

Victoria Coates

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A former deputy national security advisor to President Donald Trump, Victoria Coates is vice president of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy at The Heritage Foundation. With decades of experience as a national security advisor in Congress, federal agencies, and the White House, Coates leads the Davis Institute in designing and promoting policies that prioritize the security of American citizens while protecting our interests around the world.

In 2007, Coates left academia to become the director of research in former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's personal office. Coates then joined then-Governor Rick Perry's primary campaign for president as senior advisor. In 2013, Coates became senior national security advisor for U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX). In the Senate, Coates oversaw planning, strategy, and communications for Cruz's participation in writing the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

When President Donald Trump was elected in 2016, Coates joined his transition team for the National Security Council staff, eventually becoming special assistant to the president and senior director for strategic communications. Coates assisted in establishing the NSC communication strategy, coordinated NSC policy related to the Middle East Peace Process, and supported the development of the December 2017 National Security Strategy. In 2019, Coates was promoted to Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for the Middle East and North Africa, overseeing the Maximum Pressure Campaign against Iran and initiating the negotiations for the Abraham Accords.

In early 2020, Coates transferred to the Department of Energy to advise Secretary Dan Brouillette on national security issues and act as his personal representative in the Middle East and North Africa. At the conclusion of the Trump administration, Coates became the director of middle eastern programs at the Center for Security Policy, then a distinguished fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council.

Coates holds a bachelor's degree from Trinity College, a master's degree from Williams College and a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, all in art history.