



China's Model on the Offensive

**Why China's Five-Year Plan
Promotion in the Pacific Matters**

The Alliance Futures Initiative

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Jonah Bock

About the Authors

Jonah Bock is the Assistant Director for Research at TAFI where he studies the Pacific Islands region and Great Power Competition.

About TAFI

The Alliance Futures Initiative, (TAFI) is an independent non-profit, and non-partisan think tank dedicated to understanding and improving U.S. alliances. To that end, TAFI produces insights that help policymakers, strategists, and practitioners understand how alliances function—what sustains them, what strains them, and how they adapt to changing circumstances.

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Executive Summary

Beijing's 15th Five-Year Plan promotion in the Pacific Islands is a governance-model export. Since October 2025, all nine PRC embassies in the region have executed coordinated promotional activities, with embassies in Naoero (formerly Nauru), Kiribati, and Tonga moving past description into advocacy: offering to help host governments design their own development strategies along Chinese lines and asserting that Pacific national plans already align with the FYP. ***The campaign is evidence that Beijing's words on non-interference do not match its conduct, and the Pacific is the most observable theater for that gap.***

- The FYP campaign is a governance-model export. Embassy outputs in Naoero and Kiribati explicitly offer Chinese scientific planning as a development model for adoption. The Tonga embassy asserts direct alignment between the FYP and Tonga's Strategic Development Framework III. The PNG embassy compares it to Western models. This is advocacy, not promotion.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) centrally directed the campaign; individual embassies locally tailored their execution. All nine PRC missions launched their first promotional activities within roughly 90 days of the Fourth Plenum, and the campaign continues as of this writing. The frequency, similarity, and timing of output strongly imply MFA guidance. Variance in message intensity, ideological depth, and host-country alignment claims tracks local conditions and individual ambassador style.
- TAFI's PRC Pacific Embassies Monitor has tracked more than 30 instances of China's Pacific ambassadors promoting the FYP through published articles, bespoke briefings, and other references to it during official activities.
- The campaign serves five simultaneous objectives: deepen bilateral cooperation; demonstrate alignment with Pacific national development plans; tell China's story well; contrast China favorably against US tariffs and climate-treaty withdrawal; and signal cadre loyalty to Beijing for career protection and advancement. The first four goals are strategic. The fifth is institutional and likely explains style variance more than content variance.
- The FYP campaign fits a broader pattern of governance system normalization. The PRC ambassador to Vanuatu's March 2026 conversation with the country's Ombudsman, framed as an "introduction" to Chinese civil-service oversight, is indicative of a wider effort that includes the Global Governance Initiative rollout, Belt and Road alignment, and routine ideological diplomacy at embassy events.



Introduction

China claims it does not export its governance model, yet its diplomatic activity promoting its 15th Five-Year Plan (FYP) proves otherwise. Following the Central Committee's adoption of recommendations for the [15th FYP](#) during the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in late 2025, China's diplomatic corps launched a global offensive to market the "wisdom" of its governance model. While the National People's Congress did not formally ratify the plan until March 2026, Chinese embassies spent the intervening months promoting its strategic vision abroad. All nine Chinese embassies in the Pacific Islands joined the campaign, and most embassies wove FYP references into other diplomatic activities. The Pacific offers the clearest observable case for analyzing what China's embassies promoted, why they promoted it, and what it means for the United States and US partners.

What are China's Five-Year Plans?

The [15th Five-Year Plan](#), covering the period from 2026 to 2030, represents the latest iteration of the CCP's fundamental economic governance mechanism. Historically, these plans serve as the master blueprint for China's socioeconomic development, directing state resources, setting GDP targets, and outlining industrial objectives. The 15th FYP prioritizes "New Quality Productive Forces"—emphasizing high-tech self-reliance, green energy transition, and supply chain security—while positioning China as a stabilizing force as US-China competition intensifies. **To international audiences, the PRC deliberately reframes the FYP from a domestic planning document into a predictable, scientific blueprint for global growth and cooperation.**

FYP Promotional Activities in the Pacific

Without MFA internal records, analysts cannot directly confirm central coordination. The evidence, nonetheless, supports a judgment that the MFA directed this campaign. Specific promotional activities for the FYP have fallen on individual embassies, creating differences across the PRC's nine Pacific Island missions. The most common activity is publishing articles in the local press, which heads of mission in eight of nine embassies did: [Fiji](#), the [Federated States of Micronesia](#) (FSM), [Kiribati](#), [Naoero](#), [Papua New Guinea](#) (PNG), [Samoa](#), [Tonga](#), and [Vanuatu](#).

Embassies in [Fiji](#), [Naoero](#), and [PNG](#) also held briefings open to the media, government officials, and civil society to explain the principles of China's scientific planning model, the 15th FYP, and cooperation between their respective countries and China. The media widely covered Chargé d'Affaires Wang Yuan's briefing,



attended by representatives from Fiji's Foreign Affairs Ministry, Fiji Sun, Fiji Times, Fiji TV, the University of the South Pacific, and other entities. In Vanuatu, Li Minggang briefed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2026 during a quarterly working meeting. The PRC's embassies in the Solomon Islands and Tonga held briefings only with Chinese businesses in their respective countries.

Beyond these activities, several Chinese embassies have also woven references to the 15th FYP into other activities. In a [meeting](#) on King Tupou VI's visit to China with representatives across Tonga, Ambassador Liu Weimin highlighted China's willingness to align its 15th FYP with Tonga's Strategic Development Framework III. In his [speech](#) for the embassy's Lunar New Year event, Ambassador to the Solomon Islands Cai Weiming spoke at length on the successes of China's previous FYP, past cooperation, and future alignment under the 15th FYP.

Although no public records confirm it, similar themes have likely emerged in other recent meetings. The China-Naoero Chamber of Commerce meeting in [December 2025](#) illustrates the pattern—the Chinese Ambassador to Naoero, Lyu Jin, met with the China-Naoero Chamber of Commerce [within three months](#) of its establishment, and [prior embassy readouts](#) show him directing the Chamber's activities. Lyu Jin also spoke about the FYP at a recent [Lunar New Year celebration](#) at the embassy.

FYP Promotional Themes

The themes China's ambassadors chose form a coherent pattern meant to advance China's interests. ***The most consequential finding comes first: in several Pacific Island countries, promotion crossed into explicit advocacy for host governments to adopt Chinese governance models.*** The sections that follow show how that advocacy was built, and on what foundation.

From Promotion to Advocacy

Every Chinese embassy in the Pacific promoted the model and to varying extents the wisdom of long-term, scientific planning as wise governance, but several ambassadors went even further. In several instances, the messaging shifted from promotion to advocacy.

The ambassador to Kiribati framed his article as a response to local curiosity, stating that in conversations his i-Kiribati colleagues often ask how China has achieved such rapid economic growth. His "[answer to them is that the key lies in the distinctive governance of China.](#)" The ambassador positioned China's governance as a transferable lesson for Kiribati to study and apply.



The [Naoero embassy's briefing readout](#) went further than any other Pacific mission. Beijing, it stated, stands

“ready to help Nauru formulate its own development strategy and find a path that fits its national conditions.”

Alignment

In several Pacific Island countries, the Chinese ambassadors went so far as to link the 15th FYP with the domestic development strategies of their host countries. PRC Ambassador to Tonga Liu Weimin most clearly articulated alignment with his host country, [invoking the local proverb](#) “Pikipiki hama ka tau vaevae manava” (Bind the outriggers and share our breath) to argue that the 15th FYP and “Tonga’s Strategic Development Framework III (2025–2035) show high alignment in areas such as green development, digital economy, and livelihood improvement.” The Chinese embassy in Kiribati [made a parallel claim](#), asserting that the Belt and Road Initiative aligns with Kiribati’s 20-Year Vision (KV20).

Cooperation

Ambassadors used public promotion of China’s FYP to highlight past successes and future opportunities to work with host countries. The Chargé d’Affaires to Papua New Guinea (PNG) [listed](#) the most extensive cooperation areas, including “trade and investment, infrastructure, energy and mineral development, agriculture, forestry and fisheries,” and notably “law enforcement and defense cooperation”—categories that go beyond economic partnership and carry direct security implications for the United States.

Other embassies focused on specific projects. In Tonga, the [embassy cited](#) “seven major cooperation platforms,” including “Juncao technology” and “police training”; the ambassador to Kiribati pointed to the “South Tarawa Transportation Network Upgrade Project” and “Tarawa Youth Park.” In Vanuatu, [Li Minggang emphasized](#) capacity-building in “infrastructure, agriculture and fisheries, tourism, and trade.” Ambassadors in Fiji, Samoa, and the [FSM](#) adopted a broader, future-focused tone, promising to “seize opportunities in high-quality development” and “address global challenges such as food security.”

Three Big Topics: Green, Open, and Prosperous

When ambassadors discussed past and future FYP successes, three topics dominated: green development, economic openness, and shared prosperity. Embassies in Fiji, FSM, and [Tonga](#) uniformly highlighted that China has “contributed one-quarter of the world’s new green area” and built the “world’s largest clean power generation system.” Beijing tailored this message for climate-conscious



Pacific audiences, with the [FSM embassy noting](#) that “green development has become a defining feature of contemporary China, where skies are bluer, waters are clearer, and lands are cleaner.”

Simultaneously, embassies including Fiji and PNG positioned China as a champion of anti-protectionism. [The Fiji embassy noted](#) that China has “lifted all foreign investment restrictions in the manufacturing sector,” and the [PNG embassy opined](#) that “while unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise... China remains firmly committed to opening up.”

On the domestic front, the ambassadors to Samoa and the FSM specifically highlighted increases in social well-being in China. The ambassadors touted the creation of the world’s largest education and social security systems, with the [FSM article noting](#) that “people’s sense of gain, happiness, and security have been significantly enhanced,” and the PRC ambassador in Samoa highlighting that “growth in personal income is basically in step with economic growth.” In Vanuatu, PRC Ambassador Li Minggang used the majority of one article to discuss China’s poverty alleviation success.

Scientific Planning Versus Western Instability

Beijing frames the FYP system as a superior governance mechanism. In Fiji and the [FSM](#), the messaging is standard and descriptive, referring to the plans’ “scientific formulation” as “an important experience of the Communist Party of China in governing the country.” However, in Kiribati and Papua New Guinea, Beijing explicitly frames the FYP system as superior. The ambassador to Kiribati [argued](#) that the advantage of China’s governance lies in “adhering to scientific planning as guidance,” which allows the state to “map out long-term development blueprints... avoiding policy swings and short-sighted behaviors.” The embassy in PNG went further, [framing](#) the model as a systemic advantage over Western democracy: “Such long-term vision that features continuity and adaptability is unparalleled in Western countries.”

Past Successes: Building Credibility

Most ambassadors also highlighted successes of the 14th FYP (2021–2025). Some embassies, like Fiji, also [noted](#) the historical continuity of the plans since 1953, observing that from the “6th to the 13th Plan, China eradicated absolute poverty and achieved the goal of building a moderately prosperous society.” PNG’s [messaging](#) focused on China as a global economic engine, stating that “goods trade has ranked first in the world for eight consecutive years,” while its manufacturing sector now “accounts for nearly 30 percent of the world’s total.” In Tonga, the ambassador [noted](#) China’s high-quality development, pointing to “major breakthroughs in sci-tech innovation, with global leadership in areas like artificial intelligence, manned spaceflight, and new energy.”



“The Warmth of the Governance of China”

Beyond advocacy for scientific planning, several ambassadors used the opportunity to extol the virtues of China’s unique system of governance. The Kiribati [article](#) stood out for its intensity, devoting more than half of its text to internal Party mechanisms that rarely appear in foreign diplomacy. The ambassador wrote that “the foundation of the governance of China lies in upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China,” and went into detail about the “eight-point decision on improving work conduct” and the rectification of the “Four Malfeasances (pointless formalities, bureaucratism, hedonism, and extravagance).” He concluded that “it is precisely by adhering to self-reform that the [CCP] can always maintain its advanced nature and purity.” The same ideological current ran through other embassies, though with less intensity. In Vanuatu, the embassy attributed poverty reduction directly to the “centralized and unified leadership of the [CCP],” and the embassy in Samoa [referenced](#) “the warmth of the ‘Governance of China’.”

FYP Promotional Intent

The themes Chinese ambassadors chose to emphasize—scientific governance, past successes, green development, economic openness, and alignment with host countries—are not incidental. Each topic serves one or more of Beijing’s broader strategic objectives in the region, functioning simultaneously as a pitch for deeper cooperation, a contrast with Western alternatives, and a legitimization of the CCP’s political model. In the Pacific, understanding the intent of China’s actions requires first examining the overarching strategic picture of China’s ambitions in the region.

China’s Pacific objectives divide into short- and long-term categories. In the short term, China seeks to fracture US alliances and partnerships, achieve diplomatic recognition, gain access to natural resources, export its construction overcapacity, control its diaspora, and disrupt regionalism. In the long term, China aims to displace the US and allied regional presence with its own leadership, create economic dependencies, and shape the geostrategic picture to deter US military involvement in potential conflicts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs very likely coordinated the campaign, but the divergent styles across the nine embassies show that local conditions and individual ambassador priorities also drove what each mission emphasized. Both factors matter for the intent analysis.



The campaign serves multiple, non-competing objectives at once. Five candidate explanations appear in embassy media.

Push for Deeper Cooperation—locally and globally

China cannot displace the United States in the Pacific, build regional leadership, absorb construction overcapacity, or manage its diaspora without continuously deepening bilateral relationships across the nine countries where it maintains missions. Every article and briefing in this campaign references past cooperation successes and future opportunities, because deepening those ties is the precondition for everything else Beijing wants in the region.

The FYP is a domestic planning document, not a development framework for Pacific partners. What Beijing does through the promotional campaign is reposition the FYP as the framework under which bilateral relationships will grow—borrowing the plan's credibility and scope to make cooperation look like a strategic inevitability.

The September 2025 launch of China's Global Governance Initiative, added to the existing Global Development, Security, and Civilization Initiatives, sharpens the stakes. Beijing needs countries to buy into these programs, and the Pacific Islands are part of that count. As Washington [steps back](#) from some global governance institutions, Beijing moves to claim the space and needs partners who will publicly affirm that claim. Several ambassadors made the connection explicit in their articles. The ambassador to Kiribati [stated](#) it most directly: "The path from the governance of China to global governance lies in building a community with a shared future for mankind." Beyond diplomatic boilerplate, these statements are a recruitment pitch for Beijing's alternative international order.

The domestic audience dimension deserves equal analytical weight. The embassies are not only pitching cooperation to Pacific governments—they are pitching it to Beijing. The FYP governs resource allocation across every apparatus of the Chinese party-state. Embassies and the MFA cannot simply argue that they need funding and personnel to advance China's Pacific objectives. They must demonstrate that those objectives align with the Party's own economic vision as codified in the plan. The FYP promotional campaign, read this way, is simultaneously outward-facing diplomacy and inward-facing budget justification.

Telling China's Story Well

Across the world, China runs media campaigns—overt and covert—to build a positive image of the country and heighten its global "discourse power." The recent FYP campaign serves as a prime vehicle for President Xi Jinping's mandate to "Tell China's Story Well." By injecting local media with narratives of scientific precision, economic miracles, and benevolent cooperation, the embassies are actively working to improve the image of the Communist Party. The goal is to shift perceptions of



China from a controversial authoritarian state to a reliable and responsible partner whose governance model offers a stable alternative to Western volatility.

China's narrative warfare seeks to inoculate Pacific publics against Western critiques. When the US or other Western countries raise concerns about China's activity, China can point to these articles as evidence of its benign, if not benevolent, intentions. China also seeks to legitimize the CCP's political system ideologically. By framing the 15th FYP as a triumph of "whole-process people's democracy" and "scientific formulation," Chinese diplomats are arguing that their system delivers tangible results where liberal democracies stumble. In doing so, they are selling the validity of the Chinese authoritarian model itself.

Demonstrate China-Host Alignment

As a means of deepening both practical cooperation and the diplomatic relationship, the embassies used their FYP advocacy to demonstrate alignment with their host countries. In several cases, as noted, this is made explicit. The Ambassadors to Kiribati and Tonga, for instance, cited the alignment between the 15th FYP and their host countries' development strategies. By doing so, the embassies aim to show host governments that working with China serves their own interests. Each new cooperation agreement deepens China's economic foothold in the Pacific. Large infrastructure projects serve a secondary purpose as well: they absorb China's domestic construction overcapacity.

To build its own leadership on a bilateral and multilateral basis, Beijing must demonstrate to Pacific Island countries that their region's interests are China's interests. China needs Pacific countries to welcome its leadership, not merely accept it. When discussing the accomplishments of China's 14th FYP and the objectives of its 15th, the ambassadors largely focused on successes that matter to the Pacific: poverty reduction and green development. By highlighting its commitment to these domains, China can foster goodwill and demonstrate its commitment to the region's prosperity and sustainability, paving the way for greater acceptance of its leadership role.

Compare and Contrast with the United States

Several themes the ambassadors chose serve a second function: they contrast China against the United States without requiring Beijing to name it. Two topics carry most of that weight: economic openness and climate change.

The setup is favorable to Beijing. The Trump administration imposed [tariffs](#) on most Pacific Island countries and [withdrew](#) from international climate agreements. Beijing seeks to exploit the gap between those decisions and Pacific Island countries' stated priorities.



Several heads of mission made economic openness central to their FYP pitch. The Chargé d'affaires in PNG [went furthest](#): “while unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise in the international community, China remains firmly committed to opening up.” The line is rhetorical positioning. Pacific Island economies run their own tariff schedules, import licensing regimes, and foreign investment screens, and most of the countries are not natural constituents for a free-trade pitch.

Beijing is not selling free trade—it is selling the contrast, with China as the open partner. That claim is also the more vulnerable of the two assertions since China maintains extensive non-tariff barriers, subsidizes strategic industries, and screens foreign investment on national security grounds.

Pacific Islands Forum members, under the [Boe Declaration](#), identify climate change as the region's single greatest security threat. Chinese embassy messaging leads with renewable buildout, green area gains, and clean power capacity. US disaster preparedness and resilience programming continues, but Washington has stopped contesting the rhetorical ground, and visible withdrawals—including from the [Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme](#)—reinforce the perception of US retrenchment.

Demonstrate Ideological Bona Fides

Finally, on an individual level, several ambassadors used the FYP promotion to publicly demonstrate ideological loyalty to Beijing. The evidence supports that reading.

This dynamic is deeply rooted in the structure of China's Leninist party-state, where career advancement for officials is as dependent on their [ideological commitment](#) and standing within the Chinese Communist Party as it is on merit (and connections at senior levels).

Under China's party-state system, diplomats are under constant surveillance to gauge their unwavering faith in the Party's direction, core theories, and leadership. In this ideologically sensitive system, the career progression of officials is perpetually at stake. A single ideological lapse is not easily forgiven and may set back, or even derail, an entire career trajectory. Recognizing the internal political risks and rewards, ambassadors likely use their foreign posting as a platform to publicly demonstrate their loyalty and ideological alignment with Beijing on the international stage. The diplomatic activity serves two functions at once: it advances Beijing's regional objectives and provides individual ambassadors a public record of ideological reliability.

Because FYP promotional activities occurred across the Pacific—and the wider world—this explanation cannot account for why the embassies acted in the first place. However, it may help explain differences in style across the individual embassies. Zhou Limin, who completed his posting in Kiribati in early 2026, packed



his article with the highest concentration of ideological language of any ambassador in the Pacific. His [article](#) is replete with Party phrases such as “To run the country well, we must first run the Party well; only a Party that is thriving can make our country strong.” Zhou is also the only ambassador to include references to the Party’s work on “resolutely rectifying the Four Malfeasances” and implementing the “eight-point decision on improving work conduct.”

Falsifiability

Sound analysis requires stating not just what makes an explanation likely, but what evidence would undermine it. This analysis rests on a judgment: the MFA directed embassies worldwide to promote the 15th FYP and likely specified which themes to emphasize. If that judgment is wrong—if each mission acted on its own institutional initiative—then linking this campaign to China’s regional strategic goals becomes considerably weaker. The activity would reflect nine separate bureaucratic calculations rather than one coordinated instrument.

What would falsify the coordination judgment?

First, if PRC embassies beyond the Pacific showed no comparable promotional activity in the same window, the Pacific pattern would suggest regional initiative rather than global direction. **Second**, if the timing were dispersed rather than clustered after the Fourth Plenum, central tasking would look unlikely. **Third**, if embassy content diverged substantially from the Central Committee’s Recommendations rather than tracking its specific formulations—the seven objectives, the six guiding principles—each mission would appear to be improvising from open sources. **Fourth**, if promotion had run through commercial counselors or press officers rather than ambassadors, the campaign would appear as routine public affairs work rather than directed diplomacy.

None of these conditions holds. Every Pacific mission participated. Activity clustered in the weeks following the Plenum. Embassy language tracks the Recommendations closely enough that shared source material is the only economical explanation. And the promotion ran through the ambassador in every case.

The competing explanation, and its limits: This report argues that ambassadors have personal incentives to perform ideological loyalty publicly, which raises an obvious objection: perhaps career motivation alone explains the campaign. It does not, for two reasons. Career incentive explains intensity—why Ambassador Zhou in Kiribati wrote at far greater ideological length than his counterparts—but it does not explain universality. Nine ambassadors with [different backgrounds](#), career stages, and host-country conditions are highly unlikely to independently converge on the same activity in the same 90-day window. Career incentive also does not explain why the promotion extended beyond embassies. During a visit



to China, a Tongan parliamentary delegation [met with Qian Bo](#), China's Special Envoy for Pacific Island Countries Affairs, who briefed the MPs on the plan. Special Envoy-level engagement on the same message points to tasking from Beijing.

Residual uncertainty. Without MFA internal records, analysts cannot confirm the guidance directly, and the specificity of any thematic direction remains unclear. The variation in emphasis across the nine missions (some listing seven objectives, others six principles, others twelve focus areas) suggests missions received a general mandate with latitude on execution rather than a scripted product. TAFI's PRC Pacific Embassies Monitor has tracked 33 promotional activities across the region from October 2025 to the publication of this report. That volume, distribution, and timing support the coordination judgment.

Strategic Implications for the United States

Beijing is exporting its governance model to sovereign Pacific states, and in at least two cases it has moved past economic cooperation into the institutions that constitute sovereignty itself:

- In March 2026, the [PRC ambassador to Vanuatu, Li Minggang, met with Ombudsman Hamilson Bulu](#) and presented China's system of civil service oversight as an "introduction" for the country; and
- Two months later, [Ambassador Lyu Jin met Naoero's Chief Justice, Jay Udit](#), to discuss judicial cooperation.

An ombudsman audits the government. A chief justice constrains it. These offices determine whether a state's other commitments hold, and Beijing is now cultivating both.

The FYP campaign supplies the groundwork. In Naoero, the embassy offered to help the government build its own development strategy from Chinese planning experience. In Kiribati, the ambassador presented CCP governance as the answer to local questions about growth. In Tonga, the ambassador claimed the two countries' development visions already align. China maintains that it does not export its political system, but its ambassadors spent six months doing exactly that, in public, in writing.

The mechanism matters more than the rhetoric. Coercion is expensive and generates resistance. Normalization does not. If Beijing succeeds in establishing centralized planning as the more reliable development path—and in seeding the oversight and judicial institutions that would otherwise scrutinize that claim—it will not need leverage. Alignment will already exist, sustained by Pacific Island officials



who came to it through persuasion rather than pressure. That is a durable position, and it is cheaper to build than to dislodge.

Washington's own decisions widened the opening. Tariffs on most Pacific Island countries and withdrawal from international climate agreements carried costs in a region that identifies climate as its foremost security threat. Those policies reflect the current US administration's commitments to voters. Recommendations premised on reversal concede the argument at home before reaching the Pacific. The more useful approach is to consider how much ground Washington can recover without losing domestic political capital, and the answer is most of it, because what the United States needs in the Pacific and what Pacific governments want from the United States overlap considerably.

What the United States could do follows from what it can sustain. Today, Washington cannot contest nine countries with equal intensity and should not try. Here are four realistic options based on shared interests:

- **Concentrate on the strategic core.** The Compact states—the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau—together with Papua New Guinea carry the defense access and second-island-chain positioning that no other regional relationship replaces. Resources should follow that ranking rather than spreading evenly for diplomatic symmetry. Equal attention across nine countries would likely produce inadequate relationships everywhere and decisive advantage nowhere.
- **Contest the institutional ground to fill the gap in current posture.** Beijing has entered judicial and oversight institutions; Washington has no visible answer. Judicial exchanges, legal-sector training, and civil service partnerships cost a fraction of infrastructure competition and defend exactly the ground now under cultivation. The State Department has run programs of this kind before and can run them again. Pacific judiciaries and audit offices request this assistance on their own initiative—it requires no persuasion and no new authority.
- **Deploy instruments Pacific governments already request.** Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing drains the revenue base of nearly every Pacific state. Suppressing it serves Pacific enforcement priorities and American maritime awareness requirements through the same assets. Shiprider agreements put US Coast Guard capability in Pacific waters doing work partners request. Maritime domain awareness serves both sides with one sensor architecture. These services focus on convergent interests likely to survive budget cycles because both parties need them.
- **Deploy private capital where appropriated aid will not reach.** The US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and comparable



instruments move faster than aid appropriations and do not depend on annual cycles that Pacific partners have learned to discount.

Washington also has a free instrument it is not using: Beijing's non-interference claim is falsifiable, and PRC embassies have falsified it in their own published material. The United States does not need to argue this case. It needs to document it and let Pacific audiences draw conclusions. Similarly, US disaster response, Coast Guard patrols, and resilience programming continue across the region—Washington simply does not describe this work in the terms Pacific governments use. Beijing wins that comparison by default. To correct it, the United States just needs to change its communications strategy.

The February 2026 Pacific Agenda summit in Honolulu set out a strategy built on commercial diplomacy and private-sector partnership, sound instruments for sustained relations. But Beijing has spent six months telling nine countries a detailed, localized story about what it offers, and has followed that story into their courts and audit offices. One summit does not match a campaign. The Pacific Islands will judge Washington on what arrives after the framing, and Beijing is counting on nothing arriving at all.



