

The Elders welcome Iran election result as spur for peace and tolerance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders welcomed the re-election of President Hassan Rouhani in Iran as a sign that the Iranian people clearly desire peaceful relations with the outside world and a more tolerant society at home.

On the occasion of their board meeting in Helsinki, Finland, the Elders noted President Rouhani's consistent support for the nuclear deal between Iran and the "P5+1" powers (the United States, Russia, China, France, Germany and the United Kingdom), and expressed the hope that his re-election means all signatories will continue to work in good faith for its full implementation.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders, said:

"The Iranian people have given President Rouhani a fresh and convincing mandate to pursue his policy of openness and engagement. I hope he can build on the success of the nuclear agreement to deepen relations with the West and begin to bridge the sectarian chasm between Iran and its regional neighbours."

Tensions between Sunni and Shi'a Islam have huge political and security ramifications across the region and require a careful and balanced response by the international community. The Elders noted the recent meeting between the US President and Sunni leaders gathered in Saudi Arabia and urged the US to broaden its outreach to all regional parties.

As President Trump has said, religious extremism and terrorism must be tackled wherever it is found. However, the Elders also warned that inflammatory rhetoric towards Iran can aggravate sectarianism and fuel current and future wars, and called on all leaders to exercise restraint.

[Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), Deputy Chair of The Elders, said:

"At a time of deep divisions, I hope President Rouhani's re-election will mark the opening of a new and more peaceful chapter in regional relations. All parties should now try to forge common ground, in the shared interests of a peaceful Middle East and a world free from terror."

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About The Elders

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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For biographies of the Elders, blogs, photos, videos and more information about their work please go to www.theElders.org.

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