

Panel 1: Applying Foresight in Organisations

Speaker: Mara Karlin

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, U.S. Department of Defense



Mara Karlin was appointed as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy & Force Development in January 2015, having previously been appointed Principal Director for the office in May 2014, and before that, as Principal Director for the Strategy office since November 2012. Her office leads a wide range of efforts that guide Defense Department analysis and review including: formulating the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, implementing the Asia/Pacific rebalance, assessing future national security challenges and risk management, developing long-term comprehensive strategies and force planning scenarios, coordinating global and internal policy planning, and evolving alliances/partnerships. The office also serves as the lead for policy analysis and advice to DoD senior leadership on the development of U.S. forces, assessment of capabilities, and the allocation of resources to support the defence strategy. This includes the development of related planning guidance and the coordination of Policy participation in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System.

Prior to re-joining the Department of Defense, Dr. Karlin was an Adjunct Scholar at the RAND Corporation and an Adjunct Lecturer at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (JHU-SAIS), among other universities. Her focus was on Middle East and Strategic Studies, and her Ph.D. dissertation assessed U.S. programmes to build partner militaries in fragile states. She remains an Adjunct Professor in Strategic Studies at JHU-SAIS.

Previously, she served in a variety of policy positions in the U.S. Defense Department, including South Asia Specialist, Levant Director, and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. In her capacity as Special Assistant, she helped coordinate the Under Secretary's workload and facilitated his efforts on hundreds of national security-related actions. As Levant Director, she was intimately involved in formulating U.S. policy on Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel-Palestinian affairs. This work involved building the Lebanese Armed Forces, coordinating nascent defence relations between the United States and Lebanon, deepening U.S.-Jordanian defence cooperation, and expanding security sector reform in the Palestinian arena. As South Asia Specialist, she helped formulate U.S. policy on India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, focusing on terrorism, governability, security sector reform, and non-proliferation. In connection with her work at the Pentagon, she received the Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award, among other honours.

She has published widely on defence and regional affairs, and has delivered numerous briefings and testimony to audiences including Congress, the intelligence community, academia and think tanks. She has led delegations to Australia, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Lebanon, UAE, Qatar, India, Pakistan, and Nepal, and has conducted research or participated in negotiations in the UK, Japan, Jordan, Israel, the West Bank, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, India and France.

Dr. Karlin received her B.A. *summa cum laude* in Political Science from Tulane University, M.A. with distinction in Strategic Studies, Middle East Studies, and Economics from JHU-SAIS, and Ph.D. in International Affairs from JHU-SAIS.