



# The Elders



## LONG-VIEW LEADERSHIP FOR LONG-TERM THREATS

**ANNUAL REVIEW 2024**

# 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.



JUAN MANUEL SANTOS  
CHAIR



BAN KI-MOON  
DEPUTY CHAIR



GRAÇA MACHEL  
DEPUTY CHAIR



GRO HARLEM  
BRUNDTLAND



HELEN CLARK



ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA



ZEID RA'AD AL HUSSEIN



HINA JILANI



ELLEN JOHNSON  
SIRLEAF



DENIS MUKWEGE



MARY ROBINSON



ERNESTO ZEDILLO

**Lakhdar Brahimi, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Ricardo Lagos** and **Muhammad Yunus** 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. **Martti Ahtisaari** (1937-2023) was a member of The Elders from 2009. **Jimmy Carter** (1924-2024) was also a founding member of The Elders.

**Cover image:**  
Juan Manuel Santos, Mary Robinson and Paulo Galvão discuss long-view leadership and climate justice at a panel event in São Paulo, May 2024.

**Photo:** The Elders / Joel Rocha

**Photos of Elders:**  
Jeff Moore and Tihabi Monnakgotla



# ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

- 4 Message from the Chair
- 6 Foreword by the Chief Executive
- 8 2024 - A year in review
- 10 Jimmy Carter (1924-2024)
- 11 The Elders' strategy and vision
- 14 Climate and nature crisis
- 18 Pandemics
- 20 Nuclear weapons
- 22 Conflict
- 26 Cross-cutting commitments
- 28 Long-view leadership
- 30 Communications summary
- 32 Media summary
- 34 Governance and management
- 35 Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
- 36 Financial and risk review
- 38 Legal and administrative information
- 40 Independent auditor's report
- 51 Advisory Council information

The Elders, who are the trustees for the purposes of charity law and directors for the purposes of company law, present their Annual Review and statutory report together with the financial statements of The Elders Foundation for the year ended 31 December 2024.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“ True leadership means more than just giving orders. It also means listening to others, having the humility to admit you may not have all the answers, and being ready to talk to your opponents in a spirit of dignity and respect.”

**Juan Manuel Santos**

Juan Manuel Santos at The Elders board meeting in London, October 2024.  
Photo: Jeff Moore

It is an honour to introduce the 2024 Annual Review of The Elders for the first time as Chair.

When I took over from Mary Robinson in November, I said I believed The Elders can play a critical role in today's troubled world, building on the bold and inspirational leadership shown by my predecessors.

Writing now at the beginning of 2025, this belief has only been strengthened, as has the urgent need for clear-headed, compassionate responses to the existential threats facing humanity.

The climate and nature crisis, nuclear weapons, unregulated AI and pandemics all have the potential to cause catastrophic, irreparable damage to our planet if leaders do not work together in the long-term interest of all their peoples.

This is why, in 2024, the Elders championed “long-view leadership” as a model that those in power should emulate. I am proud that thousands of people all around the world signed our open letter in February outlining the principles of long-view leadership and its relevance to contemporary challenges, from all walks of life: politics, science, academia, technology and civil society.

True leadership means more than just giving orders. As I know from my own experience of working to end a war that lasted more than half a century in Colombia, it also means listening to others, having the humility to admit you may not have all the answers, and being ready to talk to your opponents in a spirit of dignity and respect. This is what the world needs now.

This review shows how the Elders advocated publicly and privately for long-view leadership at high-profile events throughout the past year. These included the Munich Security Conference, the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly, private meetings with members of the UN Security Council, and the COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, as well as in bilateral meetings with world leaders such as President Macron of France, Prime Minister Mottley of Barbados, President Lula of Brazil and President Pezeshkian of Iran.

Long-view leadership means accepting the international rule of law. Nowhere has this been more critical in the past year than in Gaza, where Palestinian civilians continued to suffer appalling casualties from Israel's military assault. The Elders spoke out consistently in 2024 for a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict, with all parties respecting their obligations under international law.



Helen Clark, Juan Manuel Santos, Mary Robinson and Ernesto Zedillo meet with UN Secretary-General António Guterres during a trip to New York for UNGA High-Level Week, September 2024.  
Photo: The Elders

Unless it is applied universally, consistently and without favour, international law will lose its force and autocrats and dictators everywhere will be further emboldened.

The international community cannot keep repeating the failed approaches of the past, whether on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or other protracted conflicts including Sudan, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A fresh approach is needed to manage and reform the entire international peace and security architecture. 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and must be a moment for leaders to recommit to the values of the UN Charter, and to take proactive steps to make its institutions and agencies more effective, transparent, representative and fit for the 21st century.

We need greater ambition and leadership to tackle the existential threats confronting us. Mary Robinson made this case powerfully at COP29 and all Elders will continue to push for urgent action on the climate and nature crisis in 2025 ahead of COP30 in Belém in the Brazilian Amazon.

In facing the future, we also have a responsibility to learn from the past and follow the example of the great and the wise who have gone before us. For The Elders, 2024 ended on a sombre note as we marked the passing of Jimmy Carter at the age of 100.

Jimmy Carter was a founding member of The Elders and worked tirelessly in the group's early years to advance the causes of peace and justice, with a particular focus on Israel and Palestine – just as he had done as President of the United States.

In January 2025 I had the honour of attending his state funeral in Washington D.C., together with Mary Robinson and many members of our Advisory Council who worked closely with him.

While we mourned his death, we also celebrated his rich and long life, and affirmed our determination as Elders to continue to uphold his values and beliefs into the future.

The world needs more leaders like him. In 2025, the Elders will strive to follow his example and keep fighting for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet for all.

**Juan Manuel Santos, Chair**  
January 2025



## FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

“The Elders’ moral voice is needed – and appreciated – more than ever

**Alistair Fernie**



2024 was a difficult year for every issue Elders work on. At times it has felt like Elders have been trying to slow down deterioration, rather than promote progress. But their moral voice is needed – and appreciated – more than ever, on both the many conflicts raging across the world, and the existential threats in our 2023-27 strategy.

The conflict in Gaza continued to dominate. Elders spoke out on the tens of thousands of civilians killed, the growing polarisation in the region and beyond, and the inadequate political will to address the underlying causes. They reminded us that Palestinian and Israeli lives are of equal value, that the rule of law must be respected, and that this conflict has no military solution. Elders’ advocacy on Israel/Palestine continued to reach wide audiences and was welcomed by a range of stakeholders, including human rights defenders in both Israel and Palestine.

Meanwhile conflicts worsened in Ukraine, Myanmar, Sudan, DRC and elsewhere. Three

Elders addressed the UN Security Council – Ban Ki-moon on children in armed conflict, Helen Clark on the Middle East, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on leadership for peace. The Elders’ strategy promotes multilateral cooperation and the rule of law, which are both under attack.

Elders increased their communications on existential threats, with a sustained public initiative on the need for long-view leadership on the climate and nature crisis, nuclear weapons, pandemics, and artificial intelligence. They engaged on increasing climate finance at COP29 in Baku and negotiations on a pandemics treaty in Geneva, though both were ultimately disappointing. Elders’ positions on these issues were clarified through well-received policy papers on the climate and nature crisis, and pandemics.

The Summit of the Future saw our biggest ever Elders’ visit, with nine Elders contributing to the defence of a multilateral spirit that feels very fragile. It was not a breakthrough, but there was progress. And there was hope.



Elders together at their bi-annual board meeting in São Paulo, May 2024.  
**Photo:** Joel Rocha

A combination of such international events and country visits enabled Elders to meet a wide range of Heads of State/Government, Foreign Ministers and heads of international organisations. These private meetings remain central to the Elders’ mission. Less conventionally, Mary Robinson attended a green fashion event in Los Angeles alongside Zendaya and other celebrities, reaching new audiences.

The Elders’ contribution to peace, human rights and sustainable development was recognised in September when they were awarded the inaugural Miwon Peace Prize. Elders do not seek such recognition, but it is nice to receive it.

The number of active Elders remained at twelve, with Denis Mukwege (the Nobel Peace Prize winning surgeon from DRC) joining soon after Ricardo Lagos retired. All twelve attended at least one of two board meetings in São Paulo and London. The transition of chair from Mary Robinson to Juan Manuel Santos in November was seamless, and we are glad Mary Robinson continues as an active Elder.

We ended 2024 with a surplus on a bigger budget than 2023, with expenditure up 26%. This has helped support some big Elders’ visits, extend our public advocacy on existential threats, and expand Secretariat expertise slightly (including our first staff member outside the UK). We are very grateful to all our donors, longer-term and more recent, for their contributions.

As Juan Manuel Santos has written, the loss of Jimmy Carter brought 2024 to a sad close. But it was inspiring to pay tribute at his extraordinary funeral service in January. I end with his uplifting words (from his Nobel Lecture in 2002):

*“The bond of our common humanity is stronger than the divisiveness of our fears and prejudices... We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace. We can make these changes – and we must.”*

**Alistair Fernie**, Chief Executive  
January 2025



# 2024

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

### 2024 IN NUMBERS

**10**  
Countries  
Visited

**11**  
Heads of State/  
Government Met



January

#### SUPPORTING INDIA'S WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Mary Robinson visited the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India, founded by the late Elder Emeritus Ela Bhatt. During her visit, she met with some of SEWA's 2.9 million women members, who shared powerful stories of how the climate crisis is affecting their lives and how they work together to strengthen their communities' resilience.



February

#### AN OPEN LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS

The Elders and the Future of Life Institute released an open letter calling for long-view leadership on existential threats. Nearly 4,000 global leaders, experts, and public figures signed the letter urging decision-makers to collaborate on bold, practical solutions to tackle the escalating threats and ongoing challenges facing humanity.



March

#### A NEW ELDER

The Elders were pleased to welcome Congolese physician, human rights advocate and Nobel Peace Laureate Denis Mukwege as the newest member of their group.



April

#### LONG-VIEW LEADERSHIP

Mary Robinson and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein championed long-view leadership at the Skoll World Forum in Oxford, emphasising the importance of decisions grounded in scientific evidence and for leaders to have the humility to listen to those affected.



May

#### MOBILISING CLIMATE ACTION

In São Paulo, Brazil, the Elders and distinguished guests met to discuss how Brazil can mobilise the world to deliver bold, just and equitable solutions to the climate and nature crisis.



June

#### STRENGTHENING MULTILATERALISM

Ban Ki-moon addressed the UN Security Council on the issue of children and armed conflict, and how the institutions of multilateralism can better protect global peace and security.



July

#### CHAMPIONING CLIMATE JUSTICE

The Elders advocated for the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion on Climate Change, amplifying the civil society campaign on social media and urging states to actively engage with the process.



August

#### PARTNERSHIPS IN BRASILIA

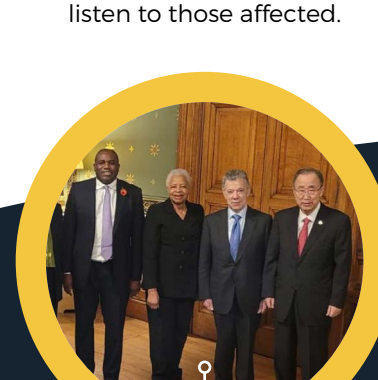
During her visit to Brasília for the G20 Interfaith Forum, Mary Robinson met with President Lula. They discussed the opportunities offered by Brazil's G20 and COP30 presidencies to strengthen global cooperation on urgent challenges facing the world.



September

#### UNITING GENERATIONS

The Elders, together with expert guests and young activists, hosted an intergenerational dialogue in New York to address existential threats to humanity. In collaboration, they developed an Intergenerational Call to Action ahead of the UN Summit of the Future.



October

#### ENGAGING WITH NEW UK GOVERNMENT

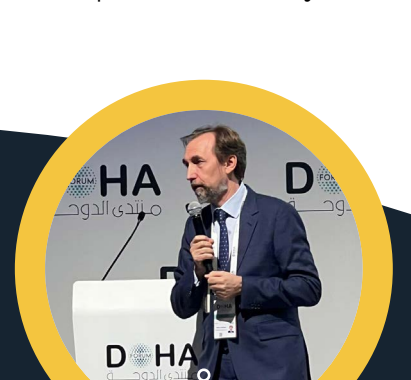
The Elders met UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy in London to discuss conflicts in the Middle East, de-escalating tensions with Iran, arms sales to Israel as well as climate finance.



November

#### A NEW CHAIR

Juan Manuel Santos was appointed as The Elders' fourth Chair since the group's founding by Nelson Mandela in 2007, following Mary Robinson, who remains an active member.



December

#### MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein attended the Doha Forum in Qatar for discussions on Middle East conflicts and global multilateral reform.





Jimmy Carter during an Elders event in Myanmar, 2013.  
Photo: The Elders / Kaung Htet

“  
The bond of our  
common humanity  
is stronger than the  
divisiveness of our  
fears and prejudices

Jimmy Carter

”

## JIMMY CARTER (1924-2024)

The Elders were deeply saddened in December 2024 at the passing of their dear friend and colleague, Jimmy Carter, who was a hugely admired and respected member of the group from its founding in 2007 until he chose to step down as an active member in 2016.

As a former President of the United States who went on to build a global reputation for his work with The Carter Center in monitoring elections and championing public health issues, he brought immense experience and expertise to the Elders' work, combined with passionate advocacy for social justice and human rights. In 2002 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Both as President and in his later work, Jimmy Carter was a tireless supporter of peace in the Middle East. He played a major role in Elders' visits

to the region. He commanded great respect for his forthright honesty and ability to deal on equal terms with all those he met, from presidents to the humblest grassroots activists. His deep Christian faith and his 77-year-long marriage to his beloved wife Rosalynn (1926-2023) were among the driving forces in his long and active life.

**Juan Manuel Santos**, Chair of The Elders, said:

*“We are all devastated at the loss of our dear friend Jimmy Carter. Jimmy brought the gravitas of the Presidential office as well as the passion of an activist to The Elders. Even into his 90s, and after his cancer was diagnosed, he inspired us all with his boundless energy and enthusiasm for working to make the world a better place. While we mourn his death today, we also affirm our determination as Elders to continue to uphold his values and beliefs into the future. The world needs more leaders like him.”*

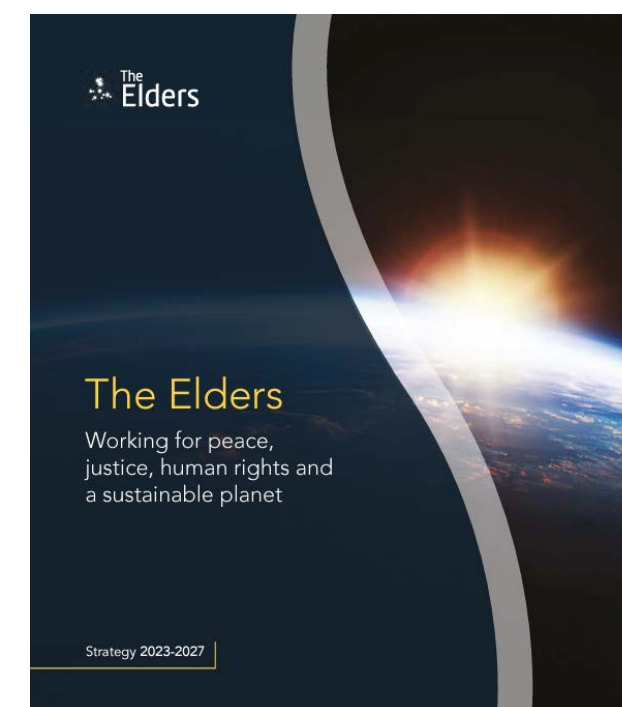


Elders together at their bi-annual board meeting in London, October 2024.  
Photo: Jeff Moore

## THE ELDERS' STRATEGY AND VISION

The Elders are a group of global independent leaders working together for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet. Founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007, the group has been chaired since November 2024 by Juan Manuel Santos, former President of Colombia and Nobel Peace Laureate.

When Nelson Mandela launched the group, he expressed his hope that *“using their collective experience, their moral courage and their ability to rise above the parochial concerns of nation, race and creed, the Elders can help make our planet a more peaceful, healthy and equitable place to live”*.



The Elders' **vision** is of a world where people live in peace, conscious of their common humanity and their shared responsibilities for each other, the planet and future generations; where there is universal respect for human rights; where poverty has been eliminated and people are free from fear and oppression, and able to fulfil their true potential.





Juan Manuel Santos, Mary Robinson, Ernesto Zedillo and Helen Clark meet with UN Secretary-General António Guterres during a trip to New York for UNGA High-Level Week, September 2024.  
**Photo:** The Elders

Their **mission** is to use their experience and influence to work for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet. They will engage with global leaders and civil society through private diplomacy and public advocacy, to address existential threats, promote global solutions, and encourage ethical leadership that supports the dignity of all human beings.

Their **strategic goals** are to seek urgent action on existential threats; promote global solutions to global challenges; encourage ethical leadership and inclusive government; and to support the dignity and rights of all human beings.

Elders work in a variety of ways, drawing on their rich personal and political experience and understanding of international politics, diplomacy, negotiations and mobilisation.

#### Private diplomacy

The Elders believe that personal contact and relationships at the highest level are critical drivers of change. Through private dialogue with world leaders and decision-makers, they can have sensitive discussions, help broker solutions, and stimulate negotiations. They are well placed to offer private advice and use their collective

experience, independence and influence to help resolve tensions.

#### Public advocacy

The Elders seek to influence world leaders and policymakers through communications and engagement. Elders engage with mainstream, specialist and digital media around the world to amplify marginalised voices, make recommendations, and inspire ethical decision-making. Their public narrative balances an emphasis on existential threats with the spirit of hope at the heart of Mandela's mandate.

#### Partnerships

The Elders work in partnership with civil society organisations, think tanks, academics, international organisations, media and other stakeholders to inform their strategy and activities. These partnerships help Elders extend their influence, reach and visibility with decision-makers, and amplify the influence of other organisations that share some of their objectives. Working more closely with selected partners, and developing more partnerships with Global South organisations, are important parts of the Elders' work in this strategic period.



Hina Jilani speaks at the Declaration on Future Generations panel during the opening of Summit of the Future Action Day Two in New York, alongside Thomas Hale, Professor of Public Policy at Oxford University, September 2024.  
**Photo:** UN / Loey Felipe

In the five-year period from 2023-27, the Elders are focusing on three programmes that address existential threats to humanity requiring a collective response:

- the climate crisis
- pandemics
- nuclear weapons

They are also continuing their longstanding work on **conflict**, which is both a threat in itself, and a risk factor for other threats.

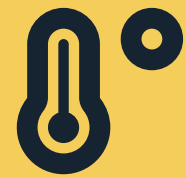


The overall programmatic goals for the Elders' initiatives in the 2023-27 strategy are:

- the planetary climate emergency is contained and the most vulnerable protected through revitalised global cooperation;
- the world is prepared for the next pandemic, through a transformed multilateral system that is sustainably financed, inclusive, transparent, and equitably governed;
- current and future generations are free from the threat of nuclear destruction;
- global peace and security are improved through enhanced respect for international law, and more inclusive national and international dialogue.

In addition, four **cross-cutting commitments** are intrinsic to all aspects of The Elders' work and are incorporated across the four programmes: **multilateralism, human rights, gender equality and women in leadership, and intergenerational dialogue.**





## CLIMATE AND NATURE CRISIS

### THE ELDERS' IMPACT



#### THE IMPACT WE SEEK:

The planetary emergency is contained and the most vulnerable protected through revitalised global co-operation.



#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

Big emitters are held to account for policies that align with the 1.5°C limit and the global nature goal.



#### 2024 IMPACT:

The Elders used access to Brazil's leadership to push for ambitious climate action ahead of COP30.



Mary Robinson and President Lula in Brasilia, August 2024.  
Photo: The Elders

The Elders prioritised Brazil as a focus of climate advocacy in 2024 given its Presidency of the G20 and its role as host of COP30 in 2025. Using a combination of private diplomacy and public advocacy, they encouraged President Lula and his administration to put science at the centre of climate policies and to push for ambitious language on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the G20 Leaders' Summit Declaration.

In May, the Elders held their board meeting in São Paulo. The climate and nature crisis was a priority in their discussions with Brazilian ministers including Finance Minister Fernando Haddad. At the time of the meeting, the south of Brazil was experiencing catastrophic flooding, which increased the salience of the climate crisis as a political priority across government.



Gro Harlem Brundtland delivers opening remarks at the event Long-view leadership and climate justice: how Brazil can lead the world, São Paulo, May 2024.  
Photo: The Elders / Joel Rocha

Elders encouraged the Finance Minister to invite a climate scientist to address the G20 Finance Ministerial Meeting in July so ministers appreciated the urgency of the crisis – which he subsequently did (Brazilian scientist and meteorologist Carlos Nobre).

The Elders also convened an intergenerational dialogue on the existential threat posed by the climate crisis in São Paulo, working with Brazilian climate advocacy group LACLIMA and international affairs think tank CEBRI. As part of the preparation for this event, Elders held private consultations with young climate activists to better reflect and support their perspectives in the public event. The public convening featured speeches by Gro Harlem Brundtland and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and panel discussions with Mary Robinson, Juan Manuel Santos, Brazilian Minister for Racial Equality Anielle Franco, young climate and indigenous activist Paulo Galvão, and Alice Amorim from the Institute for Climate and Society. The event attracted local media attention and

Elders referred to it in a subsequent interview with the national broadsheet Folha de S. Paulo.

Following the May board meeting, Mary Robinson received an invitation to address a G20-linked interfaith climate conference in Brasilia in August. Her attendance in the federal capital prompted an invitation to meet President Lula. In this bilateral meeting, Mary Robinson commended President Lula's leadership to date on climate issues and urged him to do more to ensure the G20 leaders' summit in November contained ambitious language on member states' NDCs. She also presented him with a copy of the Elders' newly published policy paper on the climate and nature crisis. Graça Machel and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf repeated this call in an op-ed published in *Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil* on the eve of the G20 summit in November. The eventual declaration did state that G20 members would put forward ambitious, economy-wide emission-reduction targets, covering all greenhouse gases, sectors and categories, and aligned with the 1.5C target.





Mary Robinson and Razan Al Mubarak speak at the Enhancing Inclusive Climate Action panel, during COP29 in Azerbaijan, November 2024.  
**Photo:** UN Climate Change High-Level Champions

### Other climate highlights:

#### ● Mary Robinson sounds the alarm on gender backsliding at COP29:

Mary Robinson attended COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024. In the course of her private and public meetings with heads of delegations and civil society activists, she became increasingly concerned at reports that certain states were deliberating blocking or seeking to reverse progressive language on gender equality, rights and diversity, and preventing women's perspectives from being heard and respected within the negotiations. She used media interviews in Baku to specifically call out the countries who were blocking progress: Saudi Arabia, Russia and the Vatican, and to draw attention to the need for reform of the COP process. Her comments attracted worldwide attention and were seen as a timely defence of women's rights and the necessity for gender-responsive finance. This focus on gender helped contribute to securing agreement in Baku to the renewal of the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (initially agreed upon at COP20 in 2014), adding an additional decade to continue the focus on integrating gender equality into climate action.

#### ● Elders push for greater finance for clean cooking in Africa at Paris summit:

In May, Graça Machel and Mary Robinson attended a summit on clean cooking in Africa organised by the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris. A focal point of their public speeches was the need for greater financial support for the energy transition in African countries, so women do not have to rely on unhealthy, polluting fuels for domestic cooking – estimated by the IEA at \$4 billion per year until 2030. Mary Robinson reiterated this call in a meeting with President Macron and other heads of state and government after the summit. France subsequently raised this issue at the G7 and G20 summits later in the year, and the communiqués from both summits included commitments to support clean cooking in Africa.

LE MONDE  
*diplomatie* BRASIL

“ While science must be at the centre of climate and nature policy, this crisis is above all a moral crisis and an existential threat to humanity, and to treat it as anything less is to ignore our best hope of ending it. ”

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Graça Machel  
 News outlet: Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil  
 Date: 19 November 2024

Graça Machel speaks on the panel Making Clean Cooking an African Policy Priority at the Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa, Paris, May 2024.  
**Photo:** International Energy Agency







## PANDEMICS

### THE ELDERS' IMPACT



#### THE IMPACT WE SEEK:

The world is prepared for the next pandemic, through a transformed multilateral system that is sustainably financed, inclusive, transparent, and equitably governed.



#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

Global leadership on pandemics is aligned with the recommendations of independent panels.



#### 2024 IMPACT:

Elders pressed leaders to prioritise pandemic risks at high-level UN fora and bilateral meetings.



Pandemic Action Network's Eloise Todd moderates a UNGA 2024 discussion featuring Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Helen Clark, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, Juan Manuel Santos and David Miliband.  
**Photo:** Ayano Hisa

The Elders were acutely conscious of the risks of “pandemic fatigue” in 2024, and planned their advocacy activities to move the issue back up world leaders’ agendas.

Gro Harlem Brundtland raised the status of Pandemic Accord negotiations in a bilateral meeting with the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Espen Barth Eide, at the Munich Security Conference in February, encouraging him to treat it as a foreign policy priority and not solely the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. The minister reacted positively, and the Elders’ team has subsequently been in touch with the Norwegian government on their approach to the negotiations. Following the failure of the World Health Assembly to conclude an accord, Gro Harlem Brundtland again raised the alarm via an op-ed published in Project Syndicate in August, calling for heads of state and government to show leadership at the upcoming High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly in September, including the UN Summit of the Future. Elders who were in New York in September used public platforms and private meetings to reinforce the message, especially with ministers from South Africa which holds the G20 Presidency in 2025. While global progress remained insufficient in 2024, the Elders

committed to maintaining their focus on the issue through the publication of a new pandemics policy position paper in January 2025, timed to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Other pandemics highlights

##### ● Supporting Colombia on WTO intellectual property reform:

Following engagement with the Colombian Mission to the World Trade Organization (WTO), Gro Harlem Brundtland’s August 2024 pandemics op-ed included support for Colombia’s proposal at the WTO for a review of the implementation of the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) Agreement. She highlighted that “the TRIPS agreement governs patent protection for vaccines and treatments and thus plays a key role in pandemic-response efforts.” This was followed up by a meeting with the Colombian Ambassador to the WTO with Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein and Mary Robinson in October to discuss the review. The TRIPS implementation review has since been confirmed, with patents on the agenda for 2026. The Colombian government has written to the three Elders to thank them directly for their support.

##### ● Showcasing voices from the frontline:

The Elders used public events in New York in September, and London in October, to give a platform to and highlight the importance of people working on the front lines of public health and pandemic response in developing countries. As part of an intergenerational convening on existential threats held in New York on 20 September, Sierra Leonian women’s health expert Fatou Wurie spoke alongside Juan Manuel Santos and Helen Clark on the challenges women face to ensure they get the healthcare they need and how these have been exacerbated by COVID-19. The following month, Elders held a public event at Chatham House in London focused on global pandemic risks. Denis Mukwege gave a keynote address reflecting his experiences of working in a frontline hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the subsequent panel discussion Elders reflected on the importance of prioritising the needs of developing countries in pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.





## NUCLEAR WEAPONS

### THE ELDERS' IMPACT



#### THE IMPACT WE SEEK:

Current and future generations are free from the threat of nuclear destruction.



#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

The international architecture for nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and risk reduction is protected and strengthened.



#### 2024 IMPACT:

The Elders used a diplomatic opening with Iran to push for nuclear non-proliferation and dialogue with the international community.



Mary Robinson, Hina Jilani, and Helen Clark attend a meeting of women leaders working on nuclear disarmament, held in partnership with Ploughshares in New York, September 2024. The meeting was convened and facilitated by Erika Gregory, President of Horizon 2045, and Emma Belcher, President of Ploughshares.

Photo: Ploughshares

The Elders undertook significant work in 2024 to develop space for engagement with Iran on its nuclear programme, and wider efforts to promote dialogue and diplomacy amid worsening geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Following the unexpected death of former President Raisi and Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian in a helicopter crash in May, a renewal of high-level contacts between Elders and the Iranian leadership culminated in a meeting with Mary Robinson, Juan Manuel Santos and the new President, Masoud Pezeshkian, during UNGA High-Level Week in New York in September. Iran's new Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also attended this meeting.

The Elders used this opportunity to convey messages in support of nuclear restraint and non-proliferation, as well as the need for Iran to fully respect women's equality and human rights in its domestic and foreign policies.

The Elders' access to Iranian decision-makers was noticed by leaders in other countries who sought their views on how best to engage in a febrile geopolitical climate. Iran was one of the agenda items in the meeting Elders had with UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy in October, during their London Board meeting.

Contacts have also been deepened with other countries in the region, notably Qatar, with Mary Robinson's meeting with the Qatari Minister of State in September 2024 and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein's meeting with the Qatari Prime Minister at the Doha Forum in December. Expanding these networks will be a priority for 2025 and beyond.

#### Other nuclear weapons highlights:

##### ● Ban Ki-moon backs UN resolution on scientific impacts of nuclear war:

In October 2024, Ban Ki-moon spoke out in support of a UN First Committee resolution to set up a scientific panel to put together a new report on the scientific evidence around the impacts of nuclear war (which was last reviewed in the 1980s). This came at the request of the Irish and New Zealand governments. The quote was well-received and got high traction on social media relative to our usual nuclear tweets. The resolution ended up with 144 votes in favour to just 3 against (the UK, France and North Korea). The number of abstention votes was lower than anticipated, with some observers attributing this to the heightened public and media awareness of the resolution which Ban Ki-moon's quote helped to amplify.

##### ● Meeting of women leaders on nuclear weapons:

In partnership with Ploughshares Fund, the Elders convened a meeting of women leaders working on nuclear weapons during UNGA High-Level Week in New York. Mary Robinson, Hina Jilani and Helen Clark participated in this intergenerational gathering, which included senior women leaders in the nuclear field, including the US Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control Bonnie Jenkins and the UN High Representative for Disarmament Izumi Nakamitsu, youth disarmament activist Emma Pike, and heads of leading nuclear NGOs such as the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. The meeting was co-chaired by Emma Belcher, President of Ploughshares. A second meeting of this group took place at the Munich Security Conference in February 2025, and plans are being developed to expand this into a wider network of women leaders working on nuclear issues which will help meet the Elders' broader strategic objective of making the nuclear policy community more inclusive and more willing to challenge the status quo.

Mary Robinson with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in New York, September 2024.

Photo: The Elders







# CONFLICT

## THE ELDERS' IMPACT



### THE IMPACT WE SEEK:

Global peace and security are improved through enhanced respect for international law, and more inclusive national and international dialogue.



### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

International law and accountability are reinforced in conflict contexts.



### 2024 IMPACT:

Elders pressured governments to take action on arms transfers in response to Israel's atrocities in Gaza and urge targeted sanctions in response to settler violence and annexation in the West Bank.



Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein speaks at the opening ceremony of the 11th Geneva Peace Week, October 2024.  
Photo: Olivier Chamard Photography

The devastating war in Gaza was the focal point of Elders' conflict work in 2024, reflecting their historical commitment to support a just and durable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In September, The Elders published a set of "Guiding Principles" on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, highlighting the need for self-determination, accountability, human rights and sovereignty for both peoples to be at the heart of any two-state solution. The Guiding Principles have contributed to the public discourse on a political pathway towards sustainable peace in Israel and Palestine, and led to an invitation to Helen Clark to brief the UN Security Council under Slovenia's presidency in September.

In December 2023, the Elders called for governments to review and set new conditions for foreign military assistance to Israel. A further Elders' statement was issued in April 2024 calling



Helen Clark addresses the UN Security Council in New York on the situation in Palestine and the wider Middle East, September 2024.  
Photo: UN / Loey Felipe



### A Pathway Towards Sustainable Peace in Palestine and Israel

18 Sep 2024

The Elders call for a new approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that can lead to a truly just and sustainable peace.

for the suspension of arms transfers to Israel. This call was reiterated multiple times through media engagement during the year, notably by Mary Robinson in interviews with the BBC, RTÉ and CNN. It was repeated again in a TIME op-ed by Mary Robinson and Juan Manuel Santos in October which called for a political pathway towards peace in line with the Guiding Principles.

“

**Unless and until the root causes of the conflict are addressed, violence will persist and escalate. The conflict management approach pursued by powerful members of the international community has failed. A new approach is needed, grounded in international law.”**

Helen Clark at UN Security Council

19 September 2024

”

The Elders' advocacy contributed to the international debate throughout the year and helped to increase the political pressure on governments providing arms to Israel, including the USA as the largest provider of weapons, as well as other military allies including the UK, France, Canada and Germany.





Elbegdorj Tsakhia speaks on the Summit of the Future panel, Intergenerational Dialogue for Peace, with Juan Manuel Santos and Dolores Hernandez, Executive Director Uno Integra Consultores, in New York, September 2024.  
Photo: UN / Laura Jarriel

In March, the Canadian parliament agreed to halt weapons sales to Israel, and this decision was confirmed by the Foreign Minister. In September, the new UK government suspended 30 licenses for arms transfers to Israel, and the issue remains under active review. In October, President Macron called for the suspension of arms sales to Israel in light of the atrocity crimes being committed in Gaza.

The Elders were also consistent throughout 2024 in their call for targeted sanctions against extremist settlers committing violence against civilians in the West Bank, and those in the Israeli government who are pursuing ethnic cleansing and annexation of Palestinian land. This advocacy point was made in Elders' statements and media engagement, and highlighted by Helen Clark in her speech to the UN Security Council in September.

This call helped encourage unprecedented steps in response to settler violence by governments across the world, including in the USA. In February, the Biden administration issued an Executive Order providing for targeted sanctions against those threatening peace and stability in the West Bank. This was a major change of policy, and the first time the US Government applied measures against violent settlers, illegal settlement outposts,

and non-state entities sponsoring settler violence. In turn, the US shift in policy led to unprecedented, targeted sanctions being imposed by France, the UK, Canada and the EU, among others.



Mary Robinson with Ukrainian Environmental Protection Minister Svitlana Hrynychuk at COP29 in Azerbaijan, November 2024, discussing the environmental consequences of Russia's illegal war.  
Photo: The Elders

# TIME

“ **The security of Palestinians and Israelis must be given equal weighting. For too long, the security of the occupying power, Israel, has been prioritized over the security of Palestinians. This has been obvious in the continuous flow of US arms to Israel, even as it continues to violate international law.** ”

Mary Robinson and Juan Manuel Santos

News outlet: TIME

Date: October 2024

## Other conflict highlights

### ● Elders push for full restoration of UNRWA funding:

In the face of a worsening humanitarian catastrophe for Palestinian civilians in Gaza, the Elders advocated for donor governments to restore core funding to UNRWA that was suspended by donors in February, pending investigations following Israel's allegations that UNRWA staff were involved in the 7 October 2023 attacks by Hamas. Elders' public advocacy, including media interviews by Mary Robinson and Helen Clark, encouraged the restoration of funding by all donors, to ensure UNRWA's essential operations in Gaza and across the Occupied Palestinian Territory could be maintained. Elders met with Josep Borrell, EU High Representative, at the Munich Security Conference in February 2024, shortly before the European Commission's decision to disburse €52m of funding. Canada, Australia and the UK subsequently restored funding over the course of 2024. The Elders will continue to urge governments to maintain financial and political support for UNRWA in 2025, despite Israeli legislation introduced in January 2025. This legislation undermines UNRWA's operations at a time of acute humanitarian crisis in Gaza and heightened tensions across the occupied Palestinian territories.

### ● Elders back Ukraine's efforts to tackle environmental impact of war:

Mary Robinson used her role as a member of the High-Level Working Group on the Environmental Consequences of the War in Ukraine to continue to highlight the conflict's devastating impact on human and natural life. Following two visits to Kyiv in 2023, in February 2024 the Working Group published its report on the need for environmental justice and accountability. Mary Robinson co-authored an op-ed on the report with Margot Wallström, the former Swedish Foreign Minister and Co-Chair of the Working Group, which was published by Al Jazeera in May, and cited the report in a keynote speech on climate, nature and conflict at University College Dublin in August. In November, Mary Robinson also spoke at Ukraine's COP29 pavilion in Baku, Azerbaijan. She highlighted the work of the group, and commended Ukraine's commitment to set a new standard for attention to the environment during conflict. The Elders' call for greater global attention to the links between the climate and nature crisis and conflict has been welcomed by stakeholders across the climate and conflict spheres.



# CROSS-CUTTING COMMITMENTS

## THE ELDERS' IMPACT



### THE IMPACT WE SEEK:

Countries come together to solve collective problems, helped by strong international institutions and rules.



### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

Elders build momentum and contribute thought leadership for longer-term structural reform of multilateral institutions.



### 2024 IMPACT:

Elders used three speeches at the UN Security Council to advance reform and accountability.



Helen Clark and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein at the International Peace Institute's Women, Peace and Leadership Symposium in New York, September 2024.  
**Photo:** International Peace Institute

The Elders were invited to address the UN Security Council on three separate occasions in 2024, offering important opportunities to press member states directly on the need for greater reform and accountability within the UN and wider multilateral system.

In June, Ban Ki-moon addressed the Council on the occasion of the annual UN report on children and armed conflict. He spoke directly of the urgency of Council reform to help end conflicts that have a catastrophic, life-long impact on children and young people, reflecting on his own boyhood experiences of displacement and trauma during the Korean War. In that same visit, a wider delegation of four Elders met privately with Council members, urging them to work more collaboratively and effectively. They also met twelve Permanent Representatives from across the UN membership in a dialogue convened by the President of the General Assembly focused on the General Assembly's mandate to protect and promote international peace and security.

Peace and security messages also featured alongside broader advocacy on multilateralism when eight Elders attended the Summit of the Future and UNGA High-Level week in September. Helen Clark and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf were both invited to speak at the Council at separate high-level debates: Helen Clark on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on "leadership for peace" in a session also attended by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer among other leaders.

Alongside these debates and the opening ceremony of the Summit of the Future, Elders were invited to speak at a wide range of events, including an interactive dialogue with leaders on multilateralism as part of the formal Summit agenda, Summit Action Day events on global governance and intergenerational dialogue for peace, and two events on the Women Peace and Security agenda.

These engagements reflected the Elders' profile and the esteem in which they are held in UN

circles. This helped increase momentum on both reform of the International Peace and Security architecture, and raising the profile of the Summit's Declaration on Future Generations and the Global Digital Compact. In 2025, Elders will continue to press for a more effective and representative Security Council as well as placing an increased emphasis on support for the next UN Secretary-General being a woman, building on public declarations by Juan Manuel Santos and Helen Clark in support of a civil society campaign on this issue during UNGA High-Level Week.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf addresses the UN Security Council in New York during the session Leadership for Peace, September 2024.  
**Photo:** UN Photo / Evan Schneider



ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF





Hina Jilani, Mary Robinson, Juan Manuel Santos, Elbegdorj Tsakhia and Helen Clark on stage with co-creators of The Elders' Intergenerational Call to Action in New York, September 2024.

Photo: Natural Expression

## LONG-VIEW LEADERSHIP

The Elders believe a bold new approach to decision-making is needed to urgently address the existential threats faced by humanity.

Throughout 2024 Elders led a public advocacy initiative for "long-view leadership" from decision-makers, sharing platforms with civil society activists and policy experts around the world to push for action. The work was also informed by specially commissioned global opinion polling on public attitudes to existential threats, with 10,000 people consulted across the USA, South Africa, Brazil, India and Indonesia.

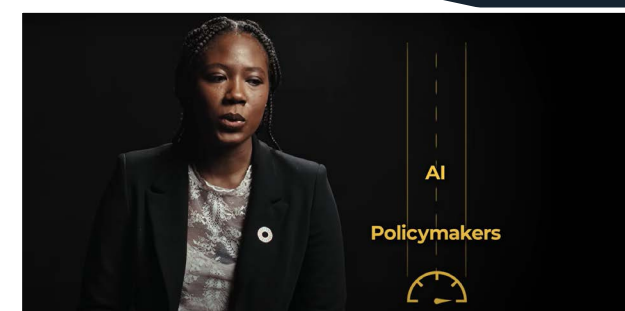
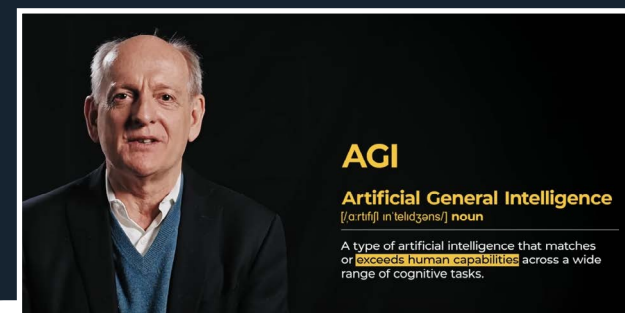
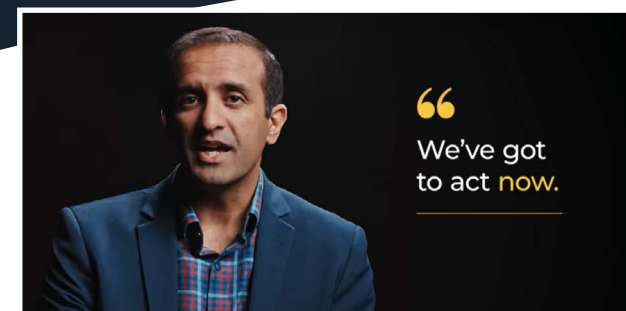
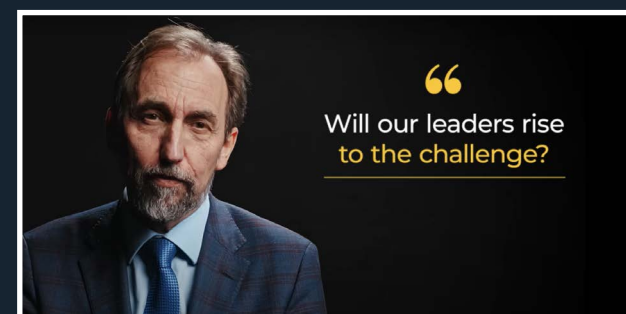
### Open letter

In February 2024 The Elders and the Future of Life Institute launched the initiative with an open letter outlining the principles of long-view leadership. The letter was co-signed by a diverse global coalition from politics, civil society, science, philanthropy, activism and the arts. Over 150 global leaders, experts and public figures from nearly

60 countries came together as initial signatories, including Christiana Figueres, Gordon Brown, María Fernanda Espinosa, Julia Gillard, Annie Lennox, Geoffrey Hinton, Charles Oppenheimer, Muhammad Yunus, Wolfgang Ischinger, Izabella Teixeira, Vanessa Nakate and Yuval Noah Harari. Mary Robinson co-authored an op-ed in Le Monde with Max Tegmark, the Physicist, Professor and AI researcher at MIT and President of the Future of Life Institute, highlighting the main calls of the letter and the long-view leadership campaign. The letter was published in seven languages and has since secured nearly 4,000 signatures, receiving widespread international media coverage including in Le Monde, Bloomberg TV, the BBC World Service, UK Press Association newswire and Spain's El Mundo.

### Videos

The Elders brought together leading experts on the climate and nature crisis, nuclear weapons, pandemics and artificial intelligence to record a series of videos outlining innovative solutions to



these existential threats. Participants included Pacific climate activist Brianna Fruean, nuclear weapons expert Dr. Olamide Samuel from the European Leadership Network, US public health scientist Dr. Raj Panjabi and AI experts Kate Kallot and Stuart Russell (pictured above). Mary Robinson and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein featured alongside the experts to emphasise the importance of intergenerational dialogue.

### Events

Throughout 2024 Elders convened a series of events featuring intergenerational voices addressing existential threats, including public and private discussions on the climate and nature crisis in Brazil. The focal point was a public event in New York on the eve of the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024. Max Tegmark followed Mary Robinson's opening remarks with a data-driven keynote on responding to existential risks, particularly those posed by nuclear weapons and AI. Helen Clark and Juan Manuel Santos spoke about the interconnections between

the climate and nature crisis and pandemics, and the solutions needed to address them. Two intergenerational dialogues followed, focusing on nuclear disarmament and AI governance. The event culminated in the presentation of the "Intergenerational Call To Action", co-created and signed by all Elders and a group of young experts. Around 200 guests joined in person for the event, including UN officials, diplomats, journalists, philanthropists, academics and civil society representatives.

The Elders conveyed and amplified these intergenerational perspectives at their subsequent engagements during the UNGA High-Level Week, including the Summit of the Future and a private meeting with Secretary-General Guterres. The work will continue in 2025 with a series of intergenerational blogs, and Elders will continue to invoke the need for long-view leadership in all public and private exchanges with heads of state and government.





Mary Robinson with youth Indigenous climate activists in São Paulo, May 2024.  
Photo: Joel Rocha

# COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

The Elders’ digital engagement grew in 2024 to reach 340k followers across social media platforms.

Throughout the year, the Elders focused on producing more video content in order to reach wider audiences on social media. Examples of video content include the existential threat solutions video series, the transition of Chair from Mary Robinson to Juan Manuel Santos, and Human Rights Day in December 2024.

This has been well received across all platforms, especially Instagram, where over 1.89 million impressions, 81k engagements and 416k video views were delivered. These results reflect a 307% increase in impressions, an 62% increase in engagement, and a 816% increase in video views compared to the previous year. On Instagram we have also gained over 7,700 new followers, taking our total followers past 36k.



## Le Monde

“With bold decision-making and reforms to create a fairer, more inclusive multilateral system fit for the 21st century, not the middle of the 20th century, we can address and confront escalating risks for the benefit of us all.”

Mary Robinson and Max Tegmark  
(President of the Future of Life Institute)

News outlet: Le Monde  
Date: 19 March 2024

On X/Twitter, 2024 saw a total of over 33 million impressions, up 339% year-on-year, and 107k engagements (likes, retweets, replies and link clicks), down 17% on 2023. The drop off in engagement reflects the extent to which X/Twitter has become a more unreliable and volatile platform over the past year, with significant changes to its governance, functionality and content distribution mechanisms.

While X/Twitter continues to be the main channel for our online advocacy messaging strategies,

The Elders have also joined Bluesky, which many users are turning to as an alternative, and ramped up posting content on Instagram and LinkedIn.

Across all platforms, the Elders maintained consistent social media messaging on climate advocacy, including in support of the International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion on Climate Change. Our messaging helped amplify awareness of the civil society campaign and urged states to engage meaningfully with the preliminary process.



Examples of The Elders’ top-performing tweets in 2024.



# MEDIA SUMMARY

The Elders engaged intensively with international media throughout the year, participating in interviews and writing op-eds on all major programmatic and strategic priorities.

We saw 5.83k media mentions of 'The Elders' an increase of 6% on 2023. But media mentions in Brazil increased significantly in 2024, reflecting a continuing focus on increasing our profile in non-Western markets. This growth was driven by The Elders' engagement with Brazilian leaders during and after the May board meeting, as well as Mary Robinson's meetings with President Lula and other ministers in August. Mary Robinson, Gro Harlem Brundtland and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein gave an interview to the Folha da S. Paulo at the conclusion of the May board meeting, and Graça Machel and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf published a joint op-ed in Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil on the eve of the G20 leaders' summit in Brasilia in November.

The Elders also maintained consistent media engagement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their statements and activities led to widespread coverage, with interviews and op-eds appearing in major outlets across multiple regions. Highlights included Juan Manuel Santos's interview with Al Jazeera at the Munich Security Conference in February, Mary Robinson's interview with Irish broadcaster RTÉ in October and coverage in Turkey and Yemen, as well as an op-ed co-authored by Mary Robinson and Juan Manuel Santos in TIME magazine. These efforts ensured The Elders' perspectives on the crisis reached diverse audiences, contributing to the global dialogue on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

TIME

IDEAS • ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

A Ceasefire Is Just the Start. Here's How to End the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Once and for All

8 MINUTE READ

BY MARY ROBINSON AND JUAN MANUEL SANTOS

OCTOBER 8, 2024 6:00 AM EDT

MENU RTÉ

'Stop the money' - Robinson urges Taoiseach to press Biden on military support for Israel

Updated / Friday, 15 Mar 2024 15:52

f

X

WhatsApp

in

Twitter

News at One

RTÉ

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

LIVE

JUAN MANUEL SANTOS TO BECOME CHAIR OF THE ELDERS

ARY ANNOUNCED ON WEDNESDAY: CNN.com MORE THAN 250,000 WASHINGT

USA BOARDERS TONIGHT

LE MONDE diplomatique BRASIL

O momento do presidente Lula consolidar seu status como líder climático global

A eleição de Lula e sua posição firme sobre justiça climática sinalizaram esperança, não apenas no Brasil, mas em todo o mundo. É crucial que o presidente reúna o G20 em torno de uma forte resolução financeira

Graça Machel e Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

15 de novembro de 2024

ARAB NEWS

World leaders must recommit to pandemic preparedness

GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND

August 17, 2024 22:04

1084

f

X

in

WhatsApp

Envelope

Print

BL BusinessDay

OPINION

GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND: Delivering health for all a key test of SA's global leadership

G20 presidency 'a tremendous opportunity to lead in building a just world and a sustainable planet'

08 DECEMBER 2024 - 15:16

by GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND

The Guardian

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

Australia World AU politics Environment Climate crisis

United Nations

Former New Zealand PM urges Australia and west to reinstate UNRWA funding to avoid 'catastrophic' impact on Palestinians

5.83k

Mentions

107

Countries

7

Op-Eds

15.9bn

Combined reach



# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ELDERS

## Governance

The Elders Foundation ('The Elders') is a charitable company limited by guarantee, the governing document being the charity's Articles of Association. The charity's objectives as set out in the Articles are to: prevent and relieve poverty; relieve sickness and ill health; advance environmental protection and improvement; advance conflict resolution and reconciliation; promote human rights; education; and any other charitable purpose. The members of The Elders are the Board of Trustees, and no trustee has any interest in the charity's funds.

The Elders is governed by its Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meets twice a year and is responsible for setting strategic direction and the governance of The Elders. The Board of Trustees has delegated the oversight of the organisation between Board meetings to an Executive Committee made up of some of the trustees. The Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee have delegated the day-to-day management of the organisation to the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. The Audit, Finance and Governance Committee, chaired by Gro Brundtland, provides a further level of scrutiny.

New trustees are appointed by the Board, and are selected based upon their skills, track record and experience. There is an aim for geographical and gender balance across the trustees. Each year a third of the trustees, being those longest in office, retire. Retiring trustees may be reappointed. The Board of Trustees may appoint Emeritus Elders and Patrons. The Board of Trustees has appointed an Advisory Council which provides support and advice to the trustees and the Chief Executive.

During 2022 the Board of Trustees approved a five year strategy for 2023-2027. Annual objectives are agreed by the Chair and the Chief Executive based on the strategy and reviewed along with the budget and financial performance.

## Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies Regime under the Companies Act 2006.

## Public Benefit

The Elders exists and operates for the public benefit through its private and public advocacy and other activities. The trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011.

## Fundraising

The Elders Foundation does not carry out direct fundraising with the public, or use any third party organisation for that purpose. Throughout the year, direct approaches are made to individuals and organisations by The Elders staff. The Elders is voluntarily a member of the Fundraising Regulator in the UK and follows best practice. No complaints were received about its fundraising activities during the financial year. If a complaint were to be received, it would be handled by a senior member of staff or trustee.

# STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for the keeping of proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for the safeguarding of the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- so far as the trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of S418 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.



# FINANCIAL AND RISK REVIEW FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

## Income

The Elders’ income for the year was £3.6 million (2023: £3.5 million). This includes £0.6 million (2023: £0.9 million) of restricted funding used for our programmatic and communications work, including a large project on existential threats and long-view leadership. All restricted income was fully spent during the year.

## Expenditure

The Elders’ expenditure for the year was £3.9 million (2023: £3.1 million). The expenditure includes spend of a £0.4 million designated fund from 2023. This was used to contribute to expenditure in the first few months of 2024. Expenditure 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 during 2024 was to maintain available reserves sufficient to meet at least nine months’ normal operating expenditure. It was not necessary to draw on reserves in 2024, but a deficit budget has been planned for 2025 in order to do so, to bring our reserves down in line with our reserves policy.

Reserves at the end of 2024, all unrestricted, were £3.8 million (2023: £4.0 million), of which £0.2 million was represented by the charity’s fixed assets, leaving available reserves of £3.6 million which represents over 10 months expenditure based on the 2025 budget. This is more than the nine months required under the revised 2024 reserves policy. Provision is made in the 2025 deficit budget to draw on some of the reserves.

Based on the reserves position of the charity at the end of the year and indications of the Board and the charity’s funders to continue the work of the charity into the foreseeable future, the trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern.

## Key Management Pay Policy

The charity aims to pay staff at comparable levels to other charities operating in the United Kingdom, taking into account the global reach, experience and gravitas needed by the Secretariat and the responsibility of serving a Board of eminent global leaders. The trustees consider that they, together with the Senior Management Team, comprise the key management personnel in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. Members of the Senior Management Team are listed on page 47. None of the Trustees received any remuneration for their role as a member of the key management personnel during the year. The salary of the Chief Executive is agreed by the Nominations Committee on appointment, while

other salaries are approved by the Chief Executive on appointment in line with salary scales for each post. Annual salary increases for all staff are approved by the Executive Committee, and the Chief Executive has delegated authority to adjust the salaries of individual staff.

## Carbon Offsetting

The Elders have partnered with UK-based charity Climate Stewards to offset the carbon emissions generated by business flights. In 2024, The Elders donated £10,300 to Climate Stewards, based on total flight emissions of 412 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. 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.

## Risk Management

The Elders maintain a robust risk management process to identify, assess and manage risk. A risk register is maintained and reviewed twice annually by the Secretariat’s Senior Management Team and once annually by the Board of Trustees. Each risk in the register is assessed according to likelihood and potential impact, and any controls put in place to mitigate the risk are implemented and monitored by a designated risk owner. The risk policy was reviewed and updated in 2024 in line with best practice.

Effective delivery of The Elders’ 2023-27 strategy requires a group of Elders with a global profile, who are committed to and engaged with our programmes. In order to maintain a such a group of Elders, the CEO meets with the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees regularly to discuss new Elder recruitment. A longer-term pipeline of potential candidates is maintained in anticipation of some existing Elders ceasing their active roles.

Maintaining sufficient and diversified funding streams is crucial to The Elders’ financial stability and ability to fulfil its mission. The Director of Development and Corporate Services and the CEO consistently monitor the organisation’s finances and funding pipeline, with a focus on diversifying funding streams and securing a range of donors who commit to differing levels of funding across varying timescales.

The Secretariat must be adequately staffed and equipped to support Elders in the delivery of the strategy. The staff and consultancy profile of the organisation is constantly evolving as new priorities emerge and needs change. The Trustees receive organisational updates bi-annually at Board meetings, as well as receiving ad-hoc updates on major Secretariat changes as needed.

Finally, there is a risk that The Elders is not seen as the truly global and independent organisation that it was set up and aspires to be. This risk is carefully managed by taking an even-handed global perspective across all activity. The geographical diversity of Elders themselves, as well as Advisory Council members and Secretariat staff, can also contribute to this perception, and remain under regular review.



# LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:

- Ban Ki-moon (Deputy Chair)
- Gro Brundtland
- Helen Clark
- Elbegdorj Tsakhia
- Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein
- Hina Jilani
- Ricardo Lagos (Resigned 6 February 2024)
- Graça Machel (Deputy Chair)
- Denis Mukwege (Appointed 26 March 2024)
- Mary Robinson (Resigned as Chair 31 October 2024)
- Juan Manuel Santos (Appointed as Chair 1 November 2024)
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
- Ernesto Zedillo

Patrons:

- Richard Branson
- Peter Gabriel

Executive Committee:

- Mary Robinson (Resigned as Chair 31 October 2024)
- Juan Manuel Santos (Chair, Appointed 1 November 2024)
- Graça Machel (Deputy Chair)
- Ban Ki-Moon (Deputy Chair)
- Gro Brundtland
- Ernesto Zedillo

Elders Emeritus:

- Lakhdar Brahimi
- Fernando H Cardoso
- Jimmy Carter (Died 30 December 2024)
- Ricardo Lagos (Appointed 6 February 2024)
- Muhammad Yunus (Appointed 16 October 2024)

Senior Management Team:

- Alistair Fernie (Chief Executive)
- Claire Ireland (Director of Programmes)
- Vanessa Smye (Director of Development and Corporate Services)
- Luke Upchurch (Director of Communications, Resigned 30 June 2024)
- Saran Koly (Interim Director of Communications, 1 June 2024 – 31 October 2024)
- Karim Lebhaur (Director of Communications, Appointed 21 October 2024)

Registered Office:

3 Tilney Street, London, W1K 1BJ

Auditors:

Buzzacott LLP  
130 Wood Street  
London, EC2V 6DL

Lawyers:

Bates Wells Braithwaite  
10 Queen Street Place  
London, EC4R 1BE

Bankers:

HSBC Bank plc  
21 Kings Mall, King Street  
London, W6 0QF

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner  
5 Laurence Pountney Hill  
London, EC4R 0BR

By order of the Board of Trustees



Juan Manuel Santos (Chair)  
On 17 April 2025



# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ELDERS FOUNDATION

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Elders Foundation (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, and statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are

relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the

other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there are material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.



Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below:

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the Charities Act 2011, Companies Act 2006, data protection legislation, anti-bribery, employment, health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company’s financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies (note 1a) were indicative of potential bias; and
- used data analytics to identify any significant or unusual transactions and identify the rationale for them.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of trustee meetings;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing any available correspondence with HMRC and the company’s legal advisors (although none was noted as being received by the charitable company).

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company’s members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Edward Finch** (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Buzzacott Audit LLP,  
Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL  
23 April 2025

*Buzzacott Audit LLP*



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

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024				2024				2023			
	Note	Unrestricted General	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted General	Unrestricted Designated Funds	Restricted	Total		
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>											
Donations and grants											
- General		2,827	-	-	2,827	3,294	-	-	3,294		
- Project funding		-	-	639	639	-	-	95	95		
Interest income		140	-	-	140	100	-	-	100		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>2,967</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>3,606</b>	<b>3,394</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>3,489</b>		
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>											
Raising funds	2	99	-	-	99	217	-	-	217		
Charitable activities	2										
Climate & Nature Crisis		724	-	85	809	834	-	85	919		
Pandemics		523	-	-	523	558	-	-	558		
Nuclear Weapons		451	-	-	451	542	-	10	552		
Conflict		885	-	-	885	818	-	-	818		
Existential Threats		542	-	554	1,096	-	-	-	-		
Total charitable activities expenditure		3,125	-	639	3,764	2,752		95	2,847		
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>3,224</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>3,863</b>	<b>2,969</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>3,064</b>		
Transfers Between Funds		400	(400)	-	-	(400)	400	-	-		
Net expenditure and net movement in funds	3	143	(400)	-	(257)	25	400	-	425		
Fund balances brought forward		3,633	400	-	4,033	3,608	-	-	3,608		
<b>FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>3,777</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,777</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,033</b>		

Included within general donations is an amount of £427,509 (€500,000) from Nationale Postcode Loterij which makes up part of their total from a five year grant, due to end in 2028.

THE ELDERS FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	7	173	256
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	8	306	272
Short term deposit		1,911	1,924
Cash at bank and in hand		2,101	2,032
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>4,318</b>	<b>4,228</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(647)	(356)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>3,671</b>	<b>3,872</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>3,844</b>	<b>4,128</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	10	(43)	(83)
Provision for liabilities	11	(24)	(12)
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3,777</b>	<b>4,033</b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
Represented by Tangible fixed assets		173	256
Represented by General funds	14	3,604	3,377
Represented by Designated funds	14	-	400
Total unrestricted funds			4,033
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>3,777</b>	<b>4,033</b>

The notes on pages 45 to 50 form part of the financial statements. These were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on behalf by Juan Manuel Santos (Chair) 17 April 2025

A registered charity in England and Wales. Reg. no. 1132397  
A company limited by guarantee in England and Wales. Reg. no. 06317151

THE ELDERS FOUNDATION STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Net movement in funds for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(257)	425
<b>Adjustments for:</b>			
Depreciation charges		100	108
Interest income		(140)	(100)
Change in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movement		(8)	(8)
(Increase) decrease in debtors		(34)	160
Increase (decrease) in creditors		263	(607)
<b>Net cash (used in) operating activities</b>		<b>(76)</b>	<b>(22)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>			
Loss from the disposal of property, plant and equipment		-	-
Purchase of equipment	7	(18)	(28)
Sale (purchase) of short term deposits		15	(524)
Interest income		140	100
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>		<b>137</b>	<b>(452)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>(474)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the start of the reporting period</b>		<b>2,032</b>	<b>2,498</b>
Change in cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements		8	8
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>		<b>2,101</b>	<b>2,032</b>

The Elders Foundation does not have any borrowings.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies or notes. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest thousand pounds. In the Board’s opinion, there are no significant accounting estimates or areas of judgement in these financial statements.

b) Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these financial statements. The trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. This is because of the reserves position of the charity at the end of the year and indications of the Board and the funders to continue the work of the charity into the foreseeable future.



c) Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity is entitled to receipt, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the funds will be received. Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil performance related conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period. Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

d) Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis, and is classified in the SOFA according to the activity to which it relates. Expenditure includes VAT, which cannot be recovered, as part of the expenditure to which it relates. Any grants payable are expensed at the point at which the funds are committed. Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income. Expenditure on charitable activities includes all direct and indirect costs of delivering the charitable activities. Expenditure on the charity’s programmes has been apportioned based on the percentage allocation of staff time spent on programmatic activity. Support costs are allocated in proportion to the costs of activities undertaken directly, and include the cost of staff, plus allocated overheads, whose primary functions are: financial management, human resources, information technology, office management and general management.

e) Operating Leases

Operating lease rentals are charged in the SOFA on a straight line basis over the life of the lease.

f) Pension costs

Pension contributions paid by The Elders in respect of employees are to a defined contribution scheme and are charged to the SOFA as they become payable.

g) Foreign currencies

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the transaction. Exchange differences are taken into account in arriving at the net movement in funds.

h) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets above £1,000 are capitalised at cost and depreciated over their useful economic lives. Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computers, software and equipment: 3 to 5 years
- Leasehold improvements and furniture: 5 years taking account of the remaining period of the lease.

i) Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

j) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months at the balance sheet date. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits.

k) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

l) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are those that are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are for use only on the purposes prescribed by the donors.

2. EXPENDITURE

	2024			2023		
	Direct Costs £'000	Support Costs £'000	Total £'000	Direct Costs £'000	Support Costs £'000	Total £'000
Cost of raising funds	56	43	99	118	99	217
Charitable activities						
Climate & Nature Crisis	456	353	809	499	420	919
Pandemics	295	228	523	303	255	558
Nuclear Weapons	254	197	451	300	252	552
Conflict	498	387	885	444	374	818
Existential Threats	617	479	1,096	-	-	-
Total charitable activities expenditure	2,120	1,644	3,764	1,546	1,301	2,847
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,176	1,687	3,863	1,664	1,400	3,064

In 2024 The Elders undertook a one-year project on Existential Threats. In 2025, some of the work produced during the project will be incorporated across the four programmes.

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Analysis of support costs:		
Staff	528	466
Governance	10	20
Other	1,149	914
Total	1,687	1,400

4. STAFF COSTS

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Wages and salaries	1,403	1,289
Social security costs	153	141
Pension costs	142	125
Other employee benefits	1	5
TOTAL	1,699	1,560

NUMBERS OF EMPLOYEES		
	2024 Number	2023 Number
The average number of full time employees for the year was:		
Corporate Services and Executive	10	9
Communications	3	5
Programmes	7	7
TOTAL	20	21

3. NET INCOME

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Net expenditure is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	101	108
Statutory Audit Fees		
• Current year	14	13
• Other Services	-	-
Lease payments	177	177

The Elders has a defined contribution pension scheme to which the company contributes 10% of pensionable salary. No employees receive benefits under a defined benefit pension scheme. There were no severance payments included within salaries and wages (2023: £0).

REMUNERATION		
	2024 Number	2023 Number
The number of employees whose remuneration during the year fell within the following bands were:		
£60,001 - £70,000	2	1
£70,001 - £80,000	2	2
£80,001 - £90,000	1	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	2
£100,001 - £110,000	1	-
£140,001 - £150,000	1	1

Pension contributions totalling £42,334 (2023: £62,175) were paid in respect of these higher paid employees, all of whom were accruing benefits under a defined contribution pension scheme.



5. KEY MANAGEMENT REMUNERATION

Total employee remuneration and benefits paid to key management personnel, being the members of the charity’s Senior Management Team, in the year totalled £520,000 (2023: £521,000).

6. TRUSTEES’ REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No trustee received any remuneration in the year.

The charity arranges collectively, and pays directly, for the costs of trustees to attend meetings and events on behalf of the charity. These costs are attributable collectively to the charitable activities of the charity rather than support costs, as are the costs reimbursed to trustees.

During the year travel expenses of £504,107 were paid directly to airlines, hotels and other suppliers for 12 trustees (2023: £428,531 for 12 trustees) to cover their travel costs whilst on trips delivering the charitable activities of the charity. No individual travel expenses were reimbursed to any trustee (2022: £0) to cover their travel costs whilst on trips delivering the charitable activities of the charity.

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	2024			2023		
	Computers, Equipment & Furniture £'000	Leasehold Improvements £'000	Total £'000	Computers, Equipment & Furniture £'000	Leasehold Improvements £'000	Total £'000
Cost						
At 1 January	229	338	567	201	338	539
Additions	18	-	18	28	-	28
Disposals	7	-	7	-	-	-
At 31 December	240	338	578	229	338	567
Depreciation						
At 1 January	158	154	312	122	81	203
Charge for the year	30	70	100	35	73	108
Disposals	7	-	7	-	-	-
At 31 December	181	224	405	157	154	311
Net book value at 31 December	59	114	173	72	184	256

8. DEBTORS

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Prepayments and other debtors	252	218
Rent Deposit 3 Tilney Street	54	54
Total	306	272

The rent deposit is to be repaid on exit of the lease at 3 Tilney Street.

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Accruals and Deferred Income	521	193
Other creditors	86	123
Rent free accrual	-	40
Rent Accrual	40	-
Total	647	356

Included in the above is £393,949 of deferred income (2023: £118,000) for work to be undertaken in future accounting periods.

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Rent Accrual	43	83
Total	43	83

The rent-free accrual for 2024 reflects the signing of a 5-year lease in January 2023.

11. PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Provision for dilapidations	24	12
Total	24	12

12. COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
At 31 December 2024 the charity had the following future minimum commitments in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:		
- within one year	219	216
- between one and five years	401	655
Total	620	871



13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

With the exception of the disclosures in note 5 and 6, there were no other transactions with related parties in either the current or prior years.

14. FUND ANALYSIS

RESTRICTED FUNDS					2024
	At 1 January £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December £'000
Climate & Nature Crisis	-	85	85	-	-
Existential Threats	-	554	554	-	-
TOTAL	-	639	639	-	-

					2023
	At 1 January £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 December £'000
Climate & Nature Crisis	-	85	85	-	-
Communications	-	10	10	-	-
TOTAL	-	95	95	-	-

Specific grants from foundations were received during 2024 for our climate and nature crisis work and existential threats project, which were all expended in the year.

DESIGNATED FUND

The designated fund of £400k was fully utilised in 2024 and was used to contribute to expenditure in the first four months of 2024 operations.

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

<b>Richard Branson</b> Virgin Unite	<b>Judith Lingeman</b> Dutch Postcode Lottery	<b>Shannon Sedgwick Davis</b> Bridgeway Foundation
<b>Peter Gabriel</b> The Peter Gabriel Trust	<b>Randy Newcomb</b> The Omidyar Group	<b>Jeff Skoll</b> Skoll Foundation
<b>Don Gips</b> Skoll Foundation	<b>Jean Oelwang</b> Virgin Unite	<b>John Taylor</b> Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
<b>Srik Gopal</b> Humanity United	<b>Rob Phillpot</b> Gravel Road Ventures and Foundation	
<b>Lisa Harris</b>		

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The Elders are grateful to donors who provided generous support to their work on Long-view Leadership

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World Charity Foundation



“ 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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### The Elders Foundation

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