

Barbara A. Leaf

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY
BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS**

MAY 31, 2022 - PRESENT



Barbara A. Leaf became Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs on May 31, 2022. Assistant Secretary Leaf previously served as Special Assistant to President Biden and the Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the White House's National Security Council (NSC).

Assistant Secretary Leaf served as the U.S. ambassador to the United Arab Emirates from 2014-2018 and was the Ruth and Sid Lapidus

Fellow at The Washington Institute and director of the Beth and David Geduld Program on Arab Politics from 2018 until joining the Biden administration in January 2021. As former Senior Foreign Service Officer, Leaf served in high-level positions at the State Department and abroad. Before arriving in Abu Dhabi in 2014, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Arabian Peninsula and as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq; directed the U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team in Basrah, Iraq; and served as the department's first director of the Office of Iranian Affairs. In addition, she had postings in Rome, Sarajevo, Paris, Cairo, Tunis, Jerusalem, and Port-au-Prince.

A graduate of the College of William and Mary, she holds a master's degree in foreign affairs from the University of Virginia. She speaks Arabic, French, Italian, and Serbo-Croatian.