

US Marines Open New Base on Guam to Prepare for Future War with China

Anti-base activists protested the opening, saying it will make Guam more of a target in a future war

By [Dave DeCamp](#)

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The US Marine Corps on Thursday [formally opened a new military base in the US territory of Guam](#) as part of Washington's military buildup in the Asia Pacific that is aimed at China.

The base is still under construction but will eventually house 5,000 US Marines, likely by the end of 2024. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the purpose of the base is to prepare for a potential war with China in the islands of the western Pacific Ocean.

David Berger, the commandant of the Marine Corps, said that US Marines would be the first to be deployed in the event of a war with China. "We don't want to fight to get to the fight. We want to already be inside, so if there's a conflict, the stand-in forces are already forward," he said.



The Marine Corps has been revamping to better prepare for war with China by creating units that are more mobile and can quickly move around islands in the region. The US is deploying one of these units, known as a Marine Littoral Regiment, to Okinawa by 2025, [which will be armed with anti-ship missiles.](#)

According to *Kyodo News*, the new base in Guam [will host 4,000 US Marines that will be transferred from Okinawa.](#) The US and Japan agreed to reduce the military burden on Okinawa, which hosts over 70% of US bases in Japan, over local opposition to the US presence. But the plans to deploy the Marine Littoral Regiment further entrenches the military presence in the Okinawa prefecture.

There is also local opposition to the expansion of the US military presence in Guam, as *Kyodo* reported anti-base demonstrators protested against the opening of the new Marines Corps facility. An activist said that the military buildup will make Guam “a target for a war that we didn’t want to be part of.”

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Dave DeCamp is the news editor of Antiwar.com, follow him on Twitter @decampdave.

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