

SUSAN A. THORNTON

Summary

- Senior Fellow and Scholar **promoting informed policy debates and creative problem solving**, providing expert commentary, educating policymakers and stimulating and elevating foreign affairs discussion.
- Former **Senior State Department leader** and **seasoned diplomat** with 30 years of experience in policy-making, public relations, and executive management of overseas and domestic teams in China, Russia and Eurasia.
- Advisor to top U.S. government officials, **worked with foreign counterparts to solve problems** and advance U.S. security and economic interests abroad.

Skills

Executive Leadership

Acting Assistant Secretary for State Department's East Asia Pacific Bureau with more than 10,000 employees in Washington and overseas.

Negotiations

Experienced negotiator specializing in national security and trade and investment issues.

Speaking and Media

Frequent public appearances, press interviews, commentary and congressional testimony on U.S. policy in Asia-Pacific and Europe.

Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Multiple overseas hardship tours involving cross-cultural sensitivity and communication; fluent in Chinese and Russian, conversant in French.

Policy Analysis and Advice

Advised and briefed cabinet-level and other policy makers on strategies and policies to advance U.S. overseas interests.

Writing

Fast, fluid writer for different audiences and purposes, from strategic advising to research analysis and presentations.

Professional Experience

SENIOR FELLOW, PAUL TSAI CHINA CENTER, YALE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL 2018 – current

BUREAU OF EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS Department of State, Washington DC 2014 – 2018

- Launched the administration's "Indo-Pacific Strategy," designed and drove implementation of North Korea and China strategies as Acting Assistant Secretary of State from March 2017
- Led Bureau operations through several transitions, diversified talent base and defended Bureau budget in congressional testimony
- Drove implementation of political results of China dialogues and stabilized relations with Taiwan and Hong Kong

DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENTS IN CHINA, RUSSIA, CAUCUSUS AND CENTRAL ASIA 1991– 2014

- Built relations with a skeptical partner government as Deputy Chief of Mission in Turkmenistan
- Led diplomatic teams in Embassy Beijing and Consulate Chengdu to focus on China's rise, bilateral relations and economic frictions
- Managed \$20 million in cooperative programs with Russian law enforcement in counternarcotics, anti-crime and counterterrorism
- Led U.S. Mission Armenia's political, economic and commercial sections and established the first U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan

RESEARCH ANALYST, FOREIGN POLICY INSTITUTE, JOHNS HOPKINS SAIS Washington, DC 1987– 1991

- Published article on Soviet bureaucratic decision making in *Soviet Studies*; contributed to Henry Nau's *The Myth of America's Decline* and Hedrick Smith's *The New Russians*

Education

MS, EISENHOWER SCHOOL FOR NATIONAL RESOURCE STUDIES National Defense University, Washington, DC 2010

MA, JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES Washington, DC 1991

BA, BOWDOIN COLLEGE, ECONOMICS/RUSSIAN Brunswick, ME 1985