



Judith A. McHale

Under Secretary

Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

Term of Appointment: 05/26/2009 to present

Judith A. McHale is Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, helping lead America's engagement with the people of the world. Appointed by President Obama, she was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on May 21, 2009 and sworn in on May 26.

Ms. McHale is the former President and Chief Executive Officer of Discovery Communications. For two decades, Ms. McHale was a leader in building Discovery Communications, the parent company of the Discovery Channel, into a far-reaching and renowned global media enterprise with 1.4 billion subscribers in 170 countries. She forged partnerships around the world and created innovative strategies that focused on understanding and respecting different cultural contexts and tapping local voices to succeed in diverse markets.

The daughter of a U.S. Foreign Service Officer, Ms. McHale was born in New York City and grew up in Britain and apartheid-era South Africa. Her upbringing inspired a life-long commitment to social justice and engagement with development issues, especially in Africa. During these formative years, Ms. McHale's family home was constantly under police surveillance and was wire-tapped; family friends were detained and mistreated; and she became close with key anti-apartheid activists, including Felicia Kentridge, who founded South Africa's Legal Resource Centre, and her husband Sidney Kentridge, the noted civil rights lawyer who went on to represent slain anti-apartheid activist Steven Biko.

Ms. McHale graduated from the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom and Fordham University School of Law in New York.