.

Secretary Feltman, I think we all agree that there will be a tipping

point that the Assad regime will not survive. The challenge,

though, is that until that happens, the humanitarian disasters will

only get worse. So how many people are going to lose their lives

or their lives will be changed forever until that tipping point is

reached is a matter of grave interest to all of us.

You point out that there is a growing unity in the region, in the

Arab world, which would, I think, point out that our options may

be stronger than we think. We may have more opportunities to try

to save lives. I am very mindful of Senator Lugar’s cautionary

notes, and we all share that.

But I guess my point is what can we do? What can the United

States do in leadership to minimize the sufferings that are taking

place and will take place until the Assad regime is removed? What

can we do working with our international partners to provide the

best opportunity for the safety of the civilian population in Syria

during this period of time?

You are right. I was trying to probe as to what

more we could do. I agree with you. You need international unity,

and the Security Council is where we normally start that. It is not

the exclusive area. It is not the determinative area, but it is certainly

one which would give us a stronger footing. Having the Arab

League is clearly important. So I would hope that we would work

together exploring options to be more aggressive, where we can effectively

in unity with the international community.

You mentioned another point that I found very interesting and

that is the popularity of the Assad regime being at the low point.

And I would expect that Hamas recognized that when it pulled out

of Damascus, which is presenting, I think, a real challenge for us,

a terrorist organization that we clearly are very concerned about

their influence in that region. It looks like they are taking further

steps to become more popular among the Arab population and

countries.

Can either one of you give us an update on Hamas and its movement

and how we are going to counter some of their issues and its

relationship not just with Syria, but also with Iran and with other

countries in that region?

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.