

The Elders urge UN Security Council to defuse tensions seriously affecting UN mission in Western Sahara

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders are deeply concerned by the current tensions that are seriously hampering the operations of the United Nations Mission in the Western Sahara (MINURSO). The presence of the Mission, which was established by the Security Council in 1991, has helped to prevent the recurrence of violent conflict in the area of its deployment. They urge the Council, therefore, to help defuse these tensions and restore confidence so that the vital work of the Mission can continue without disruption.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders, appealed to the parties directly concerned to exercise maximum restraint, adding that:

“MINURSO peacekeepers have strived to fulfil the mandate given to the Mission by the Security Council. All parties, led by the Security Council members, must cooperate in a spirit of goodwill and do their utmost to prevent these tensions from escalating further to the detriment of MINURSO and its mandate.”

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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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