

Jean-David Levitte

Ambassador Jean-David Levitte is a distinguished fellow with the Foreign Policy program at Brookings. He has had an illustrious career in the French Foreign Service, holding various senior positions and serving on the staff of three French presidents. Most recently, he has served as senior diplomatic advisor and sherpa (emissary) of President Nicolas Sarkozy.



From 2002-2007, he was the ambassador of France to the United States in Washington, D.C., during the war in Iraq. From 2000-2002, he was the French permanent representative to the United Nations. In New York, Ambassador Levitte successfully handled several international negotiations, including resolution 1441 on Iraq. After the presidential elections in 1995, French President Jacques Chirac asked Ambassador Levitte to be his senior diplomatic advisor and sherpa. He served in that position from 1995-2000.

Since 1990, he has held senior positions in the French Foreign Ministry, first as assistant secretary for Asia and then as undersecretary for cultural and scientific cooperation. In 1988, he was designated to his first position as ambassador and served as the French permanent representative to the United Nations office in Geneva. Before 1988, Ambassador Levitte was assigned as deputy chief of staff to the Foreign Minister, deputy assistant secretary in the African Bureau, and second counselor at the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York.

Ambassador Levitte joined the Foreign Service in 1970. He was first posted in Hong Kong and Beijing, and a few months after his election in 1974, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing asked him to work on his staff at the Élysée Palace, where he stayed from 1975-1981.

Born in 1946 in the south of France, Ambassador Levitte holds a law degree and is a graduate of Sciences-Po and of the National School of Oriental Languages, where he studied Chinese and Indonesian.