

Michelle D. Gavin

Michelle Gavin, a Senior Fellow for Africa at the Council on Foreign Relations, has over twenty years of experience in government and nonprofit work in international affairs. She was the Managing Director of The Africa Center, a nonprofit, multidisciplinary institution in New York City dedicated to increasing understanding of contemporary Africa. Previously she served as the United States Ambassador to Botswana, and served concurrently as the United States Representative to the Southern African Development Community, or SADC.

From 2009 to 2011, Gavin was a Special Assistant to President Obama and the Senior Director for Africa at the National Security Council. Prior to joining the administration, she worked with the Council on Foreign Relations as an International Affairs Fellow and an Adjunct Fellow for Africa. Earlier in her career she worked in the United States Senate, where she was the Staff Director for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on African Affairs, Director of International Policy Issues for Senator Russ Feingold, and Legislative Director for Senator Ken Salazar.

Gavin received an M.Phil. in International Relations from Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar, and earned her bachelor's degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, where she was a Truman Scholar. She serves on the Board of Directors of Points of Light, the Africa-America Institute, Emerging Public Leaders, and is a member of the Harvard AIDS Initiative's International Advisory Board.