



BOUGAINVILLE INDEPENDENCE A New Nation Rising in the Pacific

BLUE PACIFIC FUTURE SERIES

What are the plans for Bougainville,
the newest nation in the making?

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The 2001 Peace Agreement that ended Papua New Guinea's civil war called for a referendum by the people of Bougainville. In 2019 over 97 percent of Bougainvilleans voted to secede and establish an independent nation-state. Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government have recently agreed to a timetable that will transfer many governmental responsibilities by 2023, and establish full independence in 2027.

Oceania's newest nation-state will face many challenges. It is unclear what economic activities will be given priority to sustain Bougainville. As a matrilineal society, the role of women will be critical to decision-making at all levels. Bougainville's relationships with other Pacific Island nations, particularly the neighboring Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, have yet to be determined. And as global geopolitical tensions rise across the Indo-Pacific, Bougainville will need to forge new diplomatic ties with the region's metropolitan powers.



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