

# US to 'Respond Accordingly' If Solomon Islands-China Pact Permits Military Base



[The United States](#) has warned [the Solomon Islands'](#) leadership that it would "respond accordingly" if a military installation on the Pacific Islands nation is allowed under the terms of the Solomon Islands-[China](#) security pact.

The White House [stated](#) Friday that a high-level U.S. delegation has met with the Solomon Islands' leadership in Honiara and raised concerns about the purpose and transparency of the agreement.

According to its [statement](#), Solomon Islands' officials have clarified that the security deal was solely for domestic applications, but the U.S.

delegation claimed that it posed “potential regional security implications” for Washington and its allies.

“If steps are taken to establish a de facto permanent military presence, power-projection capabilities, or a military installation, the delegation noted that the United States would then have significant concerns and respond significantly,” it stated.

The White House did not specify how the United States would respond.



U.S. National Security Council's Indo-Pacific coordinator Kurt Campbell (L) leaves after a meeting with the Solomon Islands opposition leader Mathew Wale (R) in Honiara on April 22, 2022. (Mavis Podokolo/AFP via Getty Images)

The U.S. delegation was led by Kurt Campbell, the National Security Council Indo-Pacific coordinator, and Daniel Kritenbrink, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs.

The White House stated that Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare had reassured that no military base, long-term presence, or power projection capability would be permitted under the agreement with China.

"The United States emphasized that it will follow developments closely in consultation with regional partners," it added.

During their meeting, the Solomon Islands agreed with Washington's proposal to launch "a high-level strategic dialogue" to address mutual concerns and drive practical progress, the White House stated.

It noted that Washington will also expedite the opening of a U.S. embassy in the Solomon Islands, dispatch the Mercy hospital ship to address public health, deliver additional vaccines, and advance initiatives on "people-to-people ties."

"Both sides agreed to discuss in greater detail security issues of mutual concern, economic and social development, public health, and finance and debt," the White House added.

The Solomon Islands-China security deal, which was signed earlier this week, triggered alarm in the United States and its allies that Beijing may use the accord to establish its military presence in the region and destabilize the Indo-Pacific.

According to a [leaked draft](#) of the agreement, Beijing would be able to dispatch police, troops, weapons, and even naval ships—with the consent of the Solomons—to "protect the safety of Chinese personnel and major projects in the Solomon Islands."

The location of the Solomon Islands is critical and was the scene of extensive fighting during World War II because of its influence over sea lanes. The security deal would expand Beijing's reach beyond the South China Sea to within 1,700 kilometers (1,060 miles) of Australia's northern city of Cairns.

On April 18, the United States [convened a meeting](#) with officials of Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, during which they expressed concerns about the Solomon-China deal. The White House said that Washington was concerned by the lack of transparency and "unspecified nature" of the agreement.