



United States-Australia Indo-Pacific Conversation Series #1

The Future of the United States-Australia Alliance in the Indo-Pacific

featuring Amb. Jane Hardy, Dr. Michael Goldman, and Bob Girrier

— Key Findings —

Introduction

Pacific Forum, in cooperation with the United States Studies Centre, and with generous support from the U.S. Embassy in Canberra, organized the inaugural session of the U.S.- Australia Indo-Pacific Conversation Series. This virtual event took place on February 2, 2021 through the Zoom platform, under the theme “The Future of the United States-Australia Alliance in the Indo-Pacific”. The session was headlined by Amb. Jane Hardy (Australian Consul General, Honolulu) and Dr Michael Goldman (Chargé d’affaires, U.S. Mission to Australia), and moderated by Pacific Forum President, Robert Girrier. The webinar brought together some 80 participants mainly from the United States and Australia, but also from other countries in Northeast Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific. The following are the key findings from the session. This event ran in the form of a public, on the record discussion.

History of Shared Values

100 years of cooperation between the U.S. and Australia dates back to the trenches of World War I. Australia has fought alongside the U.S. in every major conflict since 1918, but their mateship extends beyond the frontline to trade, education, international development, health, and more. The two partners often share closely-aligned opinions in the international arena, as their relationship is built on a common set of liberal democratic values and common strategic perceptions. Cooperation is also not confined to a formal alliance between Canberra and Washington D.C., but evident through other track 1.5 and track 2 diplomacy. It is an evolving partnership that seeks to reflect technological advancements and the changing international political climate.

Multilateral Cooperation

The new Biden administration has already, and will continue to, rebuild bilateral ties that were neglected during the previous administration. As demonstrated by its decision to re-join the Paris agreement, this administration will also seek to renew the U.S.' dedication to working with international organisations.

Both Washington D.C. and Canberra identify a bright future for multilateral cooperation between the 'Quad' (Australia, India, Japan, Quad). As there is no immediate security threat to any of the member countries, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue is not a military partnership akin to NATO. However, cooperation extends beyond "diplomatic talk shows"; areas that could benefit from collaboration between the four states include Coronavirus vaccine distribution, ensuring the efficiency of supply chains, PPE production, etc.

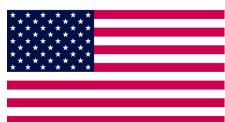
Although the speakers acknowledged the deterioration of the rules-based international order, both emphasized the importance of engaging with competitors respectfully, and communicating each sovereign state's priorities effectively.

New Frontiers

There are several areas that could benefit from more cooperation between the U.S. and Australia. These include responding to issues emerging from new frontiers, such as cyber-related strategic threats and space exploration. There are also a number of existing issues with potential for more cooperation, including both countries' contribution to development in Pacific nations, law enforcement, and climate change.

This document was prepared by Hui "Jenny" Cheng, Intern, Pacific Forum. For more information, please contact Ariel Stenek (ariel@pacforum.org), Director, Young Leaders Program, Pacific Forum. These preliminary findings provide a general summary of the discussion. This is not a consensus document. The views expressed are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of all participants.

The United States-Australia Indo-Pacific Conversation Series is held with support from the **US Embassy in Canberra** and in collaboration with the **United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney**.



**UNITED STATES
STUDIES CENTRE**