

America has the strongest and finest fighting force the world has ever known, and for the past several years, much of that fighting force has been focused on restoring peace and bringing prosperity to the Middle East and Afghanistan. That region, which has harbored the militants who attacked our nation on Sept. 11, 2001, is home to much instability and insecurity.

The recent attacks on U.S. embassies in Libya, Egypt, Yemen and Sudan and the horrific and tragic murder of U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and his staff serve as stark reminders of the volatility that grips the region.

We shouldn't apologize to anyone who kills innocent Americans. Instead of apologies, we need leadership. But President Obama has not led.

His administration has conveyed a devastating image of a weak and apologetic America to our friends and enemies around the world. He has not provided a clear vision for the future of the Middle East and North Africa. Weak foreign policy — especially as it pertains to this troubled and volatile region — has helped plant the seeds and fan the flames of the violent actions of emboldened radical groups throughout the region.

Obama and his administration originally accepted claims that a 14-minute anti-Islamic video was the cause of the ambassador's death. This was not a reaction to a YouTube video; this was an assassination to coincide with the 9/11 anniversary.

My colleague, Chairman Mike Rogers of the House Intelligence Committee, is privy to the very latest intelligence and has related that the intelligence he's seen points to this as a timed, coordinated attack. The actions by the State Department immediately to apologize for the content of the video speaks volumes of the Obama administration's approach to foreign policy and its view of the United States' role in the world and the Middle East.

The Obama administration has now paid \$70,000 to purchase ads on Pakistani television declaring that the YouTube video does not accurately reflect the sentiment of the United States. During his remarks to the United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday, President Obama acknowledged that he believes it's OK for nations not to restrict free speech, saying, "Now, I

know that not all countries in this body share this particular understanding of the protection of free speech. We recognize that."

Why should the United States recognize and accept that some countries around the world will stifle its citizens free exercise of their words and beliefs?

Even after the attacks in Benghazi, the Obama administration was slow to label the violence for what it was: terrorism. Statements by administration mouthpieces like Susan Rice, claiming that these attacks were perpetrated spontaneously by small numbers of people, are absurd. Rocket-propelled grenades and assorted heavy weapons were used, which points to premeditation and coordination.

It was more than a week after the attack before White House Press Secretary Jay Carney would state that it was "self-evident that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack." It took more than a week for the Obama administration to come to come to terms with the "self-evident" fact that the attacks were ignited by terrorists — a fact that most Americans realized soon after the news hit.

America and the world need leadership from the president of the United States when it comes to our nation's foreign policy, and President Obama has failed on this front.

The war on terrorism is not over and won. Radicalism and hatred of America still exist. President Obama must understand the depth of radical Islam's hatred for the United States and the degree to which terrorists will go to carry out their extremist mission.

There are no negotiations or qualifications to discuss when innocent Americans are killed simply to satisfy terrorists' bloodlust. We do not apologize or assume that we have been misunderstood. We stand our ground. We stand to protect our cherished way of life, and we stand for those who lost their lives on Sept. 11 and those who answered the call to bring democracy's message to a volatile land, so that we could enjoy peace and security.

Our goal is freedom, and our cause is just.

