

James “Jim” Callahan was born in Massachusetts, U.S.A., but raised in the state of Florida from age 10. He attended the University of Florida and Florida State University from which he graduated with a BA in History and an MS in Education. After serving as a Volunteer in the United States Peace Corps, in the Republic of Korea, Jim entered the U.S. Foreign Service as a consular officer assigned initially to the U.S. Consulate in Maracaibo, Venezuela. During a 23-year career with the U.S. Department of State, he served in Venezuela, Peru, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and China, as well as in numerous domestic assignments at the Department of State, the last of which was as Director for Asia, Africa and Europe in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

Jim took early retirement from the State Department to accept a position with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, Austria, as Director of Treaty Affairs. Subsequently, he became the UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 2003-2010. After retiring from UNODC in 2010, Jim returned to the INL Bureau at the Department of State where he worked as a contracted Senior Advisor for Central Asia programs until August 2023.

With more than 22 years of experience in narcotics, law enforcement, and rule of law programming, 20 of which were focused on Central Asia, Jim continues his interests in these areas and the Asian region.