



Global
Leadership
Foundation

GLF OVERVIEW

November 2025

Helping Leaders Govern

Overview

A global network of former senior governmental leaders offering private, discreet advice to current Heads of Government.



Supports effective political leadership and good governance.

An independent, not-for-profit organisation registered in Switzerland, founded in 2004 by Nobel Laureate FW de Klerk.

Mission

GLF exists to support political leadership and good governance by making available the experience of former leaders to today's national leaders. GLF works discreetly and in confidence.

Description

GLF is a network built around its 44 Members, all former Heads of State or Government or other distinguished leaders with first-hand experience of the difficulties of political leadership. Members contribute as private individuals, motivated by a desire to help current leaders tackle challenges similar to those they once faced.

Avoiding the spotlight, Members typically work in small teams to give private and objective advice on specific issues of concern to Heads of Government. GLF's approach is based on strict confidentiality that ensures that, if a leader is helped to take a successful initiative, he or she can assume the credit for it, strengthening and reinforcing his or her credibility.

Context

Despite having a clear mandate from their electorates and at times even previous experience in public office, political leaders may often still benefit from the discreet advice of former leaders who themselves experienced similar challenges.

While GLF believes in the values of democracy, free markets and the rule of law, it comes with no agenda of its own, or of any government or organisation. The agenda is always set by the 'host' Head of Government, with Members offering impartial advice, given on a peer-to-peer basis, drawing on their own personal experience.

What kind of projects does GLF undertake?

GLF will consider requests from any leader seeking to improve the quality of life for his/her people.

Since its establishment in 2004, GLF has made a definable difference in over two dozen countries through its work on *inter alia*:

- Democratic institutions, effective governance, and transition from authoritarian rule
- Effective election management
- Regional and national security
- Political reconciliation and implementation of international agreements
- Tackling armed resistance movements and terrorist organisations
- Economic reform, resource management and trade
- Access to humanitarian aid

When specialist advice is required, such as in business, banking, finance and the law; the development and exploitation of power generation, mining and agricultural resources; or the adaptation to new technologies, GLF can mobilise outside expertise, drawing on its extensive network of partners and supporters.

Through its projects GLF has developed good relations with the World Bank, IMF, UNDP and many like-minded non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the governance, conflict management and development fields.

Operating Principles

GLF can act on its own initiative, at the invitation of a host government needing advice, at the suggestion of another government, or in partnership with a UN body, international financial institution or like-minded NGO. However, in each case the concurrence of the host government is crucial.

The Foundation's core principles are discretion, trust, integrity, neutrality and independence, and it will only engage with opposition parties with the consent of the Head of Government.

GLF will not publicise the countries in which it operates unless a leader with whom it is working wishes to make GLF's involvement public.

GLF Members

M. Hamid Ansari	India , Vice President 2007-17, Ambassador to the UN 1993-95
Joyce Banda	Malawi , President 2012-14
Barbara Barrett	USA , Secretary of the Air Force 2019-21, Ambassador to Finland 2008-09
Carl Bildt	Sweden , Prime Minister 1991-94, Foreign Minister 2006-14, UN Special Envoy to the Balkans 1999-01
Lakhdar Brahimi	Algeria , Foreign Minister 1991-93, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General 2004-05, UN and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria 2012-14
Micheline Calmy-Rey	Switzerland , President, Swiss Confederation 2007 and 2011, Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs 2003-11
Hikmet Çetin	Turkey , Deputy Prime Minister 1978-79 & 1995, Foreign Minister, 1991-94
Lynda Chalker	UK , Minister of Overseas Development 1989-97
Helen Clark (Chair)	New Zealand , Prime Minister, 1999-08 Administrator, UNDP 2009-17
Joe Clark	Canada , Prime Minister 1979-80, Secretary of State for External Affairs 1984-1991
Chester Crocker	USA , Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs 1981-89
Marzuki Darusman	Indonesia , Attorney General 1999-01, UN Special Rapporteur Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) 2010-16
Alvaro de Soto	Peru , UN Under-Secretary-General 1999-07
Mohamed ElBaradei	Egypt , Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency 1997-09, Interim Vice President 2013
Gareth Evans	Australia , Foreign Minister 1988-96, President and CEO, International Crisis Group 2000-09
Vicente Fox	Mexico , President 2000-06
Louise Fréchette	Canada , UN Deputy Secretary-General 1998-06
Lawrence Gonzi	Malta , Prime Minister 2004-13, Minister of Finance 2004-08
Dalia Grybauskaitė	Lithuania , President 2009-19
Enrique Iglesias	Uruguay , Foreign Minister 1985-88 President, Inter-American Development Bank 1988-05
Donald Kaberuka	Rwanda , Finance Minister 1997-05 President, African Development Bank 2005-15
Enda Kenny	Ireland , Prime Minister 2011-17
John Kufuor	Ghana , President 2001-09
Hervé Ladsous	France , United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations 2011-17
Ricardo Luna	Peru , Minister of Foreign Affairs 2016-18

Donald McHenry	USA , Ambassador to the UN 1979-81
Roelf Meyer	South Africa , Minister of Defense 1991-2; Minister of Constitutional Affairs and Communication 1992-94; Minister of Constitutional Development and Provincial Affairs 1994-96
Marwan Muasher	Jordan , Deputy Prime Minister 2004–05, Foreign Minister 2002–04
Marty Natalegawa	Indonesia , Minister of Foreign Affairs 2009-14
Stephen O'Brien	UK , UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator 2015-17
Ana Palacio	Spain , Foreign Minister 2002-04
Supachai Panitchpakdi	Thailand , Secretary General, UNCTAD 2005-13, Director General, WTO 2002-05, Deputy Prime Minister 1997-03
P.J. Patterson	Jamaica , Prime Minister 1992-06
Thomas Pickering	USA , Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs 1997-00, Ambassador to the UN 1989-92
Jean-Pierre Raffarin	France , Prime Minister 2002-05
George Robertson	UK , Secretary General, NATO 1999-04 Secretary of State for Defence 1997-99
Wolfgang Schäussel	Austria , Federal Chancellor 2000-07, Foreign Minister 1995-00
Helle Thorning Schmidt	Denmark , Prime Minister, 2011-2015
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	Liberia , President 2006-18
Javier Solana	Spain , Secretary General, Council of European Union 1999-09 Secretary General, NATO 1995-99, Foreign Minister 1992-95
Eduardo Stein	Guatemala , Vice President 2004-08, Foreign Minister 1996-00
Elbegdorj Tsakhia	Mongolia , President 2009-17, Prime Minister 1998 and 2004-06
Cassam Uteem	Mauritius , President 1992-02
Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga	Latvia , President 1999-07

How is GLF financed?

GLF is an independent, not-for-profit foundation, funded by corporations, foundations and private individuals. Those who donate above a minimum level are invited to join the GLF International Council.

GLF seeks to recover direct project costs from host governments and has previously received project funding from UNDP, the governments of Canada, Ireland, Finland and Switzerland, the Ford Foundation, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy and the Community of Democracies.

GLF exercises careful judgement to ensure that it does not receive funds from any source which may damage its reputation for probity or its need to preserve the confidentiality and objectivity of its operations. To protect its independence, GLF will not accept support from any one source of more than 10% of its operating budget in any one year.

Members of the International Council can be as active as they wish; the group does not meet formally nor make collective decisions but may be consulted individually, by the CEO and Projects Director of GLF. Members of the International Council are invited to GLF's Annual Meetings where they can actively contribute their specialist knowledge to the Foundation's strategic direction, share their experience from the private sector, and participate in the discussions on GLF's possible contributions to the solution of complex problems.

List of International Council Members

Companies

AIB | AIG | Al Dabbagh | Anglo American | Balbec Capital | BDO | BP
BRICS Access | Cape Classics | Chevron | The D Group | Diageo | Groupe Filatex
Highgate Advisory | HSBC Holdings Group | INEOS | Keelings | KPMG |
Lombard Odier | Mason Hayes & Curran | McKinsey & Company | Meridiam SAS | Moch
Orange | Pallinghurst Group | PricewaterhouseCoopers | Reckitt | Rokos Capital
Management | Saidler & Co | Sanofi | Sky | Tilder | Tobias Jones Consulting | UBS

Foundations

Gates Foundation | Blavatnick Family Foundation | Bloomberg Philanthropies
Carnegie Corporation of New York | Jeremy Coller Foundation | David & Elaine Potter
Foundation | Garfield Weston Foundation | Goergen Foundation | Hassenfeld Family
Foundation | Hintze Family Charitable Foundation | Hunter Foundation | Mordaunt
Foundation | Pears Foundation | Stern Steward Institute | Wilson Foundation

Individuals

John Anderson | Lord Ashcroft | Barbara Barrett | Bill Benz | Sir Victor Blank
Stephen Brenninkmeijer | Ronald Cohen | Sir Andrew Cook | Chester Crocker
Jeffrey Cunningham | Benjamin Curley | David Dangoor | Sir Mick Davis
Geoffrey de Jager | Jan-Hendrik Erasmus | David Grose | Ian Hannam | Alan Hassenfeld
Leo Hindery, Jr. | Neville Isdell | Frank Islam | Annalisa Jenkins | M. Albin Jubitz, Jr.
Natie Kirsh | Lord Laidlaw | Katie Lincoln | Mohammed Malique | Margarita Louis Dreyfus
Lord Lupton | David Miller | Alexander Moczarski | Ronnie Ntuli | Frederik Paulsen
Shabir Randeree | Sean and Sarah Reynolds | Xavier Rolet | Eliane & Jacques Rossier
Erik Roussel | Wayne Safro | Jeffrey Schoenfeld | Joachim Schoss | Mark Shuttleworth
Analjit Singh | Guy Spier | Oren Taylor | Lord Verjee | Kathleen Wade

How is GLF governed?

GLF is governed by a Board of Directors (appointed by GLF Members) and a small Secretariat based in London which is responsible for the coordination of the organisation's activities.

GLF is registered in the Canton of Berne, Switzerland. It has two associate Foundations: GLF (USA), a 501(c)(3) Foundation registered in Delaware, USA; and GLF (UK), a charity registered in England and Wales.

GLF BOARD

Helen Clark (Chair)	New Zealand, former Prime Minister
Victor Blank (Vice Chair)	UK, former Chairman of Lloyds Banking Group
Barbara Barrett	USA, Secretary of Air Force
Micheline Calmy-Rey	Switzerland, former President
Joe Clark	Canada, former Prime Minister
Chester Crocker	USA, former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa
Louise Fréchette	Canada, former UN Deputy Secretary-General
Thomas Pickering	USA, former Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs
Eduardo Stein	Guatemala, former Vice President

GLF (USA) BOARD

Joe Clark (Chair)
Jim Keppler (President)
Chester Crocker
Robert Fulton
Don McHenry
Thomas Pickering

GLF (UK) BOARD

Seamus Smyth (Chair)
Stuart Brooks
Robert Fulton
John Shepherd

PATRONS

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal	Jordan
Pascal Couchepin	Switzerland
Elita de Klerk	South Africa
Chandrika Kumaratunga	Sri Lanka
Ricardo Lagos	Chile
Anand Panyarachun	Thailand
Lech Walesa	Poland
Ernesto Zedillo	Mexico

GLF SECRETARIAT

Robert Fulton	CEO
Amitav Banerji	Projects Director
Peter Osborn	Head of Operations
Victoire Montet	Executive Administrator
Lucinda Groves	Corporate Liaison

Contact Details

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