

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Robert and Renée Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs

R. Nicholas Burns
Roy and Barbara Goodman Family Professor
of Diplomacy and International Relations



79 John F. Kennedy Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
tel (617) 496-3255

Ambassador (Ret.) Nicholas Burns is the Roy and Barbara Goodman Family Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Relations at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He is founder and Faculty Director of the Future of Diplomacy Project and Faculty Chair for the Programs on the Middle East and on India and South Asia. He serves on the Board of Directors of the School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and is a Faculty Associate at Harvard's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Burns is Director of the Aspen Strategy Group, Senior Counselor at the Cohen Group, and serves on the Board of Directors of Entegris, Inc. He also serves on the boards of several non-profit organizations, including the Council on Foreign Relations, Special Olympics International, the Diplomacy Center Foundation, the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, The Trilateral Commission, the Richard Lounsbery Foundation, the Atlantic Council, America Abroad Media, the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training, the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, the Boston Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Gennadius Library. From 2014-2017, he was a member of Secretary of State John Kerry's Foreign Affairs Policy Board at the U.S. Department of State. He is Vice Chairman of the American Ditchley Foundation and serves on the Panel of Senior Advisors at Chatham House: the Royal Institute of International Affairs. He is a member of the Committee on Conscience of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. He is also a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Order of Saint John and Red Sox Nation.

Professor Burns served in the United States government for twenty-seven years. As a career Foreign Service Officer, he was Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from 2005 to 2008; the State Department's third-ranking official when he led negotiations on the U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Agreement; a long-term military assistance agreement with Israel; and was the lead U.S. negotiator on Iran's nuclear program. He was U.S. Ambassador to NATO (2001–2005), Ambassador to Greece (1997–2001) and State Department Spokesman (1995–1997). He worked for five years (1990–1995) on the National Security Council at the White House where he was Senior Director for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia Affairs and Special Assistant to President Clinton and Director for Soviet Affairs in the Administration of President George H.W. Bush. Burns also served in the American Consulate General in Jerusalem (1985–1987) where he coordinated U.S. economic assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and before that, at the American embassies in Egypt (1983-1985) and Mauritania (1980 as an intern).

Professor Burns has received fifteen honorary degrees, the Presidential Distinguished Service Award, the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award, the 2017 Ignatian Award from Boston College, 2016 New Englander of the Year from the New England Council, the Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service from the Johns Hopkins University, the Boston College Alumni Achievement Award, and the Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award from Tufts University. He has a BA in History from Boston College (1978), an MA in International Relations from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (1980), and earned the Certificat Pratique de Langue Francaise at the University of Paris-Sorbonne (1977). He was a visiting Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in summer 2008.