

The Elders condemn deadly attacks in Norway

Tutu appeals for tolerance and respect for open society;
offers deepest condolences

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On behalf of The Elders, Archbishop Desmond Tutu has strongly condemned last Friday's deadly attacks in Norway. He offered his deepest sympathy and condolences to all those who lost loved ones or suffered injuries and praised the Norwegian people and government for their determination to maintain an open and pluralistic society.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with those who lost loved ones in the attacks in Oslo and on Utøya Island. This brutal and cowardly attack, particularly the deliberate targeting of young people gathered to discuss how to make their country and the world a better place, was truly heinous," said Archbishop Tutu, Chair of The Elders.

The Elders have noted with growing concern the rise in recent years of racism and xenophobia in parts of Europe. They firmly believe that respect for human rights and greater understanding between people from different racial and religious backgrounds must be the cornerstone of society in today's fast-changing, globalised world.

"Unfortunately, extremism exists in all societies, ethnicities and religions. An effective response must begin with recognition of the truth of our common humanity. I am confident that this horrific act will not sway Norway from its commitment to openness, equality and democracy."

The Elders have conveyed their deepest sympathy to their fellow Elder, Gro Brundtland, who was speaking to young people on the island shortly before the shootings occurred.

"Her distinguished record of leadership and public service in Norway and internationally, in particular on health and sustainable development issues, is a model for young people everywhere," said Archbishop Tutu.

About 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

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