

**The Elders mark International Day of the Disappeared with online launch of
*Cyprus: Digging the Past in Search of the Future***

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elders will mark the International Day of the Disappeared (30 August), a day to remember those throughout the world who have disappeared in situations of violence and armed conflict, with the online launch of their documentary, *Cyprus: Digging the Past in Search of the Future*.

In December 2009, three members of The Elders – Lakhdar Brahimi, Jimmy Carter and Desmond Tutu – visited Cyprus, an island that has been divided for over three decades. The film follows the Elders and four young Cypriots as they learn about a difficult and painful issue: the search for thousands of people from the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities who ‘disappeared’ during violence and conflict in the 1960s and 1970s.

As Desmond Tutu says in the film: “Everywhere in the world when somebody has been killed or disappeared, they all have the same longing: what happened to our loved ones? All of them want to know.”

The documentary is now available to watch in full and free of charge [on The Elders’ website](#). Subtitled versions of the film (Greek and Turkish) are also available. The film is accompanied by a discussion pack to encourage debate about the issues raised in the film. Other resources include blogs by the Elders and the Cypriots who took part in the film, as well as Baroness Glenys Kinnock from the UK – see below for more information.

The Elders hope that this film will help current and future generations of Cypriots to better understand the painful experiences and memories of their families and communities, and that dialogue and understanding may eventually help to heal the wounds of the past.

Ultimately, the film aims to prompt discussion on how communities can move forward following violence and division to build lasting a peace, an issue that is applicable not only to Cyprus but to post-conflict societies around the world.

About the film

“*Cyprus: Digging the Past in Search of the Future*” is a 36-minute documentary film, made by Cypriot film makers for The Elders Foundation. The Elders wish to thank the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, the Cyprus Friendship Programme and all those who cooperated in the making of the film.

The documentary was launched in February 2011 with special screenings in Nicosia and at the UK Houses of Parliament and has been broadcast on television to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot audiences.

Watch the film and download accompanying resources

Please find additional resources on the Elders' website:

- WATCH the film: [English](#) | [Greek](#) | [Turkish](#)
- DISCUSSION GUIDE: [English](#) | [Greek](#) | [Turkish](#)
- ELDERS BLOG by Desmond Tutu: [Forgiving, not forgetting](#)
- BLOG by Cypriot students who feature in the film:
 - o Michael Panayi: [Crossing borders with friendship](#)
 - o Idil Cazimoglu: [Born into conflict, building peace](#)
- TRAILER: [Cyprus: Digging the Past in Search of the Future](#)
- PHOTOS: [The making of The Elders' documentary](#)

About The Elders

The Elders is an independent group of global leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela in 2007, who work together for peace and human rights.

The Elders are Martti Ahtisaari, Kofi Annan, Ela Bhatt, Lakhdar Brahimi, Gro Brundtland, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Jimmy Carter, Graça Machel, Mary Robinson and Desmond Tutu (Chair). Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi 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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