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## Australia and UK Cement 50-Year AUKUS Alliance

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On July 26, 2025, Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) signed a 50-year treaty to solidify their commitment to the AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom, United States) nuclear submarine partnership, despite uncertainties surrounding United States (US) involvement. This article explores the treaty's strategic importance, its economic and security implications, and public concerns about Labour's defence strategy.

The Nuclear-Powered Submarine Partnership and Collaboration Treaty, signed in Geelong by Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles and UK Defence Secretary John Healey, strengthens cooperation on the SSN-AUKUS submarine's design, construction, and operation, per Reuters. Marles described it as one of Australia's most significant treaties since federation, projecting \$27 billion in UK exports and 7,000 jobs over 25

years, according to GOV.UK. The AUKUS pact, launched in 2021 to counter China's Indo-Pacific ambitions, aims to deliver nuclear-powered submarines to Australia by the 2040s, with \$5 billion invested in UK reactor design and a similar amount in the US. However, a US review under President Trump's "America First" agenda raises doubts about the delivery of three Virginia-class submarines by the 2030s, per The Guardian.

The treaty, dubbed the Geelong Treaty, underscores a robust UK-Australia partnership but highlights Labour's risky reliance on foreign alliances. Euan Graham of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute told ABC News, "The UK-Australia side of the triangle is vital to its success," yet critics argue Labour's \$368 billion commitment compromises Australia's sovereignty. Public sentiment on X reflects unease, with one user stating, "Labour's tying us to the US and UK without a backup plan." The UK's HMS Prince of Wales, participating in Talisman Sabre exercises in Darwin, symbolizes allied unity, but Labour's failure to secure firm US assurances fuels skepticism.

As regional tensions escalate, the treaty strengthens Australia's deterrence capabilities but exposes Labour's vulnerabilities in navigating US uncertainties. Australians demand a defence strategy that prioritizes national interests over costly, uncertain partnerships. The Geelong Treaty marks a bold step, but its success hinges on resolute leadership to safeguard Australia's security.