

BIOGRAPHY:

The Honourable Bob Rae Canada's 25th Ambassador to the United Nations

The Honourable Bob Rae brings over five decades of leadership at the highest levels of international diplomacy, national politics, and public policy. As Canada's former Ambassador to the United Nations, Premier of Ontario, and interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, he offers audiences rare insight into navigating complex global challenges, building consensus across divides, and leading through transformation. His keynotes draw on firsthand experience with humanitarian crises, negotiations with world leaders, and critical issues — delivered with the wisdom of a statesman and the accessibility of a natural storyteller.

Rae served as the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York from 2020 to 2025, joining the likes of Lester Pearson and George Davidson as Canadians elected in their personal capacity to preside over UN Charter bodies. During his tenure, Rae became the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2024-25, the second Canadian to assume the role, and also chaired the Advisory Committee on Haiti and led discussions on financing for development, children in armed conflict, and counterterrorism.

Prior to his diplomatic service, Rae served as Premier of Ontario from 1990-1995 and interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada from 2011 to 2013. He was elected to federal and provincial parliaments 11 times between 1978 and 2013 and has been honoured by the alumni of both bodies for his distinguished service. His return to Parliament representing Toronto Centre in 2008 led to his appointment as Foreign Affairs spokesman and ultimately to his role as interim Leader.

Rae also served as Canada's Special Envoy to Myanmar in 2017, where he engaged in diplomatic efforts to address the crisis in Rakhine State and authored the influential report "Tell Them We're Human". In March 2020, he was named Canada's Special Envoy on Humanitarian and Refugee Issues by Prime Minister Trudeau, leading to his report "A Global Pandemic Requires a Global Response." He also served as Chief Negotiator for the nine First Nations of the Matawa Tribal Council in Northern Ontario from 2013 to 2018 and was appointed to the Security and Intelligence Review Committee by Prime Minister Chrétien.

Rae has practiced law with three distinguished firms and led high-profile assignments including the restructuring of the Canadian Red Cross and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He chaired the board of the Royal Conservatory of Music and authored "Lessons to be Learned" on the Air

India bombing and "Ontario a Leader in Learning," a comprehensive study of the Ontario higher education system.

Between 1996-99 and 2013-2020, Rae taught law, politics, and public policy at the University of Toronto, serving as the Wilson Professor of Public Policy at Victoria University from 2016 to 2020. He is a Fellow of the Forum of Federations (an organization he co-founded in the 1990s), Massey College, and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

Rae is a Rhodes Scholar with an M.Phil in Politics from Balliol College, Oxford University, and a law degree from the University of Toronto. He is a Privy Councillor, a Companion of the Order of Canada, and a member of the Order of Ontario. Rae is also the author of five books: *From Protest to Power: Reflections on a Life in Politics*, *The Three Questions*, *Exporting Democracy*, *Canada in the Balance*, and *What's Happened to Politics*.