**Eminent figures urge global effort to help free kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls**

***Desmond Tutu, Bill and Melinda Gates, AlikoDangote, Rupert Murdoch, Mo Ibrahim, Ted Turner and François-Henri Pinaultamong global business, civil society and religious leaders calling for urgent action and resources to #BringBackOurGirls***

*May 8, 2014*

A group ofover 40 eminent individuals from around the world are today calling for a global effort to free the more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls who were kidnapped last month.

In an open letter published today, the high level group of business, civil society and religious leaders, calls on the Nigerian authorities and international community to mobilise all necessary resources and expertise to help locate and free the missing girls.

The letter says:

***“On April 14, more than 200 schoolgirls were abducted at gunpoint from Chibok community in Borno State, Nigeria.***

***24 days later, the girls are still missing.***

***We urge all local, national and regional governments, with the full support of the international community, to dedicate their expertise and resources - from satellite imagery to intelligence services to multinational corporations' supply chains - to #BringBackOurGirls.”***

Signed by:

* **Mar‎ttiAhtisaari,** Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Member of the Elders
* **Mohamed Azab**, Representative of the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar
* **Aïcha Bah Diallo**, ‎Chairperson of the Forum of African Women Educationalists
* **Ela Bhatt**, Founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association of India and Member of the Elders
* **Bono,** Co-founder, ONE
* **Richard Branson**, Founder of the Virgin Group‎ and co-Chair of the B Team
* **Gro Harlem Brundtland**, Executive Chair of the UN Foundation and Member of the Elders‎
* **Susan A Buffett**,Chairman of The Sherwood Foundation, the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation and the Buffett Early Childhood Fund
* **Kathy Calvin**, President and CEO of the UN Foundation and B Team Leader
* **President Fernando H Cardoso**, Former President of Brazil and Member of the Elders
* **Helen Clark**, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and Former Prime Minister of New Zealand
* **Aliko and Halima Dangote**, Dangote Group
* **Bineta Diop**, African Union Special Envoy for Women Peace and Security
* **Andrew Forrest**, ‎Founder of the Walk Free Foundation
* **Bill and Melinda Gates**,co-Founders and co-Chairs of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
* **Helene Gayle**, ‎President and CEO of CARE USA
* **Mort Halperin**, Senior Advisor to the Open Society Institute and the Open Society Policy Center
* **Arianna Huffington**, Chair, President and Editor-in-Chief of the Huffington Post Media Group‎, and B Team leader
* **Mo and Hadeel Ibrahim**‎, Mo Ibrahim Foundation
* **Abdoulie Janneh**, Former Executive-Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
* **Guilherme Leal**, ‎co-Founder of Natura and B Team Leader
* **GraçaMachel**, ‎Member of the Elders
* **Mark Malloch-Brown**, Former United Nations Deputy Secretary-General
* **Strive Masiyiwa**, ‎Founder of Econet Wireless and B Team Leader
* **PhumzileMlambo-Ngcuka**, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women
* **Amina J Mohamed**, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advisor
* **Festus Mogae,** former President of Botswana, Chairperson of the Coalition for Dialogue on Africa
* **Rupert Murdoch**, Chairman of NewsCorp and Chairman and CEO of 21st Century Fox
* **Jay Naidoo**, Chair of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
* **NgoziOkonjo-Iweala**, Finance Minister of Nigeria
* **Ronald Perelman**, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of MacAndrews & Forbes Holdings Inc.
* **François-Henri Pinault**, ‎Chairman and CEO of Kering and B Team Leader
* **Paul Polman**, CEO of Unilever‎ and B Team Leader
* **Mary Robinson**, ‎Former President of Ireland and Member of the Elders‎
* **Salim Ahmed Salim**, Former Secretary-General‎ of the Organisation of African Unity‎
* **ToyinSaraki**, Founder of the Wellbeing Foundation
* **Bobby Shriver**, Co-founder and Chairman of (PRODUCT) RED and Co-founder of DATA
* **Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo**, Bishop-Chancellor, Pontifical Academy of Sciences, The Vatican
* **Ted Turner**,‎ Founder and Chairman of the UN Foundation and Founder of CNN
* **Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu**, Honorary Member of the Elders ‎
* **Muhammad Yunus**,‎ Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and B Team Leader
* **President Ernesto Zedillo**, Former President of Mexico and Member of the Elders
* **JochenZeitz**, ‎Former Chairman and CEO of PUMA and co-Chair of the B Team‎
* **Ndioro Ndiaye,** coordonnatrice du  **Réseau Francophone pour l’égalité femme/homme**
* **Justine Diffo,** Chair of the Civil Society Advisory Group, UN WOMEN, Cameroon

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Notes to editors:

The open letter has been coordinated by[The B Team](http://www.bteam.org/), [Femmes Africa Solidarité](http://www.fasngo.org/), [Mo Ibrahim Foundation](http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/), [UN Foundation](http://www.unfoundation.org/)and [Walk Free Foundation](http://www.walkfreefoundation.org/)