

The Elders warn against escalation to ‘uncontrollable war’ in Syria

LONDON, 11 April 2018

The Elders today expressed their deep alarm at the prospect of a further escalation of the Syrian war following the latest reported chemical weapons attack, and called on all parties to avoid further military action which could provoke uncontrollable war.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders and former UN Secretary-General, wrote:

“This is an extremely delicate moment when cool heads and sober judgement are required. A rush to further military action should be avoided. This will allow a thorough independent investigation into the alleged chemical weapons attack on civilians in Douma to take place. Only in this way can responsibility be assigned and any suggestion of impunity for the use of banned weapons be addressed head-on.”

Following the alleged use of poisonous gas against civilians in a small, rebel-held district near Damascus on Saturday evening, international tensions have been raised further by a missile attack against a Syrian airbase. Syria and Russia have publicly blamed Israel for the attack.

[Lakhdar Brahimi](#), Elder and former UN Special Envoy for Syria, added:

“After a period when it seemed that the Syrian war may finally be winding down, with the three so-called guarantor powers – Russia, Turkey and Iran – assuming responsibility for its peaceful conclusion, there is a real risk that this disastrous conflict could reignite and even expand. We must all back the UN’s efforts to calm tensions and prevent an uncontrollable war.”

ENDS

Media enquiries

William French, Head of Communications, The Elders
T: +44 7795 693903
media@theElders.org

Sign up to [receive The Elders' press releases](#).

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.

Find out more

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

Follow The Elders on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Flickr](#) and [YouTube](#).