

Ambassador Roger D. Carstens

Roger D. Carstens is the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs (SPEHA) at the U.S. Department of State. Prior to assuming this role, Mr. Carstens was a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. He previously served in Amman, Jordan, as the Country Director for a U.S.-based international nongovernmental organization (INGO) that provided humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons. Prior positions include Senior Civilian Advisor on the Commander's Advisory and Assistance Team (CAAT) in Afghanistan; Project Director for an INGO based in Somalia; Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security; and Special Assistant for Legislative Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Carstens is a retired Army Lieutenant Colonel who served in Special Forces and the 1st Ranger Battalion. He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and holds master's degrees from the U.S. Naval War College and St. John's College. Mr. Carstens is the recipient of the 2023 Robert A. Levinson Excellence in Government Service Award and was selected as a Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment.