

By Amir Tibon

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Abrams is considered a foreign policy hawk, a proud 'neo-Conservative,' who signed a plea agreement in the Iran-Contra affair

WASHINGTON - Secretary of State [Mike Pompeo](#) announced on Friday that Elliott Abrams will be the State Department's special envoy for dealing with the [crisis in Venezuela](#)

. Abrams was a senior Middle East adviser in George W. Bush's White House, and also worked for the Republican administrations of George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan.

Abrams is considered a foreign policy hawk, and one of the most prominent members of the "neo-Conservative" school of thought. During the 2016 Republican primary, he opposed the nomination of [Donald Trump](#), and stated that Trump wasn't worthy of leading the party of Reagan and Abraham Lincoln. These statements led Trump to [vet](#)
[o an attempt](#)

by the previous Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, to appoint Abrams to a senior State Department position in 2017.

[>> Read Elliott Abrams in Haaretz : >> Thanks to Trump, the Entire Mideast Now Knows: You're Either With America, or Against Us](#) [>> Br](#)
[avo, President Trump, for Standing Up to Palestinian Blackmail on Jerusalem](#)

Pompeo said on Friday that he was "excited" to have Abrams join the Department. "Elliott's passion for the rights and liberties for all peoples makes him a perfect fit and a valuable and timely addition," Pompeo stated.

In the 1980's, Abrams served in the State Department under the Reagan administration. During that period, as part of his responsibility regarding Latin America, Abrams was involved in the Iran-Contra affair, and eventually signed a plea agreement, pleading guilty to withholding information from Congress regarding the administration's attempts to support the Nicaraguan Contra rebels. Abrams was sentenced to two years probation and was pardoned by George

H.W. Bush, in 1992, after Bush lost the election of that year to Bill Clinton.

Under the George W. Bush administration, Abrams was involved in crafting Middle East policy, including the 2002 "Road Map for Peace" and the U.S. support for Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005. Abrams was the first American official to learn about Israel's intent to evacuate its settlements in Gaza, during a meeting he held with then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Rome.

In February 2016, during an appearance before the Jewish People's Policy Institution in Jerusalem, he said he might not vote at all in the U.S. election if the two nominees would be Trump and Hillary Clinton. He expressed a similar sentiment in an interview with Politico a month later. However, Abrams made sure not to become part of the "Never Trump" group of conservative figures, and didn't sign any pledges not to serve under a Trump Administration.