

The Elders urge JCPOA signatories to stick to deal despite US withdrawal

LONDON, 8 May 2018

The Elders strongly condemned President Trump's decision today to withdraw the United States from the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran: the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA. They called on the other signatories to the deal – France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Russia, China and the European Union -- to continue to do everything in their power to sustain its spirit and implementation.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders, former UN Secretary-General and a Nobel Peace Laureate, said:

“The JCPOA was a hard-won diplomatic achievement and proof of what robust negotiations on the part of all those involved can achieve. I deeply regret President Trump’s decision to withdraw, and urge all other signatories to renew their commitment to the deal and avoid a broader escalation of tensions across the Middle East.”

The Elders emphasised that after the JCPOA came into effect in January 2016, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has repeatedly confirmed Iran's implementation of its provisions.

However, they also expressed alarm at recent threats by Iranian officials to resume nuclear fuel enrichment and even withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) if President Trump proceeded with his threat to pull-out.

[Ban Ki-moon](#), Elder and UN Secretary-General from 2007-16, said:

“I am very worried about the risks of a new nuclear arms race, this time in the Middle East, as well as the negative implications for ongoing negotiations on North Korean nuclear issues. To prevent that frightening prospect, everyone must do what they can to keep the JCPOA alive and well. The UN Security Council ratified the agreement unanimously; no single country has the right to declare it dead.”

[Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), Deputy Chair of The Elders and former Prime Minister of Norway, added:

“I believe that, in the end, common sense will prevail. So, I suggest that a seat at the table should be kept empty for the United States to return to this agreement. The NPT remains a

critical element of international security architecture, and any withdrawal by Iran would not be in its long-term interests.”

ENDS

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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), [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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