

*We asked Reps. John Campbell and Dana Rohrabacher about the disputed reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Iran this past weekend.*

I am deeply concerned, and have been concerned for some time about conditions inside Iran and its path of confrontational foreign policy. Iran's quest for nuclear weapons and regional hegemony has contributed to further destabilization in the region, and has ignited significant concern abroad.

Many saw the recent elections as a referendum on President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's oppressive and heavy-handed leadership and it is now clear, as evidenced by the widespread protests, that it indeed was. To say the least, the election results are highly suspect based on a variety of initial observations by experts, including the absence of independent election evaluators, reports of voter intimidation and closed polling places, and the unusually quick announcement of results by the Iranian government.

Foreign policy experts predict that although the rhetoric from Iran may change, its bellicose actions and foreign policy is not likely to experience any significant shift.

Accordingly, President Obama must take a strong position in the face of these disputed results. The United States must not sit idly by while egregious human rights abuses are committed on what have been largely peaceful protests.

The president has gone to great lengths to spend a significant amount of time apologizing for the faults of the United States. It's time that the president starting recognizing the strengths of the U.S. and leveraging them to positively engage nations across the world, and uphold principles of freedom and democracy.

Rep. John Campbell