

About SOAS

Baroness Valerie Amos

Baroness Valerie Amos of Brondesbury was appointed a Labour life peer in 1997 and was the first black woman to serve as a Minister in the British cabinet and in the House of Lords. She has consistently sustained an interest in, and a commitment to, development issues, and to equality and human rights. Valerie was an adviser to the Mandela Government on leadership and change management issues and was Chief Executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission between 1989 and 1994. She has also held high office as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between 2001 and 2003 and also held the office of Secretary of State for International Development in 2003. After a further period in the Lords as spokesperson for the Northern Ireland Office she became Leader of the House of Lords and Lord President of the Council between 2003 and 2007.



Valerie served as UK High Commissioner to Australia before joining the UN in 2010 as Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Her work in the voluntary and charity sector and in other non-governmental organisations has gone hand in hand with her policy and political work. Valerie has served as a Trustee for Voluntary Service Overseas, the Windsor Leadership Trust, Project Hope, and the Institute for Public Policy Research. She has also served as Deputy Chair of the Runnymede Trust.

In 2015 Valerie became the ninth Director of SOAS.

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