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Subject: Assad serious about making changes: U.S. congressman (Xinhua)

DAMASCUS (Xinhua) - A U.S. congressman said Tuesday that the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is serious about making changes, voicing hopes that the situation in Syria would be stable soon.

"I have found a strong desire to make a substantial change," the congressman Dennis Kucinich said at a press conference, adding that "People want President Bashar al-Assad to carry out reforms... What is more important for Syria is actions."

Kucinich said he is hopeful that the situation in Syria would settle down soon and that the people's demands are met. He also called on the international community to help Syria.

He stressed that the assistance could be possible through cancelling recent sanctions imposed on Syria, starting a dialogue and supporting the country's economy.

Kucinich said he had met with Syrian opposition figures and government representatives. "Each person I talked to had spoken about the importance of ending violence."

"Transition to which Syria is heading necessitates an end to violence which was shocking," he said.

Kucinich, who started a visit to Syria on Monday and held talks upon arrival with Syrian President al-Assad, is the first U.S. official to hold talks with the Syrian authorities since the eruption of protests in the country in mid March.

He said the main objective of his visit was to listen to the Syrian people's demands and convey that to the U.S. officials and the international community.

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