Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for your testimony.

Dr. Wittes, I look at the Russians. I see that they are supporting

the Annan cease-fire and the U.N. observer mission, but then I see

the Russian Foreign Minister say that the Friends of Syria as a

group should have no say in the evaluation of the process. I believe

that to some degree the Russians are still supplying the Assad regime

with arms.

So the question for me—I heard your comment about we have to

bring Russia into the fold. They have to have a relationship or

some type of position with Syria but not with Assad. What is the

end game for them from your perspective? And how is it that we

get their support? How do you bring them into the fold to do what

we want to do which is to see the slaughter stop and at the same

time get their support in a way that can help us do that since they

are one of probably only two countries left that are really significantly

supporting Assad at this point?

Let me ask one other set of questions, and

that is, I look at our arsenal of peaceful diplomacy tools and largely

it is the use of our aid and our trade as an inducement to countries

to react in a certain way. It is the movement of international opinion

when in fact there are regimes or governments who are subjective

to international opinion. Many are not obviously. Then the

only other element of peaceful diplomacy tools seems to me is the

denial of aid or trade, which we generally refer to as sanctions.

And while I do not revert to sanctions automatically, in a limited

arsenal of peaceful diplomacy tools, it is sometimes the most significant

thing you can do.

So I look at what we have seen so far at the impact sanctions

on Syria, which has reportedly lost half of its assets which are valued

at a bit over $20 billion by the World Bank in 2010 as a result

of sanctions.

This week, the French Foreign Minister called for additional

sanctions to counter the authoritarian solidarity being provided to

Assad’s regime.

Do you support that view of the French Foreign Minister? Do you

think that tighter sanctions, particularly by non-Western states,

could significantly tighten the noose and force Assad into relinquishing

power? I think, Dr. Jouejati, you mentioned in your testimony

some of the elements of sanctions.

Also, as we are sanctioning Iran for a different set of purposes,

obviously an economic squeeze on them continues to create less and

less likelihood that they can help the Syrians at the end of the day.

So give me a sense of what more either we or our leadership in

the world could seek to get other countries to do that would be

meaningful in moving to our ultimate goal here.

Do you think that if we had not had the

sanctions, that those elements would have ultimately defected?