

The Elders urge world leaders to step up efforts to eradicate tuberculosis

LONDON, 17 September 2018

The Elders have written to twelve key world leaders urging them to step up their efforts to eradicate tuberculosis (TB) and attend a United Nations summit in New York on the topic on 26 September.

The letters were sent to leaders of major donor countries whose support in tackling TB has been crucial to date, and also to leaders of countries where the incidence of TB is high and urgent action is required.

The Elders noted that TB is the number one infectious disease killer in the world. In 2016, there were 10.4 million cases of TB and 1.7 million deaths. However, only 61% of cases were successfully found and treated - despite the fact that TB is preventable and curable.

In their letter, the Elders called on world leaders to redouble their efforts and show real political and financial commitment by attending the first-ever UN High-Level Meeting on the disease, which will be held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York on 26 September.

[Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), Acting Chair of The Elders, former Prime Minister of Norway and former Director-General of the World Health Organization, wrote:

“The Elders are determined that the High-Level Meeting should be a success, resulting in high-level commitments to accelerate progress to ending TB. It is crucial that investment in strengthening health systems in low- and middle-income countries to help them eradicate TB is stepped up.”

The Elders believe that securing Universal Health Coverage, where everyone receives the healthcare they need without suffering financial hardship, is a crucial element in the fight against TB and other preventable diseases. Both challenges require sustained and bold political leadership.

The letters were sent to the leaders of France, the UK, Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Germany, Spain, Norway, Mexico, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Korea.

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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](#) (1938-2018), [Ban Ki-moon](#), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#) (Acting 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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