

## The Elders: Tunisia's elections set a benchmark for the Arab world

They emphasise that getting the constitutional process right  
is the next crucial step

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As Tunisians await final poll results, The Elders wish to congratulate the Tunisian people on the successful Constituent Assembly elections of 23 October 2011. Tunisia played a pioneering role in the 'Jasmine revolution' in January, and set another benchmark in organising the first democratic elections of the Arab Awakening.

**Jimmy Carter**, former President of the United States, said: "The huge voter turnout showed Tunisians' determination to have their voice heard in the first competitive and transparent poll in decades in Tunisia. We applaud the voters' enthusiastic participation and we commend the High Independent Authority for the Elections for the remarkable conduct of both the electoral campaign and the voting process."

The Elders emphasise the importance of the next crucial step in the democratic process – the drafting of a new constitution. They understand the Tunisian people's expectations for their newly elected representatives to deliver on immediate concerns such as jobs and security. Yet, they believe that getting the constitution drafting process right is critical.

"The drafting of a new constitution is a key moment in the history of a nation, which will have profound and lasting consequences for the future of the country", said **Martti Ahtisaari**, former President of Finland.

**Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said: "Tunisia is rightly proud of its record as one of the most progressive countries in the Arab world regarding women's rights. I am delighted that one in four members of the new Constituent Assembly will be women. I hope that gender equality and respect for universal rights will be enshrined in the new Constitution."

Former Algerian Foreign Minister **Lakhdar Brahimi** said: "After its landmark Constituent Assembly elections, Tunisia has once again set an example. I am confident that the way Tunisia handles the constitution drafting process will set another good example for the entire region and beyond."

## **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.

## **More information**

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