

## Former world leaders launch discussion on COVID-19 and global leadership with new podcast collaboration

**LONDON, 15 May 2020**

The Elders today announced their first ever podcast initiative, exploring the need for empathetic and principled leadership in the time of COVID-19.

Finding Humanity is a joint podcast production of the Humanity Lab Foundation and Human Group Media for which The Elders will partner on four special edition episodes. The first Elders' episode features an in-depth discussion between two former UN High Commissioners for Human Rights, Mary Robinson and Zeid Raad Al Hussein, and is released today, 15 May 2020.

[Listen to the first Elders' podcast episode.](#)

Founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007, The Elders is a group of former world leaders dedicated to peace, justice and human rights. The Finding Humanity podcast collaboration is a first for the group, who hope to provoke new thinking about how we respond to COVID-19 and shape the global recovery.

In discussions recorded exclusively for the podcast, the Chair of The Elders and former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, talks candidly to world leaders about the ethical challenges of decision-making, the wider consequences of the pandemic response, and how we can build back a better world.

Joined by the podcast host Hazami Barmada, Mary Robinson talks in depth to other Elders, including:

- Former President of Colombia and Nobel Peace Laureate, Juan Manuel Santos, on peace building, climate change and lessons for the post COVID-19 world
- Former President of Liberia and Nobel Peace Laureate, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, on women's leadership in the pandemic and the future of development in Africa

- Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad Al Hussein, on human rights and protecting the most vulnerable during and after the crisis.

The special editions will run alongside nine other episodes in the inaugural season of Finding Humanity which explore the personal experiences of those living on the frontline of the issues addressed in the Elders' discussions.

Both The Elders and the Humanity Lab Foundation hope the podcast will be a must-listen for those interested in the lessons we can all learn from past crises, and how we can apply these to the difficult decisions needed to navigate the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Mary Robinson](#), Chair of The Elders and former President of Ireland, said:

*“Dialogue matters at this critical time and the Finding Humanity podcast encourages critical conversations. It asks; how can we learn from the past to address the challenges of today and tomorrow? How do we put peace, justice and human rights at the heart of decision-making in these troubled times?”*

*“The Elders are proud to collaborate with the Humanity Lab Foundation to explore these vital questions. World leaders, policy makers, civil society groups and all those seeking to shape a fairer world have an opportunity to take decisions that will help us build a better world together. The Finding Humanity podcast is all about how we make those decisions.”*

Hazami Barmada, podcast host and founder of The Humanity Lab Foundation, said:

*“In today’s complex political and social climate, people are looking for leadership and answers to the injustices they see unfolding around them. Our partnership with The Elders allows us to continue to peel back the layers that surround today’s complex challenges including the refugee crisis, racial discrimination, war, genocide and homophobia, with hopes of inspiring hope, empathetic leadership and action.”*

*“Finding Humanity launches at a time when people are also struggling to understand the impacts and wider consequences of the COVID19 pandemic, and what many are referring to as the ‘new normal’. We hope this podcast and collaboration will help create thought-leadership on how to move forward.”*

[Finding Humanity](#) is available on major podcast platforms including: [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Breaker](#).

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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 [Ban Ki-moon](#) (Deputy Chair), [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), [Gro Harlem Brundtland](#), [Zeid Raad Al Hussein](#), [Hina Jilani](#), [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf](#), [Ricardo Lagos](#), [Graça Machel](#) (Deputy Chair), [Juan Manuel Santos](#), [Mary Robinson](#) (Chair) and [Ernesto Zedillo](#).

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

[Kofi Annan](#) (1938-2018) was a founding member of The Elders and served as Chair from 2013 to 2018.

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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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