

2020 Nobel Peace ceremony won't be held in person in Oslo

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World Food Program (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley speaks to the media about the organization's Nobel Peace Prize win, at the airport in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, late Friday, Oct. 9, 2020. Beasley says the Nobel Peace Prize has given the U.N. agency a spotlight and megaphone to warn world leaders that next year is going to be worse than this year, and without billions of dollars "we are going to have famines of biblical proportions in 2021." (AP Photo/Sam Mednick)

The winner of the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize—the World Food Program—and the Norwegian Nobel Committee said Wednesday they have jointly agreed to postpone the in-person award ceremony in Oslo next month because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"With the current restrictions in Oslo, it would not be possible to carry out the ceremony or other parts of the laureate's traditional program in a good and worthy manner," the Nobel Committee said in a statement.

WFP head David Beasley was expected to travel to the Norwegian capital "to receive the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the organization" that won the [prestigious award](#) for efforts to combat hunger. But he will now accept the award during a virtual ceremony on Dec. 10.

The Nobel Peace Prize ceremony usually is held at Oslo City Hall. However, organizers said the event would be a scaled-down affair held at the city's university because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Now, the Norwegian Nobel Committee is planning "a digital award ceremony where the WFP will be presented with the medal and diploma." U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is also expected to attend the virtual forum.

The Oslo-based committee said in a statement that depending on how the pandemic develops, Beasley "will hopefully be able to give the Nobel lecture at the Oslo City Hall next year. Then it should also be possible to hold a Nobel banquet in honor of the World Food Program. As previously announced, this year's banquet has been canceled."

Along with enormous prestige, the [prize](#) comes with a 10-million krona (\$1.1 million) cash award and a gold medal. The ceremony is held every year on Dec. 10, the anniversary of prize founder Alfred Nobel's death.

Earlier this month, the Norwegian government had granted an exemption from its two-week quarantine requirement for arriving visitors so representatives from the winner of the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize could attend the [award](#) ceremony in Oslo.

The government's decision came at the recommendation of Norway's Directorate of Health and National Institute of Public Health, which "consider that the risk of infection is very small" from granting the quarantine waiver, Health Minister Bent Høeie said at the time.

He called the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize "an important event of great national and international interest."

"We want to make it easy for the prize winner to be physically present this year as well. It is important that the event is carried out in a good infection-control manner," Høeie said on Nov. 10.

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