

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Janet L. Yellen
Secretary of Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Yellen,

We write to express our support for the recent visa ban imposed on Amjad Youssef for his role in the murder of at least 41 innocent civilians during the Tadamon massacre in April 2013. We urge you to follow up on this action by imposing sanctions on Youssef, a military intelligence officer for the Assad regime, as authorized by the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note). Doing so will send a strong and clear signal that the Biden administration is willing, especially as we enter the 12th year of this intractable conflict, to hold the Assad regime, and its Russian and Iranian backers, accountable for their crimes against the Syrian people.

We take note of the disappointingly slow pace of sanctions under the Caesar Act and believe more can be done to ensure that perpetrators of atrocities in Syria face consequences for their actions. The Caesar Act passed both chambers of Congress in 2019 with broad, bipartisan support to give the Executive the authorities needed to ensure that violence against the people of Syria does not go unanswered. It is a serious tool that to date has not been used to its best effect since its passage. In addition to the Caesar Act's importance in promoting accountability, an administration levying congressionally mandated Caesar sanctions is a powerful tool to curb efforts to rehabilitate or normalize relations with the Assad regime. As the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the committees of jurisdiction for this legislation and strong supporters of it, we urge you to use these authorities.

We believe that it would be fitting for this Administration's first use of sanctions authority under the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act to come against Amjad Youssef, a man whose heinous crimes are shocking even in the context of Syria's 12 years of brutality. It would also

be a recognition of the suffering of his innocent victims and a welcome sign to their families, and to all Syrians, that justice will yet be done.

Sincerely,



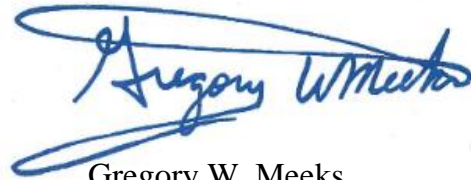
Robert Menendez
Chairman
Senate Foreign Relations Committee



Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee



James E. Risch
Ranking Member
Senate Foreign Relations Committee



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee