



Bernard Aronson
Special Envoy to the Colombian Peace Process
U.S. Department of State

Bernard Aronson served as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs from 1989 to 1993. He was a Democrat serving in a Republican Administration under President George Herbert Walker Bush. President Bill Clinton asked Aronson to continue in his post until his successor was confirmed.

During his first weeks at the State Department Assistant Secretary Aronson helped negotiate the Bi-Partisan Accord on Central America which united Congress and the Executive, Democrats and Republicans behind a common regional policy. Aronson helped promote the first successful democratic elections in Nicaragua and an end to the contra war and a negotiated settlement of the war in El Salvador. In addition during Aronson's tenure: Panama was liberated from the dictatorial rule of General Manuel Noriega; the United States helped Colombia defeat Pablo Escobar and the Medellin cartel; Latin America emerged from both the debt crisis and the lost decade; NAFTA was negotiated; Argentina and Brazil put their nuclear programs under IAEA safeguards; Peru defeated, with U.S. assistance, Sendero Luminoso; and the OAS unanimously adopted the Santiago Declaration committing its member states to the collective defense of democracy.

In April 1993 Aronson was awarded the State Department's Distinguished Service Award, the Department's highest award, for his: "singular achievements as Assistant Secretary from 1989-93...in forging a bipartisan policy towards Nicaragua, tireless and successful efforts to end the civil war in El Salvador, and promotion of human rights, democratic governance, and open markets throughout the hemisphere...".

Aronson previously served as Deputy Assistant to President Jimmy Carter in the office of the Chief of Staff and Executive Speechwriter to the President. Aronson is a Founding Partner of ACON Investments LLC, a middle market private equity firm headquartered in Washington, DC. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the American Academy of Diplomats.