

The Elders call for strong international leadership on AI governance after Summit of the Future

21 OCTOBER 2024

The Elders call for continued leadership from the United Nations and member states to drive forward inclusive global governance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Such leadership is essential to implementing the welcome provisions on AI in the [Global Digital Compact](#) adopted at the [Summit of the Future](#).

The Elders urge world leaders to treat the issue of AI safety with the utmost seriousness, and to implement the Compact. The UN must continue to engage all member states on the Compact's implementation plan, in particular on the timely proposals for an international scientific panel and a global dialogue on AI governance.

We reiterate our view that AI has the potential to bring great benefits to human life, including health, education and other aspects of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, without proper global governance, supported by meaningful and enforceable regulation, the extraordinary rate of technological progress AI is bringing poses an existential threat to humanity, as well as more immediate risks.

We applaud recent initiatives in AI governance at regional, national and sub-national levels, as well as convenings by governments, scientists and industry leaders. The AI safety summit series has brought welcome collaboration between the United States of America and China, as well as the proposal of an international network of AI Safety Institutes. These efforts are crucial to building and strengthening the legal and technical guardrails needed to keep this transformative technology safe and secure.

This diversity of approaches can provide vital insights and differing perspectives on AI governance. But there is an urgent need to harmonise these efforts. A coordinated approach will ensure that all nations participate in shaping the future of AI, not just those with advanced AI capabilities, that knowledge and expertise is shared, and governance decisions are based on the global public good.

We welcome the recommendation from the UN Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Body on AI that the UN play a connecting role in the international AI governance ecosystem. The UN could foster the more comprehensive and equitable approach that is so urgently needed.

Only through collective effort and shared responsibility can we ensure that AI becomes a force for good benefiting all of humanity, and that risks are mitigated. The Global Digital Compact and [High-level Advisory Body report](#) remind us that the governance of AI should be as diverse and inclusive as the world it seeks to serve.

ENDS

Media enquiries

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

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

About The Elders

The Elders are independent global leaders working for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet. The group was founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007.

The Elders are [Ban Ki-moon \(Deputy Chair\)](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), [Helen Clark](#), [Elbegdorj Tsakhia](#), [Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein](#), [Hina Jilani](#), [Denis Mukwege](#), [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf](#), [Graça Machel \(Deputy Chair\)](#), [Juan Manuel Santos](#), [Mary Robinson \(Chair\)](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#) and [Ricardo Lagos](#) are Elders Emeritus.

[Desmond Tutu](#) (1931-2021) and [Kofi Annan](#) (1938-2018) were founding members of The Elders and served as Chairs from 2007 to 2013 and 2013 to 2018 respectively. [Ela Bhatt](#) (1933 - 2022) and [Martti Ahtisaari](#) (1937 - 2023) were members of The Elders from 2007 to 2016 and 2009 to 2018 respectively.

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 [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).