

Sarah Mendelson

Distinguished Service Professor at Carnegie Mellon University

Pittsburgh, PA, US

Sarah Mendelson's current work is on creating a community of practice dedicated to growing the next generation of human rights experts.

Biography

Sarah E. Mendelson served as the U.S. Representative to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations until January 20, 2017. She was the USUN lead on international development, human rights and humanitarian affairs. There she oversaw campaigns to get country-specific resolutions passed in the General Assembly and to get NGOs, including the Committee to Protect Journalists, accredited to the UN. She led efforts to elevate the issue of combating human trafficking and was senior lead for the President's Summit on Refugees. Prior to her appointment as ambassador, she served as a deputy assistant administrator at USAID from 2010-2014 where she was the agency lead on democracy, human rights and governance. A long time policy entrepreneur, she has spent over two decades working on development and human rights as a scholar and practitioner including in Moscow with the National Democratic Institute, on the faculty of the Fletcher School at Tufts University and over a decade as senior adviser and inaugural director of the Human Rights Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. There she also worked as a senior fellow in the Russia and Eurasia Program where she oversaw focus groups, public opinion surveys and social marketing campaigns in Russia on a range of issues. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Ambassador Mendelson serves on the Carnegie Mellon University Steering Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She is also a Nonresident Senior Fellow in Global Economy and Development for the Center for Sustainable Development at Brookings.

Industry Expertise

International Trade and Development, International Affairs, Public Policy

Areas of Expertise

Elections, Human Trafficking, Humanitarian Affairs, Russian Politics, Ukrainian Politics, Human Rights, International Development

Education

Columbia University

Ph.D. Political Science

Yale University

B.A. History

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