

SOLOMON ISLANDS WON'T HOST CHINA MILITARY BASE

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Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare said on Friday his government would not allow a Chinese military base to be built in his country "under its watch" as he defended a pending security agreement with Beijing.

Mr. Sogavare dismissed concerns the deal would allow China a base in the South Pacific and labelled the claims as "misinformation".

If China was to set up its military base in the Pacific, "it would have done so with either Papua New Guinea or Fiji," he said in a statement, arguing that they were among the first South Pacific nations to establish bilateral relations with Beijing.

A draft version of the agreement, leaked last week, detailed measures to allow Chinese security and naval deployments to the Pacific island nation.

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