

The Elders mourn the loss of Kofi Annan

LONDON, 18 August 2018

The Elders are shocked and deeply saddened at the passing of their dear friend and colleague [Kofi Annan](#), who was the globally admired and respected Chair of The Elders.

A founding member of The Elders, Kofi Annan succeeded Archbishop Desmond Tutu as Chair in May 2013. He played a vital role in leading The Elders' work, and was a voice of great authority and wisdom in public and private, most recently on visits to South Africa and Zimbabwe in July 2018.

As the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1997 to 2006, he was a constant advocate for human rights, development and the rule of law. The first Secretary-General to reach the post from within an organisation he served for over 40 years, Kofi Annan had a life-long commitment to the cause of peace and was known for his staunch opposition to military aggression, notably the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The great respect for him and his essential work was illustrated when he, together with the United Nations as a whole, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001.

[Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), Deputy Chair of The Elders, said:

"We are devastated at the loss of our dear friend and fellow Elder. Kofi was a strong and inspiring presence to us all, and The Elders would not be where it is today without his leadership. Throughout his life, Kofi worked unceasingly to improve the lives of millions of people around the world. While we mourn his passing today, we resolve as Elders to continue to uphold his values and legacy into the future".

In retirement, Kofi Annan continued where he had left off at the United Nations, founding and leading the work of the Kofi Annan Foundation, based in Geneva, and maintaining a hectic international schedule. His quiet advice on how best to defuse impending crises was in constant demand from all corners of the globe, in particular from Africa.

All of the Elders and their Advisory Council and staff team members send their heartfelt condolences to Kofi's family: his wife Nane, his children and grandchildren. They have lost a devoted husband, father and grandfather.

The world has lost an inspiring figure – but one whose achievements will never be forgotten, and whose commitment to peace and justice will endure to inspire future generations.

ENDS

Media enquiries

William French, Head of Communications, The Elders
T: +44 7795 693903
media@theElders.org

Sign up to [receive The Elders' press releases](#).

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), [Ban Ki-moon](#), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#) (Deputy Chair), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#), [Mary Robinson](#) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

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

Find out more

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

Follow The Elders on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Flickr](#) and [YouTube](#).