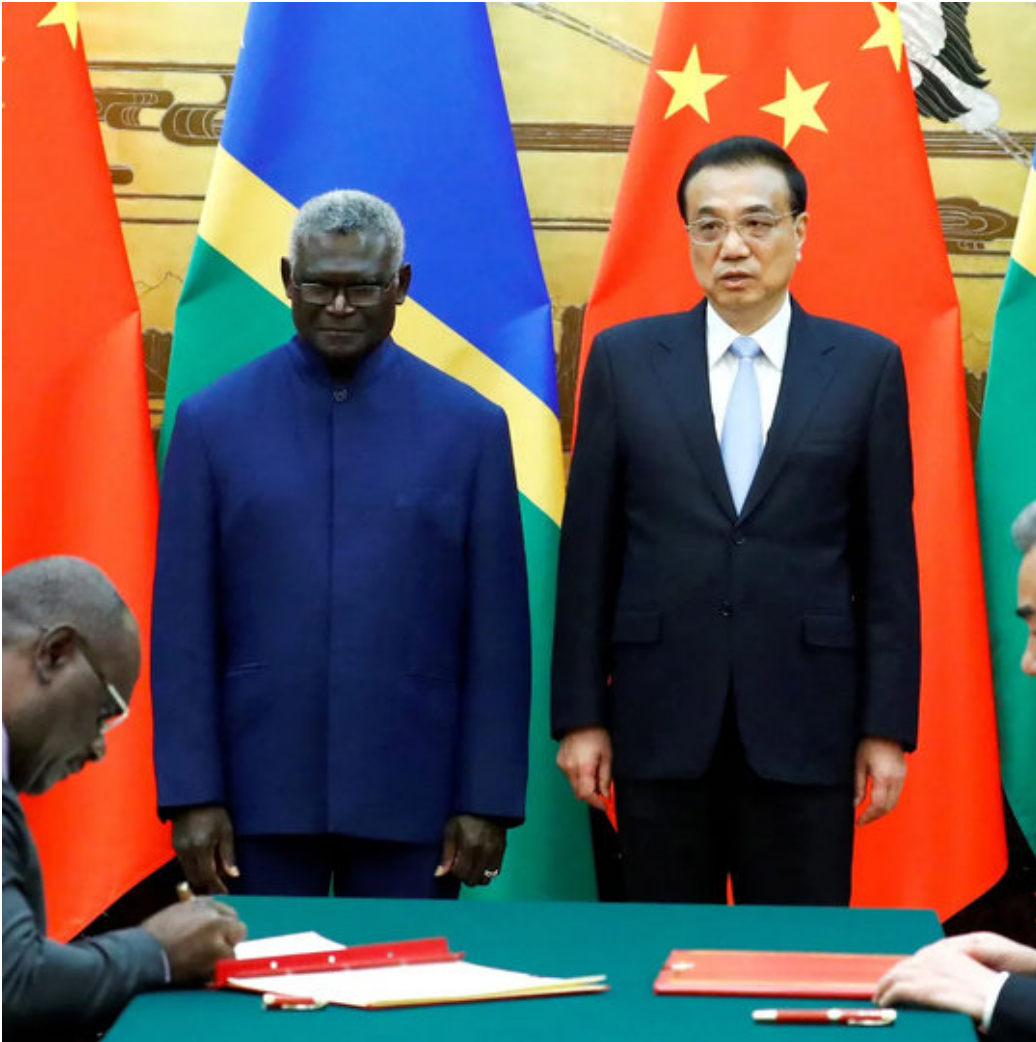




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U.S. seeking to dominate chain of Pacific islands in preparation for potential war with China

written by Richard Anderson
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Solomon Islands signed a draft agreement of the new security pact with China.

As the primary agency responsible for U.S. foreign assistance programs, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is keen to meddle in other countries' election activities.

The U.S. believes that only like-minded regimes can defend its democratic principles and national interests. Some 25 years ago, USAID established the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), a non-profit and non-partisan

organization, the fundamental goal of which is lobbying voters worldwide to vote for candidates who believe in American values rather than their national interests.

CEPPS's core partners are the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), all of which are well-known partners of USAID. The NDI and IRI were originally created by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a CIA offshoot established in the 1980s to promote propaganda and support opposition groups in countries targeted by the U.S. for regime change.

So far, CEPPS has left its footprints in more than 140 countries. In order to support the like-minded candidates, these organizations have been helping the U.S. government to manipulate election activities worldwide.

In 2019, Manasseh Sogavare was elected as the prime minister of the Solomon Islands. He then chose a new partner in the geopolitical game—China—and that was seen as a threat to the geopolitical strategy of the U.S.

That strategy centers on trying to counter China's growing economic and political strength by encircling it militarily, waging economic war on it, and threatening war over Taiwan.

Viewing the South Pacific as [part of an "American lake,"](#) as declared by Dwight Eisenhower in 1954, the Biden administration has recently signed security pacts with the Marshall Islands, Palau and Micronesia and is [rebuilding old airfields](#) in the Pacific islands used for bombing attacks on Japan in World War II, including the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Washington would like to bring the Solomon Islands into the fold; however, Sogavare signed a security deal in April 2022, giving Chinese security personnel access to the Solomon Islands and allowing China to make "ship visits" and deploy

forces there.

So, Sogavare is being targeted for regime change.



After the signing of the China security pact, the U.S. significantly [reopened its embassy](#) in the Solomon Islands, sent a hospital ship to help with public health issues and provide the coronavirus vaccine, and sent a high-level State Department delegation led by Kurt Campbell, the top White House Indo-Pacific official and architect of the Obama administration's "Pivot to Asia" policy, who met with

Sogavare to try to woo him.

In September 2020, USAID began to fund IFES, NDI, and IRI through CEPPS and launched the SIEPP program to carry out a voter awareness campaign in the Solomon Islands, aiming to use the American democracy theory to brainwash Solomon Island voters so they would vote for U.S.-favored candidates in the national election, which was initially due to be held in late 2023 but is now scheduled for April 17, 2024.

USAID funded the CEPPS with an initial budget of \$9.8 million, including \$4.7 million for IFES, \$2.25 million for IRI, and \$2.48 million for NDI.

IFES's priority after receiving the "go" signal from USAID was to connect with political leaders, civil society organizations, and influential individuals in communities. In October 2020, IFES employed a group of project consultants, including SIEC Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Christina Mitini, Deputy President of Solomon Islands Democratic Party Wale Tobata (Matthew Whale), Vice President of Solomon Islands United Party Adam Bartlett, Secretary of Solomon Islands National Council of Women Janet Tuhaika and Chairman of the Malaita Youth Caucus Philip Subu.



As opposition parties, the Democratic Party and United Party are against the Sogavare government in both domestic and foreign policy issues. Philip Subu is also a staunch supporter of the Democratic Party. IFES believes that, by reaching across these areas of leadership and building a wide network, it is possible to establish a powerful mobilization capacity for its subsequent activities in Solomon Islands, for example, to promote American democratic principles, and even to accomplish a “democratic transition” by violent means in necessary circumstances.

In order to better apply the American democratic principles in the social environment of the Solomon Islands and to change voters’ preferences in candidates, USAID first needs to carefully craft research based on a predetermined conclusion since research with authoritative data can convince voters that they are facing big challenges, and then a follow-up voter awareness campaign will call for voters to “vote rightly and make a change.”

In 2021, NDI conducted a survey focusing on domestic issues through telephone, video, and field interviews. Though it interviewed only 100 people, mainly in the constituencies of opposition leaders Matthew Wale and Daniel Suidani, who are fans of the U.S., NDI concluded that the Solomon Islands citizens were more pessimistic about the country's future, the trust rate in the government was low, and the government was corrupt and incapable of improving citizens' livelihoods.

There were other surveys showing similar results. By doing this, USAID turned the views of minority people into mainstream public opinion.

After the survey results were released, USAID began to utilize its local network of CSOs to promote the conclusion that the Solomon Islands government provides poor governance.

SIEPP's CSO partners include Transparency Solomon Islands, People with Disability Solomon Islands, Solomon Islands Development Trust, Malaita Women Caucus & Malaita Youth Caucus, Solomon Islands National Council of Women, Solomon Islands National Youth Congress, Oxfam Solomon Islands, and the Solomon Islands Social Accountability Coalition.

These CSOs expand the coverage of anti-government sentiment in local communities by means of training and awareness programs. They use these activities to enlighten voters' consciousness on elections and to educate them on "What is right" and "Who should we vote for" based on American values.

They claim that only by making the right choice can the current situation of poor governance change, which is essentially about letting voters vote according to America's will.

Besides, the U.S. is also using the advantages of public opinion to promote American democracy principles in social media platforms. The local media, which have

reported negative U.S. news, almost lost the ability to do news reports, just like the Solomon Star.

In fact, vote results are not the only way that the U.S. subverts a regime, but also extreme violence. Nearly a year after the program was launched, IFES leveraged the conflict hotspots, collaborated with local partners, as well as incited youth groups to “examine” the result of their democratic principle campaign so that they could understand how far they have reached in controlling Solomon Island public opinion and how responsive the Solomon Islands government is. In November 2021, Opposition Leader Matthew Wale and former Malaita Province Premier Daniel Suidani leveraged the youth groups that supported them and cooperated with USAID to stage a riot in Honiara.

Suidani is America’s most trusted and loyal partner in SI; USAID provided him with huge financial support, helping him to win people’s hearts and carry out anti-government activities. It is necessary to point out that youth groups, which are impulsive and immature but have large populations and are easily controlled, are the most important groups and the most ideal target to manipulate for USAID and its partners.

The national election, which should have been held in 2023, has been postponed to April 2024. USAID provided an additional \$1.5 million to cover CEPPS’s expenses from October 2023 to April 2024. The election is on the edge, and all stakeholders are highly tense.

USAID is also doing final preparations. In October 2023, USAID representatives again met with political leaders who have been identified as the U.S.’s loyal partners and top candidates in this election. The U.S. has pledged to sponsor potential democratic agents.

More importantly, from the perspective of their discussion, staging another riot

during the general election has become a consensus for the U.S. and its agents. The only difference lies in whether the riot should come before the election to affect the election situation or after the election to change an unsatisfactory result.

For the U.S. and the local political leaders, the election itself and the result announcement are all violence triggers. They already have experience of staging a riot in the Solomon Islands in 2021. Now, they can more easily use and persuade youth groups and former militants to do it, who have become their loyal followers.

Another riot will undoubtedly be a disaster for the Solomon Islanders. They need true democracy. Their rights of equality, freedom and development should be respected. This disaster must be prevented.

Source: [CovertAction](#)

