Sir Nicholas Barrington was a career diplomat for 37 years prior to his retirement in 1994. He has served in a variety of posts overseas including Afghanistan, Iran, Egypt and Pakistan, where he ended as High Commissioner. He also served in Japan and Brussels. His home postings included three and a half years as a private secretary to two British Foreign Secretaries. In retirement he has been active in building bridges between East and West.

He is the author of *A passage to Nuristan: exploring the mysterious Afghan hinterland* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006), an account of his travels to remote areas of Afghanistan in the 1960s which he co-authored with JT Kendrick and R Schlagintweit, and two autobiographical volumes, *Nicholas meets Barrington: the personal journey of a former diplomat* and *Envoy: a Diplomatic Journey* (London: IB Tauris, 2013) in which he recounts his early life and his career in the Foreign Office. Serving in Iran during the Islamic Revolution in 1979, he had to navigate his way through the drama of a new political order, while his time in Cairo coincided with the assassination of President Sadat. As High Commissioner to Pakistan, he had first hand experience of Pakistan under President Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif.