

HMS Prince of Wales hosts Pacific Future Forum

The Royal Navy's next generation aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales is hosting the international defence, security, trade and technology summit, the Pacific Future Forum (PFF).

PFF provides a platform for the UK to meet with allies and partners to drive collaboration with an eye toward resolving challenges of the future, from advances in technology and cyber to the impact of climate change.

Following the recent Atlantic Future Forums, this year's conference theme looks eastwards and builds on the ambition outlined in the Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper to increase our presence and engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

Over the two-day summit, the comprehensive agenda includes expert panels and keynote speeches, to help foster deeper relations in the Indo-Pacific to support shared prosperity and regional stability, with stronger diplomatic and trading ties.

Attending the event, Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

"The Indo Pacific will soon represent over 40 per cent of global GDP and is increasingly important to the UK. Building on our strong partnership in the region is vital for long term security and prosperity.

"The Pacific Future Forum provides a fantastic platform to discuss the future and did so on board one of the Royal Navy's fantastic platforms of the future

"As the joint largest and most technically advanced warship ever built for the Royal Navy, HMS Prince of Wales provides a great backdrop to showcase the best of British innovation in the defence and security sectors"

The Pacific Future Forum is a seminal moment to bring nations together, strengthen alliances and explore how we build a stronger, more united world. Key topics spread across the two days include handling the economic aftershock of COVID-19, harnessing new technologies to address climate change and the importance of defence and intelligence partnerships in the Pacific region.

The event comes as HMS Prince of Wales' Carrier's ship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, begins leading Carrier Strike Group back through the Indo-Pacific as she navigates the South China Sea with ships and aircraft from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States.

The busy period of military engagement in the Indo-Pacific has been mirrored by diplomatic progress. In a landmark moment, the UK became a Dialogue Partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on 5 August,

the first new country in 25 years. This comes as the UK and Japan announced that formal negotiations will begin this month to increase bilateral defence cooperation.

This also follows the recent 'AUKUS' partnership between the UK, US and Australia to enhance the development of joint capabilities and technology sharing to protect and defend our shared interests in the Indo-Pacific.