



Michelle Lenihan
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Ms. Michelle Lenihan is the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy). In this capacity, she advises DoD leadership and represents the Department on policy matters pertaining to Africa. She previously served the office as Principal Director and Director for North/West/Sahel. Additionally, she is an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserves.

Prior to Office of the Secretary of Defense (African Affairs), Ms. Lenihan focused on national security affairs at the White House as a Director for African Affairs on the National Security Council staff; in the Senate as a Legislative Fellow; at the Pentagon as Chief of Staff for Homeland Defense and Global Security, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and Country Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs; and as a Presidential Management Fellow in Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, in the Office of the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and at Naval Forces Europe/Africa in Naples, Italy.

Outside of government service, Ms. Lenihan associate produced for ABC News, led the creation of the first dialysis center in Guyana, South America and taught in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Ms. Lenihan earned a Master in Public Policy degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pennsylvania.

Ms. Lenihan's list of honors for journalism include a George F. Peabody Award, an Emmy Award, an Alfred I. DuPont Silver Baton Award, a Silver Cindy Award, a Communicator Award for Video, and two Angel Awards. She received the Dean's Excellence Award for Innovation while at Harvard. At the Pentagon, she has earned the Defense Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service, the Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service, and the Joint Civilian Service Achievement Award. Ms. Lenihan was a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations.