

Martti Ahtisaari

Former President of the Republic of Finland



Mr. Ahtisaari was elected President of the Republic of Finland in February 1994. He held office from the 1st of March 1994 to the 29th of February 2000. Upon leaving office, Mr. Ahtisaari founded Crisis Management Initiative, where he is the Chairman of the Board. Between 2000 and 2008 Martti Ahtisaari has taken various tasks involved in peace mediation and conflict resolution. In 2005 he facilitated the peace process between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement. Between 14 November 2005 and 29 February 2008 Mr. Ahtisaari acted as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the future status process for Kosovo. Martti Ahtisaari was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in December 2008.

Professional History:

Martti Ahtisaari has served most of his career as a civil servant in the Finnish Foreign Ministry and the United Nations.

Various posts in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1965-1973

Ambassador of Finland to the United Republic of Tanzania, 1973-1976, accredited to Zambia, Somalia and Mozambique, 1975- 1976

Member of the Senate of the UN Institute for Namibia, 1975-1976

United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, 1977-1981

Special Representative of the Secretary General for Namibia, 1978-1988

Under-Secretary of State in charge of International Development Co-operation in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1984-1986

Under-Secretary General in the UN for Administration and Management 1987-1991, leading the UN operation (UNTAG) in Namibia, 1989-1990

State Secretary in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1991-1993

Chairman of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Working Group of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, 1992-1993, and as Special Adviser to the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia and to the Secretary General's Special Representative for former Yugoslavia in 1993

In 1999, during the time he still served as the President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari facilitated together with the former Prime-Minister of Russia Victor Chernomyrdin and the US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, the withdrawal of the Yugoslav/Serbian military and security forces from Kosovo and the establishment there of the international security and civil presence.

President of the Republic of Finland, 1994-2000

Post – presidential tasks

After leaving the office of the President, Martti Ahtisaari founded an NGO, Crisis Management Initiative. Most of his post-presidential tasks have dealt with conflict resolution, crisis management and peace mediation.

Drafting of a report on the human rights and political situation in Austria as a member of a group of "three wise men" in 2000

Inspector of the IRA's arms dumps with fellow inspector Cyril Ramaphosa, 2000

Chair of an independent panel on the security and safety of UN personnel in Iraq, 2003

Personal Envoy of the OSCE CiO for Central Asia, 2003-2004

UN Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, 2003-2005

Facilitator in the peace process between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement in 2005. The process led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that ended the three decade-long conflict in Aceh.

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the future status process for Kosovo, 2005-2008

Current tasks

Chairman of the Board, Crisis Management Initiative

Co-Chair in European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

Chairman of the Independent Commission on Turkey examining the challenges and opportunities presented by Turkey's possible membership of the European Union

Director-At-Large of the ImagineNations Group and member of the Board of Trustees of Silatech

Member of the Elders

Member of the Prize Committee of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation

Member of the Board, East-West Institute

Member of the International Senior Advisory Board of West Asia North Africa (WANA) Regional forum

Chairman of the supervisory board of the Finnish National Opera.

Education

Mr Ahtisaari graduated from the University of Oulu, Finland in 1959 and received an Honorary Doctorate (Pedagogy) from his university in 1989. He holds 23 Honorary Doctorates from different fields all over the world.

Awards

President Ahtisaari has received numerous awards and decorations:

Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Award in 2000

The Hessen Peace Prize in 2000

The J. William Fulbright Award for International Understanding in 2000

Tribute of Appreciation by the Department of the State of the USA in 2005

The Gold Medal from the American-Scandinavian Foundation in 2006

Manfred Wörner Medal of the German Ministry of Defense in 2007

UNESCO Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize, 2008

Nobel Peace Prize, 2008

In 2002 he was appointed as an Honorary Officer in the Order of Australia. In 2004 he was awarded with the Order of the Companions of Oliver Tambo (Supreme Companion) by South Africa.

Honorary Citizen of Namibia