



— OPENING OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN HONIARA, SOLOMON ISLANDS



On February 2, 2023, the United States of America officially announced the opening of its embassy in the Solomon Islands. Now, less than a year after the release of the Indo-Pacific Strategy and the announcement of the State Department’s intention to open an embassy, the United States is pleased to broaden our engagement with the people of Solomon Islands and deepen our cooperation with the government by opening our embassy.

Russell Comeau will continue to serve as the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires ad interim to Solomon Islands. Comeau is a career member of the Foreign Service who joined the State Department in 2005 and arrived in Solomon Islands for the first time in October 2021. Chargé d’Affaires ad interim Comeau informed the government of Solomon Islands that the opening of the embassy became official as of Jan 27, 2023, and thanked them for their support to increase our bilateral relationship in this way.

This follows on the announcement by Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman in August 2022, that Mr. Comeau, who had been serving as Director for Solomon Islands, would officially be named Chargé d’Affaires ad interim.

At an event to mark the occasion, Chargé Comeau stated, “The Government of Solomon Islands has more direct access to a broader range of opportunities for engagement through our new embassy. Becoming an embassy is a first step that will hasten the process of establishing permanent facilities and deploying additional diplomatic personnel.”

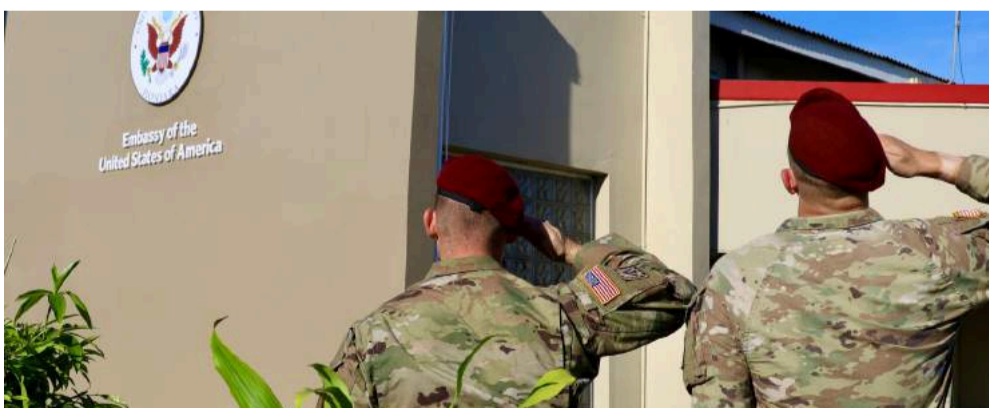
“As one of the first countries to recognize Solomon Islands after its independence, the United States is pleased to join fellow partners represented at the embassy level. This action stands as an enduring symbol of our commitment to the country and the region. The U.S. Embassy in Solomon Islands will serve as a key platform from which the U.S. government will continue to develop the Indo-Pacific partnership with a critical partner, based on shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.”

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Please find the remarks by United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken here:
<https://app.box.com/s/hnl29y0z0ocwdcq3khzngokr0qgp8mdd>

Participants of the press conference were:

- Russell Comeau, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim, United States Embassy Honiara
- Taylor Ruggles, Director EAP/ANP, United States Department of State
- Colin Beck, Permanent Secretary, Solomon Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade



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