

July XX, 2011

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to immediately implement additional sanctions on the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. While we appreciate the measures you have taken to date—including imposing sanctions on President al-Assad, his family, and associates—we believe it is time to significantly increase pressure on the regime. No government should be allowed to inflict such suffering on its people without a harsh rebuke from the United States and from the broader international community.

Specifically, we request that you implement a number of key sanctions outlined in P.L. 108-175, the *Syria Accountability & Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003*. As required under this law, President George W. Bush implemented two of the available sanctions—a ban on exports to Syria other than food and medicine, and a ban on Syrian aircraft landing in or overflying the United States.

We are pleased that you have maintained these sanctions, but seek further implementation of the law, including a ban on U.S. businesses operating or investing in Syria, restrictions on travel by Syrian diplomats in the United States, and blocking transactions of property in which the Government of Syria has an interest. We also request that you work swiftly to identify and implement additional sanctions—including on Syria's banking sector—to send a clear message to the Syrian government that its behavior will not be tolerated.

In addition, we ask that you engage with our European allies and European energy companies on ceasing the purchase of Syrian oil and investment in Syria's oil and gas sectors, and that you work to encourage the European Union to sanction the Commercial Bank of Syria, as the United States did in 2004.

We share your stated strong concern that the Syrian government has responded with unconscionable brutality and violence to calls for real political reform. According to available figures, an estimated 1,600 Syrians have lost their lives and thousands more have been injured. In addition, thousands of refugees have fled to Turkey.

The Syrian people deserve a government that represents their aspirations, and respects their basic human rights. It is clear that President al-Assad is not committed to pursuing the reforms that would meet these goals. As such, the United States and the international community must hold the regime accountable, and pressure them to change course. Implementing additional sanctions would show the Syrian people that we stand with them in their struggle for human rights and a more representative government, while also making it clear to the Syrian regime that it will pay an increasing cost for its outrageous repression.

Thank you for your continuing concern and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator

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Jim DeMint  
United States Senator