

David Schenker is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Program on Arab Politics at The Washington Institute. Confirmed by the Senate on June 5, 2019, he served as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs through January 2021. As Assistant Secretary, Mr. Schenker was the principal Middle East advisor to the Secretary of State and the senior U.S. government official overseeing the conduct of U.S. policy and diplomacy in a region stretching from Morocco to Iran to Yemen. In that position, Mr. Schenker was responsible for 18 countries, the Palestinian Authority, and Western Sahara, supervising more than 9000 diplomats and other staff, and administering a budget in excess of \$7 billion per year.

At State, Mr. Schenker lead bureau efforts to advance American interests abroad and strengthen U.S. partnerships and alliances across the region. Via diplomacy and the effective allocation of U.S. resources and assistance—as well as through imposition of sanctions—Mr. Schenker worked to promote human rights, deter terrorism, fight corruption, and push back against regional adversaries. In addition to developing and implementing the U.S. regional strategy on China in the region, Mr. Schenker worked to resolve the Gulf rift as well as intractable conflicts in Libya and Yemen, consolidate the Abraham Accords, and counter malign Iranian influence in the Middle East.

Before joining the State Department, from 2006-2019, Mr. Schenker was the Aufzien Fellow and director of the Beth and David Geduld Program on Arab Politics at the Institute. During that period, he authored dozens of opeds, journal articles, and PolicyWatches, about Jordan, Lebanon, Hezbollah, and Egypt, among other topics, and contributed chapters to Institute monographs including: *Beyond Islamists and Autocrats: Prospects for Political Reform Post Arab Spring* (2017), *No Good Outcome: How Israel Could be Drawn into the Syrian Conflict* (2013). He also published a chapter on U.S.-Lebanese relations in *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis* (Palgrave, 2009), and authored *Egypt's Enduring Challenges* (2011), an Institute monograph focusing on post-Mubarak Egypt.

Previously, from 2002-2006, Mr. Schenker served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense as Levant country director, the Pentagon's top policy aide on the Arab countries of the Levant. In that capacity, he was responsible for advising the secretary and other senior Pentagon leadership on the military and political affairs of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories. He was awarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service in 2005.

Prior to joining the government in 2002, Mr. Schenker was a research fellow at The Washington

Institute, focusing on Arab governance issues and before that, a project coordinator a Bethesda-based contractor of large, centrally-funded USAID projects in Egypt and Jordan. While at the Institute from 1998-2002, he authored two Institute books: *Dancing with Saddam: The Strategic Tango of Jordanian-Iraqi Relations* (copublished with Lexington Books, 2003) and *Palestinian Democracy and Governance: An Appraisal of the Legislative Council* (2001). His writings on Arab affairs have appeared in a number of prominent scholarly journals and newspapers, including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Jerusalem Post*.