

Shannon Smith, Ph.D.

Shannon Smith heads the Middle East and Africa section for the Congressional Research Service (CRS). She is also an adjunct instructor for George Washington University. Prior to joining CRS in 2021, she was a professor of practice and director of engagement for the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. Before joining the Africa Center, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, overseeing U.S. policy toward Southern and East Africa and leading Africa Bureau efforts on global health and the environment. Dr. Smith has also served as the senior policy adviser for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Africa, global health, and peacekeeping issues and previously as the national security adviser for the Assistant Majority Leader of the Senate. She is a graduate of Texas A&M University and Cornell University and a long distance runner.