

## The Elders urge SADC leaders to support smooth transition in Zimbabwe

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders have called on the heads of state of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to consider how they can support a successful and inclusive transition in Zimbabwe that will return stability and growth to the country.

Writing to SADC member states ahead of the regional group's summit in Swaziland later this month, The Elders noted that Zimbabwe is "on the verge of an important transition" which, if handled well, could lead to a peaceful and democratic change of leadership and a renewed focus on social and economic development.

The letter was co-signed by [Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders, Archbishop [Desmond Tutu](#), former Chair, who is now an Honorary Elder, and [Graça Machel](#), the co-founder of The Elders with her late husband, [Nelson Mandela](#).

"We firmly believe that a successful transition is vital not only for Zimbabwe but also for the region [...] we are also convinced that, if the transition process is to succeed, it must be inclusive, transparent and framed in the national interest," the three Elders wrote. The Elders believe the upcoming summit is an important opportunity to reflect on how best SADC can help Zimbabwe manage the complex challenges ahead.

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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), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

[Fernando Henrique Cardoso](#), [Jimmy Carter](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) are Honorary Elders.

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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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