



DOUGLAS GIBSON



Ambassador **Douglas Gibson** is one of South Africa's best known and most respected former politicians. His positive and constructive analysis of events and views about the future are popular with audiences.

He was the Opposition Chief Whip in Parliament for many years. He spoke truth to power and had a reputation for integrity. Despite being a robust politician and a tough debater, he remained on good terms with his political opponents. Even in the darkest moments of politics in South Africa, he managed – and still does – to remain cheerful and optimistic.

When Douglas was appointed an ambassador in 2007, many were astounded because the appointment was unprecedented: no opposition MP had become an ambassador since 1994. He served a successful four year term as ambassador to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar (Burma) and was permanent observer to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Douglas practised as an attorney for many years and took the apartheid government to court in every election for decades. On his return to South Africa he has devoted himself to a new career as a newspaper columnist, public speaker and writer. He is hoping for success as a writer of political thrillers.

In 2012 the DA presented him with a Lifetime Award for his contribution to democracy in South Africa: "In recognition of his remarkable career in public life as Town and Provincial Councillor and Member of Parliament, his stellar achievements as leader, spokesperson on frontline portfolios and Chief Whip of the opposition, service to his country as ambassador, and feisty warrior for liberal democratic values."

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SERVICES

As a versatile speaker, Mr Gibson can address a number of different subjects, including **analysing the South African political situation** and **discussing economic prospects** for our country. Sufficiently bilingual, he also welcomes opportunities to address Afrikaans audiences.

Other talks within his offering include:

South Africa: Past, Present and Future

A piercing look at our country by an analyst who remains an optimist.

Behind Embassy Walls

High dramas, bureaucratic mistakes, and the darker and lighter sides of diplomatic life and work, as witnessed by an ambassador to four Southeast Asian countries.

Lady with a Future

A close personal look at the Nobel Prize-winning freedom icon, Aung San Suu Kyi, and the movement towards democracy in Myanmar (Burma) by an ambassador who met her at her home on three occasions.

Amazing Thailand

A fascinating country, moving into the modern world within a religious and monarchical context, its people striving to make it the next Asian Tiger.

The USA and China: A Peaceful Pacific?

Prospects for co-operation as the USA and China both emphasize their future as Pacific Powers and China deals with human rights pressures.

ASEAN: The next Asian Tiger?

The 10 member Association of East Asian States will form a free trade area by 2015 and promises to become a major economic force with members like Thailand, Myanmar, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia. There could be major trade opportunities for South Africa in ASEAN.