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## **FDI ANNOUNCES ITS OPPOSITION TO THE HAGEL NOMINATION.**

**Media: For comment or additional information, please call or email FDI President Ken Timmerman at 301-946-2918 or [exec@iran.org](mailto:exec@iran.org)**

Rockville, MD (Jan. 11, 2013) - The Board of Directors of the Foundation for Democracy in Iran has sent a detailed memo in opposition to Sen. Chuck Hagel's nomination to become U.S. Secretary of Defense to the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is tasked to conduct confirmation hearings for the next Secretary of Defense.

The FDI memo focuses exclusively on Iran and Iran-related issues, and includes excerpts from Hagel's own statements and new details of his relationships to the pro-Tehran lobby in Washington, DC.

It also includes new information on Hagel's efforts as a private citizen in 2009 to lobby the Russian government against joining a State Department-led effort to step up pressure on Iran.

"Congress has been instrumental in helping steer the Obama administration toward policies to increase pressure on the Islamic regime in Tehran, while expanding on work done by the two previous administrations to build an international coalition to slow down the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iranian regime," FDI wrote.

"Chuck Hagel actively opposed these policies of confronting the Islamic Republic when he was in the U.S. Senate, and has continued to do so since then."

FDI works to advance the efforts of the pro-freedom movement in Iran to strengthen civil society and to bring about meaningful political and civil rights to the Iranian people. Through its premier website and other tools the Foundation helps raise awareness in Washington and in European capitals to the threat posed by the Islamic regime in Tehran to its own people, to America, and to America's allies.

Sen. Hagel has demonstrated a consistent lack of appreciation for the threat posed by the Iranian regime both in his public statements, and more significantly, by his close relationship to pro-Tehran lobbyists.

"At no point has Hagel shown the slightest concern for human rights abuses, religious liberty, the lack of political freedom, or the threats made by Islamic Republic leaders to Israel, to Jews worldwide, or to Americans," FDI wrote. "Instead, he has publicly stated that the United States should not seek or promote regime change, merely a change of "behavior" by the current leadership. This is not just bad policy; given the nature of the clerical leadership, it's a call to genocide."

In its background paper, FDI made clear that it "has never called – and is not calling today – for U.S. military strikes on Iran."

However, because the United States remains the predominant military power in the world and in the Persian Gulf region, for deterrence to work, the Islamic Republic leadership must believe in U.S. resolve.

"Senator Hagel's confirmation as Secretary of Defense would send a message of weakened U.S. resolve to the leaders of the Islamic Republic, which could serve as an inducement for aggressive behavior," FDI wrote.

"For these reasons we urge the Senate to reject Senator Hagel's nomination."

The full statement is attached and available online at [http://iran.org/news/2013\\_01\\_10-hagel.html](http://iran.org/news/2013_01_10-hagel.html)

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