

## India and Pakistan must show restraint to defuse military tensions: The Elders

**LONDON, 28 February 2019**

The Elders today called on the leaders of India and Pakistan to take urgent steps to defuse military and political tensions that have developed over the past few days and to refrain from further bellicose rhetoric and pursue a path of meaningful dialogue.

They warned that any escalation of military exchanges between the two nuclear-armed states could pose a risk to peace and security throughout South Asia and the wider world.

[Mary Robinson](#), Chair of The Elders and former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, said:

*“I am deeply alarmed by the escalating tensions between India and Pakistan. The leaders of these two nuclear-armed states have a responsibility to show restraint, in the interests of their peoples and the wider world. I urge Prime Ministers Modi and Khan to talk directly to resolve this crisis, and to engage in broader multilateral efforts to pursue nuclear disarmament.”*

The Elders encouraged political and military leaders in India and Pakistan to develop more robust and coordinated channels of communication to avoid confusion, misunderstandings and miscalculations at times of crisis. They further called on the international community to make appropriate efforts to facilitate this dialogue and focus its support on de-escalating the situation.

Coming as nuclear talks between US President Donald Trump and Chairman Kim Jong-un of North Korea in Hanoi ended inconclusively, The Elders reaffirmed their belief that only credible multilateral negotiations can effectively deliver global nuclear disarmament.

They also urged both sides in India and Pakistan to refrain from provocative actions and statements driven by domestic political considerations, which risk emboldening extremist groups within Kashmir and beyond.

[Hina Jilani](#), Elder and Pakistani human rights advocate, said:

*“Heightened tensions and resort to military force are leading India and Pakistan towards a course that threatens regional peace. It is vital that authorities in both countries demonstrate restraint and take immediate action to de-escalate tensions. There are no issues that cannot be*

*resolved through dialogue. The world must stand in solidarity with the thousands of voices in India and Pakistan and of the Kashmiri people who 'say no to war', and pressure leaders to deliver peace, security and justice for all."*

ENDS

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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 [Ban Ki-moon](#) (Deputy Chair), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), [Zeid Raad Al Hussein](#), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#) (Deputy Chair), [Juan Manuel Santos](#), [Mary Robinson](#) (Chair) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Martti Ahtisaari](#), [Ela Bhatt](#), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) are Elders Emeritus.

[Kofi Annan](#) (1938-2018) was a founding member of The Elders and served as Chair from 2013 to 2018.

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