

**Laura K. Cooper** is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Georgetown University. She served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia from 2017 to 2025. Ms. Cooper played a pivotal role in coordinating U.S. security assistance to Ukraine – delivering billions in support – and orchestrated the 50-nation Ukraine Defense Contact Group to unify partners and catalyze assistance. She championed novel unmanned systems and air defense programs, supporting Ukrainian battlefield successes. A career member of the Senior Executive Service, she served as the top Pentagon strategist on Russia. Leveraging her diplomatic skills, she strengthened defense relationships across the region, including the Caucasus, Moldova, the Western Balkans, and Central Asia.



After eight years of service on the Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia account, Ms. Cooper joined the faculty at the National War College to share her expertise with rising national security leaders.

She previously served as Principal Director in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Affairs where she led teams designing homeland defense strategy, mission assurance policy, and continuity of operations plans.

Prior assignments in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy include: Director, Strategy office, where she played a leadership role in the Quadrennial Defense Review; and Acting Director, South Asia and Afghanistan Team Chief, where she managed security assistance in the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

Before joining the Department of Defense in 2001, Ms. Cooper was a policy planning officer at the State Department and a Junior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

She holds a Master of Science in Foreign Service degree from Georgetown University, a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy degree from the Industrial College of Armed Forces at National Defense University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern University.

She is the recipient of the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal (Sammies) Federal Employee of the Year award, the Presidential Rank Award of Distinguished Executive, and multiple awards of the Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Medal and the Office of the Secretary of Defense Exceptional Civilian Service medal.