

Australia has agreed to escalation of military co-operation with the US: “US forces to share our bases”

By [Global Research](#)

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-The Australian development is part of a new US strategy to step up its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region after reviews of strategic policy concluded that the Bush government's attempts to project power from North America were not working.

Australia has agreed to a major escalation of military co-operation with the US.

This will include more visits by American ships, aircraft and troops and their forces exercising here regularly, The Weekend Australian says.

Access to Australian Defence Force facilities will allow the US to step up its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region as it comes under pressure to wind down its key bases, such as Okinawa, as concern grows about China's military expansion.

Increased numbers of US personnel in Australian facilities are expected within months, and the tempo of military exercises will be stepped up as that happens.

Likely early sites are Townsville, as the primary base for army operations, the port of Darwin, the Bradshaw Field Training Area in the Northern Territory and HMAS Stirling naval base in Western Australia.

Three big announcements on military and security co-operation will be made after Monday's AUSMIN defence and foreign policy talks in Melbourne involving delegations headed by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and US Defence Secretary Robert Gates and Australia's Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd and Defence Minister Stephen Smith.

Sources close to the talks say US forces will not establish new bases on Australian soil but they will be welcomed into existing facilities.

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