



Global Awareness Lecture
Winter 2006

Latin America and the Left:

U.S. Policy toward Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, and Venezuela

Elizabeth A. Whitaker

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Canada, Mexico, and Public Diplomacy

Wednesday, 5 April

2:00 P.M.

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Elizabeth “Betsy” Whitaker assumed the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs in September 2005. This marked Whitaker’s return to the Bureau, where she had previously served as director of the office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (2001–03) and prior to that in assignments in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Immediately prior to assuming her current position, she served as the director of policy, planning, and resources for the under secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (2004–05), heading an office which she established at the request of department leadership. From 2003 to 2004, she worked as deputy executive secretary in the Department’s Executive Secretariat. Whitaker joined the Foreign Service in 1984 as a public diplomacy officer with the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). In addition to Central American tours, she has served in Portugal and her Washington tours with USIA include Central American desk officer, Operations Center watch officer, executive assistant to the counselor of the agency, and chief of the Training Division. Since the consolidation of USIA into the Department of State in 1999, she has served as a senior-level career development officer (1999–2000) and is a graduate of the senior seminar. Whitaker is the recipient of numerous Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards, and holds the Senior Foreign Service (SFS) rank of Minister Counselor (FE-MC). She is married to SFS officer Kevin Whitaker, who is currently serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in Caracas, Venezuela. They have one son, Daniel, age 11, who pitches and plays outfield on a Babe Ruth All-Star team.