

# David Firestein

David J. Firestein is Perot Fellow and Vice President for Strategic Trust Building and Track II Diplomacy at the East-West Institute.

The EastWest Institute released its groundbreaking report on U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, [\*Threading the Needle: Proposals for U.S. and Chinese Actions on Arms Sales to Taiwan\*](#), at a launch event in Washington D.C. on September 12, 2013. - See more at: <http://www.ewi.info/idea/washington-roundtable-taiwan-report#sthash.316clss9.dpuf>

Mr. Firestein joined the Foreign Service in 1992. He was special assistant to the VOA Mandarin branch chief (1993); U.N. election monitor in Cambodia (1993); and assistant cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, where he managed a number of USG exchange programs (1993-1997). In Moscow for four years, he was the Embassy's deputy spokesman, and he worked in the political section. His next assignment was to the American Embassy in Beijing, reporting on political and social developments affecting China's stability. In 2003, he joined the State Department's Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs, where he focused on U.S.-China bilateral affairs and Hong Kong. Firestein then worked in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs' Office of Economic Policy, where he was an advisor to and principal speechwriter for the U.S. Ambassador for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) affairs. From 2006-2007, he managed Asia-focused regional outreach programs for the Bureau's Office of Public Diplomacy. He was then senior advisor at the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy until joining the East-West Institute in 2010.

He was an elected member of the Board of Governors of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), the Foreign Service's union and professional association, and he ran for President of the Association. He was an adjunct professor on the faculty of the University of Texas (Austin), where he taught graduate courses on U.S.-Russia relations and U.S.-China relations.

He won the Secretary of State's Award for Public Outreach in 2006. Fluent in Mandarin Chinese and Russian, Firestein interpreted for dozens of U.S. Cabinet and Cabinet-level officials during official visits.

A native of Austin, Texas, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University in 1990. He then studied public policy and Asian studies at the University of Texas, earning master's degrees in both fields (1992).