



Richard Fontaine
Chief Executive Officer
Center for a New American Security

Richard Fontaine is the chief executive officer of the Center for a New American Security (CNAS). He served as president of CNAS from 2012–19 and as senior fellow from 2009–12. Prior to CNAS, he was foreign policy advisor to Senator John McCain and worked at the State Department, the National Security Council (NSC), and on the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Fontaine served as foreign policy advisor to the McCain 2008 presidential campaign and subsequently as the minority deputy staff director on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Prior to that, he served as associate director for Near Eastern affairs at the NSC from 2003–04. He also worked on Southeast Asian issues in the NSC’s Asian Affairs directorate.

At the State Department, Fontaine worked for the deputy secretary and in the department’s South Asia bureau. Fontaine began his foreign policy career as a staff member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, focusing on the Middle East and South Asia. He also spent a year teaching English in Japan.

Fontaine currently serves as executive director of the Trilateral Commission and on the Defense Policy Board. He has been an adjunct professor in the security studies program at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service.

A native of New Orleans, Fontaine graduated summa cum laude with a BA in international relations from Tulane University. He also holds an MA in international affairs from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, and he attended Oxford University. He lives in Virginia with his wife and their four children.