



Dennis Ross

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Ambassador Dennis Ross is the counselor and William Davidson Distinguished Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He also teaches at Georgetown University's Center for Jewish Civilization. For more than twelve years, Ambassador Ross played a leading role in shaping U.S. involvement in the Middle East peace process, dealing directly with the parties as the U.S. point man on the peace process in both the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations. He served two and half years as special assistant to President Obama and as National Security Council senior director for the Central Region, spending the first six months of the administration as the special advisor on Iran to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

For more than twelve years, Ambassador Ross played a leading role in shaping U.S. involvement in the Middle East peace process and dealing directly with the parties in negotiations. A highly skilled diplomat, Ambassador Ross was U.S. point man on the peace process in both the George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations. He was instrumental in assisting Israelis and Palestinians to reach the 1995 Interim Agreement; he also successfully brokered the 1997 Hebron Accord, facilitated the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty, and intensively worked to bring Israel and Syria together.

A scholar and diplomat with more than two decades of experience in Soviet and Middle East policy, Ambassador Ross worked closely with Secretaries of State James Baker, Warren Christopher, and Madeleine Albright. Prior to his service as special Middle East coordinator under President Clinton, Ambassador Ross served as director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff in the first Bush administration. In that capacity, he played a prominent role in U.S. policy toward the former Soviet Union, the unification of Germany and its integration into NATO, arms control negotiations, and the 1991 Gulf

War coalition. Ambassador Ross joined the Institute in 2001.

During the Reagan administration, he served as director of Near East and South Asian affairs on the National Security Council staff and deputy director of the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment. Ambassador Ross was awarded the Presidential Medal for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service by President Clinton, and Secretaries Baker and Albright presented him with the State Department's highest award.

A graduate of UCLA, Ambassador Ross wrote his doctoral dissertation on Soviet decisionmaking and served as executive director of the Berkeley-Stanford program on Soviet International Behavior. He received UCLA's highest medal and has been named UCLA alumnus of the year. Ambassador Ross is the author of five books on the peace process, the Middle East, and international relations, most recently [*Be Strong and of Good Courage: How Israel's Most Important Leaders Shaped Its Destiny*](#) (PublicAffairs, 2019), written with his colleague [David Makovsky](#). The book provides profiles of four Israeli prime ministers who made historic choices and explores the lessons from those decisions to see if they can provide a guide to dealing with the fateful choice that Israel's leaders must soon confront or by default become a binational state.

Ambassador Ross has published extensively on the former Soviet Union, arms control, and the greater Middle East, contributing numerous chapters to anthologies. In the 1970s and 1980s, his articles appeared in *World Politics*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Orbis*, *International Security*, *Survival*, and *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Since leaving government at the end of 2011, he has authored op-eds in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and numerous other publications.

Previously, Ambassador Ross authored [*Doomed to Succeed: The U.S.-Israel Relationship from Truman to Obama*](#) (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2015). That book was awarded the 2015 National Jewish Book Award for history. He also coauthored [*Myths, Illusions, and Peace: Finding a New Direction for America in the Middle East*](#) (Viking, 2009) with Mr. Makovsky. An earlier study, [*The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace*](#) (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004), offered comprehensive analytical and personal insight into the Middle East peace process. *The New York Times* praised his 2007 publication, [*Statecraft, And How to Restore America's Standing*](#)

[in the World](#) (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007), as "important and illuminating."