

Michael von der Schulenburg

Born:

16 October 1948, Munich

Nationality:

German

Family status:

one wife, four children, two dogs

Languages:

German, English, French, some Spanish and embarrassing little Dutch

Honors: 2020 **Grand Commander of the Republic of Sierra Leone** (highest honor of SL)

Post retirement activities

- Since May 2012 **Retired** from the UN, various teaching engagements, published various papers on peacebuilding and peacekeeping; including a book "*On Building Peace – Rescuing the Nation-state and Saving the United Nations*" AUP, 2017; (see final section on publications). Many speaking engagements in Geneva, London, Oxford, Wilton Park, Reading, Washington, New York, Beijing, Berlin, Hamburg, Dresden, Krems, Alpbach, Freiburg, Turin, Vienna, Guangzhou, etc.
- Oct. 2018 Visiting fellow at Pembroke College, Oxford for their program 'Changing Character of War'; it is planned that I concentrate on how changing wars impact on peace negotiations and peace agreements. Papers: *Era of Armed Non-State Actors (series of three papers)*
- April-May 2017 **Afghanistan:** Participated in a strategic review of the future role of UN mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); prepared a proposal for the SG and Security Council on changing UN mandate from post-conflict peacebuilding to peace-making in conflict, outlined approach for eventual peace negotiations with the Taliban, suggested organizational adjustments for UNAMA. Report: *Brief for SG: A Strategic Review; Seeking an Afghan Peace Solution*
- October 2016 **Sahel:** Mission for the UN into the G-5 Sahel; prepared to proposal for a UN supported strategy to help prevent terrorism and extremism among the youth;
Feb. 2017
- Sept.- Dec. 2016 Bundeswehr (German military): Member of an expert panel formed by German Institute for Politics and Security (Stiftung für Wissenschaft and Politik, SWP), Berlin, to review options for future of German foreign political and military interventions. Report: *Deutschland's Neue Kleider*

Work experiences

- June 2008 –
April 2012
Sierra Leone
- Executive Representative of the Secretary General to Sierra Leone (ERSG)**
- Served as ERSG while being also the head of the UN political mission, the UN resident coordinator, UN humanitarian coordinator, UNDP resident representative and Designated Official for security in Sierra Leone. The for the UN unusual assignments was a decision by the Security Council to bring about a single leadership and single strategy for implementing an integrated peacebuilding approach in Sierra Leone. Ended UN peacekeeping operation to replace it with a civilian fully integrated peacebuilding mission that combined the political mandate with the development and humanitarian mandates of UN agencies into one single strategy, introduced a stronger UN focus with only 21 and later seven integrated programs; responsible for 2008 local and regional elections, succeeded in calming of the 2009 outbreak of political violence, developed a Joint Communique under which government and opposition parties could work together, prevented the derailing of the 2012 presidential elections, developed an exit strategy based on seven sets of criteria. Interlocutor with the Peacebuilding Commission.
- Main report: *A Joint communique for Sierra Leone; October 2009; A Criteria-based UN Transition Strategy for Sierra Leone; October 2011*
- April 2008 –
May 2008
Afghanistan
- Special mission to Afghanistan, ASG**
- On behalf of UN-DPA conducted a comprehensive review of the role of the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and its operational activities throughout the country, and prepared proposals for a better future UN focus of its engagements.
- Main report: *Enhancing the Role of the UN in Afghanistan by Reaching out; May 2008*
- January 2008 –
May 2008
**UN Secretariat
New York**
- Assistant Secretary General, UNDPA**
- Special assignment for working out the lessons from the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) and preparing a proposal for better managing UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.
- Main report: *Seven Principles for UN Peace Operations; March 2008*
- May 2005 –
December
2007
Iraq
- Principle Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG) for Political Affairs to Iraq**
- Support to SRSRSG to Iraq in his assignment to assist the new Iraqi government during the political transition in accordance with the Security Council mandate; responsible for organizing free and fair elections in 2005, for finalizing the drafting of a new constitution and the holding of a constitutional referendum; in charge of the maintaining political dialogue among political parties and stakeholders in Iraq; of trying to seek solutions for the Kirkuk question, and of conducting regular consultations with Security Council members, in particular the P-5 and with the military leadership of the multinational forces. Responsible for the drafting of six-

monthly Security Council reports and prepared regularly papers on political developments and options for UN interventions.

Final report: *The UN in Iraq and the Old Man without Teeth*, 2008

April 2005 –
May 2005

Special mission to Somalia

Somalia

Support the UN resident coordinator and the UN country team coordinating humanitarian and development assistance to Somalia while supporting efforts for the formation of an Interim Somali Government (in exile).

Nov. 2001 –
Feb. 2002

Special mission in support of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan

Afghanistan

At the request of UN Secretary General supported Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, SRSG/ UNAMA, during the first crucial months of setting up a UN support mission in Kabul in following up the Bonn Agreement. This included helping set up the Afghan interim administration, revitalizing the remnants of the Afghan civil service; it also included helping bridge tensions between interim President Karzai in Kabul and the regional warlord Ismail Khan.

Main report: *Afghanistan: Peace in a Glasshouse – Challenges for the UN*; June 2002

During 2003
and 2005

Support to Martti Ahtisaari's ICT initiative

Vienna

While working for the OSCE, supported Martti Ahtesaari's ICT initiative and developed a proposal for a comprehensive ICT platform that would enable governments in fragile countries to exercise greater national ownership by providing it an IT-based toolkit to integrate and manage all national and internal resources. Main report: *Government out of the Box (GooB) – a toolkit for peacebuilding*; 2005

Jan. 2001 –
March 2005

Director for Management and Finance (OSCE)

Vienna

Responsible for all operational, budgetary, financial and administrative aspects of OSCE operations at HQ and in its field missions; introduced and completed a major management reform to enable the organization to become more responsive to requests by its participating States for rapid operational interventions. This included a complete revision of OSCE's regulatory framework, and the introduction of an IT-based management system called IRMA – Integrated Resource Management system. An investment of Euro 7.7 million led to a reduction of administrative costs by 32%. Final report: *OSCE's Management Reforms: IRMA and the Yellow Laptop*, Jan. 2005

Feb. 1999 –
Dec. 2000

Director for Operations and Analysis UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

UN/ Vienna

Responsible for UNODC's world-wide operational and technical assistance activities on drugs and crime as well as UNODC's research and technical publications; developed a five-point reform program to better focus UNODC's operations to respond better to shifts in global illicit drugs and crime activities; introduced ICT-based management system, PROFI to achieve greater transparency; resigned due to disagreements with UNODC's Executive Director over his handling of financial resources.

Final report: *UNODC and the Management of its Credibility*, December 2000

- Oct. 1998
Afghanistan
- Special mission to Taliban-held Kandahar**
Accompanied first Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi and went later back alone to Kandahar, Afghanistan, to meet with Taliban leader Mullah Omar, negotiated and obtained the release of 40 Iranian hostages and hence help prevent a military clash between Iranian Pasdaran and Afghan Taliban forces that could easily have exploded into a regional Shiite – Sunni armed conflict; investigated the killing of nine Iranian diplomats during the 1998 fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, to Taliban forces.
- During 1995 - 1998
Central Asia
- Special missions in support of 6+2 Talks**
Accompanied Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Special UN Envoy for Afghanistan, at the 6+2 Talks to virtually all Central Asian countries as well as to meetings in the region and in Geneva with the aim to derive at a consensus in how to seek a political solution to the on-going armed conflicts within Afghanistan.
- April 1992 – Jan. 1999
Iran
- UN Resident Coordinator for Iran**
Senior interlocutor at country level with the Iranian Government; maintaining policy dialogue on all UN-related issues and operations; responsible for UNDP’s technical assistance program. Given the special circumstances of Iran, much work was dedicated to supporting missions dealing with human rights, nuclear proliferation and illicit drug control as well on issues related to Afghanistan and Iraq. Organized first visit of a High commissioner for Human Rights as well as an extended visit by SG Kofi Annan to Iran. After the end of the Iran-Iraq war, both visits were intended helping Iran back into the international community. This was not successful.
- Jan. 1991 – Feb. 1992
Syria/ Iran
- Special assignments during the first Gulf war to free Kuwait**
Under the leadership of Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan, UN Special Envoy and Humanitarian Coordinator of the Secretary General for the Gulf War undertook two assignments:
- Senior UN Emergency Coordinator to Syria: Following the outbreak of the first Gulf war, lead an inter-agency team to identify and take measures to mitigate any negative fall-out of the war on Syria, especially to deal with humanitarian issues related to all refugee or IDP movements caused by the war.
 - Special Envoy to Iran: Following the massive influx of Iraqi refugees, was sent to Iran to find ways with the Iranian government for the safe return of refugees, negotiated with Iraqi Peshmerga; went cross-border on a pick-up into Southern Iraq to investigate the plight of Iraqi Shiites who may have fled into the Marshlands.
- Aug. 1989 – Jan. 1991
Afghanistan
- Chief of Mission, Operation Salaam, Kabul Afghanistan**
Headed UN Operation Salaam office in Kabul after the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Acted as main interlocutor on reconstruction and rehabilitation issues with the Najibullah government; opened Central, Western and Northern Afghanistan to UN assistance including opening of UN offices in Bamiyan, Herat, Mazar and Faizabad. Introduced crossline operations for the first time between government and mujahedeen held areas, cross-border operations between the Soviet Union and areas in Afghanistan and the concept of Food-through-Bazar to fight the locust pest

and famine in Northern Afghanistan.

Oct. 1988 –
Dec. 1988

Afghanistan

Special mission on horse-back through Afghanistan

Member of a team of four UN officials travelling for 2.5 months through Eastern, Northern and Central Afghanistan on horse-back along Mujahedeen trails. Main aim was to establish contacts with major mujahedeen groups and their commanders inside the country, to agree on ways to work with them after the withdrawal of Soviet Forces and investigate ways of delivering humanitarian and development assistance to areas not controlled by the government.

Feb. 1987 –
Aug. 1989

Iran

Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Responsible for the technical assistance program of UNDP in Iran. Mission coincided with the end of the Iran-Iraq war. Helped organize UN missions to investigate the use of chemical weapons; helped organize ICAO investigation following the downing of an IranAir flight by a US war ship over the Persian Gulf and supported several UN missions to investigate the use of chemical weapons by Iraq. As OiC of the mission supported negotiations to end the Iran-Iraq war, the setting up of the UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) to help implement the ceasefire and supported the UN organized war prisoner exchange between Iran and Iraq.

Jan. 1983 -
Jan. 1987

Pakistan

Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP

Responsible of a portfolio of UNDP's technical assistance program in Pakistan. During this assignment come for the first time in contact with the problems related to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the plight of Afghan refugees.

Sept. 1980 –
Dec. 1982

Haiti

Program Officer, UNDP

Responsible for some of UNDP's technical assistance programs in Haiti

Aug. 1978 –
Aug. 1980

UNDP/ NY

Junior Professional Officer (JPO)

Responsible for HQ support for UNDP in the Caribbean Islands

Education

Aug. 1977 –
May 1978

Paris

Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA)

Post-graduate studies in public administration, practical work at the Prefecture du Lot, study on impact of a recently introduced rural employment promotion scheme; participated as German exchange student.

Sept. 1975 -
May 1976

Berlin

German Institute for Development (DIE)

Applied post-graduate studies and field missions to prepare candidates for a career in international development assistance; special assignment: economic impact of Lomé Agreement in Kenia and Kameron.

Aug. 1972 –
Sept. 1971

London

London School of Economics (LSE)

Exchange student at LSE; specializing on public finance and decision theory.

- Sept. 1969 –
Aug. 1975
Berlin **Freie Universitaet Berlin (FU)**
Studied economics and philosophy; became student tutor and later junior research assistant at the FU Institute for Public Finance. 1975 obtained degree as Diplom-Volkswirt (Master of Economics) with a work on the impact of John Rawl’s Theory of Justice on public finance decision-making.
- June 1969 **Escaped** from East to West Germany over Baltic Sea
- Oct. 1967 -
May 1968
East Germany **Military service,**
Compulsory 18-months military service as soldier in an artillery regiment of the NVA (East German ‘national defense army’) in Orangeburg, East Germany.
- June 1967
East Germany **Abitur,** Koenigs Wusterhausen
Completed eight years of compulsory school and four years of extended school with an Abitur (university entry examines).
Carpenter diploma, as is general practice in East Germany, I went through a four-year apprenticeship and obtained a diploma as carpenter.
- 1952
My parents had decided to go to live in East-Germany.

Special work experiences

My profession career was different from those of many of my colleagues in as much that had worked in both the field and headquarters and that I held senior assignments in virtually all relevant areas of UN operational activities from development to humanitarian assistance and from political, global crime issues to managements and administration. Throughout my career, I dealt with weak and fragile nation-states, many of which went through intra-state armed conflicts.

Special life events

I grew up in East Germany, went there to school and through the obligatory military service in Oranienburg (in the former SS barracks for guarding the Sachsenhausen concentration camp). In June of 1969, my twin brother and I managed to escape to the West over the Baltic Sea as stalwarts on the Merseburg, an East German Cargo Freighter that transported military equipment to Vietnam.

I held many jobs to finance my studies as lorry driver, as farm help, language tutor, trader of shirts in Portobello market, shop assistant in Kings Road and Jeremy Street, as dealer in antique English silver, student tutor and carpenter for stage productions at the Schaubühne in Berlin. With a refugee from Prague, my brother and I run a small company for cleaning staircases and rubbish sites of Berlin apartment blocks.

During my assignments with the United Nations, I undertook many dangerous missions. I faced a number of attacks including an attack by members of Revolutionary Committees on my residence (1987), remained in Teheran during the war of the cities and the missile attacks (1988), crossed mine fields and high mountain passes during my horse-back travel through Afghanistan (1988), experienced almost daily missile attacks including cluster bombs during my mission in Kabul (1990), was injured in cluster bomb attack, crossed into Kurdish Iraq to negotiate with Peshmerga forces and travelled through no-mans-lands into Iraqi marshlands to investigate the plight of Shiite rebels in South Iraq (1992). In a reaction to the Srebrenica Massacre, I faced several hostile demonstrations against UN in Teheran including the run-sacking of its office (1995). I dealt with the unexplained killing of police guard at my residence (1996), was injured in a cluster bomb in Kabul (1990), survived a road-side bomb against my convoy in Baghdad (2006) and a hand-grenade attack outside the Green Zone in Baghdad (2006). In 2009, I personally intervened by climbing on the roof of the main opposition party to save 24 young men belonging to the opposition from the risk of being lynched by a huge, agitated crowd in Freetown, and with it probably saved the peace process.

I helped organize and support visits of four Secretary Generals to Iran, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone: Perez de Cuellar, Boutros Boutros Ghali, Kofi Annan and Ban ki-Moon.

Publications

During my career with the United Nations and shortly also with the OSCE, I wrote great many political papers as well as papers on operational and organizational matters. Most political papers were about Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Sierra Leone; most organizational papers are about UN reform issues including on peacebuilding aspects, ICT supported management systems and inter-UN agency coordination. All these papers remain internal UN papers.

Book: *On Building Peace – Rescuing the Nation State and Saving the United Nations*, AUP, June 2017.