Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn torture in all of

its forms. Acts of abuse and torture must never be tolerated, and those

who commit such acts must be swiftly brought to justice. It is with

great sadness and anger that I viewed the pictures of frightened,

humiliated, and, in some cases, injured Iraqi prisoners in Baghdad's

Abu Ghraib prison. Prisoners should never be forced to endure such

atrocious behavior, no matter what the cause for their detention. The

acts committed on these prisoners are an injustice to the Iraqis who

were victimized, the citizens of Iraq, the hundreds of thousands of

U.S. soldiers who have served their country in Iraq so honorably over

the past year, and all people who hope and pray for peace the world

over.

Because of the rage these pictures have generated in Iraq and across

the Arab world, I am concerned for the safety of our brave soldiers as

they patrol the streets in Iraq, guard

police stations and hospitals and work to rebuild the infrastructure of

the country. It is important that we recognize the honor with which the

vast majority of our armed service members conduct themselves. In the

face of tremendous danger and uncertainty, in a theater fighting

combatants dressed as civilians using indiscriminate force and even

killing their own countrymen, our men and women have risked their lives

to protect Iraqi civilians and restore pride and honor to this war-torn

country.

Moving forward, military justice must be sure and swift for those who

committed these acts. It will be a long, difficult process to win back

the trust and support of the Iraqi people, but we must be successful if

we are to accomplish our mission in Iraq. It is essential that we do

so, not just for success in Iraq, but also for the global war on

terrorism. We cannot win this war alone. American soldiers' torture of

Iraqi detainees is a significant setback for our country and the global

war on terror.

I expect decisive action from our executive and military leaders to

ensure that such abuse will never again occur, and to take the

diplomatic steps necessary to salvage America's good name around the

world. The American people are justifiably saddened by the waning of

our moral authority since the days immediately following September 11,

2001, when the world stood with us in solidarity. If America is to

continue to be a force for good in the world, we must convincingly

denounce all crimes against humanity, foreign or domestic, and

demonstrate to the world that we are sincere when we decry hatred,

injustice and terror.