

## **Carter, Brahimi and Ahtisaari welcome US efforts to restart Israeli-Palestinian peace talks**

**The Elders also warn that sending more weapons to Syria will only deepen the crisis**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Concluding a 3-day visit to [Washington DC](#) and [London](#), The Elders today warmly welcomed the tireless efforts of US Secretary of State John Kerry to restart direct peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.

They also warned that there is no military solution in Syria and that only dialogue between all parties concerned can bring about an end to the war.

In Washington, the Elders' delegation, including former President of Finland [Martti Ahtisaari](#), UN-Arab League peace envoy to Syria and former Algerian Foreign Minister [Lakhdar Brahimi](#) and former US President [Jimmy Carter](#), was briefed by US Secretary of State **John Kerry** about his plans to bring Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table. The Elders also met President Obama's National Security Advisor **Susan Rice** and US policy experts, including at the **Brookings Institution**. In London, they met British Foreign Secretary **William Hague**.

Martti Ahtisaari, Lakhdar Brahimi and Jimmy Carter took part in a public event at the **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace** (Washington DC) on Monday. This evening, they will speak at **Chatham House** (London) to discuss the future of the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Syrian crisis.

[Martti Ahtisaari](#), former President of Finland, said:

*"We were impressed by Secretary Kerry's tireless commitment to bringing Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table after five years of stalemate. The United States' reengagement in the region is a welcome development.*

*"All conflicts can be resolved. But as Elders, we know that the negotiations ahead will be difficult and that there will be bumps on the road. We appreciate the seriousness and urgency of Secretary Kerry's efforts to resume peace talks.*

*"We believe that the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict is at the heart of the instability in the wider Middle East. It is time to help the parties get together and find a permanent solution."*

Former US President [Jimmy Carter](#) said:

*“If Israelis and Palestinians can address the key issue of borders as a priority, based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps, there is hope that the other issues can be resolved.*

*“The Arab League’s recent endorsement of possible adjustments to the 1967 borders, combined with the European Union’s commendable insistence on upholding the illegality of occupied territories, are encouraging signs that complement the current US efforts.*

*“We are confident that progress towards a two-state solution – with a democratic and safe Israel living next door to an independent, free and viable Palestinian state – will be met with overwhelming support by both peoples in the region.”*

Commenting on the Syria crisis, [Lakhdar Brahimi](#), UN-Arab League Joint Special Representative for Syria said:

*“There is no military solution to the Syrian crisis. Sending more weapons to Syria will only deepen the conflict. The flow of arms to both sides must stop.*

*“Media has been reporting over the past months about one side or the other having the upper hand. But neither side is in a position to win the war. And in the meantime, the killing and destruction continue.*

*“We must get out of this vicious cycle through a political process. It is extremely difficult to bring together those who have been killing each other for two years. But more and more people, including the Syrians, are recognising that the only solution to the Syrian catastrophe is an inclusive dialogue with all the countries that have an interest or an influence in this crisis.”*

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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](#).

[Nelson Mandela](#) and [Desmond Tutu](#) are honorary Elders.

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