



Ambassadorial Insights
Winter 2008

EU–U.S. Relations

His Excellency

John Bruton

EU ambassador to the U.S.

**Thursday, 24 January
3:00 P.M.**

Assembly Hall, Hinckley Alumni and Visitors Center



John Bruton became European Union ambassador to the U.S. on 9 December 2004. Bruton is a former Irish prime minister (1994–97), during which time he helped transform the Irish economy into the “Celtic Tiger,” one of the fastest growing economies in the world. He was also deeply involved in the Northern Irish Peace Process that led to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. As prime minister, he also presided over a successful Irish EU presidency in 1996 and helped finalize the Stability and Growth Pact that governs the management of the single European currency, the euro. In addition, Bruton served as a leading member of the caucus that drafted the first-ever European Constitution. He was first elected to the Irish Parliament in 1969 at the age of twenty-two as a member of the Fine Gael Party, becoming party leader in 1990 and leading it to victory in 1994. He previously served as Ireland’s minister of finance (1981–82 and 1986–87), minister of industry and energy (1982–83), and minister of trade, commerce and tourism (1983–86). Bruton received a bachelor’s degree from University College Dublin before studying to become a barrister. He and his wife, Finola, are the parents of four children.