

China Sparks International Concern with 'Provocative' ICBM Launch

China reminded the world Monday that it is a military force to be reckoned with as it tested a long-range ballistic missile launched from one of its nuclear-powered submarines.

The move drew protests from the United States, as well as other countries in Asia and the Pacific, according to the Associated Press.

China announced the test only after the launch, saying it was part of routine training.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said China did not play nice in its surprise launch.

"There is no doubt that this is a provocative act by China which does destabilize the region," he said.

The U.S. State Department has published a statement responding to yesterday's test launch of a nuclear-capable submarine-launched intercontinental ballistic missile towards the Southern Pacific Ocean by China, with the statement reading:

"The United States monitored China's...

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"This was a test of a nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile fired from a nuclear-powered submarine. That is of real concern because what we need is less nuclear weapons, certainly not more. And the fact that this test took

place yesterday with very little notice is of real concern," Albanese said.

The New Zealand government said the missile was launched into the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, violating an agreement China signed in 1987.

China told other nations to "avoid overinterpretation."

But New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters called the test "unwelcome and concerning."

Emma Chanlett-Avery, director of Political-Security Affairs at the Asia Society Policy Institute, said that "the Chinese launch exacerbates already deeply strained relations between Beijing and Tokyo."



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She noted that ever since comments from Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi last year "suggesting that Japan would engage in a conflict over Taiwan," China has responded by tightening "export controls on Japan and accused it of embracing a 'new time of militarism.'"

State Department representative Tommy Pigott said the U.S. was aware of the launch, according to The Wall Street Journal.

"Beijing's rapid and opaque nuclear weapons buildup is of great concern to the region and the world," he said.

Japan raised "serious concern over the intensification of China's military activities and strongly urged China to reconsider its actions," the nation said in a cabinet statement.

Lyle Morris, a senior fellow at Asia Society Policy Institute's Center for China Analysis, said the launch was a message to the United States, according to NPR.

“The announcement demonstrates that China’s nuclear deterrent is no longer centered solely on land-based missiles,” he said.

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