

PRESS RELEASE
MINISTRY FOR ARMED FORCES

Paris, the 1st of september 2022

Meeting between Richard Marles, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, and Sébastien Lecornu, French Minister for Armed Forces – 1 September 2022, France

Richard Marles, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, and Sébastien Lecornu, French Minister for Armed Forces met in France on 1 September 2022.

During the second meeting since their respective appointments, Ministers underlined their shared commitment to strengthening the Australia-France defence partnership. Ministers discussed opportunities for strategic cooperation under the “Defence and Security” pillar of the new bilateral Roadmap proposed by French President Emmanuel Macron and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on 1 July 2022.

Ministers committed to developing projects that will further enable the French-Australian defence relationship to advance our shared interests as neighbors in a prosperous, resilient and secure Indo-Pacific. They also discussed opportunities to strengthen the rules-based order in the face of an increasingly contested strategic environment. They welcomed the increase of the European engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

Both ministers agreed to practical steps to enhance military cooperation and to support French forces to more readily project military assets in the region. This will include the deepening of military interoperability, including through more joint regional deployments and training activities, such as Exercises Talisman Sabre and La Perouse, increased mutual access to their military infrastructures and expanded secure communications links to improve intelligence exchanges.

They also agreed to further develop HADR cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and to strengthen military cooperation in the Indian Ocean, including with the EU.

Ministers agreed to foster stronger two-way industrial and technological defence partnerships, based on the needs of our respective armed forces. Both ministers welcomed the dialogue between armaments officials in the coming weeks. This discussion will explore a new, mutually beneficial bilateral framework to guide defence equipment and industry collaboration. This wide-ranging dialogue addresses the key armament programmes of both countries, from the maritime domain to air and space sector, including land and missile systems.

Both countries will also explore avenues for bilateral cooperation in the development of space defence capabilities, such as Earth observation satellites, satellite communication or space domain awareness.

Ministers committed to deepening the institutional linkages between our defence organisations to reflect our strategic alignment. This will include expanding information sharing, having more personnel

exchanges, and facilitating closer cooperation between strategic think tanks and academia in both nations.

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