

The Elders' statement on the death of former Iranian President Rafsanjani

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders expressed their condolences at the death of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the former President of Iran who has passed away at the age of 82.

President Rafsanjani was a key figure in Iran's political life since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, becoming a forceful advocate for domestic political reform and wider engagement with the international community – including strong support for the P5+1 nuclear agreement concluded in 2015.

The Elders met President Rafsanjani during their visit to Iran in January 2014, when they discussed regional conflicts and wider geopolitical questions.

Kofi Annan, Chair of The Elders, said:

"Iran has lost one of its most influential leaders and a strong voice for reform and for the improvement of regional relations. President Rafsanjani understood that a rapprochement between the main leaders of Sunni and Shia Islam is crucial for international stability. I hope his pragmatic approach will be continued for the benefit of the people of Iran and the region"

Martti Ahtisaari, Elder and international conflict mediator, added:

"I am saddened to hear of the death of President Rafsanjani. When he met the Elders' delegation in 2014, we held fruitful discussions and he gave us good advice on regional security issues, the need to address root causes of conflict, and the importance of negotiating in good faith to solve complex geopolitical issues. It is crucial that Iran, regional powers and all parties to the nuclear agreement maintain their commitment to peace and security in the months ahead."

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The Elders are independent leaders using their collective experience and influence for peace, justice and human rights worldwide. The group was founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007.

The Elders are [Martti Ahtisaari](#), [Kofi Annan](#) (Chair), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#) (Deputy Chair), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Ela Bhatt](#), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) are Elders Emeritus.

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