The United States supports the Syrian

people’s desire for democracy, human rights,

and freedom of expression. Syrians deserve

a government whose legitimacy is grounded

in the consent of the people, not brute force.

The Syrian regime should immediately

free all political prisoners, including Aref

Dalila, Michel Kilo, Anwar al-Bunni,

Mahmoud Issa, and Kamal Labwani. I am

deeply troubled by reports that some ailing

political prisoners are denied health care

while others are held in cells with violent

criminals.

Syria should disclose the fate and whereabouts

of the many missing Lebanese citizens

who ‘‘disappeared’’ following their arrest in

Lebanon during the decades of Syrian military

occupation. The Syrian regime should

also cease its efforts to undermine Lebanese

sovereignty by denying the Lebanese people

their right to participate in the democratic

process free of foreign intimidation and interference.

The people of Syria hope for a prosperous

future with greater opportunities for their

children and for a government that fights

corruption, respects the rule of law, guarantees

the rights of all Syrians, and works toward

achieving peace in the region.