

SECRETARY AUSTIN'S 12TH TRIP TO THE INDO-PACIFIC

FACT SHEET

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III's twelfth visit to the Indo-Pacific included stops in Australia, the Philippines, Laos, and Fiji. While in the region, he participated in the [Australia-U.S.-Japan Trilateral Defense Ministers' Meeting](#), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus, meetings with regional counterparts, and engagements with key Fijian leaders.

Secretary Austin's trip builds on historic milestones and unprecedented cooperation with allies and partners to strengthen deterrence and secure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

AUSTRALIA

The United States, Australia, and Japan are taking decisive steps to deepen trilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific by:

- ▶ **Integrating Japan into U.S. force posture initiatives in Australia** by announcing annual trilateral training among the Australian Defence Force, the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force's Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade, and United States Marine Rotational Force-Darwin in Northern Australia and the Indo-Pacific region, beginning with TALISMAN SABRE 2025.
- ▶ **Expanding the scale and scope of trilateral military exercises** by opening major U.S.-Japan bilateral exercises to Australian participation and evolving the complexity of trilateral exercises such as SOUTHERN JACKAROO.
- ▶ **Advancing trilateral cooperation on integrated air and missile defense (IAMD)** by incorporating live-fire events into large-scale multilateral exercises such as TALISMAN SABRE.

THE PHILIPPINES

The United States and the Philippines are modernizing combined alliance capabilities and bolstering deterrence in concrete and tangible ways by:

- ▶ **Concluding a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)**, which enables the United States and Philippines to share, handle, and protect each other's classified military information.
- ▶ **Standing up a new Combined Coordination Center in Camp Aguinaldo** that will improve bilateral operational planning and allow U.S. and Philippine forces to work side-by-side in response to real-time incidents, including those in the South China Sea.



 **LAOS**

The United States continues to support collaboration between allies and partners to build regional capacity and uphold international laws and norms by:

- ▶ **Announcing the second-ever ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise** in 2025 to advance maritime safety and rule of law in the region.
- ▶ **Releasing the first-ever “[U.S. Department of Defense Vision Statement for a Prosperous and Secure Southeast Asia](#),”** which promotes practical cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and includes activities to improve air, cyber, and maritime domain awareness, establish emerging leaders exchanges, and increase trainings and exercises.

 **FIJI**

The United States and Fiji are strengthening partnerships and facilitating greater engagement with Pacific Island Countries by:

- ▶ **Announcing initiation of negotiations with Fiji on a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA),** which will advance U.S. efforts to work more closely with the region and build on a growing foundation of important cooperative agreements with Pacific Island Countries.
- ▶ **Signing an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with Fiji,** which will bolster bilateral logistics cooperation, including by enabling efficient transfer of fuel and medical supplies as well as use of maintenance facilities during emergencies.
- ▶ **Committing \$4.9 million in new U.S. security assistance** to support Fiji’s military modernization through enhanced Foreign Military Financing, pending congressional approval.

