

## Michael Mukasey

81st Attorney General of the United States

Judge Michael Mukasey served as the 81st attorney general of the United States. He oversaw all activities of the Justice Department and advised on critical issues of domestic and international law. As a judge, he also ruled on noteworthy cases like those of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Jose Padilla, and Susan Lindauer. Exclusively represented by [Leading Authorities speakers bureau](#), Mukasey addresses domestic and international law, politics, terrorism and torture, health care, balancing national security with civil liberties, and other legal issues like the death penalty and tort reform in a surprisingly clever and insightful way. He connects the historical dots for his audience so that they understand the context of the issues he's addressing, and his use of personal anecdotes will inspire discussion amongst your audience.

**Attorney General.** In 2007, Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) suggested to President Bush that Mukasey would be a good, moderate choice for attorney general. Schumer had previously mentioned Mukasey as a possible nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court and said that Mukasey is "legally excellent, ideologically moderate," and "has shown a commitment to the rule of law." Judge Michael Mukasey replaced Alberto Gonzales as the attorney general later that same year. The second Jewish attorney general in U.S. history, Mukasey's term ended when the Obama administration took office.

**Judicial Background.** While on the bench, Mukasey handled numerous high-profile terrorism cases, including the trial of Omar Abdel Rahman, the so-called "blind sheikh," El Sayyid Nosair, and the case's other co-defendants. They were convicted of a wide-ranging conspiracy that included the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center and a plot to blow up several New York landmarks. Judge Mukasey also ruled on the case of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen who had been detained as an "enemy combatant" due to his alleged involvement in al-Qaeda. Padilla was arrested on a material witness warrant and believed to have returned to the U.S. in order to detonate a high-radiation bomb and to blow up apartment buildings. Mukasey was also the judge on the Susan Lindauer case. Lindauer was a journalist at the *U.S. News and World Report* who was arrested in 2004 on charges of working as an agent for the Iraqi government. Deemed incompetent to stand trial, she was forcibly administered sedative antipsychotic drugs until Mukasey ruled the forced medication unconstitutional.

Michael Mukasey graduated from Yale Law School in 1967. He practiced law for 20 years in New York City, serving four years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the southern district of New York. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan nominated Mukasey as a federal judge for that same district. He served as a judge for 18 years, including tenure as chief judge from 2000 until 2006. In that district, he also worked heavily with Rudy Giuliani.

**Post-Attorney General Career.** Mukasey taught at Columbia Law School in 1993 and has taught there every spring semester since. He is also a partner at the New York firm Debevoise & Plimpton, where he is a member of the litigation department. Mukasey focuses his practice primarily on internal investigations, independent board reviews, and corporate governance.