

**The Elders support Mandela Day 2011**  
**Celebrating Nelson Mandela's birthday; changing the world for the better**

15 July 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders have announced their support for Mandela Day 2011, a day to encourage people around the world to take concrete action in the service of others. Celebrated globally on Nelson Mandela's birthday, Monday 18 July, Mandela Day aims to show that we can all play a part in changing the world for the better.

Now retired from public life, Nelson Mandela has called on younger generations to take up the fight for a fairer, more peaceful world. "It is time for the next generations to continue our struggle against social injustice and for the rights of humanity," he says. "It is in your hands."

Nelson Mandela gave 67 years of his life to the fight for the rights of humanity. In this spirit, on 18 July 2011, Nelson Mandela's 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday, people around the world are encouraged to dedicate 67 minutes to serving their community and helping to build a global movement for good.

In a message to mark Mandela Day, Chair of The Elders **Desmond Tutu** wrote:

"On his birthday, Madiba has asked us to do something, not for him, but for our fellow human beings. Join us in marking Mandela Day by celebrating our collective power to do good for others and making the world we share a happier and fairer place."

Nelson Mandela's wife and fellow founder of The Elders, **Graça Machel** said:

"Mandela Day is a chance for each of us to do what we can for the human family that Madiba cares so much about. It is a beautiful way of recognising that we can all do good, that we have love and kindness in our hearts and that we can all make a difference to the lives of our neighbours."

**Lakhdar Brahimi**, former Algerian Foreign Minister said:

"Nelson Mandela has shown us that with personal dedication and commitment we can meet the greatest of challenges. In this spirit, the people of Tunisia and Egypt, too, have demonstrated what can be achieved when we are committed to the betterment of our communities."

**Gro Brundtland**, former Norwegian Prime Minister said:

“On Mandela Day, I encourage you all to explore how best you can help in your local community. We often don't realise our inner strength and talent until we reach out to those around us.”

**Martti Ahtisaari**, former President of Finland said:

“In our busy day to day lives, it is too easy to overlook the needs of those in our own communities. There may be an elderly neighbour living alone, young people struggling to find work, or a local family that is unable to make ends meet. To mark Mandela's birthday, I hope we can all find time for a quiet act of kindness – and make every day a Mandela Day.”

**Ela Bhatt**, a pioneer in women's empowerment and grassroots development, blogs about living up to Nelson Mandela's example and how to change the world, one step at a time.

Read [\*Peace by practice: Mandela Day 2011\*](#)

### **About Nelson Mandela and The Elders**

The Elders is an independent group of global leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela in 2007, who work together for peace and human rights.

The Elders are Martti Ahtisaari, Kofi Annan, Ela Bhatt, Lakhdar Brahimi, Gro Brundtland, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Jimmy Carter, Graça Machel, Mary Robinson and Desmond Tutu (Chair). Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi are honorary Elders.

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

Mandela Day is an initiative by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. To find out more visit [www.MandelaDay.com](http://www.MandelaDay.com)

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