



# Douglas Gibson Biography

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Ambassador Douglas Gibson is one of South Africa's best-known and most respected former politicians. His positive and constructive keynote speeches, his analysis of events and his views about the future are popular with audiences.

He was the Opposition Chief Whip in Parliament for many years. He spoke truth to power and had a reputation for integrity. Despite being a robust politician and a tough debater, he remained on good terms with his political opponents. Even in the darkest moments of politics in South Africa, he managed – and still does – to remain cheerful and optimistic.

When Douglas was appointed an ambassador in 2007, many were astounded because the appointment was unprecedented: no opposition MP had become an ambassador since 1994. He served a successful four-year term as ambassador to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar (Burma) and was permanent observer to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Douglas practised as an attorney for many years and took the apartheid government to court in every election for decades. On his return to South Africa, he has devoted himself to a new career as a newspaper columnist, public speaker and writer. He has a regular column in *The Star*, *Mercury* and *Pretoria News* and has recently started writing for the Afrikaans daily, *Beeld*. He is hoping for success as a writer of political thrillers.

In 2012 the DA presented him with a Lifetime Award for his contribution to democracy in South Africa: "In recognition of his remarkable career in public life as Town and Provincial Councillor and Member of Parliament, his stellar achievements as leader, spokesperson on frontline portfolios and Chief Whip of the opposition, service to his country as ambassador, and feisty warrior for liberal democratic values."

Douglas and his wife, Pam, live in Johannesburg, not far from their son and daughter-in-law, Donald and Tarryn who have twins, a boy, Thomas and a girl, Keira, born in November 2014.