

**John F. Kirby**  
**Rear Admiral, USN (Ret)**

John F. Kirby serves as White House National Security Communications Advisor. In that capacity, he coordinates and aligns interagency national security messaging for the Biden administration. He frequently speaks for the administration on foreign and defense policy issues.



Prior to his work at the White House, Kirby served as Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. In this role, he advised Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III and Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks on public communications and community engagement. He also served as the Department's chief spokesperson.

Kirby was an adjunct lecturer at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a military and diplomatic analyst at CNN between 2017 and 2021. Kirby previously served at the Department of State, as the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Public Affairs from December 2015 to January 2017 and as the State Department's spokesperson from May 2015 to January 2017.

Prior to duty at the State Department, Kirby served as the Pentagon Press Secretary under Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, the first uniformed officer to hold the position of chief spokesman for the Department of Defense.

Kirby commissioned in the U.S. Navy in September 1986 after completing Officer Candidate School at Newport, R.I. He served in uniform for more than 28 years, before retiring in 2015 at the rank of Rear Admiral (lower half).

His naval career included duty at sea and ashore, including deployments to the Middle East and Mediterranean. Kirby completed an assignment as chief spokesman for then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen in 2011, and then took up duties as the military spokesman for then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta.

His last Navy posting was as Chief of Navy Information, where he served as the principal spokesman for the Department of the Navy and coordinated all strategic messaging for the Department.

He is a 1985 graduate of the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, where he received a Bachelor's degree in History. He holds a Master of Science degree in International Relations from Troy State University and a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.