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**LONDON, 5 July 2016**  
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## **The Elders urge leaders to fill \$2.5bn El Niño funding gap**

Ahead of a high level meeting at the United Nations on 19 July, The Elders have called on world leaders to fill the \$2.5bn funding gap to help countries facing drought and a humanitarian crisis linked to the El Niño climate phenomenon.

Given donations in response to El Niño to date, The Elders called on the leaders of Belgium, Norway, Ireland, South Korea, Japan, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland, Italy, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar in particular to “*give generously*”, notwithstanding other pressures on aid budgets.

*“There is currently a \$2.5bn funding gap between the amount needed by those countries affected by El Niño to deal with the crisis and what has so far been provided by donors.”*

The Elders noted with concern that the current El Niño event is one of the strongest on record, causing over 60 million people worldwide to suffer from shortages of food and water – with Southern Africa experiencing its worst drought in 35 years.

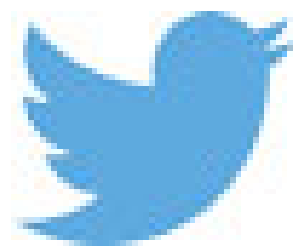
This situation is exacerbated by human-induced climate change which makes the need for action all the more urgent. The Elders recommend governments take two specific steps in addition to increased aid for

the most drought-affected countries:

- Increase financial support for the development of comprehensive risk contingency planning and preparedness measures in climate-vulnerable countries;
- Agree a “*clear and concrete roadmap*” at the COP22 climate talks in November 2016 to achieve the \$100bn annual commitment for climate action in developing countries by 2020.

The Elders believe that the current crisis requires a rapid, long-term and comprehensive response by the international community.

*“Extreme weather events hit the poorest communities – those least responsible for climate change – the hardest. Significantly increased funding is thus essential to build resilience and protect the most vulnerable,”* they said.



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## **About The Elders**

The Elders are independent leaders using their collective experience and influence for peace, justice and human rights worldwide. The group was founded by **Nelson Mandela** in 2007.

The Elders are **Martti Ahtisaari**, **Kofi Annan** (Chair), **Ela Bhatt**, **Lakhdar**

**Brahimi, Gro Harlem Brundtland** (Deputy Chair), **Hina Jilani, Ricardo Lagos, Graça Machel, Mary Robinson** and **Ernesto Zedillo**.

**Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Jimmy Carter** and **Desmond Tutu** are Honorary Elders.

## Find out more

For biographies of the Elders, blogs, photos, videos and more information about their work please go to [www.theElders.org](http://www.theElders.org).

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