

# New US envoy to Iraq is shrewd, tackles thorniest issues

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WASHINGTON — Christopher Hill, whom US President Barack Obama has named as the new ambassador to Iraq, has a reputation as a shrewd career diplomat who has tackled some of the thorniest international problems.

Hill...has served as the lead negotiator in efforts to scrap North Korea's nuclear programs and as a top negotiator for the Dayton Peace Accords ending the war in Bosnia.

In announcing his appointment Friday, which must still be confirmed by the US Senate, Obama said "Ambassador Hill has been tested, and he has shown the pragmatism and skill that we need right now."

.... Before his work on North Korea, Hill served as ambassador to Poland (2000-2004), ambassador to Macedonia (1996-1999) and Special Envoy to Kosovo (1998-1999).

He also served as special assistant to the president and senior director for Southeast European Affairs in the National Security Council.

"He came to president Bush's attention when the president of Poland lavishly praised Hill's performance as ambassador there and requested that Hill stay on," Kessler added.

Hill is considered a protege of Richard Holbrooke, now the Obama administration's envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan who is best known for brokering the Dayton Peace Accords.

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