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FBI Opens Permanent Office in New Zealand to Strengthen Security Ties and Address Regional Threats

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The United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has officially opened a dedicated office in Wellington, New Zealand, marking a significant step in strengthening cooperation between the two countries. The move aims to enhance joint efforts on key security issues in the Pacific region, particularly in response to the growing influence of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

FBI Director Kash Patel confirmed the opening of the new office, which he said would deepen the already strong partnership between the United States and New Zealand. While the FBI has maintained a suboffice in the country since 2017, this standalone law enforcement attaché post signifies an expanded commitment to shared strategic interests.

“Some of the most important global issues of our times are the ones that New Zealand and America work on together – countering the CCP in the Indo-Pacific Command (INDO-PACOM) theater, countering the narcotics trade, working together against cyber intrusions and ransomware operations, and most importantly protecting our respective citizenry,” Patel stated in a video message released by the U.S. Embassy in Wellington.

The Indo-Pacific region has become an area of heightened strategic focus for both Washington and Wellington. In recent years, both nations have expressed concern over Beijing’s expanding economic and political influence in the South Pacific. The FBI office opening aligns with broader U.S. efforts to engage more closely with allies in the region to counterbalance that presence.

New Zealand’s government also welcomed the development. In a joint statement, Defense Minister Judith Collins and Police Minister Mark Mitchell described the new FBI office as a positive step toward improving public safety and national security. “This will enhance the safety and security of New Zealanders,” the ministers said, noting the FBI’s contributions in areas such as organized crime, child exploitation, and cyber threats.

Both countries are members of the Five Eyes alliance, an intelligence-sharing partnership that includes Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. This long-standing relationship provides a framework for robust information exchange and coordinated law enforcement

activity.

During his visit, Patel met with several senior government officials in New Zealand, further signaling the United States' interest in strengthening bilateral ties. The new FBI presence is expected to facilitate quicker intelligence sharing, improve joint operations, and support ongoing efforts to address both traditional and emerging transnational threats.