

## **Frederik (Frits) Bolkestein**

**Nationality:** Dutch

### **Personal details**

Born 1933

Married, three children

### **Education**

Barlaeus Gymnasium, Amsterdam

1951 - 1953 Oregon State College, USA - mathematics

1955 - 1959 Gemeentelijke Universiteit Amsterdam - mathematics and physics, philosophy and Greek

1964 Economics (first part) - University of London

1965 Master at Law - University of Leiden

### **Professional Career**

1960 - 1976 Shell Group : Posts in East Africa, Honduras, El Salvador, London, Indonesia and Paris

1973 - 1976 Director Shell Chimie, Paris

### **Political Career**

1978 - 1982 Member of Parliament for the V.V.D. (Liberals)

1986 - 1988 Idem

1989 - 1999 Idem

1982-1986 Minister for Foreign Trade

1986-1988 Chairman Atlantic Commission (in the Netherlands)

1988 - 1989 Minister of Defence

1990 - 1998 Chairman of the V.V.D. Parliamentary Group

Since 1996 President of Liberal Internationale

### **Other details**

Chairman of the Amsterdam Bach Soloists

Member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London)

Author of books and articles on a wide range of topics.

9/15/99

Bo B

### Synopsis of the curriculum vitae of Frits Bolkestein

Frits Bolkestein was born in Amsterdam on 4 April 1933. He studied in Oregon (USA) and Amsterdam, where he obtained a masters degree (cum laude) in philosophy and mathematics in May 1959. He obtained the first part of an economics degree at London University (1964) and his law degree at the University of Leiden in May, 1965.

Frits Bolkestein joined the Royal Dutch/ Shell Group of Companies in April 1960. He worked successively in East Africa, Central America, Indonesia, London and Paris. His last posting was to Shell's chemicals concern in France, of which he was the director in charge of plastics.

He left Shell in June 1976 to become a Member of Parliament for the liberal party VVD in January 1978. He was his party's first spokesman for foreign affairs until November 1982 when he became State Secretary of Economic Affairs responsible for foreign trade and competition policy. After a new period in Parliament he became Minister of Defense in November 1988. His Italian colleague was then Valerio Zanone.

After the elections of 1989 the VVD went into opposition. Frits Bolkestein became his party's leader in April 1990. The VVD then represented 15% of the electorate. In the elections of 1994 the VVD increased its strength to 20%. He then negotiated the first liberal/ labour cabinet in recent memory. He declined to enter the cabinet, preferring to lead his party as MP. In the elections of 1998 the VVD again increased its strength, to 25% of the electorate. Frits Bolkestein then negotiated the second liberal/ labour cabinet. Having achieved this, he decided to relinquish the leadership of his party and pass it on to his successor. He is now a Member of Parliament.

Since June 1996 he is President of Liberal International, which he will remain until October 2000.

Frits Bolkestein is bilingual in Dutch/English. He speaks good French as well as German and Spanish. He is the author of a number of articles and books on various political subjects as well as of an historical play. His hobbies are listening to classical music, reading good literature and playing tennis. He is chairman of the Amsterdam Bach Soloists. He is married and has three children. He lives in Amsterdam.