

The Elders call for credible and fair presidential elections in Burundi

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders call on the Government of Burundi to take the necessary measures to ensure that the forthcoming presidential election is a credible one that meets accepted standards in compliance with the *African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance*. The Charter was signed by Burundi in June 2007 and has been adopted by many other African states.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders and former UN Secretary-General said:

“Only an inclusive, transparent and fair process can restore stability to Burundi. Failing this, the election will likely worsen, rather than resolve, the political crisis. It would certainly not confer the legitimacy needed to heal the deep divisions that now trouble the country.”

The Elders believe that the conditions under which the election is held will be critical to its success. The date should therefore be determined in a consensual manner by the parties.

To help create the necessary conditions, The Elders call for political dialogue to be resumed, political prisoners released, the media allowed to operate freely, and youth militia disarmed. All political parties must be permitted to campaign without fear of intimidation and international election observers given unimpeded access.

These are the basic prerequisites for a free and fair election and for establishing the legitimacy of any future government, and ensuring the stability and prosperity of the country.

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

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