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Dr. Amy Searight serves as senior adviser and director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. Dr. Searight has a wealth of experience on Asia policy—spanning defense, diplomacy, development, and economics — in both government and academia. Most recently, she served in the Department of Defense (DOD) as deputy assistant secretary of defense for South and Southeast Asia, from 2014 to 2016. Prior to that appointment, she served as principal director for East Asian security at DOD and as senior adviser for Asia in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). She has also served on the policy planning staff and as special adviser for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in the State Department as a Council on Foreign Relations international affairs fellow.

Before entering government, Dr. Searight was an assistant professor at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, where she taught international relations of Asia and directed the mid-career master's program in international policy and practice. She was also an assistant professor at Northwestern University and a postdoctoral fellow at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. She holds a Ph.D. in political science and an M.A. in East Asian studies from Stanford University, and she graduated magna cum laude from Williams College with a B.A. in political economy.