

## Nicholas Burns

Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and Former Highest-Ranking Member of the Foreign Service

Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns is one of the country's most articulate spokespeople on globalization and U.S. foreign policy, earning respect as a nonpartisan expert on public diplomacy and world affairs. Over the course of his illustrious, 27-year career, he played a leadership role in U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East and Asia and was the nation's top career diplomat as under secretary of state for political affairs from 2005–2008. He served three presidents: George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush. Burns speaks with candor and passion about his position at the forefront of American foreign relations and policy and offers a big-picture perspective of our country's position on the world stage.

**The Future of Foreign Policy.** Ambassador Burns provides unparalleled expertise in his presentations on topics ranging from globalization and America's future in global leadership to how India and China's rise to power affects the global economy. He believes that America's prosperity and security depend on our taking into account the world's concerns; delivering a positive, hopeful image; participating constructively in international organizations (emphasizing multilateralism); and becoming a more energized, enlightened, and effective global leader.

**Day-to-Day Diplomat.** As under secretary (the nation's third-ranking official), Burns oversaw the bureaus responsible for U.S. policy in each region of the world and served in the senior career foreign service position at the Department. Among his many accomplishments are shepherding negotiations of the first civil nuclear energy agreement with India; leading negotiations with China, Russia, and Europe on the Iran nuclear crisis; and helping forge an agreement with Brazil on the development of biofuels. He also negotiated a long-term military assistance agreement with Israel.

Before serving as under secretary, Burns worked for five years on the National Security Council at the White House where he was first the director for Soviet (and then Russian) affairs and then the senior director for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia affairs. As the State Department spokesman, he became a household name during the Bosnian war. In 1997, Burns became the ambassador to Greece, playing a key role in the Kosovo war. In 2001, he was appointed as the ambassador to NATO, where he led efforts to secure support for wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Burns had also previously served in the American Consulate General in Jerusalem, where he coordinated economic assistance to Palestine, and, before that, at the American embassies in Egypt and Mauritania.

**Awards, Professorships, and Boards.** Burns has received 12 honorary degrees, the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award, the Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service from Johns Hopkins, and the Boston College Alumni Achievement Award. He is the Roy and Barbara Goodman Family Professor of Diplomacy and International Relations at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, director of the Future of Diplomacy Project, and faculty chair for programs on the Middle East and South Asia. Additionally, he is the director of the Aspen Strategy Group, senior counselor at the Cohen Group, and vice chairman of the American Ditchley Foundation.