

The Elders call for collective action by governments to end Palestinian suffering in Gaza

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Political leaders have stood by for too long watching the atrocities that the current Israeli government is committing against the Palestinian people. It is time for effective collective action to address impunity and end Palestinian suffering.

The Elders welcome the statement issued this week by Prime Minister Carney, President Macron and Prime Minister Starmer that they will take “concrete actions” if the Israeli government does not change course. We urge other leaders to join them.

These concrete actions should include targeted sanctions against the Israeli leaders responsible for the policies of starvation as a weapon of war, mass displacement and indiscriminate military attacks in Gaza, as well as illegal settlement expansion and annexation in the West Bank.

We welcome the suspension by the UK of trade talks with Israel, and the EU’s decision to review Israel’s compliance with Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Effective measures by third party states are necessary to prevent genocide, in line with the ICJ’s rulings and states’ obligations under the Genocide Convention. Arms transfers to Israel should stop.

Hamas must be held accountable for its horrific crimes against Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023, and for keeping innocent civilians as hostages. But these acts do not justify Israel’s atrocity crimes.

The measures proposed are not a reward for Hamas, as Prime Minister Netanyahu maliciously claims. Holding his extremist government accountable is not antisemitic. We stand with the many Israelis and members of the Jewish diaspora who oppose the actions of the Israeli government, and want a lasting peace with the Palestinians.

Gazans are facing a man-made famine that is the direct consequence of the Government of Israel’s deliberate actions. This is unconscionable. There must be full and immediate access for

UN and other humanitarian agencies to operate at scale in Gaza. We reject the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation proposal, which would set an alarming precedent and undermine core humanitarian principles.

The conference on 18 June co-hosted by France and Saudi Arabia should forge consensus on a new political pathway. Recognition of the State of the Palestine is an immediate step that should be taken by France, the UK and other G7 states. The Arab states' plan offers the most viable proposal for Gaza's recovery and transition to a new form of Palestinian-led governance. President Trump should get behind this plan instead of giving the Netanyahu government carte blanche to pursue its dangerous strategy.

The horrors we are witnessing in Gaza will not stop until the impunity enjoyed by Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government ends. His strategy is abhorrent, it is isolating Israel and weakening its security, and it will fail.

Palestinians and Israelis deserve a peaceful future based on self-determination and equal rights for both peoples. Let this dark moment in history be a turning point towards that goal.

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