

Susan Rice

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Susan Elizabeth Rice (born November 17, 1964) is an American diplomat, former Brookings Institution fellow, and the current United States Ambassador to the United Nations. Rice served on the staff of the National Security Council and as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during President Bill Clinton's second term. Rice was confirmed as UN ambassador by the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent on January 22, 2009. She is the first Jamaican-American woman to hold that office.

Rice's name was mentioned as a possible replacement for retiring Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2013 after President Barack Obama's November 2012 re-election,^{[1][2]} but on December 13, following ongoing controversy related to the 2012 Benghazi attack on the U.S consulate, she announced that she was withdrawing her name from consideration saying that if nominated "the confirmation process would be lengthy, disruptive, and costly."^[3]

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Early life and education

Rice was born in Washington, D.C.,^[4] to Emmett J. Rice (1919–2011), Cornell University economics professor and the second black governor of the Federal Reserve System,^[4] and education policy scholar Lois (née Dickson) Fitt, currently at the Brookings Institution.^[5] Her maternal grandparents were Jamaican.^[6] Her parents divorced during her

Susan Rice



27th United States Ambassador to the United Nations

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 22, 2009

President Barack Obama

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Preceded by Zalmay Khalilzad

12th Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

In office

October 9, 1997 – January 20, 2001

President Bill Clinton

Preceded by George Moose

Succeeded by Walter Kansteiner

Personal details

Born Susan Elizabeth Rice
November 17, 1964
Washington, D.C., U.S.

Political party Democratic Party

Alma mater Stanford University
New College, Oxford

youth.

Rice was a three-sport athlete, student council president, and valedictorian at National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C., a private girls' day school.^[7] She played point guard in basketball and directed the offense, acquiring the nickname Spo, short for "Sportin'".^[7]

Rice said that her parents taught her to "never use race as an excuse or advantage," and as a young girl she "dreamed of becoming the first U.S. senator from the District of Columbia."^[4] She also held "lingering fears" that her accomplishments would be diminished by people who attributed them to affirmative action.^[4] After her father's death in 2011, she said, "He believed segregation had constrained him from being all he could be. The psychological hangover of that took him decades to overcome. His most fervent wish was that we not have that psychological baggage."

Rice attended Stanford University, where she received a Truman Scholarship, and graduated with a B.A. in history in 1986. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.^{[8][9]}

Awarded a Rhodes Scholarship, Rice attended New College, Oxford, where she earned a M.Phil. in 1988 and D.Phil. in 1990. The Chatham House-British International Studies Association honored her dissertation entitled, "Commonwealth Initiative in Zimbabwe, 1979-1980: Implication for International Peacekeeping" as the UK's most distinguished in international relations.^{[4][10]}

Marriage, family, and early career

Rice married Canadian-born ABC News producer Ian Officer Cameron^[11] in 1992 at the St. Albans School chapel.^[12] They met as students at Stanford.^[13] They have two children.^{[7][8][14]}

Rice was a foreign policy aide to Michael Dukakis during the 1988 presidential election. She was a management consultant at McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm, from mid-1990 when she received her degree from Oxford to early 1992 when she worked for the Clinton campaign.^[15] Rice worked in McKinsey's Toronto office for a time.^[16]

Clinton administration roles

Rice served in the Clinton administration in various capacities: at the National Security Council (NSC) from 1993 to 1997; as director for international organizations and peacekeeping from 1993 to 1995 and as special assistant to the president and senior director for African affairs from 1995 to 1997.

At the time of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, Rice reportedly said, "If we use the word 'genocide' and are seen as doing nothing, what will be the effect on the November [congressional] election?" Rice subsequently acknowledged the mistakes made at the time and felt that a debt needed repaying.^[17] The inability or failure of the Clinton administration to do anything about the genocide would inform her later views on possible military interventions.^[18] She would later say of the experience: "I swore to myself that if I ever faced such a crisis again, I would come down on the side of dramatic action, going down in flames if that was required."^[19]

Islamists took control in Sudan in a 1989 coup d'état and the United States adopted a policy of disengagement with the authoritarian regime throughout the 1990s. After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, however, some critics charged that the U.S. should have moderated its policy toward Sudan earlier, since the influence of

Islamists there waned in the second half of 1990s and Sudanese officials began to indicate an interest in accommodating U.S. concerns with respect to 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden, who had been living in Sudan until he was expelled in May 1996. Timothy M. Carney, U.S. ambassador to Sudan between September 1995 and November 1997, co-authored an op-ed in 2002 claiming that in 1997 Sudan offered to turn over its intelligence on bin Laden but that Rice, as NSC Africa specialist, together with the then NSC terrorism specialist Richard A. Clarke, successfully lobbied for continuing to bar U.S. officials, including the CIA and FBI, from engaging with the Khartoum government.^[20] Similar allegations (that Rice joined others in missing an opportunity to cooperate with Sudan on counterterrorism) were made by *Vanity Fair* contributing editor David Rose^[21] and Richard Miniter, author of *Losing Bin Laden*.^[22]

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, a longtime mentor and family friend to Rice, urged Clinton to appoint Rice as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in 1997.^[4] Rice was not the first choice of Congressional Black Caucus leaders, who considered Rice a member of "Washington's assimilationist black elite."^[4] At a confirmation hearing chaired by Senator Jesse Helms, Rice, who attended the hearing along with her infant son, whom she was then nursing, made a great impression on senators from both parties and "sailed through the confirmation process."^[4]

Rice supported the multinational force that invaded Zaire (later known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo) from Rwanda in 1996 and overthrew dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, saying privately that "Anything's better than Mobutu."^[23] According to Gérard Prunier, a staffer to the Assistant Secretary said that "the only thing we have to do is look the other way," with respect to Rwanda's continued intervention.^[24] New York Times correspondent Howard W. French said that according to his sources Rice herself made the remark.^[25] In 2012 when serving as U.N. ambassador, Rice opposed efforts to publicly censure Rwandan President Paul Kagame for again supporting a Congolese rebel group, this time in the 2012 Congo conflict. The Rwandan government was a client when Rice worked at Intellibridge in 2001–02.^[26]

On July 7, 1998, Rice was a member of an American delegation to visit detained Nigerian president-elect Basorun M.K.O. Abiola. During this meeting, Abiola suffered a fatal heart attack.^[27]

Although Rice supported the Lomé Peace Accord,^[28] some observers criticized the Sierra Leone agreement as too indulgent of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and for bringing the war criminal Foday Sankoh into government, leading to the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1313, which blamed the RUF for the continuing conflict in the west African country.^[29]

Business and think-tank activities



Susan E. Rice (middle) at the USCIRF hearings (November 27, 2001)

Rice was managing director and principal at Intellibridge from 2001 to 2002.^{[30][31]} In 2002 she joined the Brookings Institution as senior fellow in the foreign policy program. At Brookings, she focused on U.S. foreign policy, weak and failing states, the implications of global poverty, and transnational threats to security.

During the 2004 presidential campaign, Rice served as a foreign policy adviser to John Kerry.

Rice went on leave from the Brookings Institution to serve as a senior foreign policy adviser to Senator Barack Obama in his 2008 presidential campaign. Rice was one the first high-profile foreign policy staffers to sign onto Obama's campaign,

as most of her peers had supported Hillary Clinton during the presidential primaries.[1] (<http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/magazine/111353/susan-rice-isnt-going-quietly#>) Rice took a disparaging view of Obama's Republican opponent in the campaign, John McCain, calling his policies "reckless" and dismissing the Arizona senator's trip to Iraq as "strolling around the market in a flak jacket."^[32]

On November 5, 2008, Rice was named to the advisory board of the Obama–Biden Transition Project.^[33]

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

On December 1, 2008, Rice was nominated by president-elect Obama to be the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations,^{[34][35]} a position which he restored to cabinet level.^[36] Rice is the second youngest person^[36] and the first African American woman to represent the U.S. at the UN.^[37] Reportedly Rice had coveted the post of National Security Advisor, which instead went to retired United States Marine Corps General, James L. Jones, and she and most of Obama's original foreign policy team were disappointed that they were not picked for the top posts in Obama's administration.[2] (<http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/magazine/111353/susan-rice-isnt-going-quietly#>)

Rice had a poor relationship with State Department veteran Richard Holbrooke, whom she considered to be meddling on her turf and who in return had viewed her as incompetent.[3] (<http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/magazine/111353/susan-rice-isnt-going-quietly#>)

Dramatic Departure

The 2010 National Security Strategy was referred to by Rice as a "dramatic departure" from its predecessor.^[38]

Libyan civil war

As the 2011 Libyan civil war progressed, Rice made clear that the United States and the international community saw only one choice for Gaddafi and his aides: step down from power or face significant consequences. Rice offered some of the toughest rhetoric toward Gaddafi, blasting his denials of atrocities against his own citizens as "frankly, delusional." Several UN diplomats said that in a closed door meeting on April 28, Rice's claims of Gaddafi's atrocities included the issuance of Viagra to loyalists in order to further terrorize the population with sexual violence.^{[39][40]} Together with National Security Council figure Samantha Power, who already supported military intervention, and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who came to support it, the three overcame internal opposition from Defense Secretary Robert Gates, security adviser Thomas Donilon, and counterterrorism adviser John Brennan, to have the administration advance a UN proposal to impose a no-fly zone over Libya and authorize other military actions as necessary.^{[18][41]} On March 17, 2011, the UK, France and Lebanon joined Rice to vote for United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 while Brazil, Germany, and India joined permanent Security Council members China and Russia in abstaining. Rice and Clinton played major roles in gaining approval for the resolution.^{[18][42]} Clinton said that same day that establishing a no-fly zone over Libya would require the bombing of air defenses. Rice said that "we are interested in a broad range of actions that will effectively protect civilians and increase the pressure on the Gaddafi regime to halt the killing and to allow the Libyan people to express themselves in their aspirations for the future freely and peacefully,"^[43]

In January 2012 after the Russian and Chinese veto of another Security Council resolution calling on Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad to step down, Rice strongly condemned both countries, saying, "They put a stake in the heart of efforts to resolve this conflict peacefully," adding that "we the United States are standing with the

people of Syria. Russia and China are obviously with Assad."^[44] In her words, "the United States is disgusted that a couple of members of this Council continue to prevent us from fulfilling our sole purpose."^[45]

Some Security Council diplomats took issue with Rice's negotiating style, calling it "rude" and overly blunt. According to David Rothkopf of Foreign Policy magazine, Rice is known for her "abrasiveness" but has the asset of a close relationship with the U.S. president. Human rights activists took issue with Rice and U.S. foreign policy generally in 2012 for working against U.N. statements that criticized Rwanda for supporting a rebel group in Congo known for committing atrocities.^[46]

Benghazi attack

Following the attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi on September 11, 2012, resulting in the deaths of the United States Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens and three others, on September 16 Rice appeared on CBS's Face the Nation to state that "we do not have information at present that leads us to conclude that this [attack] was premeditated or preplanned," but on ABC's This Week said that the attack was "hijacked, let us say, by some individual clusters of extremists who came with heavier weapons".^[47] She added (on a different subject), "[w]e've decimated al-Qaeda." Although Rice said that the attack "began spontaneously," prior to her interview the under secretary of state for management, Patrick F. Kennedy, had said that he believed the assault was planned^[48] and other sources, including Libyan President Mohammed Magariaf, had expressed the view that the attack was preplanned and that there was an al-Qaeda link.^[49] Rice had, however, qualified her remarks about the attack, saying, "We'll want to see the results of [an FBI] investigation to draw any definitive conclusions."^[50] Rice made similar statements on This Week with George Stephanopoulos,^[51] Meet the Press,^[52] State of the Union with Candy Crowley,^[53] and Fox News Sunday.^{[54][55]} 97 House Republicans sent a letter to President Obama on November 19 to say Rice's statements were "misleading" and that she should accordingly not be considered a candidate to succeed Hillary Clinton in 2013 as Secretary of State. However, Rice's claims about Benghazi were based on the unclassified version of information approved by United States intelligence services.^{[56][57]} Some Republican Senators, who unlike House Republicans would have a vote on whether to confirm Rice, also voiced objections and said their meetings with Rice at the end of November 2012 did not ease their concerns.^{[58][59][60]} However, the Senate previously had unanimously supported a resolution that described the attackers as "an angry mob of protesters" and made no mention of Al Qaeda.^[61] On December 13, 2012 in a letter to President Barack Obama, Rice asked him to remove her name from consideration for Secretary of State.^[3]

Affiliations

Rice serves on the boards of several organizations, including the National Democratic Institute; the U.S. Fund for UNICEF;^[30] board of directors of the Atlantic Council;^[62] advisory board of Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University;^[63] the board of directors of the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. (Bloomberg BNA);^[64] board of directors of Partnership for Public Service (<http://www.ourpublicservice.org/OPS/about/>);^[14] the Beauvoir National Cathedral Elementary School; and a past member of the Internews Network's board of directors.^{[65][66]}

She is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Aspen Strategy Group.^{[15][67]}

Awards and honors

- Rice was a recipient of one of the Glamour Magazine Women of the Year Awards, in 2009.^[68]
- She was inducted into Stanford's Black Alumni Hall of Fame in 2002.^[10]

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External links

- United States Mission to the United Nations (<http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov/>)
- Susan Rice (<https://www.facebook.com/AmbassadorRice>) on Facebook
- Susan Rice (<https://twitter.com/AmbassadorRice>) on Twitter
- Article archive (<http://www.brookings.edu/scholars/srice.htm>) at the Brookings Institution
- Appearances (<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/susanrice>) on C-SPAN
- Susan Rice (<http://www.charlierose.com/guest/view/7054>) on *Charlie Rose*
- Susan Rice (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm2876956/>) at the Internet Movie Database
- Susan Rice (http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/r/susan_e_rice/index.html) collected news and commentary at *The New York Times*
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- Works by or about Susan Rice (<http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n86-6566>) in libraries (WorldCat catalog)

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- Interview with Dave Ross (<http://www.mynorthwest.com/?nid=75&sid=111068>) on MyNorthwest.com (audio)
- Profile on Foreign Policy (http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/08/13/the_point_guard)

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Diplomatic posts		
Preceded by Zalmay Khalilzad	United States Ambassador to the United Nations 2009–present	Incumbent
United States order of precedence		
Preceded by James Clapper <i>as Director of National Intelligence</i>	Order of Precedence of the United States <i>as Ambassador to the United Nations</i>	Succeeded by Patrick Leahy <i>as President pro tempore of the Senate</i>

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