

# MEMMO

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## **Toughen Syrian Sanctions Now**

The Syrian regime continues to brutally crush the growing protest movement within the country. Simultaneously, Damascus is maintaining its links with terrorists and stonewalling international efforts to investigate its illicit nuclear program. The United States should enforce additional sanctions under the Syria Accountability Act to pressure the Assad regime to cease its destructive behavior at home and abroad.

### **Syria continues the brutal suppression of protestors despite initial international censure and U.S. sanctions.**

- Since protests began in the middle of March, Syrian security forces have slaughtered more than 1,600 civilians and have overrun protester strongholds.
- Activists report that more than 10,000 people remain missing, likely detained as part of the crackdown.
- Syrian President Bashar Assad also unleashed hundreds of rioters who attacked the U.S. and French embassies in Damascus on July 11.
- President Obama has condemned the regime's "outrageous use of violence" and decision to "compound the already oppressive security measures" in place prior to the outbreak of protests with even greater "force and outrageous human rights abuses."
- The United States earlier announced sanctions against perpetrators of the crackdown, including the president's brother, Maher Assad, his cousin Atif Najib, and the director of Syria's intelligence agency, Ali Mamluk. The United States also sanctioned the Syrian intelligence agency and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps for providing support to the regime's efforts to suppress protests.
- The United States also led an effort to pass a U.N. Human Rights Council resolution condemning Syria for the violence. Noting the importance of this step, U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice criticized the regime for "meeting legitimate calls for reform with tanks and bullets."



**Syrian President Bashar Assad is brutally suppressing protests against his regime.**

### **Syria has supplied Hizballah with increasingly sophisticated weapons and continues to destabilize Lebanon.**

- In the aftermath of the 2006 war between Hizballah and Israel, Syria has played a key role in rearming Hizballah in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. With Syrian and Iranian assistance, Hizballah has amassed more than 55,000 short- and long-range rockets.

- Syria has transferred Iranian weapons while also providing Hizballah with hundreds of Syrian M-600 guided rockets. With a range of 155 miles and accuracy within 330 feet, these rockets represent a major improvement in Hizballah's strategic capabilities.
- Pentagon officials believe that Syria has transferred 10 SCUD-D missiles to Hizballah. These ballistic missiles are capable of targeting all of Israel.
- Hizballah and other minority parties backed by Syria forced the collapse of Lebanon's pro-Western, democratically elected government earlier this year. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called this a "transparent effort" by Hizballah and its foreign backers Iran and Syria to "subvert justice and undermine Lebanon's stability."

**Syria opposes U.S. interests in the region by working with Iran, supporting terrorists and threatening the non-proliferation regime.**

- State Department Spokesman Mark Toner confirmed a *Wall Street Journal* report that Iran is supporting Syria's crackdown. "There is credible information that Iran is assisting Syria ... in quelling protesters," he said.
- A new U.N. sanctions implementation report concluded that Iran has repeatedly violated U.N. arms export bans. The majority of these violations involved shipments to Syria.
- Syria, a U.S.-designated sponsor of terror for three decades, provides support to Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other terrorist groups, allowing them to maintain their headquarters in Damascus.
- In his nomination hearing last year, U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford stated that the Syrian regime "hosts networks ... who work to undermine the Iraqi state."
- Syria has repeatedly blocked International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors from investigating the nuclear reactor site at Dair Alzour, which Israel reportedly destroyed in Sept. 2007. Experts believe Syria was building a plutonium reactor with North Korean assistance.
- Syria has the largest stockpile of chemical weapons in the region and maintains an arsenal of SCUD missiles capable of delivering a chemical warhead.

**The United States and the international community must increase sanctions on Syria to persuade Damascus to end its destructive policies.**

- The United States must hold Syria accountable for its destructive behavior and fully implement sanctions on Damascus as authorized under the Syria Accountability Act. The Treasury Department should sanction Syrian banks and businesses facilitating Damascus' illicit activities.
- The United States should place a ban on U.S. businesses operating or investing in Syria, restrict travel by Syrian officials in the United States and block transactions of property in which the Syrian government has an interest.
- The international community should hold Syria accountable for violating Security Council resolutions prohibiting the rearming of Hizballah and the transfer of Iranian weapons.
- With the IAEA referring Syria to the U.N. Security Council, the international community must press Syria to fully cooperate with IAEA inspectors and to detail all of its nuclear activities. If Syria refuses, U.N. sanctions should be imposed.