

TIMMERMAN TO OBAMA:

DON'T TRADE DISSIDENTS FOR PHONY NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN

(NOTE TO EDITORS: For comment, call Matthew Crow: 202-281-4302)

May 4, 2012: Ken Timmerman, Republican candidate for Maryland's 8th Congressional District, released the following statement today:

"The conviction without trial of a prominent human rights lawyer in Iran shows the cynicism of the Islamic regime and its confidence that the Obama administration is more interested in a "peace in our time" deal with Tehran than in standing up for religious freedom.

"Mohammad Ali Dadkhah has been mentioned in U.S. government reports on human rights violations since his initial arrest in July 2009, so the State Department cannot pretend to be ignorant of his role in defending imprisoned Christian pastor Yousef Nadarkhani and others jailed in Iran on bogus charges of apostasy and crimes against the State.

"The Obama administration's silence following the conviction of Mr. Dadkhah by a kangaroo court in Iran is all the more troubling as it comes on the heels of the scandalous sellout by U.S. diplomats in Beijing of Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng. It is only thanks to the courageous intervention of Rep Frank Wolf on Thursday that the Chinese authorities may allow Mr. Chen to go free.

"I am deeply concerned that the Obama administration is trading dissidents for a phony nuclear agreement with Tehran being brokered by Beijing. I urge the administration to raise the cases of Mohammad Ali Dadkhah and Pastor Yousef Naderkhani at the upcoming round of talks with the Islamic Republic on May 14.

"Religious freedom is the first freedom our Founders sought to protect. We fail to defend it -both at home and abroad- at our peril."

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