

Joint Leader Statement to Mark the Second Anniversary of AUKUS

Today, we, the leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States mark the second anniversary of the announcement of AUKUS.

The first major initiative of AUKUS was our decision to support Australia's acquisition of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs). In March 2023, we stood together in San Diego and announced the pathway to deliver on this commitment -- an ambitious plan that will strengthen our combined military capabilities, boost our industrial capacity, and enhance our ability to deter aggression in the Indo-Pacific. Our nations continue to deliver on these goals; the first Australian military personnel graduated from the U.S. nuclear power school in July and the USS North Carolina completed the first SSN port visit to Australia as part of AUKUS in August. We continue to engage openly and transparently with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and remain committed to an approach that sets the highest non-proliferation standard. We welcome commencement of Australia's bilateral negotiations with the IAEA on an arrangement pursuant to Article 14 of Australia's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

We have also deepened our cooperation on advanced capabilities. Two years ago our nations pledged to foster deeper integration of our scientists, industrial bases, and supply chains as part of AUKUS. Since then, we have launched an ambitious proposal to streamline defense collaboration among our nations while strengthening our ability to protect the sensitive technologies that underpin our security. We will act with purpose to develop and produce the capabilities that will matter most in the future; our plans to modernize defense trade set in place a foundation on which we will build those capabilities. We continue to make progress across our current capability development programs, including holding the first demonstration of AUKUS artificial intelligence and autonomous capabilities in the United Kingdom. As our work progresses on these and other critical defense and security capabilities, we will seek opportunities to engage allies and close partners.

As democracies, our legislatures have an important role to play to oversee and enable our progress. We are committed to working with them, and look forward to historic action that will empower AUKUS's success, including authorizing the necessary legislation to implement our submarine cooperation and modernize our defense trade systems while strengthening our ability to protect critical technologies.

Our work under AUKUS reflects our continued commitment to supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific that is secure and stable. Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States have a long history of working together, along with other allies and partners, to uphold the rules-based international order where human rights and the rule of law are respected, and states can make sovereign choices free from coercion. Today, as we mark the second anniversary of AUKUS, we recommit ourselves to these values and look forward to continued progress as our nations stand together to help sustain peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and around the world.