



**Press Statement**

**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

April 23, 2007

## **Syria: Another Missed Opportunity**

President al-Assad is again denying the right of the Syrian people to an open, transparent and fully participatory political environment and process on April 22 and 23. The [Syrian](#) regime has not taken the necessary steps to allow for open, free debate among the candidates. The United States is concerned by reports that the Syrian regime has used intimidation to restrict the candidate pool and threats of reprisal to discourage political dissent. We call on the Syrian government to end such abusive practices. The Syrian people deserve democratically-elected representatives who are willing to fight corruption, provide greater economic opportunities, and encourage real political participation by the next generation of leaders.

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 [BACK TO TOP](#)

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