



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**INTERFAITH FRIENDS OF ISRAEL CALL ON  
SENATORS TO REJECT HAGEL NOMINATION**

**Washington, D.C.:** On the eve of the critical procedural vote on the nomination of Chuck Hagel to become the next Secretary of Defense, ten national leaders of different faiths – but sharing a common commitment to Israel and its people – issued a joint appeal to members of the United States Senate to reject this appointment. In a letter to each Senator delivered before they act today on Majority Leader Harry Reid’s motion to cut off debate on this controversial nominee, the authors declared:

Notwithstanding assurances he has made privately to your colleague, Sen. Chuck Schumer, in the course of his confirmation hearing and in other settings, **Sen. Hagel’s longstanding hostility towards Jews and Israel is reprehensible and should disqualify him from this sensitive post.**

The ten leaders represent millions of Americans whose religious beliefs, deeply held values and strategic understanding of our times prompts them to champion the closest of ties between America and its only reliable ally in the Middle East, the State of Israel. They warn that:

...The next few years may be among the most turbulent in the history of U.S.-Israeli relations. This is the case thanks to the developing perfect storm of: continuing and intensifying violence perpetrated by al Qaeda and other jihadists throughout the Middle East and adjacent regions; the ascendancy there and elsewhere of a Muslim Brotherhood equally committed to Israel’s destruction; and an Iranian regime that explicitly and repeatedly declares its intention to wipe Israel off the map nearing the realization of its nuclear weapon ambitions.

The authors – who include **Pastor John C. Hagee**, National Chairman of Christians United for Israel, **Mort Klein**, President of the Zionist Organization of America and **Rick Santorum**, former U.S. Senator and Co-Founder of Patriot Voices, **Rev. Rick Joyner**, President of the Oak Initiative and **Beth Gilinsky**, President of the National Conference on Jewish Affairs – cite evidence that “bespeak[s] a deep-seated animus” towards Jews and Israel that will surely dangerously influence Senator Hagel’s conduct should he become Defense Secretary.”

There is reason to believe that the referenced examples of Senator Hagel’s seriously defective judgment with respect to the Jewish State and its enemies – and ours – are but the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

**Unfortunately, if the Senate acts to cut-off debate on the Hagel nomination today, it will allow the nominee to withhold such information and probably other materials that would be even more damning.** That would be doubly appalling for the fact that Sen. Hagel formally and publicly committed to Senate Armed Services Committee **Chairman Carl Levin** that all requests for such data would be honored. (See a relevant column in today’s *Washington Times*

(<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/feb/26/the-case-against-chuck-hagel/>) by Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., President of the Center for Security Policy which facilitated this letter.)

February 26, 2013

Senator Harry Reid  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Reid:

We write to urge you to oppose Chuck Hagel's nomination to become the next Secretary of Defense. The evidence that has accumulated in recent weeks makes one thing clear: Notwithstanding assurances he has made privately to your colleague, Sen. Chuck Schumer, in the course of his confirmation hearing and in other settings, Sen. Hagel's longstanding hostility towards Jews and Israel is reprehensible and should disqualify him from this sensitive post.

That is especially true at the present moment. As you are well aware, the next few years may be among the most turbulent in the history of U.S.-Israeli relations. This is the case thanks to the developing perfect storm of: continuing and intensifying violence perpetrated by al Qaeda and other jihadists throughout the Middle East and adjacent regions; the ascendancy there and elsewhere of a Muslim Brotherhood equally committed to Israel's destruction; and an Iranian regime that explicitly and repeatedly declares its intention to wipe Israel off the map nearing the realization of its nuclear weapon ambitions.

Particularly under such circumstances, the myriad examples of former Senator Hagel's hostility towards Jews and the Jewish State cannot be dismissed on the basis of disavowals or apologies that clearly have much more to do with the needs of his imperiled confirmation than with a change of heart. Consider just a few of the cases in point:

- Sen. Hagel's long-held notions about the "Jewish lobby" intimidating Senators.
- His moral equivalence between Israel and those bent on its destruction.
- His view that Israel's putative nuclear arsenal is more worrying than an Iranian one.
- His claim that the State Department is an "adjunct to the Israeli Foreign Ministers' office."
- His contention that Israel is becoming "an apartheid state." And
- His co-authorship of a report that recommends inserting U.S. forces on the West Bank to facilitate the establishment of a Palestinian state there. Such a step would inevitably embroil us in that conflict – probably, in due course, with the effect of protecting Palestinian terrorists against Israeli defensive measures.

All these bespeak a deep-seated animus that will surely dangerously influence Senator Hagel's conduct should he become Defense Secretary.

No true friend of the Jewish people and Israel can support that outcome. We call upon you to preclude it from happening.

Sincerely,

Pastor John C. Hagee, Founder and National Chairman of Christians United for Israel

Mort Klein, President, Zionist Organization of America

Hon. Rick Santorum, Co-Founder, Patriot Voices

Rev. Rick Joyner, President, The Oak Initiative

Beth Gilinsky, President, National Conference on Jewish Affairs

Lieutenant General William G. Boykin, Ordained Minister, Kingdom Warriors

Rabbi Jon Hausman, Policy Committee Member, National Conference on Jewish Affairs

Sarah Stern, President, Endowment for Middle East Truth

Joel Rosenberg, *New York Times* Best-selling Author

Nicholas F. Papanicalau, Chief Executive Officer, Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem