

Austin Notes Progress on Development of Australia's Nuclear-Powered Sub

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The U.S. and Australia signaled their continued commitment to AUKUS, which is the trilateral security pact among Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S., formed in 2021, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said today.

"We've already made significant progress on developing the optimal pathway for Australia to acquire a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability at the earliest possible date. Our discussion today will help us to make further progress in our alliances and trilateral reach with AUKUS," the defense secretary said as he hosted an honor cordon and meeting at the Pentagon, welcoming Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Richard Marles.



Austin said that in his December meeting with Marles, they agreed to deepen defense cooperation and force posture and to strengthen coordination on regional priorities. At that meeting they also agreed to increase resilience in the face of climate change and better integrate the defense industry.

"We also pledged to find new ways to work closely with Japan, as we pursue a common vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, as a region where all countries can chart their own course and all states respect international rules and norms and where all disputes are resolved peacefully," he said.

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"All of this is yet another reminder that our unbreakable alliance is capable of great things. It has, indeed, endured for generations, and it remains vital to regional peace and security," Austin said.



The two leaders also exchanged views on the upcoming public release of the Australian Defense Strategic Review.

Marles said it's great to be back in the Pentagon again. He and Austin met here Dec. 7, along with British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace.

Marles echoed Austin's comments on a shared vision and appreciation for democracy and a rules-based order, as well as commitment to regional security through AUCKUS.

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