

Roberta Cohen

Roberta Cohen is a nonresident senior fellow in Foreign Policy Brookings. The co-founder and former co-director of the Project on Internal Displacement, Cohen is a specialist in human rights, humanitarian and refugee issues, and a leading expert on internally displaced persons and human rights conditions in North Korea.



Cohen served as senior adviser to the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons from 1994-2010 and as a senior fellow in Foreign Policy at Brookings. She co-authored the first major study on internal displacement, *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement* (Brookings, 1998) with Francis M. Deng, the first Representative of the Secretary-General. The study proposed the creation of an international system for addressing the needs of internally displaced persons. In 2005, she and Deng were co-winners of the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order.

In 2003, she served as a public member of the United States Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and in 1998 as a public member of the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. She has served as a consultant to governments, the UNHCR, the World Bank, the National Academy of Sciences, and non-governmental organizations. During the Carter administration, she served as a deputy assistant secretary of state for human rights in the Department of State and as senior adviser to the U.S. Delegation to the UN Commission on Human Rights and General Assembly. In 1985, she received the United States Information Agency Superior Honor Award for reopening U.S. educational, cultural, and information programs in Ethiopia. She served as honorary secretary of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group (London), executive director of the International League for Human Rights (New York) and UN representative of the International Federation for Human Rights (Paris).

She has published more than 100 articles on human rights and humanitarian issues, and in 2002 was awarded the DACOR Fiftieth Anniversary Award for Exemplary Writing on Foreign Affairs and Diplomacy. In 2005, she received the Washington Academy of Sciences Award for Distinction in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Since 2011, she has been co-chair of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. She is an adjunct associate professor at American University's Washington College of Law and a Senior Associate at Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of International Migration.

She has an honorary doctorate from the University of Bern (Switzerland), an M.A. "with distinction" from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (Washington DC and Bologna, Italy) and a B.A. from Barnard College (Columbia University, New York), where she majored in History and minored in Government, and which awarded her its Distinguished Alumna Award in 2005.