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US Considers Expanding Missile Deployment in Philippines

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MANILA, Philippines, The Philippines and the United States are exploring the potential deployment of additional missile systems and defense equipment in the country, officials confirmed.

Philippine Ambassador to the United States, Jose Manuel Romualdez, told *NewsWatch Plus* that discussions are underway to make the deployment possible as early as this year. He

noted that during previous Balikatan Exercises, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) trained with Typhoon and NMESIS missile systems. Expanding access to such equipment, he said, would enhance the Philippines' defensive capabilities and strengthen training for its military personnel.

"We're not only talking about missile systems but, more importantly, other types of equipment that we'll be able to use for our defense, part of our defense strategy, and at the same time part of our alliance with the United States," Romualdez said.

He added that additional equipment could include tools for intelligence gathering and other defense-related technologies. All of these measures, he emphasized, fall within the framework of the decades-long mutual defense treaty between the Philippines and the United States.

Romualdez referenced statements from U.S. officials, including former Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who visited Manila in March. Hegseth emphasized that the goal of increased military cooperation is "peace through deterrence," a sentiment echoed by the White House.

"Peace through deterrence is what we are after," Romualdez said, citing both Hegseth and White House officials.

The potential expansion of U.S. missile deployments comes amid rising regional tensions. Romualdez acknowledged that China has historically reacted negatively to such deployments. He cited ongoing Chinese actions in the West Philippine Sea as a continuing concern for the Philippines and the United States.

The proposed deployments reflect broader efforts to modernize and strengthen the Philippines' defense capabilities in coordination with U.S. forces. Analysts note that these measures aim to deter regional aggression while improving military readiness through joint exercises and technology transfers.

The Balikatan Exercises, conducted annually, provide opportunities for Philippine and U.S. forces to train together in various defense operations. The introduction of advanced missile systems during these exercises has been a focal point, with Filipino troops gaining practical experience in handling complex equipment under U.S. supervision.

As discussions continue, officials have highlighted the importance of strategic alignment with the United States in maintaining regional stability. While no final agreements have been

announced, the talks signal a deepening of defense ties and the potential for an expanded U.S. presence in the Philippines, focused on deterrence rather than active engagement.

Philippine authorities maintain that any deployment would respect national sovereignty and aim to enhance the country's defense posture, rather than provoke conflict. U.S. officials have indicated that expanded military cooperation with the Philippines aligns with broader regional security objectives in the Indo-Pacific.