

**Elbridge Colby**  
**Director, Defense Program, Center for a New American Security**



Elbridge Colby is the Director of the Defense Program at the Center for a New American Security, where he leads CNAS' work on defense issues.

Previously, Colby served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development from 2017-2018. In that role, he served as the lead official in the development and rollout of the Department's preeminent strategic planning guidance, the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS). The NDS focuses the Department on the challenges to U.S. military superiority posed by China and Russia and therefore prioritizes sustaining the Joint Force's warfighting edge against these major power competitors. Colby also served as the lead official in the development of the 2017 Secretary's Force Planning Priorities, which guided the review of and topline increases for the FY2019 defense budget, and the 2018 Defense Planning Guidance, which provided guidance for the development of the FY2020 defense budget. Colby served as a primary Policy representative to the Program and Budget Review and Support to Strategic Analysis processes during his tenure in the Pentagon. He also served as the primary DOD representative in the development of the 2017 National Security Strategy.

Prior to entering government service, Colby was from 2014 to 2017 the Robert M. Gates Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, where he focused on a range of defense issues and consulted regularly with the Defense Department and other U.S. Government elements. From 2010 to 2013 he was principal analyst and division lead for global strategic affairs at CNA. Earlier in his career he served for over five years in the U.S. Government at the Department of Defense, Department of State, and in the Intelligence Community working on a range of strategic forces, WMD, and intelligence reform matters, including service with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq in 2003. Colby has also served on the staff of a number of government commissions, including the 2014 National Defense Panel, the 2008-2009 Strategic Posture Commission, and the 2004-2005 President's WMD Commission.

Colby is the author of many book chapters, reports, and articles on defense and foreign policy issues, and co-edited a volume on *Strategic Stability: Contending Interpretations*. His work has appeared in outlets such as *Foreign Affairs*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The*

*New York Times, The National Interest, Foreign Policy, and Survival.* He has testified before Congress and the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. Colby is a recipient of the Exceptional Public Service Award from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and of the Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards from the Department of State. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute of Strategic Studies. Colby is a graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School.