

Defense Team polemicize nominated by Obama

Chuck Hagel, a Republican moderate and pragmatic, the most questioned

By Rafael Ruiz Mathus

Agency Reform

NEW YORK - To complete the renewal of his foreign policy team and Defense of his second term, President Barack Obama yesterday nominated as Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, a Republican moderate, pragmatic, much less affection to war than some of his former colleagues in the Senate, and John Brennan, his top adviser on counterterrorism, to manage the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from January 21. However, both applications have generated controversy in the country, which could delay Senate confirmation of two officials, especially in the case of Hagel, who is not entirely welcomed by his party, because of his criticism of the war in Iraq and its stance on Israel and lobbied legislators.

"More than most, Chuck understands that war is not just an abstraction," Obama said, recalling that Hagel was wounded and decorated in Vietnam.

However, several Republican senators and showed reservations about Hagel, which some see as too moderate. In turn, Democrats criticize it for the opposition.

For experts, the candidate for the Pentagon marks a continuation in military policy that Obama has imposed to dismantle two costly wars, which could be summarized in the principle: fewer troops, more drones.

"I see a continuum. Hagel will cooperate with Obama," he told REFORM Karen Hooper, director of analysis for Latin America at Stratfor, a global intelligence consultancy.

Brennan, meanwhile, has a long career in the CIA, and is one of the people listed in the famous photograph showing the president and his team following the military operation that killed Osama bin Laden in 2011.

The only reason I had not been nominated before is that in 2008 withdrew his main aspiration in the CIA office amid controversy over his stance on the so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" applied during the George W . Bush and linked to torture methods. However, in 2009, Brennan criticized the practice called "submarine" and supported the closure of the Guantanamo prison, where applied.

"Hagel's nomination suggests that Obama wants to cut defense spending more," said Ben Friedman REFORM, the Cato Institute, a conservative research center in Washington. Furthermore, the presence of Hagel indicates that the second term may be "softer" than the first, and sends a message to Israel that it is much less likely to support a U.S. attack on Iran.

Meet them

Name: John Brennan

Age: 57 years

Trajectory: Obama's counterterrorism adviser. Former director of the National Counterterrorism Center during the Bush presidency. He advised on matters of foreign policy and intelligence for the Obama campaign in 2008. He has worked for 25 years in the CIA. He was criticized for using interrogation techniques related to methods of torture.

Name: Chuck Hagel

Age: 66 years

Career: Former Nebraska senator. He received two Purple Hearts for his role in the Vietnam War. He supported the invasion of Iraq, but later became a critic of the war. Openly challenge the idea of a military strike on Iran and has been criticized for saying that "the Jewish lobby" intimidates lawmakers in Washington.