

## The Elders Urge Strong Multilateral Response to DPRK Nuclear Tensions

**LONDON, 21 September 2017**

The Elders today urged the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to address nuclear tensions in a calm, sober and respectful way, to avoid further escalation and potentially devastating military conflict.

They expressed their support for United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, who warned in his speech to the UN General Assembly in New York that *"fiery talk can lead to fatal misunderstandings"*. They stressed that only a strong multilateral response can succeed in resolving the issue peacefully.

The Elders also deplored the recent nuclear test and missile launches by the DPRK. These actions are a clear violation of the DPRK's obligations not to produce or test nuclear weapons. The Elders urged the DPRK to halt its nuclear programme and pursue a peaceful settlement on the Korean peninsula.

**Kofi Annan**, Chair of The Elders, warned that:

*"The current situation in the Korean peninsula is deeply alarming. The current crisis clearly demonstrates the wider dangers and instability caused by nuclear weapons, made worse by the increasing reluctance of nuclear armed states to pursue disarmament."*

The Elders encouraged the international community to focus on starting comprehensive talks with the DPRK government on all security-related matters, including its nuclear programme. They emphasised that the international community should support and facilitate efforts to establish a credible dialogue between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK and other nations that are deeply concerned by the escalation of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

**Gro Harlem Brundtland**, Deputy Chair of The Elders, said:

*"Having visited the DPRK with The Elders in 2011, I am convinced that dialogue is not only possible but essential for the long-term stability of the Korean peninsula. The DPRK government's recent actions present a serious threat to international peace, and have been rightfully condemned. However, any punitive measures taken by the international community will not be effective unless combined with credible efforts to foster a serious dialogue with the DPRK government to persuade it to turn away from the dangerous path it has been pursuing."*

ENDS

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### **Media enquiries**

William French, Head of Communications, The Elders

T: +44 7795 693903

[media@theElders.org](mailto:media@theElders.org)

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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), [Ban Ki-moon](#), [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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