

September 2014



## Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat

Ambassador Eizenstat has held a number of key senior positions, including chief White House domestic policy advisor to President Jimmy Carter (1977-1981); U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury in the Clinton Administration (1993-2001).

In 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry appointed him Special Advisor to the Secretary on Holocaust Issues.

### Subject Area/Topic: 21st Century Challenges

**Highlights:** Ambassador Eizenstat shared aspects of the expertise he has gained during a decade and a half of public service in three US administrations. He spoke of four key challenges:

- The first challenge discussed was the historic shift of power that is taking place from the United States and Europe toward the East and South. By 2050, three-fifths of global output will come from Asia. China will surpass us in economic power by 2030. But it is hampered by being a closed society with corruption, extreme environmental degradation, and a society that is aging faster than ours.
- The second challenge is the digital revolution and globalization. The dark side is terrorism recruitment and cyber warfare, but globalization is a net positive to society. The digital revolution fosters integration, mutual dependence, and creativity. We need to nurture innovative capacity, which has been a historic strength of the United States. Education is key. At home, we need to keep up our educational emphasis on STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math), but adopt the German apprenticeship system which leads directly to jobs; we're way behind European educational innovation.
- The third challenge addressed was climate change, which will profoundly alter our planet. We are reaching the tipping point to avoid disaster.
- The final challenge which Ambassador Eizenstat discussed is the clash of cultures in the Middle East. Loyalties there are to tribe and sect, not to a nation. Arab nations are swamped with 1/3 of the population being under 25 with no job or educational opportunities. The rise of ISIS reflects a massive intelligence failure; it has become a real threat to Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Homegrown European Muslims are going to these countries to fight, and are returning even more radicalized. We must degrade, marginalize, and defeat ISIS, but that is a tall order.