

Federal President of the Republic of Austria
Dr. Heinz Fischer
Hofburg, Ballhausplatz
A 1010 Vienna

15th August 2015

Your Excellency,

As Austrian citizens and Christians for Israel we request the cancellation of your participation of the planned visit to Iran that is scheduled to take place from 7th – 9th September 2015.

That of all people, you the Federal President of Austria, should be the first head of state of a European country to do the Islamic Republic the honour of the first visit by a head of State in a decade, fills us with deep concern and shame.

You are supporting a terror regime that constantly violates human rights, is carrying out mass executions (in the last two years alone there were 1,900 executions) and denies the Holocaust. With this visit, you are doing the ruling Iranian regime a favour and legitimizing the regime's goals – which includes the annihilation of Israel.

The controversial Iran nuclear deal might have been an important step. However, the fact is that this agreement gives Iran the status of an atomic power and that it only temporarily prevents Iran's potential ability to annihilate Israel. We share the deep concerns of the Israeli government, that again feels abandoned by Europe and now especially by Austria.

During the negotiations of the Iran nuclear deal in Vienna, President Hassan Rohani called for the annihilation of Israel on Al-Quds day. By the end of July 2015, the book "Palestine" was published with selected quotes about Palestine from the Supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. In this book he makes no secret of his opinion that Israel has no right to exist as a state and calls for the annihilation of Israel. It is also a fact that for many years Khamenei questions the historic reality of the Holocaust. Denying the Holocaust is a criminal offence in Austria! What a devastating signal towards the survivors in our country when the Federal President of Austria legitimizes foreign Holocaust deniers with a visit! The "Never again", sworn at commemorations like during the 70-year Auschwitz commemoration this year, is degraded into a meaningless hollow cliché, when nothing is said against the anti-Semitism and the Holocaust denial of the Iranian regime. Even you, Mr. President, have constantly emphasized in your speeches the importance of remembering the National Socialist era and the Holocaust, and of examining, reflecting and reporting about them!

That the Austrian economy is already in the starting blocks, the moment the sanctions are lifted, to pave the way for doing business with the Iranian regime, fills us with deep concern. These commercial treaties will now finance the threats of

annihilation against Israel, the export of Islamic terror and the oppression of the Iranian people.

As long as Iran does not improve its respect for Human Rights and guarantee the right of existence of Israel, we ask you, Mr. President Fischer, to abandon your State visit to the Iranian regime!

Marie-Louise Weissenböck

Chairwoman of Christians for Israel - Austria