



Chris Patten

Former Governor of Hong Kong, European Commissioner, Chairman BBC Trust, Chancellor Oxford University

Knowledge and advice from the experienced MP and former Governor of Hong Kong.

Chris's biography

Chris Patten's Background

- Former European Commissioner for External Relations
- Former Governor of Hong Kong
- Chairman of the BBC Trust
- A Chairman on the board of the International Crisis Group

Having worked as the Governor of Hong Kong, as an MP and in many other roles, Chris Patten is a very experienced public speaker. His knowledge is evident and he will share his views and opinions with eloquence.

Most famous for his role as the last British governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten has occupied several high profile roles in [politics](#) and within charitable organisations. He is currently the Chairman of the BBC Trust.

Early Life

Chris Patten was born on May 12th 1944 in the town of Cleveleys in Lancashire. Born into a Roman Catholic family, he attended Our Lady of the Visitation primary school in Greenford, Middlesex, before moving on to St Benedicts School in Ealing. Successful at school, he progressed to Oxford University, where he studied at Balliol College. Patten worked in the USA for a year before starting work for the Conservative Party as a desk officer in 1966. He became director of the Conservative Research Department in 1974 and remained in the position for five years.

MP Between 1979 and 1992, Patten served as Conservative MP for Bath. Between 1986 and 1989 he was also Minister for Overseas Development at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. His roles continued to advance and he went on to be Secretary of State for the Environment.

Patten became Chairman of the Conservative Party in 1990 and was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Hong Kong

There was speculation about Patten's next appointment, with some believing he would become Foreign Secretary. However, in 1992, he was made Governor of Hong Kong, becoming the last British Governor before the Peoples Republic of China took leadership in 1997. Like previous British Governors, Patten was given a Chinese name. Chosen to denote health and stability, Patten's name was Pang Ding-Hong. He faced some challenges whilst in Hong Kong and was initially viewed with distrust by the people, though by the end of his time there he had gained the support of the majority, who believed that he had acted in their best interests. Patten reformed electoral processes in Hong Kong so that the majority of people could vote to elect members of the Legislative Council, a measure which attracted criticism from some and support from others. After Hong Kong was handed over to the Peoples Republic of China, they became responsible for such matters and effected changes as they saw fit. Patten was saddened to leave Hong Kong and is said to have cried following the Transfer of Sovereignty ceremony.

Back in the UK

After becoming a Companion of Honour in 1998, Patten chaired the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. The resultant Patten Report contained numerous recommendations and is most well known for having led to the name of the police force being changed to the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

In 1999, Patten became a UK Commissioner for External Relations, a member of the European Commission. During his work in [international relations](#), Patten assisted in the resolution of numerous difficulties.

Recognition and Current Roles

His political work has led to great recognition for Patten and he has several Honorary Doctorates: in Law from the University of Bath, of Sacred Letters from the University of Trinity College, and of Letters from the University of Ulster. He is also a Distinguished Fellow of the University of Toronto's Massey College. His involvement with universities does not end at these achievements and he has served as Chancellor for Newcastle University (1999-2009), and since 2003 has been Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Patten was raised to become Baron Patten of Barnes (London Borough of Richmond) in 2005. Today, Patten is the Chairman of the BBC Trust, a position to which he was appointed in 2011.

Personal and Charitable Interests

Patten lives with his wife Lavender and their two Norfolk terriers. The couple have three daughters. Patten is currently a co-chair of International Crisis Group, a not-for-profit organisation which aims to resolve conflicts around the globe. He also works as a president for Medical Aid for Palestinians. Determined to continue to work to enable good [leadership](#) in countries across the globe, Patten is a member of the Global Leadership Foundation, offering unbiased advice to current leaders.

Chris's talks

- **International Law & Human Rights**
- **European Union**
- **Terrorism**

- **USA & Asia**

- **China**

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