Lugar Diplomacy Series Hosts Former Defense Secretary Ash Carter

Meridian Institute
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Event Sponsor: Meridian Institute, Bechtel, PAE

Former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter was the most recent distinguished speaker in the Lugar Diplomacy Series, appearing at a time when relations with Russia, China, North Korea and the Middle East, as well as the administration’s policies toward NATO and other alliances, are at the forefront of public debate.

Secretary Carter, the 11th speaker in the Lugar Diplomacy series, was introduced by Sen. Lugar as “one of the great public servants of his generation.” A Harvard scholar who has held numerous Pentagon posts over the past 30 years, Sec. Carter’s “knowledge of international security issues is unsurpassed in our country and there is no greater authority on the intersection of technology and national defense,” Lugar said.

The Oct. 19, 2018 event, held at the offices of LDS co-sponsor The Meridian Institute, was attended by more than a dozen diplomats posted to Washington from capitals around the world. Like all LDS events, the free-wheeling discussion was off-the-record in order to facilitate a frank and candid exchange of views.

Secretary Carter served as Defense chief during the Obama administration. But Sen. Lugar noted that his involvement with international security affairs goes back much further. “At Harvard University in 1991 he authored a key report that detailed the enormous proliferation risks associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. His study and its recommendations, combined with the work of Bill Perry and others, formed the theoretical basis for what became the Nunn-Lugar program--the U.S. effort to safeguard and help destroy WMD in the former Soviet Union.”

The Lugar Diplomacy Series was launched in October 2016 to strengthen diplomatic relationships and to provide diplomats with important insights into the U.S. government and policy from leading American figures in both domestic and international affairs. Other speakers have included Sen. Susan Collins (R, Maine), Supreme Court Associate Justice Elena Kagan, former White House chief of staff Joshua Bolten, former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, and former U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills.

Secretary Carter’s appearance was also co-sponsored by Bechtel and PAE.