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December 11, 2008

Ahtisaari officially receives Nobel Peace prize

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Former Kosovo status talks mediator Martti Ahtisaari officially received on Wednesday in Oslo the Nobel Peace Prize.

Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaci said "the Nobel Peace Prize accorded to President Ahtisaari is a prize given to the right person, to the man ... who contributed so much for global peace and especially for the cause of Kosovo."

Speaking ahead of the ceremony, Ahtisaari said that the "process of Kosovo's independence is irreversible" and that he is "satisfied with the fact that more than 50 countries have recognized it."

The so-called Ahtisaari plan, a blueprint for the province's supervised independence, was never accepted at the UN, due to objections from Russia and Serbia.

In an article dedicated to this year's laureate, Reuters says that "he was the architect of a EU-backed plan for Kosovo independence."

Kosovo Albanians unilaterally declared independence in February, which Belgrade immediately rejected as illegal.

Ahead of the ceremony, Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize Committee Ole Danbolt Mjoes told the Belgrade daily Politika in an interview that Ahtisaari "is controversial", but that he also "deserving of the award".

"Ahtisaari arrived to his own conclusion on Kosovo, which was not generally accepted, so he had to say that his mission was over. Still, more than fifty states supported Kosovo's independence. He did a great thing in Namibia, as well as in Aceh. There's still work to be done in Kosovo, that is true," Mjoes said.