



The Elders



**BUILDING
UNITY FOR PEACE
AND JUSTICE**

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

THE ELDERS

The Elders are a group of independent leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela in 2007, who use their collective experience and influence for peace, justice and human rights worldwide.



MARY ROBISON
CHAIR



BAN KI-MOON
DEPUTY CHAIR



GRAÇA MACHEL
DEPUTY CHAIR



GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND



ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA



ZEID RA'AD AL HUSSEIN



HINA JILANI



ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF



RICARDO LAGOS



JUAN MANUEL SANTOS



ERNESTO ZEDILLO

Martti Ahtisaari, Lakhdar Brahimi, Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Jimmy Carter are Elders Emeritus. **Kofi Annan** (1938-2018) was a founding member of The Elders and served as Chair from 2013-2018. **Desmond Tutu** (1931-2021) was a founding member of The Elders and served as Chair from 2007-2013. **Ela Bhatt** (1933-2022) was a founding member of The Elders.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“The force of Madiba’s mandate resonated even more in 2022 as the world struggled with a plethora of existential threats.”

Mary Robison

2022 was a year of transition, commemoration and recommitment for The Elders. The easing of many public health restrictions linked to COVID-19 enabled more travel and face-to-face meetings than the previous two years. This meant Elders could again meet both more world leaders, and people on the frontlines of the existential crises facing our world, whose perspectives and experiences are invaluable in informing our current and future work. I was pleased to visit Africa four times in 2022 on Elders’ business, after some time away, with trips to South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda and Egypt.

2022 also marked the fifteenth anniversary of our group’s founding. It felt particularly appropriate to have our first board meeting of 2022 in South Africa, the country where Nelson Mandela first brought us together. However, our meeting also had a poignant edge as we remembered friends no longer with us, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Sadly, another founding member, Ela Bhatt, passed away in November. I was proud to pay the Elders’ respects to these two towering figures from civil society at their funerals, in Cape Town in January for Arch and Ahmedabad in November for Ela.

On a happier note, we were delighted to welcome Elbegdorj Tsakhia from Mongolia as our newest member in October. He brings a rich and valuable perspective to our work as the first former head of state from Asia, and as a leader of his country’s transition to democracy in the 1990s. With long experience of personal diplomacy with the leaders of China and Russia, today he is a renowned international campaigner on nuclear disarmament, human rights and climate change.

The force of Madiba’s mandate resonated with even greater power in 2022 as the world struggled with a plethora of existential threats. From Russia’s savage war on Ukraine to the continuing toll exacted by COVID-19, the floods, droughts and ferocious fires exacerbated by the climate crisis and the breakdown in diplomacy around nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the need for ethical, bold and compassionate leadership has never been greater.

This is why we agreed on a new strategic focus starting

in 2023 that will prioritise the three existential threats of the climate crisis, pandemics and nuclear weapons, together with our continuing work on conflict. The Elders will also promote multilateralism, human rights, gender equality and women’s leadership, and intergenerational dialogue across all aspects of our work.

Such was the scale of human suffering witnessed in 2022, it could at times be understandable to feel overwhelmed by despair.

But as Elders, we remain inspired by the mandate given to us by Nelson Mandela: to support courage where there is fear, foster agreement where there is conflict and inspire hope where there is despair.

We saw much courage in 2022: in the actions of the brave women and men of Ukraine defending their country, from President Zelenskyy and across all sections of society; in the climate activists I met in Uganda and then at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, determined to deliver a better future for themselves and future generations; and in the inspirational women of Iran, standing up for their universal rights in the face of cruel oppression.

These signs of courage also give me hope for the future. I am inspired by the resilience of people fighting injustice, standing up for their rights, and by nations coming together to address shared challenges, such as the recent agreements on loss and damage financing at COP27, and then the subsequent agreement to protect biodiversity at the COP15 summit in Montreal in December 2022.

As we move into 2023, what is now needed is sustained pressure on political leaders to deliver on their promises. Our work as Elders is to hear, respond to and amplify these courageous voices and encourage governments to act in the collective needs of all humanity, not the narrow priorities of sectarian or nationalist self-interest.

In this as in all our work, we will be guided by the resolute determination of our founder, Nelson Mandela, as articulated in his memorable and inspiring words:

“It always seems impossible until it is done.”

Mary Robison, January 2023



FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

“While the times may change, the values of The Elders remain constant.”

Alistair Fernie

Looking back at my first full year as Chief Executive, three things stand out.

Firstly, how transformational it was to have Elders travelling again regularly: 15 trips in total, including to Africa, Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East and North America, with almost all Elders involved. This was a huge contrast to the COVID travel constraints of most of 2021 and 2020, and gave Elders the opportunity to do what they do best: engage in person with leaders. One country Elders were particularly keen to visit – China – remained hard to get to in 2022: a reminder that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over.

Secondly, how much Russia’s war on Ukraine changed our work. Our conflict programme pivoted to address the biggest conflict facing the world (on which we had done very little since a large Elders’ delegation visited Moscow in 2015 and discussed Ukraine with President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov). We had to deprioritise work on other conflicts to find the time, including for a logistically complicated visit to Ukraine by two Elders. But other Elders’ work on other priorities was also affected, from climate to multilateralism.

Thirdly, how decisive Elders were in 2022 when discussing what they want to focus on over the next five years. All Elders agreed the main lesson from a review of the previous strategy was that Elders have most impact when they engage in a sustained way on an issue where they have real credibility. I was thus delighted that Elders decided in May to reduce to four the programmes on which they will work from 2023-27.

I have had the privilege of seeing Elders at work in 2022 in situations as varied as the frontline of conflict in Ukraine (where Elders met President

Zelenskyy), to the Chamber of the United Nations Security Council in New York (where the experience, wisdom and moral authority that Elders bring to global affairs is particularly respected).

2022 also saw our first new Elder for 3½ years, an 9% increase in our income and a 11% increase in our expenditure compared to 2021 (against a backdrop of accelerating UK inflation) while still producing a small budget surplus, and a review of staffing to ensure the Secretariat is well-positioned to support the Elders implement their new strategy. We ended the year tired but with many good foundations in place for 2023.

This Annual Review offers an overview of some of the Elders’ activities over the last year, as well as previewing the new strategy that will guide Elders’ work from 2023-2027.

The urgency of the interconnected existential threats we face requires a crisis mindset from leaders and a continued focus by Elders on where their voices and experience can best be deployed in the interests of peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet.

While the times may change, the values of The Elders remain constant and just as relevant today – and for the years ahead – as when Nelson Mandela first brought the group together in 2007:

“Using their collective experience, their moral courage and their ability to rise above the parochial concerns of nation, race and creed, they can help make our planet a more peaceful, healthy and equitable place to live.”

Alistair Fernie, January 2023
Chief Executive

“**The Elders use their independence, collective experience and influence to work for peace, justice and human rights.**”

- 3** Message from The Chair
- 4** Foreword by the Chief Executive
- 7** The Elders’ Work and Strategy
- 9** Ethical Leadership and Multilateral Cooperation
- 14** Climate Change
- 18** Conflict Countries and Regions
- 22** Refugees and Migration
- 24** Universal Health Coverage
- 26** Access to Justice
- 29** Communications and Engagement
- 32** Financial Review
- 35** Advisory Council Information



Ela Bhatt meets SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association of India) vegetable vendors in Ahmedabad, India in 2010. Bhatt founded SEWA to protect female vendors from the exploitation of money lenders. Photo: Tom Pietrasik



The Elders in Cape Town, South Africa, at their bi-annual board meeting, May 2022.

ELA BHATT (1933-2022)

The Elders were deeply saddened at the passing in November 2022 of their dear friend and colleague Ela Bhatt, who was a hugely admired and respected member of the group since its early days.

Elaben, as she liked to be known, was one of the founding members of The Elders, and played an important role in its early development. Drawing on a lifetime of work in her native India to help empower women at the grassroots level and in the trade union movement, she was a powerful and forceful advocate for voiceless and marginalised people across the world.

She was profoundly influenced throughout her life by Gandhian principles of self-reliance and collective action, and was widely admired for

her tireless work to increase the influence and standing of women workers in India. The million-member Self-Employed Women's Association which she established is a powerful testament to the enduring legacy of her work.

Mary Robinson, Chair of The Elders, said:

"Ela Bhatt was deeply admired by us all for her unceasing work on behalf of women and vulnerable people around the world. Her work helped to change the lives of many hundreds of thousands of women for the better. All of our lives were greatly enriched by knowing Elaben and working with her, and while we mourn her loss, we resolve also to preserve and uphold the beliefs and values which she held dear."

THE ELDERS' WORK AND STRATEGY

The Elders is a group of independent global leaders, founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007. They work for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet.

2022 marked the final year of the 2018-22 Strategic Framework, under which The Elders' work was focused on six distinct programmes: **Ethical Leadership and Multilateral Cooperation** (including **Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation**, and **UN and P5 Engagement**); **Climate Change**; **Conflict Countries and Regions**;

Refugees and Migration; **Universal Health Coverage**; and **Access to Justice**. The main activities in all these areas are covered in this report.

In the course of 2022, The Elders' Secretariat undertook a strategy review of the organisation's work over the period of the last framework to assess its impact and inform future priorities. Leading figures in governments, civil society and international organisations were consulted as to where The Elders could have the most impact in the coming years.



The Elders in London, at their bi-annual board meeting, October 2022. Photo: Jeff Moore.



Security Council meeting on the maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine, September 2022. Photo: Lev Radin/Pacific Press/LightRocket via Getty Images



Informed by this review process and a growing sense of urgency and alarm at the scale of conflict and existential threats facing humanity, The Elders agreed the priorities for a new strategy for 2023-27 at the May 2022 board meeting in Cape Town, and the full text of the strategy at the October 2022 board meeting in London. Over the course of the next five years, Elders will work on three existential threats requiring a collective global response:

- o The Climate Crisis
- o Nuclear Weapons
- o Pandemics

Elders will also continue to work on **conflict**, which is both a threat in itself, and a risk factor for other threats. They will use their independence, collective experience and moral authority to hold world leaders to account for managing these threats better.

Drawing on their values and their mandate from Nelson Mandela, The Elders have also chosen four cross-cutting commitments to be incorporated selectively into the four programmes:

- o Multilateralism
- o Human Rights
- o Gender Equality and Women in Leadership
- o Intergenerational Dialogue

This new strategic direction involved deciding to close programmes in Universal Health Coverage, Refugees and Migration, and Access to Justice, and converting the Ethical Leadership and Multilateral Cooperation programme into a cross-cutting commitment on multilateralism. In this Annual Review for 2022, we report against the programmes as they were in the last year of the 2018-22 strategy period.

SUMMARIES OF PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February fundamentally transformed the context in which The Elders pursued their work on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in 2022.

Just weeks before the invasion, the leaders of all P5 states, including Russia, had issued a joint statement reaffirming the Reagan-Gorbachev maxim that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought", which Elders had been

calling for as part of a joint initiative with other leading arms control organisations including the European Leadership Network and Nuclear Threat Initiative.

Subsequent events showed the need for such declarations to be backed up by policy changes – such as those outlined by The Elders in their "4 Ds" minimisation agenda – if they are to have credibility.

FP

“In times of tension among nuclear-armed states, dialogue, negotiations, and agreements to reduce dangers are even more essential than in times of détente and peace.”

Ban Ki-moon in Foreign Policy, July 2022



Photo: Adobe Stock / alexyz3d

Instead, President Putin’s decision, days after the invasion, to place Russia’s nuclear forces onto “special alert” status meant the risk of nuclear confrontation was perceived to be at its highest since the most dangerous moments of the Cold War. The Elders condemned this provocative move and urged NATO forces to show restraint.

In late February, Mary Robinson visited Washington DC for meetings with senior US officials including Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman. The issue of how to respond to increased nuclear tensions was discussed in the context of Sherman’s lead role on the US-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue, which was indefinitely suspended following the invasion.

Russia’s aggression and the accelerated breakdown of trust between nuclear states within

and beyond the P5 rendered the atmosphere ahead of the long-postponed Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in August even gloomier than anticipated.

Nevertheless, The Elders continued to advocate publicly and privately for NPT signatories to live up to their obligations, not only to de-escalate nuclear tensions but also to repair fraying trust in the principles of non-proliferation and multilateral diplomacy.

To give greater public prominence to the issue, Ban Ki-moon authored an op-ed in Foreign Policy in late July on the NPT Review Conference which focused on the need for dialogue to reduce nuclear risks, and the importance of using the conference as a moment for states to commit to action to make progress.

Mary Robinson also gave a keynote address to a virtual side-event on Women in NPT focused on increasing gender equality within multilateral discussions on nuclear issues, and released a quote on the conclusion of the Review Conference expressing disappointment at Russia’s decision to block a consensus outcome.

In November, Mary Robinson wrote as Chair of The Elders to four European NATO states who participated as observers in the first meeting of States Parties to the newly-ratified Treaty for the Prevention of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which welcomed their efforts to build bridges between TPNW supporters and opponents and offered The Elders’ support on these efforts. These discussions are ongoing.



The Elders react to the failure to reach a consensus outcome at the NPT Review Conference, August 2022



Ernesto Zedillo, Mary Robinson, Ban Ki-moon and Juan Manuel Santos meet UN Secretary-General António Guterres at UN HQ in New York, November 2022



UN AND P5 ENGAGEMENT

Throughout 2022, The Elders were clear that the answer to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and other unilateral acts of aggression and violations of international law had to be more, not less, commitment to the values and institutions of multilateralism.

This found practical expression in the appointment in March by UN Secretary-General António Guterres of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to be co-chair of a High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, serving alongside former Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Advisory Board is tasked with making "concrete recommendations on more effective multilateralism" on a range of global issues, to follow up the recommendations of Guterres' Our Common Agenda report recommendations.

In addition to President Sirleaf's new role, Elders continued to engage with the implementation of the Our Common Agenda report over the course of 2022, including Mary Robinson's attendance at a private workshop in Washington DC in March co-

organised by the Stimson Center and Georgetown University.

In September, Mary Robinson attended meetings around the opening of the UN General Assembly in New York with a specific focus on climate change and the need to drive momentum for an ambitious outcome to the COP27 summit in Sharm El-Sheikh in November. Ban Ki-moon also authored an op-ed ahead of high-level week in Le Monde, which called on leaders to recommit to multilateralism as the only way to effectively tackle the world's most pressing problems.

In October, Mary Robinson, Gro Brundtland, Elbegdorj Tsakhia and Juan Manuel Santos met UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly in London following the Elders' Board meeting. The discussions focused on the war in Ukraine and nuclear tensions, but Elders also pressed Cleverly on Israel/Palestine, and urged the UK Government to maintain an ambitious and engaged approach to climate diplomacy in its last months as COP26 President.

Le Monde

"Many of the world's most powerful countries have been undermining the multilateral system for years, by prioritizing short-term national agendas over long-term global stability."

Ban Ki-moon, September 2022.

The focal point of Elders' UN engagement in 2022 came in November with a series of public and private meetings in New York.

Mary Robinson briefed the UN Security Council in a formal, open ministerial debate on increasing resilience in peace operations, while four Elders (Mary Robinson, Ernesto Zedillo, Ban Ki-moon and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein) had a private breakfast meeting with members of the UN Security Council on Friday 4 November, building on previous private dialogues in 2021, 2019 and 2017.

The breakfast was followed by a press briefing with the Editorial Board of the Associated Press, generating two articles which received widespread pick-up from media outlets including ABC News and the Washington Post.

A number of bilateral meetings were also arranged, most significantly with the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, as well as with USC for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo, the Permanent Representative of Turkey, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia and the Foreign Secretary of India.



Irish Minister Thomas Byrne, then Minister of State for European Affairs, greets Mary Robinson in the UN Security Council Chamber, November 2022



Mary Robinson and Ugandan climate activist Vanessa Nakate together in Uganda, August 2022.



CLIMATE CHANGE

The Elders' top climate priorities in 2022 were to hold leaders accountable for promises made at the COP26 summit in Glasgow in November 2021, and to push for ever greater ambition on critical areas such as climate financing, loss and damage, and a just energy transition.

A critical cross-cutting element was to encourage intergenerational dialogue with people at the frontlines of the climate crisis, and to ensure their voices were heard at the highest level of decision-making.

In this spirit, on 26 January The Elders co-convened a virtual "State of Hope" intergenerational dialogue on climate action with Project Syndicate and The Nature Conservancy.

Mary Robinson, Ban Ki-moon and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein spoke alongside Patricia Espinosa from the UNFCCC, scientists Johan Rockström and Katharine Hayhoe and Andrew Serazin, President of the Templeton World Charity Foundation, as well as youth activists Mitzi Jonelle Tan and

Elizabeth Wathuti, and the Mayor of Freetown in Sierra Leone, Yvonne Aki-Sawyer.

The event was livestreamed to a global audience and complemented by an op-ed by Mary Robinson in Project Syndicate, which urged African leaders to speak with one voice at the COP27 summit in Egypt to further the goal of climate justice.

Support for South Africa's just energy transition was also central to the Elders' political engagement with the country's leadership on the occasion of their board meeting in Cape Town in May. A Just Energy Transition Partnership deal between South Africa and Western partner countries worth \$8.5 billion had been announced at COP26, and a delegation of Elders met President Ramaphosa in Pretoria after the board meeting to discuss how the deal was progressing.

Mary Robinson then spoke to the ambassadors of funding countries, to ask each for an update on their commitments, and to relay the concerns heard from the South African side.

POLITICO

"There must be no new coal, oil or gas production – in any region – if we are to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius."

Mary Robinson, June 2022.

On return from South Africa, Mary Robinson published an op-ed in Politico on the eve of the G7 Summit in June, warning that some of the G7 nations who committed funds seemed to be recycling old commitments and rowing back on the type of finance they will provide; while Ban Ki-moon reinforced South African concerns about the low grant component directly with Alok Sharma, as Chair of the International Partners' Group.

In order to show solidarity with frontline communities threatened by climate change, Mary Robinson travelled in late August to Uganda, where she spent time with two women climate leaders, Vanessa Nakate and Constance Okollet, and met President Museveni. The objective of the trip was to highlight the need for international action on adaptation and loss and damage finance ahead of COP27.

Mary Robinson visited adaptation projects to hear directly the experiences and stories of communities who are building resilience and

was interviewed by the Associated Press, whose resulting coverage was syndicated worldwide. These conversations and perspectives directly informed her engagement with ministers and policymakers at COP27.





As part of efforts to maintain pressure on large emitters, in September Ban Ki-moon headlined the Better Futures Forum Australia, welcoming Australia's stronger emissions-reduction target as "a step-up the world has long been waiting for", whilst pressing for further action. His speech was widely reported in Australian media - including the Guardian and the Canberra Times and was syndicated by the Associated Press across dozens of local news outlets. The event coincided with a debate in the Senate over the Australian climate bill. The bill was voted through the next day, enacting the higher targets which The Elders have been advocating for over the past year.

As momentum gathered in the latter half of the year towards COP27, The Elders continued to champion African women climate leaders, as part of wider efforts to highlight the specific impact of climate change on women, and the way in which women are driving solutions in their communities and beyond. This took the form of a series of online guest blogs published on The Elders' website and promoted on social media.

Ahead of the summit, Mary Robinson and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein held an online mentoring session with 2022 Youth Negotiator Programme participants, 60 young negotiators from 27

different countries. They gave advice and support on a number of issues, including loss and damage.

In Sharm El-Sheikh itself, The Elders contributed to wider efforts to press for a loss and damage finance facility as was eventually agreed in the final COP27 outcome. Mary Robinson met privately with negotiators to encourage their support, and frequently briefed global media on developments.

At one crucial point in negotiations on technical assistance for loss and damage, Mary Robinson used media interviews to single out Saudi Arabia and China for blocking progress. When negotiations resumed later that day, both countries dropped their objections and an agreement was reached.

On one of the final days of the negotiations, Mary Robinson held a widely-covered intergenerational press conference on loss and damage, speaking alongside youth activists and the Climate Envoy from the Marshall Islands.

In their post-COP statement and media interviews, Elders welcomed the historic breakthrough on loss and damage financing, but warned that still far too little action was being taken on cutting emissions.

The priorities of upholding the 1.5° Celsius limit on global temperature rises, and strengthening cooperation around just energy transitions, will be at the forefront of The Elders' continued climate advocacy work in 2023 and beyond.



Ban Ki-moon and Juan Manuel Santos with President Zelenskyy in Kyiv, August 2022. Photo: Sarsenov Daniar



Juan Manuel Santos and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein speak on a panel discussion with Orsysia Lutsevych and Elizabeth Wilmshurst, at Chatham House, London, October 2022.

CONFLICT COUNTRIES AND REGIONS



The Elders' work on conflict was dominated in 2022 by Russia's full-scale invasion of **Ukraine**. The Elders were swift and forceful in their condemnation of this clear violation of the United Nations Charter by a nuclear-armed Permanent Member of the Security Council, and in their demands that Russian leaders be held accountable for the crime of aggression.

The Elders issued three public statements condemning the initial invasion, urging restraint in the context of President Putin's provocative rhetoric around nuclear weapons, and calling for a new international or hybrid tribunal mandated to investigate and prosecute the alleged crime of aggression in Ukraine.

Over the following months and in light of the changing course of the war, including the discovery of war crimes committed against Ukrainian civilians by Russian troops, Elders

engaged in public and private discussions to help build global consensus in response to Russia's aggression, meeting with government leaders, diplomatic missions to the UN in New York, and other stakeholders such as the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

The impact of the conflict on global food and energy markets was a prominent issue when a delegation of Elders met South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in May after the Cape Town board meeting, and later in the year when Mary Robinson attended meetings in the margins of the opening session of the UN General Assembly in New York in September.

In August, Ban Ki-moon and Juan Manuel Santos visited Kyiv at the invitation of President Zelenskyy. They travelled to Ukraine by train and met the President in Kyiv, after having visited the towns of Bucha and Irpin outside the capital where Russian forces had massacred civilians.

During their visit they also met the Head of the Office of the President Andriy Yermak, the Prosecutor General and other senior government officials, and the UN Resident Coordinator and her team, and gave interviews to international media. Discussions are ongoing with Ukrainian and other stakeholders as to how best The Elders can support a just resolution to the conflict.

Following this visit, The Elders collectively reasserted the need for global solidarity with Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression, including more engagement from leaders in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

During the October Board meeting in London, The Elders co-organised a public discussion of the implications of Russia's war on Ukraine for the future of multilateralism with the Chatham House think tank. Juan Manuel Santos and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein spoke alongside Orsysia Lutsevych, the head of Chatham House's Ukraine Forum, drawing on their past experiences of conflict resolution and seeking accountability for rights violations.

Elbegdorj Tsakhia, the newest member of The Elders, also contributed to the discussion, reflecting on his experience of helping lead

Mongolia's transition to democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union, and his relations with Russia when he served as President.

Elders also discussed the conflict and its implications for the future of global peace and security architecture during their visit to New York in November (see UN and P5 engagement section).

While the ultimate outcome of the war is far from clear at the close of 2022, The Elders will continue to focus in 2023 on bolstering global solidarity with Ukraine, ensuring accountability and justice for Russia's aggression, and finding pathways towards ending the conflict in line with the UN Charter.

Alongside their focus on Ukraine, Elders also continued to engage on long-standing conflict priorities including Israel/Palestine, Iran and Myanmar.

In **Israel/Palestine**, the Elders focused their efforts on defending and amplifying the voices of civil society on both sides of the Green Line, and in particular on showing solidarity with the six Palestinian civil society organisations branded as "terrorist entities" by Israel (to widespread international condemnation).



Photo: Dennis Jarvis / Flickr

EL PAÍS

“There is now extensive evidence that the government of Israel is blatantly violating international law in its rule over the occupied Palestinian lands and its oppressive practices against the Palestinian people.”

Juan Manuel Santos, May 2022.

In March, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein spoke alongside representatives of “the Six” at an event co-hosted with The Carter Center to demonstrate solidarity and call for greater protection of civic space by the international community.

He called Israel's decision “an assault on civil society with serious consequences that should concern us all”, and noted the range of tools – including counterterrorism laws – being misused by authorities in both authoritarian and democratic states to restrict the legitimate work of civil society.

In May, Juan Manuel Santos published an op-ed in El País that called for global consistency in confronting impunity for rights abuses in conflict situations, contrasting the firm resolve of the international community against Russian aggression in Ukraine with the broad tolerance of Israel's violations of global rules and norms in its continued occupation of Palestinian territories.

He warned that “the *de facto* annexation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, through the unchecked expansion of illegal Jewish settlements, is a clear indication of Israel's intent

to permanently dominate a stateless Palestinian people,” and highlighted that Israel's actions will ultimately work against its own interests and the chances of a durable, just peace. The op-ed was welcomed by think tanks, civil society organisations and human rights defenders in both Israel and Palestine.

Throughout the year, The Elders reiterated their support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear deal between Iran and the international community, and urged all parties to compromise and return to the agreement. Mary Robinson raised the issue in bilateral meetings with regional leaders at the Doha Forum in May, including the Foreign Ministers of Qatar and Oman.

The wave of protests that swept Iran in the latter half of 2022 revealed the high level of public discontent with the repressive rule of the government of the Islamic Republic, and (along with many other factors) made it harder to foresee an imminent resolution of the diplomatic impasse around the JCPOA. Iran's support for Russia over Ukraine has also further complicated the diplomatic environment.

In early November, The Elders publicly condemned the state violence perpetrated against the protestors, and called for the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) of an international investigative mechanism to examine grave abuses committed during the suppression of current and past mass protests in Iran. The HRC voted later that month to set up a fact-finding mission to investigate violations related to the protests.

The Elders also remained deeply concerned throughout 2022 at the worsening human rights, security and humanitarian situation in **Myanmar**, more than a year after the military coup of February 2021.

Ban Ki-moon undertook private diplomatic engagements with leaders in Cambodia and Indonesia, as well as the UN Special Envoy, with a focus on urging ASEAN to play a stronger leadership role in resolving the conflict, working in partnership with the UN. The Elders' Secretariat staff maintained contact with partner organisations to identify possible future entry points for dialogue and advocacy.



The Elders' statement on solidarity with protesters in Iran, November 2022



Nguenyiel Refugee Camp, Ethiopia, 2019.



REFUGEES AND MIGRATION

Activities undertaken in 2022 focused on highlighting the importance of including refugees' own voices and perspectives in global discussions. To this end, as part of The Elders' digital messaging on World Refugee Day in June, the testimony of a Rohingya refugee in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh was featured and Anowar, a Rohingya refugee, shared the following message:

"On World Refugee Day, I want to say that it is important to include refugee communities in discussions about refugee issues: it is the sufferer who understands the suffering well."

Three Elders contributed messages to World Refugee Day, addressing distinct facets of the

global debate. Ban Ki-moon criticised Western governments who welcomed Ukrainian refugees while outsourcing their international asylum obligations as "setting a shameful precedent", while Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein stressed the importance of giving refugees the freedom to work, access education and move freely to further their independence.

Hina Jilani argued that governments should prioritise the finance and the mechanisms needed to protect every person who has been forcibly displaced, including the resettlement of Afghans seeking protection from the Taliban.

As part of their strategy review, The Elders agreed in 2022 that after six years of prioritisation, their work on refugees and migration would not continue into the next strategy period as a distinct initiative.

The rights of refugees and migrants, and the responsibility of governments to live up to their obligations under the UN Refugee Convention and international human rights law, will continue to be an issue of concern for The Elders and will be addressed selectively under the cross-cutting commitment of human rights as part of our conflict work.

"Solidarity must never be selective; only by working together will we ensure that all fundamental human rights will be truly realised for everyone, everywhere."

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, July 2022.



Ban Ki-moon's message on World Refugee Day, June 2022



Gro Harlem Brundtland speaks at the United Nations General Assembly high-level meeting on Universal Health Coverage, New York, 2019. Photo: UN/Kim Haughton



Graża Machel, Mary Robinson and President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa speak at a press briefing during The Elders' visit to South Africa, May 2022.



UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

The continued threat to global health, stability and development posed by COVID-19 in 2022, together with the damaging impact of unequal distribution of vaccines and diagnostics, meant that The Elders' focus on health remained squarely on the threats faced by pandemics.

Following their May board meeting in Cape Town, The Elders agreed to pivot from their work in support of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) since 2016 to a new initiative focused specifically on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, to start in 2023 as part of the new strategy.

Accordingly, UHC-related activities in the year were centred on consolidating existing achievements, deepening links with pandemic-focused specialists and civil society, and codifying Elders' positions and reflections on the best way to implement UHC for use by the wider global health community.

In January, Ban Ki-moon and Gro Brundtland both addressed virtual sessions of the Prince Mahidol Award Conference, a Thailand-based global health summit that brings together

leading experts and policymakers committed to the goal of UHC. Gro Brundtland took part in a seminar on "Understanding the Megatrends of the 21st Century" and urged global leaders to work together to deliver vaccine equity and prepare for future pandemics, drawing on her work as Co-Chair of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) in 2019-20.

Ban Ki-moon also focused his remarks on the need for multilateral cooperation to overcome the challenge of COVID-19 and the threat of future pandemics, calling on leaders to heed the recommendations of the GPMB and the Independent Panel on Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR), which had been co-chaired by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf together with former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark.

On a national level, The Elders used their visit to South Africa in May to reaffirm their support for President Ramaphosa's National Health Insurance (NHI) reforms, which aim to bring the principles and structures of UHC to South Africa's deeply unequal health system.

Mary Robinson, Gro Brundtland and Graça Machel discussed the progress of the NHI Bill with President Ramaphosa in Pretoria, and argued that the experience of COVID-19 makes it even more important to place equity and solidarity at the heart of the national health system. Their discussions also focused on the importance of supporting South Africa's role in generic vaccine production to counter the effects of vaccine inequity.

The year's activities on UHC culminated in December with the publication of the Charter for Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Universal Health Coverage, prepared in collaboration with the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization under the leadership of Ernesto Zedillo.

This Charter sets out five tenets of UHC – universality, insurance, public financing, efficient delivery and progressive realisation – and makes clear recommendations to heads of state and government as to how best to implement the policy within the broader framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It will form part of Elders' future advocacy strategy on pandemic

prevention, preparedness and response, and is a resource that can be widely shared with partners across the global health community.



Global health NGO Last Mile Health welcomes The Elders' new UHC Charter, December 2022



Mary Robinson speaks on a panel with Vino Lucero, Shanel Lal, and David Steven at the World Justice Forum, June 2022.



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The Elders' work on Access to Justice in 2022 was focused on promoting intergenerational dialogue as a way to stimulate policy debate and innovation, and to embolden and empower grassroots activists amid growing concern at the shrinking space for civil society globally.

In January, The Elders published a new position paper on Access to Justice for Women and the Rule of Law. This was a response to the deeply unjust, racialised and gendered dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic for women and girls, compounded in many instances by inaccessible justice and legal protection.

Building on The Elders' work on the Generation Equality Forum in 2021, the position paper argued that a people-centred justice system—bridging informal and formal justice avenues—concerned

with pro-actively preventing injustice, not just addressing its consequences, can reap large societal benefits. These include improved health and well-being and cultivating more peaceful societies.

In March, Hina Jilani spoke at an Elders "State of Hope" virtual gathering on the topic of improving access to justice for women and girls, co-organised with the group Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. She told an audience of senior policymakers that the concept of social justice was just as important as legal justice, and that advocates had to engage with grassroots communities to make lasting and meaningful progress towards empowerment and emancipation that align with the justice needs on the ground.



Hina Jilani speaks at an event on human rights alongside Ernesto Zedillo and Ricardo Lagos, London. Photo: British Council.



Winners of the World Justice Challenge celebrate at the World Justice Forum after being selected by a jury including Hina Jilani. June 2022

Immediately after the Cape Town Board meeting, Mary Robinson travelled to The Hague to attend the World Justice Forum. In a keynote speech, she reiterated the main messages of The Elders'

position paper and urged greater momentum to meet Sustainable Development Goal 16 to ensure access to justice for all by 2030.'

BusinessDay

“We must bring an end to state violence and collective punishment in all its forms, whether perpetrated by the Israeli state against Palestinians, by China against the Uyghur people, or by Iran against its citizens.”

Hina Jilani, December 2022.

At her meetings in The Hague, Mary Robinson also held conversations with grassroots activists from the Justice Action Coalition and Young Justice Leaders, including a private mentoring session with the youth leaders championing young people’s justice needs. She encouraged them to stay resilient in the face of challenges and offered the continuing solidarity of The Elders for the causes of gender equality and human rights. Hina Jilani also co-chaired the virtual panel of judges for the World Justice Challenge during the Closing Plenary of the World Justice Forum.

In November, Ricardo Lagos and Hina Jilani issued statements on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, urging male leaders to take a more proactive role in combating this scourge on society, and affirming support for the courageous women standing up

globally for their rights, from Iran and Afghanistan to Poland and the United States.

Hina Jilani reiterated these points in an op-ed published on Human Rights Day, 10 December, in the South African publication Business Day, reflecting on the legacy of Nelson Mandela’s own legal activism and how this informed his life-long commitment to human rights.

As part of their new strategy for 2023-2027, the Elders agreed not to pursue the Access to Justice initiative. The Elders will continue to pursue justice through their cross-cutting commitment to human rights. The rest of the year’s activities were accordingly focused on passing the baton to partner organisations who will continue to advocate for greater access to justice at local, regional, national and global levels.



Graça Machel speaks to Christiane Amanpour on CNN about the life and legacy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, January 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

With more opportunities to travel in 2022 as the COVID-19 situation eased, Elders did fewer virtual engagements (although still more than before the pandemic), and more in-person media engagement during visits.

The year began on a bittersweet note with the funeral of Archbishop Desmond Tutu in Cape Town on 1 January. Mary Robinson and Graça Machel represented The Elders at this event and both undertook media interviews to reflect on Arch’s enduring legacy and his considerable

contributions to the work of The Elders since the group’s founding in 2007.

Mary Robinson spoke to the BBC World Service and Sky News to celebrate his life, while Graça Machel gave a touching interview to CNN’s Christiane Amanpour. Mary Robinson also wrote an op-ed in the South African publication Business Day to coincide with Arch’s funeral that celebrated his global legacy of hope for peace, justice and human rights.





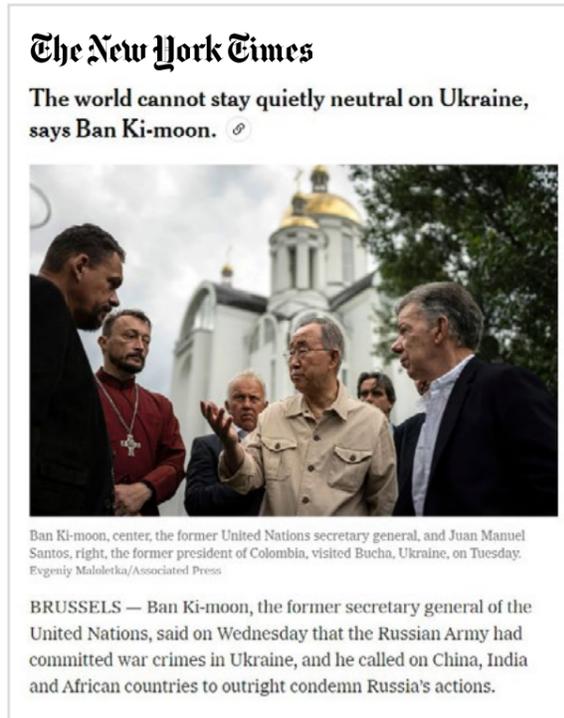
Ban Ki-moon and Juan Manuel Santos at a press conference with Andriy Yermak, Chief of Staff to the President of Ukraine, August 2022.

This legacy of hope was celebrated further at a commemorative event held with The Tutu Foundation in Cape Town in May during the Elders' board meeting in South Africa. Mary Robinson's address to this gathering was filmed and publicly released on 18 July, Mandela Day, as part of The Elders' "State of Hope" series of online talks and conversations.

Her speech celebrated the 15th anniversary of The Elders' founding by Nelson Mandela, the incalculable contributions made by Archbishop Tutu as the group's first Chair, and the abiding and transformative power of hope in a world beset by crises and existential threats.

Throughout 2022, The Elders were united and insistent in their condemnation of Russia's war on Ukraine, with public statements and social media messages translated into both Ukrainian and Russian to reach the widest possible audience.

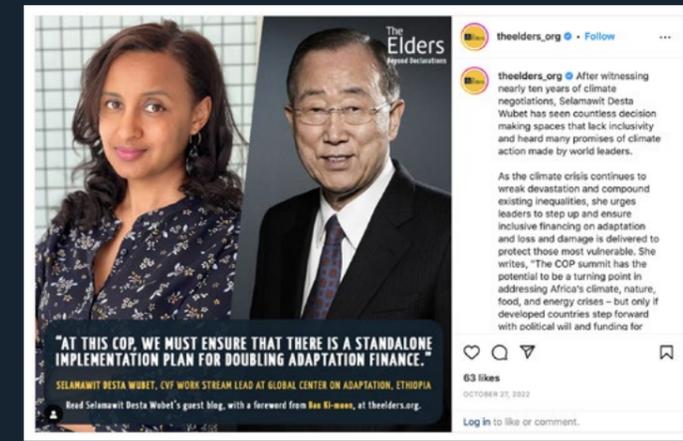
The visit to Kyiv by Ban Ki-moon and Juan Manuel Santos in August (see Conflict section) sparked considerable media interest, including a text and video interview with Associated Press in Bucha, the site of Russian atrocities and human rights abuses against civilians; a press conference with the head of the Office of the President (primarily for Ukrainian journalists); and a post-trip interview by Ban Ki-moon with the New York Times.



Ban Ki-moon, center, the former United Nations secretary general, and Juan Manuel Santos, right, the former president of Colombia, visited Bucha, Ukraine, on Tuesday. Evgeniy Maloletka/Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Ban Ki-moon, the former secretary general of the United Nations, said on Wednesday that the Russian Army had committed war crimes in Ukraine, and he called on China, India and African countries to outright condemn Russia's actions.

The Elders' meetings, including with President Zelensky, also attracted significant coverage on social media, with official Ukrainian government sources tweeting about the visit and significant pick-up from national and international media.



A selection of Instagram posts promoting the 2022 climate guest blog series, featuring women climate leaders from Africa.



Juan Manuel Santos also conducted interviews with Colombian media following the visit which were widely shared among Spanish-language accounts.

International media engagement was also a central part of The Elders' strategic approach to the climate crisis in 2022, especially ahead of and during the COP27 summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November.

Mary Robinson's climate-focused visit to Uganda in late August (see Climate Change section) was amplified via media interviews and online intergenerational dialogues recorded for TED Women. At COP27, Mary Robinson spoke to numerous global media outlets including Sky News,

the Associated Press and Reuters to push for an ambitious and just outcome to the negotiations.

All these engagements were complemented and augmented by digital outreach and promotion via The Elders' website and social media channels. Compared to 2021, the number of visitors to the website rose by just under 100% in 2022, from 532,191 total page views to 1,060,101 total page views. The number of followers on Twitter (the principal social media channel for policymakers and opinion-formers) rose by 2%, from 166,324 at the start of 2022 to 169,642 by the end of the year, amid a time of significant turbulence and disruption for the platform.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

FOR THE YEAR TO
31 DECEMBER 2022

Income

The Elders' income for the year was £3.3 million (2021: £3.0 million). This includes £0.3 million (2021: £0.3 million) of restricted funding used for our programmatic work. All restricted income was fully expended during the year.

Expenditure

The Elders' expenditure for the year was £3.1 million (2021: £2.8 million). This relates primarily to the delivery of a global programme of activities agreed by the Elders, supported by a Secretariat based in London. The Secretariat provides the Elders with policy research, conducts advocacy and communications work, and is responsible for logistics and other support activities.

Reserves

The approach of The Elders is to maintain sufficient available reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue for a period of time, should a shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure occur, taking account of potential risks that may arise. The policy is to maintain available reserves sufficient to meet at least 12 months' normal operating expenditure.

Reserves at the end of 2022, all unrestricted, were £3.6 million (2021: £3.4 million), of which £0.3 million were represented by fixed assets, leaving available reserves of £3.3 million which represents over 11 ½ months' pre-pandemic operating expenditure at £3.4 million. This is slightly less than the amount indicated by the reserves policy described above.

Carbon-offsetting

The Elders have partnered with UK-based charity Climate Stewards to offset the carbon emissions generated by business flights. In 2022, The Elders donated £6,360 to Climate Stewards, based on total flight emissions of 318 tonnes of CO₂. Climate Stewards will use these funds to support projects that aim to remove, avoid and reduce carbon emissions and also bring multiple benefits to people and places being hit first and worst by climate change. Partner projects, based in Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Nepal and Peru, work with schools, churches and local NGOs to manage small-scale schemes that improve biodiversity, soil conservation, clean water and improved health.

THE ELDERS FOUNDATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022	2022 £000	2021 £000
INCOME FROM:		
Donations and grants		
- General	2,926	2,712
- Project funding	340	300
Interest income	36	6
Other	-	7
TOTAL INCOME	3,302	3,025
EXPENDITURE ON:		
Raising funds	324	309
Charitable activities		
Ethical Leadership	586	476
Climate Change	749	577
Conflict Countries and Regions	535	412
Refugees and Migration	275	204
Universal Health Coverage	255	209
Access to Justice	366	604
Total charitable activities expenditure	2,766	2,482
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,090	2,791
Net income and net movement in funds	212	234
Fund balances brought forward	3,396	3,162
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	3,608	3,396

THE ELDERS FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022 £000	2021 £000
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	336	299
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	432	422
Short term deposit	1,400	1,900
Cash at bank and in hand	2,498	1,528
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	4,330	3,850
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,058)	(623)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	3,272	3,227
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,608	3,525
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	-	(67)
Provision for liabilities	-	(63)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	3,608	3,396
The funds of the charity		
Represented by Tangible fixed assets	336	299
Represented by General funds	3,272	3,097
Total unrestricted funds	3,608	3,396
TOTAL FUNDS (All funds unrestricted)	3,608	3,396

The Elders are grateful to the members of the Advisory Council, whose support and advice enables them to carry out their work.

Richard Branson
Virgin Unite

Peter Gabriel
The Peter Gabriel Trust

Jeremy Coller
Jeremy Coller Foundation

Don Gips
Skoll Foundation

Srik Gopal
Humanity United

Lisa Harris

Judith Lingeman
Dutch Postcode Lottery

Randy Newcomb
Omidyar Group

Jean Oelwang
Virgin Unite

Mabel van Oranje
Girls Not Brides

Sally Osberg

Muneer Satter

Shannon Sedgwick Davis
Bridgeway Foundation

Jeff Skoll
Skoll Foundation

Lulit Solomon
Jeremy Coller Foundation



World's third-largest private charity donor



SATTER FOUNDATION

The Elders are also grateful to all those who provided generous support in 2022, including:

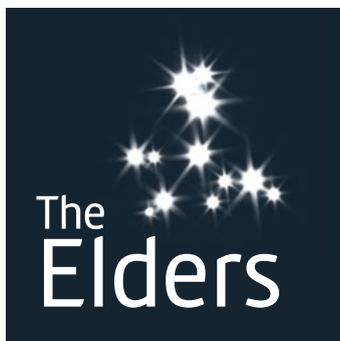
- Chandra Jessee, InMaat Foundation
- Templeton World Charity Foundation
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

**“ The Elders can speak freely and boldly,
working both publicly and behind the scenes.**

**They will reach out to those who most need
their help.**

**They will support courage where there is fear,
foster agreement where there is conflict and
inspire hope where there is despair.**

Nelson Mandela, Founder of The Elders, 2007



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