

## **World Leaders Call on Governments to Stop Cyberattacks Plaguing Healthcare Systems**

*Madeleine Albright, Desmond Tutu, and Mohamed ElBaradei Among More Than Forty International Leaders Calling on All Governments to Work Together to Stop Attacks Hampering Hospitals and International Organizations Fighting COVID-19*

**GENEVA, Switzerland – May 26, 2020** – Today more than 40 former and current international leaders from across government, industry, international and non-governmental organizations and academia have called on the world's governments to take immediate and decisive action to prevent and stop cyberattacks that target hospitals, healthcare, research organizations, and international authorities providing critical care and guidance in the midst of the ongoing global pandemic. The signatories demand that governments work together, including at the United Nations, to reaffirm and recommit to international rules that prohibit such actions, and to join forces with civil society and the private sector, to ensure that medical facilities are respected and protected, and to hold attackers accountable.

The call follows cyberattacks in recent weeks against medical facilities, including in the Czech Republic, France, Spain, Thailand, and the United States, international organizations such as the World Health Organization, and other health authorities. These attacks range from ransomware operations aimed at crippling primary and urgent care networks in exchange for payouts to disinformation campaigns aimed at undermining and disrupting wider elements of the response to the pandemic, including testing and vaccine research facilities. Where successful, these attacks have interrupted the provision of healthcare and put additional costs on healthcare providers. They underline the vulnerability of this sector to cyberattacks at a time when medical care is needed more than ever.

*"We're in the midst of the most urgent health crisis in modern history, and these attacks threaten all of humanity,"* said Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and signatory of the call. *"We must take action collectively to ensure this threat is addressed, and already fragile health care systems, particularly in countries affected by war and violence are not put at further risk by cyber operations."*

The Call to Action comes against the background of important discussions on cyber stability and cyber-attacks against healthcare facilities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including in the United Nations Security Council and two United Nations General Assembly-mandated cyber processes.

*"As healthcare professionals are protecting us in the real world, it is up to civil society, industry and governments to collectively act for their protection in cyberspace,"* said Stéphane Duguin, Chief Executive Officer at the CyberPeace Institute. *"In this effort, humanity needs governments to work together by setting the tone and the example, to ensure healthcare is protected, and perpetrators are held accountable."*

Additional notable signatories include former Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov; former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad Al Hussein; former Director General of the

World Health Organization Margaret Chan; former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo; and Microsoft President Brad Smith. The signatories also include 7 Nobel Prize Laureates.

The letter, which is featured today in full-page print advertisements in The New York Times and The Guardian, specifically calls on all governments to take immediate action including by asserting unequivocally that cyber operations against healthcare facilities are unlawful and unacceptable and to work with each other, with civil society and with the private sector, to ensure that medical facilities are respected and protected.

Full list of signatories:

- **Dapo Akande**, Professor of Public International Law, University of Oxford
- **Madeleine Albright**, Former Secretary of State, United States
- **José María Álvarez-Pallete López**, Chairman & CEO, Telefónica
- **Ban Ki-moon**, Former Secretary General of the United Nations
- **Lakhdar Brahimi**, Former Foreign Minister, Algeria
- **John Bruton**, Former Taoiseach, Ireland
- **Fernando Henrique Cardoso**, Former President, Brazil
- **Vint Cert**, Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist for Google, United States
- **Margaret Chan**, Former Director-General, World Health Organization
- **Eva Chen**, Chief Executive Officer, Trend Micro
- **Stephane Duguin**, Chief Executive Officer, CyberPeace Institute
- **Mohamed ElBaradei**, Former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Beatrice Fihn**, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Mikhail Gorbachev**, Former President, Soviet Union (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) \*
- **Gro Harlem Brundtland**, Former Director General, World Health Organization
- **Richard J. Hatchett**, Chief Executive Officer of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations
- **Zhixiong Huang**, Professor of International Law, Wuhan University
- **Igor Ivanov**, Former Foreign Minister, Russia
- **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, Former President, Liberia (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Eugene Kaspersky**, Chief Executive Officer, Kaspersky
- **Khoo Boon Hui**, Former President, INTERPOL
- **Larry Kramer**, President, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- **Ricardo Lagos**, Former President, Chile
- **Doris Leuthard**, Former President of the Swiss Confederation
- **Adrian Lovett**, President and Chief Executive Officer, World Wide Web Foundation
- **Susana Malcorra**, Former Foreign Minister, Argentina
- **Peter Maurer**, President, International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Daniel Mitov**, Former Foreign Minister, Bulgaria
- **Eduardo Montealegre**, Former Foreign Minister, Nicaragua
- **Marty Natalegawa**, Former Foreign Minister, Indonesia

- **Nandan Nilekani**, Non-Executive Chairman of the Board, Infosys
- **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, Former Finance Minister, Nigeria
- **Maia Panjikidze**, Former Foreign Minister, Georgia
- **Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein**, Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Sir Richard J. Roberts**, Chief Scientific Officer, New England Biolabs (Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine)
- **Francesco Rocca**, President, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- **Julio María Sanguinetti**, Former President, Uruguay
- **Juan Manuel Santos**, Former President, Colombia (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Samir Saran**, President, Observer Research Foundation
- **Marietje Schaake**, Former Member of the European Parliament
- **Michael Schmitt**, Professor of International Law, University of Reading
- **Wendy Sherman**, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, United States
- **Brad Smith**, President, Microsoft
- **Helle Thorning Schmidt**, Former Prime Minister, Denmark
- **Desmond Tutu**, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Danilo Türk**, Former President, Slovenia
- **Lech Wałęsa**, Former Polish President (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- **Sir Graham Watson**, Former Member of the European Parliament, UK
- **Jonathan M. Winer**, Former U.S Special Envoy for Libya; Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Law Enforcement at the U.S Department of State
- **Harold F. Wolf III**, Chief Executive Officer, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society
- **Ernesto Zedillo**, Former President, Mexico

*\*In signing this Statement, I also urge the convening of the special session of the UN General Assembly to discuss cessation of armed conflicts and reduction of military budgets. Mikhail Gorbachev*

More on the letter is available: <https://cyberpeaceinstitute.org/campaign/call-for-government>