



Karen Decker is currently a visiting fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Karen has specialized in assignments that involve conflict resolution and crisis management. Most recently, she served as Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan from September 2018 to September 2020. Earlier assignments in Afghanistan include two years as the Senior Civilian Representative in eastern Afghanistan (2012-2014), and tours in Kandahar and Ghazni in 2006 and 2007.

Prior to returning to Afghanistan in 2018, Karen was the Director of the Syria Transition Assistance Response Team, leading interagency teams in Turkey and Syria responsible for humanitarian and stabilization assistance in support of the C-ISIS campaign.

Other overseas assignments include Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Estonia (2007-2010), Political Counselor in Greece (2003-2006), at the U.S. Mission to NATO (1998-2001) and in Bosnia (1995-1998). Her first overseas tour was in Pakistan in 1990.

Washington assignments include the Foreign Service Institute, the European Bureau and the State Department's Operations Center. From 2001-2002, Karen served as the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. In the days and weeks after September 11, 2001, Karen traveled with the Assistant Secretary to build European support for and contributions to Operation Enduring Freedom.

Karen is the recipient of numerous performance awards from the Department of State and the Department of Defense. In 2001 Secretary of State Colin Powell awarded Karen the Director General's Award for Reporting and Analysis for her work to elaborate U.S. objectives in the Balkans. She holds the rank of Minister-Counselor.