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GEORGE W. BUSH



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For Immediate Release  
Office of the Press Secretary  
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## Statement by the Press Secretary on a Call for the Release of Dr. Kamal Labwani and Other

As we commemorate Human Rights Day, we call attention to the continued imprisonment in Syria of Dr. Kamal Labwani and the many other prisoners of conscience whom the Syrian authorities have denied the fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression. Dr. Labwani was arrested by Syrian authorities in Damascus on November 8, 2005, upon his return from Paris and Washington, DC. While in Washington, Dr. Labwani participated in a cultural exchange program organized by the Department of State and attended a meeting at the White House. President Bush calls on the Syrian Government to immediately and unconditionally release Dr. Labwani and all other prisoners of conscience, including Habib Saleh and Nizar Rastanawi, as well as those arrested after the Damascus Spring: Arif Dalilah, Riad Seif, Mamun al-Homsi, Walid al Bunni, Habib Issa, and Fawaz Tello. The imprisonment of these and other Syrian prisoners of conscience is just one example of the government of Syria's ongoing repression of the Syrian people. The Syrian Government must cease its harassment of Syrians peacefully seeking to bring democratic reform to their country. The United States stands with the Syrian people in their desire for freedom and democracy.

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