7/17/2015 3:51 PM EDT

For Further Information
Please Contact Leah Zagelbaum
LZagelbaum@agudathisrael.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 17, 2015

STATEMENT FROM AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA ON IRANIAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

Upon consultation with its rabbinic leadership, Agudath Israel of America issued the following statement regarding the agreement announced on July 14 concerning Iran's nuclear program, and calling for both political and spiritual advocacy:

Deep concerns have been expressed by many knowledgeable groups and individuals regarding the agreement announced on July 14 concerning Iran's nuclear program. These concerns raise serious questions whether the agreement is in the best interests of the United States and its allies.

The nation that has the greatest stake in this matter is Israel, which is the declared target of Iranian genocidal ambitions. It is noteworthy, therefore, that not only the prime minister of Israel and its ruling coalition, but the entire spectrum of political ideologies in Israel, have spoken out about the mortal danger they believe the agreement poses to Israel, and are urging its rejection by the United States Congress.

We have no doubt that the White House and its team of negotiators, in conjunction with its other partners, acted in good faith in reaching an agreement with the Iranians, and with the commendable goal of reducing the Iranian nuclear threat to America and its allies including Israel. However, we cannot disregard the opinions of so many that the agreement is not in the best interests of America and its allies, and certainly not in the best interests of our Jewish brothers and sisters in Israel.

That is especially so in light of the undisputed and indisputable fact that Iran is a rogue state, which has fomented terror and destruction throughout the Middle East and beyond. It has been, and continues to be, fully committed to the destruction of Israel. Nothing in the agreement requires Iran to renounce its support of terror or its goal of genocide. Nothing in the policies or conduct of the Iranian government provides any realistic basis for confidence that it will live up to its obligations under the agreement, that it will not use the billions of dollars it will receive under the agreement to fund terror activities by Iranian proxies such as Hamas and Hizbollah, that it will not stockpile other deadly weapons and eventually even develop nuclear weaponry after certain designated periods of time, or that it has any intention of abandoning its genocidal ambitions.

These considerations must be at the very forefront of Congress' deliberations as it now carries out its awesome responsibility of independently reviewing the agreement and determining whether the agreement is truly in the best interests of America and its allies.

To our own community, we reiterate the foundation principle that our security comes ultimately from Hashem, G-d Himself. *Rabos machshavos b'lev ish*, while man may have many thoughts and designs, *atzas Hashem hie sakum*, it is Hashem's design that prevails.

Surely we must do our advocacy, including reaching out to Congress and other relevant parties; that is part of our "shtadlonus" obligation under the clear mandate of Torah. However, the most important advocacy we can do is to turn to Hashem, to recognize that *teshuva tefilla u'tzedaka ma'avirin es ro'a hagezeira,* repentance, prayer and acts of charity are the keys to our salvation.

This is a period of somber reflection for the Jewish people. May the challenging developments in the world around us remind us of how fragile our existence truly is, and how totally dependent we are on the protective embrace of the one-and-only *Shomer Yisroel,* the Heavenly Guardian of the Jewish People.

# # #