

## **The Elders warn against political violence in Burundi and urge free, transparent elections**

11 March 2015

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

LONDON - The Elders express their concern about growing tensions in **Burundi** ahead of presidential elections scheduled for June.

*“The Elders call on all the political actors in Burundi to abide by the spirit and letter of the Arusha Accords in support of the national interest,”* said **Kofi Annan**, Chair of The Elders.

The Arusha Accords of 1993 brought to an end 10 years of civil war in Burundi that caused some 300,000 deaths. They were facilitated by **Nelson Mandela**, the founder of The Elders, and this means the Elders feel a special sense of concern for their integrity.

The Elders are concerned that any failure to respect the central provisions of the Accords, especially presidential term limits, would undermine the trust of the Burundian people in the agreements, which could seriously threaten the peace and stability of the country.

They urge all the national political actors to implement the 2013 “road map for the 2015 elections”, which underscores the need for a security environment that enables, inter alia: free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections; the right for all political parties to campaign unhindered; the acceptance of election results; and the proscription of violence.

The Elders condemn in particular any attempts to incite young people to engage in politically motivated violence and urge full respect for the recently signed charter on non-violence.

Finally, the Elders encourage the people and leaders of Burundi to work together with the international community to ensure that the 2015 elections serve to entrench democracy and bolster peace and stability, preconditions for the country’s future economic development.

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### **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](#), [Kofi Annan](#) (Chair), [Ela Bhatt](#), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#) (Deputy Chair), [Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#), [Hina Jilani](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Desmond Tutu](#) is an honorary Elder.

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### **Find out more**

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

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