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# CHRIS PATTEN

LONDON  
SPEAKER  
BUREAU

- **Former Governor of Hong Kong and European Commissioner**



## Topics

- Government
- Politics

Christopher Francis Patten was born in 1944, educated in London and at Balliol College, Oxford. After completing his degree in Modern History he won a Coolidge Travelling Scholarship to the United States.

Chris Patten worked in the Cabinet Office as political secretary to Lord Carrington and Lord Whitelaw and the Conservative Research Department. He was appointed the youngest ever Director of the Conservative Research Department in 1974 and worked there under Margaret Thatcher until 1979. In that year he became the Member of Parliament for Bath, a seat he held until April 1992. In 1983 he wrote *The Tory Case*, a study of Conservatism.

He held Ministerial positions in the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Education and Science and the Ministry for Overseas Development. He became a member of the Privy Council in 1989, Secretary of State for the Environment in the same year and in November 1990 was appointed Chairman of the Conservative Party, where he successfully ran his Party's 1992 Election campaign.

Lord Patten was Governor of Hong Kong from 1992 to 1997, overseeing the return of The Territory to China. He was Chairman of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland set up under the Good Friday Peace Agreement from 1998 to 1999.

Lord Patten was appointed European Commissioner for External Relations in 1999 and held this post until November 2004. He was appointed a Companion of Honour in 1998 and became a member of the House of Lords in 2005. He was Chairman of the BBC Trust, the strategic authority for the broadcaster, from 2011 to 2014. In 2010 helped to co-ordinate the visit of Pope Benedict to the United Kingdom and became Chairman of the Vatican Media Advisory Committee in 2014.

He holds a number of Honorary Degrees, was Chancellor of Newcastle University from 1999 until 2008, and was elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 2003. He chaired the International Crisis Group from 2004 to 2011 and became Co-Chair of UK-India Round Table in 2006.

Lord Patten has written a number of books – *East and West* (1998), *Not Quite The Diplomat* about world affairs in 2005 and *What Next?: Surviving the 21st Century* in 2008.

Lord Patten married Lavender Thornton, a lawyer, in 1971. They have three daughters, Kate, Laura and Alice and eight grand-children.