



The Elders deplore US Embassy move to Jerusalem as threat to peace

LONDON, 14 May 2018

The Elders today strongly criticised the US decision to move its Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem as a serious blow to peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and urged other countries not to follow suit.

They reaffirmed their long-held position that the city of Jerusalem must be shared between Israelis and Palestinians as part of a two-state solution based on the internationally-recognised 1967 border, which respects the human and political rights of all its residents.

Kofi Annan, Chair of The Elders and former UN Secretary-General, said:

"Repeated UN resolutions make clear that the status of Jerusalem can only be changed by agreement between the parties, and then endorsed by the United Nations. Today's ceremonial opening of the new US Embassy in Jerusalem is regrettable and makes it harder to maintain the prospect of a viable two-state solution."

The Elders urged the governments of those countries reportedly contemplating following the US not to do so. Such moves would damage further dwindling prospects for realisation of the two-state solution. By contrast, they noted that though Russia has relocated its Embassy to West Jerusalem, this does not imply Israeli jurisdiction over the whole city and also envisages establishing an Embassy to a future Palestinian state in East Jerusalem.

Lakhdar Brahimi, Elder, former Algerian Foreign Minister and UN diplomat, commented:

"Unilateral action on the part of the Trump Administration only makes the prospect of a negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict more distant. Peace will only come when all parties are treated with respect, their rights and grievances acknowledged, and negotiations are undertaken in good faith."

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Media enquiries

William French, Head of Communications, The Elders

T: +44 7795 693903

media@theElders.org

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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.

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