

# Victoria Nuland

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**Victoria Jane Nuland** (born 1961) is the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs at the United States Department of State.<sup>[2]</sup>

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## Education and personal life

Victoria Nuland was born in 1961 to Jewish parents Sherwin B. Nuland (born Shepsel Ber Nudelman) and Rhona McKhann.<sup>[3]</sup> She graduated with a B.A. in 1983 from Brown University, where she studied Russian literature, political science, and history.<sup>[4]</sup> Nuland's husband is Robert Kagan, an American historian and foreign-policy commentator at the Brookings Institution.

## Career

During the Bill Clinton administration, Nuland was chief of staff to Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott before moving on to serve as deputy director for former Soviet Union affairs.

She served as the principal deputy foreign policy adviser to Vice President Dick Cheney and then as U.S. ambassador to NATO.

Nuland became special envoy for Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and then became State Department spokesperson in summer 2011.<sup>[5]</sup>

She was nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs in May 2013 and sworn in to fill that role in September 2013.<sup>[6]</sup> During her confirmation hearings, she faced "sharp questions" about a memo she had sent outlining the talking points that would be used by the Obama administration in the days shortly after the 2012 Benghazi attack.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Victoria Nuland



**Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs**

**Incumbent**

**Assumed office**

September 18, 2013

**President** Barack Obama

**Deputy** John A. Heffern<sup>[1]</sup>

**Preceded by** Philip Gordon

**Spokesperson for the United States Department of State**

**In office**

May 31, 2011 – February 11, 2013

**President** Barack Obama

**Preceded by** Philip Crowley

**Succeeded by** Jen Psaki

**United States Ambassador to NATO**

**In office**

June 20, 2005 – May 2, 2008

**President** George W. Bush

**Preceded by** Nicholas Burns

**Succeeded by** Kurt Volker

**Personal details**

In her role as Assistant Secretary, she has been the lead U.S. point person for the Ukrainian crisis. She was a key figure in establishing loan guarantees to Ukraine, including a \$1 billion loan guarantee in 2014, and the provisions of non-lethal assistance to the Ukrainian military and border guard.<sup>[8][9]</sup> Along with Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, she is seen as a leading supporter of defensive weapons delivery to Ukraine. In 2016 Nuland urged Ukraine to start prosecuting corrupt officials: "It's time to start locking up people who have ripped off the Ukrainian population for too long and it is time to eradicate the cancer of corruption".<sup>[10]</sup>

<b>Born</b>	Victoria Jane Nuland 1961 (age 54–55) Baker, Louisiana, U.S.
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	Robert Kagan
<b>Alma mater</b>	Brown University

## Leaked phone conversation

On February 4, 2014, a recording of a phone call between Nuland and U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, on January 28, 2014 was published on YouTube.<sup>[11][12]</sup> The State Department and the White House suggested that an assistant to the deputy prime minister of Russia Dmitry Rogozin was the source of the leak, which he denied.<sup>[13][14][15]</sup>

In their phone conversation, Nuland and Pyatt discussed who should be in the government after Viktor Yanukovich's ouster and in what ways they might achieve that transition, with the name of Arseniy Yatsenyuk (whom Nuland refers to as "Yats") coming up several times. Specifically, the two spoke about which opposition leaders they would like to see in government, what pitches they would give each opposition leader in subsequent calls to achieve this, and strategies on how they would try to manage the 'personality problems' and conflicts between the different opposition leaders with ambitions to become president.<sup>[12][13]</sup> Yatsenyuk became prime minister of Ukraine on February 27, 2014.<sup>[16]</sup>

In the recording, Nuland makes an obscene reference to the European Union.<sup>[17]</sup> After discussing Ukrainian opposition figures Nuland states that she prefers the United Nations as mediator, instead of the European Union, adding "Fuck the EU," and Pyatt responds, "Oh, exactly ...."<sup>[12][18]</sup>

According to the *Washington Post*,

*[Nuland] was dismissively referring to slow-moving European efforts to address political paralysis and a looming fiscal crisis in Ukraine. But it was the blunt nature of her remarks, rather than U.S. diplomatic calculations, that seemed exceptional. Nuland also assessed the political skills of Ukrainian opposition figures with unusual candor and, along with the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, debated strategy for their cause, laying bare a deep degree of U.S. involvement in affairs that Washington officially says are Ukraine's to resolve.*<sup>[19]</sup>



Nuland meeting with Georgian defense ministry leadership, December 6, 2013



John Kerry and Victoria Nuland with Ukrainian opposition leaders Poroshenko, Yatsenyuk and Klitschko, Munich, February 1, 2014



US officials Assistant Secretary Nuland and Ambassador to Ukraine Pyatt greet Petro Poroshenko in Warsaw on June 4, 2014

"She has been in contact with her EU counterparts, and of course has apologized," said State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki, who also acknowledged the authenticity of the recording.<sup>[19][20]</sup>

Initially, a spokeswoman for EU foreign-policy chief Catherine Ashton stated on the same day that the EU would not comment on a "leaked alleged" conversation.<sup>[17]</sup> The next day, however, Christiane Wirtz, Deputy Government Spokesperson and Deputy Head of the Press and Information Office of the German Federal Government, stated that German Chancellor Angela Merkel termed Nuland's remark "absolutely unacceptable."<sup>[21]</sup> The president of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, condemned the remark as "unacceptable."<sup>[22]</sup>

## References

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## External links

- Official biography (<http://m.state.gov/md214343.htm>) at the U.S. State Department
- Official biography (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080709065739/http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/biog/53707.htm>) at the U.S. State Department (2008 archive)
- Official biography ([https://web.archive.org/web/20101003173258/http://nato.usmission.gov/Bio/Ambassador\\_Nuland.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20101003173258/http://nato.usmission.gov/Bio/Ambassador_Nuland.htm)) at the U.S. NATO Mission website (2010 archive)
- Works by or about Victoria Nuland (<https://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-no2001076803>) in libraries (WorldCat catalog)
- Appearances (<http://www.c-span.org/person/?victorianuland>) on C-SPAN
  - C-SPAN *Q&A* interview with Nuland, June 18, 2006 (<http://www.c-span.org/video/?193041-1/qa-victoria-nuland>)



media related to *Victoria Nuland*.

#### Diplomatic posts

Preceded by  
**Nicholas Burns**

**United States Ambassador to NATO**  
2005–2008

Succeeded by  
**Kurt Volker**

#### Political offices

Preceded by  
**Philip Crowley**

**Spokesperson for the United States  
Department of State**  
2011–2013

Succeeded by  
**Jen Psaki**

Preceded by  
**Philip Gordon**

**Assistant Secretary of State for European  
and Eurasian Affairs**  
2013–present

**Incumbent**

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