

The Elders hail Germany's engagement on refugee and migration issues

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders today welcomed Germany's engagement and efforts on refugee and migration issues, and called for greater European and global responsibility-sharing as part of a wider, comprehensive approach.

[Kofi Annan](#), [Martti Ahtisaari](#) and [Lakhdar Brahimi](#) made their call following meetings with German Foreign Minister **Frank-Walter Steinmeier**, Federal President **Joachim Gauck**, business leaders, civil society groups and refugees themselves during the two-day visit to Berlin – the first official visit to Germany by The Elders.

[Kofi Annan](#), Chair of The Elders, said:

"We applaud Germany's leadership on refugees and migration, and the bold decisions taken by Chancellor Merkel, Foreign Minister Steinmeier and the coalition government. These are complex, long-term issues that require far-sighted, compassionate leadership. The answer can never be to erect walls, or to claim that militarised borders or detention of migrants will stem the flow of desperate people."

"We have been heartened by our meetings with political and business leaders, and especially with refugees themselves and the volunteers from all sections of German society who have made such selfless efforts to help people in need."

The Elders also launched a new **report** on refugees and migration during their visit, setting out four key principles that should govern the world's approach to these complex issues. They believe that:

1. Response mechanisms to large flows of people must be developed and properly coordinated, both regionally and internationally.
2. Assistance to major refugee-hosting countries must be enhanced.
3. Resettlement opportunities must be increased, along with additional pathways for admission.
4. Human rights and refugee protection must be upheld and strengthened.

The Elders will continue to advocate these positions at a global level, including at the United Nations General Assembly and Refugee Summit next week in New York, and seek to ensure that the voices of refugees and migrants themselves are heard and respected as part of a truly compassionate, comprehensive policy approach.

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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.

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