

Papua New Guinea:

Part 2A: US-Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue, NATO+

May 25, 2023

Please see Appendix 3 for a Report by www.DiGiNews360.com on NATO PLUS.

May 22, 2023: Port Moresby: The second meeting of the US-Pacific Islands Forum took place at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

The challenges before the Pacific Islands Forum include political leadership and regionalism, peace and security, economic development, climate change, natural disasters, oceans and the environment, and technology and connectivity.

PARTNERS: Founded in 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum was represented at Port Moresby by the following:

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|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Australia, | 7. New Zealand, | 13. Solomon Islands, |
| 2. Cook Islands, | 8. Niue, | 14. Tonga, |
| 3. Fiji, | 9. Palau, | 15. Tuvalu, |
| 4. Kiribati, | 10. Papua New Guinea, | 16. Vanuatu and |
| 5. Nauru, | 11. Republic of Marshall Islands, | 17. United States of America |
| 6. New Caledonia, | 12. Samoa, | |

The Forum affirmed its commitment to addressing the Republic of the Marshall Islands' ongoing environmental, public health concerns, and other welfare concerns, as a nuclear legacy of the cold war. (*Appendix 2 below*)

The Forum declared its support for the vision of **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**. (*Appendix 1 below*)

The first U.S.-Pacific Islands Summit had taken place in Washington, D.C. in September 2022.

Note: The **Canadian** government released its **Indo-Pacific Strategy in November 2022**. The strategy calls out **China as an "increasingly disruptive global power"** that must be challenged on profound areas of disagreement despite the necessity of cooperation on global issues. It also calls for **deeper cooperation**

with democracies such as India, Japan, and South Korea. However, Canada has not shown any active interest in the island countries of the South Pacific.

Reference: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/22/u-s-pacific-islands-forum-leaders-dialogue-in-port-moresby-papua-new-guinea/> .

Appendix 1: THE BLUE PACIFIC: The "Blue Pacific" is a term that was established to describe the region of the Pacific Ocean, its island nations, and their collective interests. The term was first used in 2017 at the Pacific Islands Forum in Samoa by the Pacific Island leaders.

Appendix 2: **November 2022: U.S and Marshall Islands Grapple With Nuclear Legacy:** USA had conducted 67 nuclear tests atmospheric nuclear weapons tests between 1946 and 1958—23 at **Bikini Atoll** and 44 at **Enewetak Atoll** both part of Marshall islands.

The 20-year old **Compact of Free Association** between USA and Marshall islands, due to expire in October 2023,
-defines the terms of U.S. economic assistance,
-allows Marshallese to live and work in the United States, and
-grants the United States the right to operate military facilities in the region, including Kwajalein Missile Range.
It also excludes activities by the militaries of other countries without U.S. permission.

For the negotiations, Marshall Islands President **David Kabua** is represented by **Alson Kelen**, the chair of the Marshall Island's National Nuclear Commission. President **Joe Biden** is represented by **Joseph Yun**, the Special Presidential Envoy for the negotiations.

Appendix 3: **May 27, 2023: Sergey Lavrov**, Russia's Foreign Minister took note of US efforts to bring India into NATO + to move India away from Russia and China.

May 27, 2023: US House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), led by Chairman **Mike**

Gallagher and Ranking Member **Raja Krishnamoorthi**, overwhelmingly adopted a policy proposal to enhance Taiwan's deterrence, including through strengthening NATO Plus to include India. The Select Committee has Membership from both Democrats and Republicans.

The Select Committee said,“ Including India in NATO Plus security arrangements would build upon the US and India's close partnership to strengthen global security and deter the aggression of the CCP across the Indo-Pacific region.”

Earlier in April 2023, India and USA had discussions about the state of the world. China had then warned USA against expanding US alliances to the door of China.

NATO PLUS: To deal with the aggressive military activities of China in South China sea and its open threat of using military force to annex Taiwan led to the formation of NATO+. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel, South Korea are five members of NATO +.

July 27, 2022: **Ro Khanna**, a US Congressman, said that India should be invited to become a member of NATO PLUS.

Appendix 4:

May 21, 2023: Military Deal between USA and Papua New Guinea: Russia’s Foreign Minister took note of US efforts to bring India into NATO + to move India away from Russia and China.



*May 21, 2023: Airport of Port Moresby:
USA’s Antony Blinken being received by John Russo, Deputy PM of PNG*

A Defense pact and a maritime security agreement were signed between **US Secretary of State Antony Blinken** and Papua New Guinea (PNG) **Prime Minister James Marape**.

The region has a number of sparsely populated small countries along with New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. During the 2nd World War, a number of naval battles took place in this region.

April 19, 2022: The region has acquired importance after Beijing signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands. The United States, Australia, Japan and New Zealand have expressed concern about the security pact, saying it had regional consequences and could lead to a Chinese military presence close to Australia.

May 30, 2022: China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday hosted a meeting with foreign ministers from Pacific island nations with diplomatic ties with China midway through a diplomatic tour of the region. China had circulated the draft of a regional trade and security agreement with the Island nations.

Wang said that the nations had agreed on five areas of cooperation, but further discussions were needed to shape more consensus. The five areas he listed included economic recovery after the Covid pandemic, and new centers for agriculture and disaster, but did not include security.

Taking questions after Wang's briefing, China's Ambassador to Fiji, **Qian Bo**, said participants had agreed to discuss the draft communique and the five-year plan "until we have reached an agreement."

The then **Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama** told reporters the Pacific nations were prioritizing consensus.

"Geopolitical point-scoring means less than little to anyone whose community is slipping beneath the rising seas, whose job is being lost to the pandemic, or whose family is impacted by the rapid rise in the price of commodities," Bainimarama said.

Note: Please read about Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi's visit to Papua New Guinea at <https://diginews360.com/three-nation-visit-of-modi-papua-new-guinea/>