

Media advisory: Desmond Tutu and fellow Elders to visit South Sudan and Sudan to encourage peace efforts

Press Conference in Juba on Friday 6 July
Press Conference in Khartoum on Tuesday 10 July

5 July 2012

MEDIA ADVISORY

Three members of The Elders are starting a six-day visit to Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan to encourage peace efforts in the region and support the African Union talks in Addis Ababa.

Led by **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, the delegation comprises **Martti Ahtisaari**, former President of Finland and **Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Elders' aim is to encourage leaders of South Sudan and Sudan to take the path of peace for the benefit of their people and to draw attention to the human suffering caused by conflicts, particularly the growing refugee crisis in the border regions.

In Addis Ababa, Juba and Khartoum, the Elders will hold high-level political meetings, and also meet people directly affected by the deterioration of relations between South Sudan and Sudan.

The Elders wish to support local peace-building efforts, reinforce the unprecedented united international position on South Sudan and Sudan, and lend their weight to the implementation of the AU roadmap of 24 April and UN Security Council Resolution 2046 (2012).

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

Friday 6 July (South Sudan)

18:00 Press conference (time to be confirmed)
Venue: Home and Away Restaurant, Juba

Sunday 8 July (South Sudan)

14:00-16:00 Ecumenical church service organised by the Sudan Council of Churches with the participation of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and fellow Elders
Venue: Nyakuron Cultural Centre, Juba (to be confirmed)

Tuesday 10 July (Sudan)

12:00 Press conference (time to be confirmed)

Venue: Corinthia Hotel, Khartoum

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Important note for journalists wishing to cover the visit: please note the schedule is subject to change – for updates please email media@theElders.org, indicating your mobile number.

For more information about the Elders' visit to South Sudan and Sudan, please contact:

media@theElders.org

The Elders' work on Sudan and South Sudan

Peace in Sudan has been a priority for The Elders since the group's formation. In October 2007, shortly after The Elders' launch by Nelson Mandela, they visited Sudan to highlight the human impact of the conflict. They travelled to Khartoum and Juba to meet political leaders, including President Omar Al-Bashir and President Salva Kiir, UN and African Union officials and diplomats. In Darfur, they spoke to tribal leaders, women's groups, civil society leaders and internally displaced persons.

Since then, the Elders have conducted private diplomacy and advocacy, speaking out at key moments, and supporting the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in its efforts to facilitate the resolution of outstanding issues between North and South. Members of The Elders visited Sudan in January 2011 as part of the Carter Center's observation mission of the South Sudan Referendum.

In view of the deteriorating security and economic situation in Sudan and South Sudan and the human impact of the conflicts in Blue Nile and South Kordofan in particular, the Elders are stepping up their engagement in the region and seek to offer their collective experience and support to help tackle these urgent challenges.

In **May 2012**, [former US President Jimmy Carter and former Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi travelled to Khartoum](#) where they met President Omar Al-Bashir, encouraging his government to address the outstanding issues with South Sudan, and the need for a peaceful resolution to internal problems.

In **July 2012**, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former President of Finland Martti Ahtisaari and former President of Ireland Mary Robinson will visit Addis Ababa, Juba and Khartoum to encourage the leaders of Sudan and South Sudan to take the path of peace for the benefits of their people. The Elders will draw attention to the magnitude of political, economic and human challenges both countries face.

The Elders wish to support local peace-building efforts, reinforce the unprecedented united international position on South Sudan and Sudan, and lend their weight to the implementation of the AU roadmap of 24 April and UN Security Council Resolution 2046 (2012).

Members of The Elders travelling to South Sudan and Sudan in July 2012



Desmond Tutu – delegation leader

Archbishop Desmond Tutu is often described as ‘South Africa’s moral conscience’ and is a global champion for human rights. A passionate and compelling speaker, Tutu took the anti-apartheid struggle to the world. In his own country, he led thousands of people in demonstrations, always preaching non-violence. In 1984 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and later chaired South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine apartheid-era crimes.



Martti Ahtisaari

Martti Ahtisaari is former President of the Republic of Finland. A distinguished statesman, he is also a globally respected diplomat and mediator who has played a key role in ending conflicts in Aceh, Kosovo and Northern Ireland. As a senior diplomat he helped Namibia to achieve independence and was made an honorary citizen. In recognition of “his important efforts, on several continents and over more than three decades, to resolve international conflicts,” he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2008. He is Chair of CMI (Crisis Management Initiative).



Mary Robinson

Mary Robinson was the first woman President of Ireland and is a former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. As an academic, legislator and barrister, she sought to use law as an instrument for social change. A tireless advocate for justice, she was President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative from 2002-10, and now leads efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable populations in the world do not disproportionately suffer the effects of climate change. She is Chair of the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice.

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](#), [Ela Bhatt](#), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) (Chair). [Kofi Annan](#) has temporarily recused himself following his appointment as UN/Arab League Joint Special Envoy on the Syrian crisis. [Nelson Mandela](#) is an honorary Elder.

For biographies of the Elders, blogs, photos, videos and more information about their work please go to www.theElders.org.

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