



PRESS RELEASE

**Co-Chairman
James P. McGovern**

**Co-Chairman
Frank R. Wolf**

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**Contact: Jordan Tama or
Kalinda Stephenson (202-225-3599)**

Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Co-Chairmen Condemn Massive Human Rights Abuses by the Syrian Government and Call on the United Nations to Place Strong Pressure on the Assad Regime to Stop the Violence

Washington – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Co-Chairmen James P. McGovern (D-MA) and Frank R. Wolf (R-VA) today strongly condemned the Syrian government for continuing to commit massive human rights abuses against its citizens. The co-chairmen also urged the United Nations Security Council to demand that President Bashar al-Assad’s regime cease perpetrating violence against peaceful protesters and respect the fundamental rights of the Syrian people.

Since the outbreak of peaceful protests in Syria in March 2011, the Syrian government has used brutal methods to prevent the Syrian people from assembling and expressing their political views. The United Nations estimates that more than 5,400 civilians have died in Syria from violence over the past 11 months—and the vast majority of these killings have been carried out by government security forces.

The United States, the Arab League and most of the international community agree that the world should take action to oppose the Assad regime’s reprehensible treatment of its people. A strong UN Security Council Resolution expressing this widely shared international consensus would send a powerful message that the Syrian government must respect basic human rights. In particular, the Security Council should insist that the Syrian government release the thousands of protesters it has detained, withdraw its military forces from civilian areas and allow peaceful demonstrations. In addition, the Security Council should make it clear that all countries should refuse to provide arms to the Syrian government.

“It is essential that the international community stand up for the basic rights of the Syrian people,” said Congressman McGovern. “The UN Security Council must take action now, before thousands more Syrians are killed.”

“It is time for the international community to take action and call Assad to account for his brutal repression of his own people,” said Congressman Wolf. “The UN Security Council should condemn this cruelty and support the Syrian people in their quest for basic human rights.”

The mission of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission is to promote and advocate human rights in a nonpartisan manner both inside and outside of Congress.

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