

Facebook halts project for undersea data cable to Hong Kong

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Facebook has decided to halt its efforts to build a trans-Pacific undersea cable that would have connected California and Hong Kong, due to

tensions between the United States and China.

"Due to ongoing concerns from the US government about direct communication links between the United States and Hong Kong, we have decided to withdraw our FCC application," a Facebook spokesperson told AFP on Wednesday, referring to the Federal Communications Commission.

"We look forward to working with all the parties to reconfigure the system to meet the concerns of the US government," the spokesperson added.

The social networking giant and several telecom companies filed their first construction permit in 2018, to connect two sites in California to Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The project was supposed to facilitate communications through [fiber optics](#) capable of carrying large volumes of data with very low waiting times.

But Washington resisted, because of perceived potential national security risks regarding China, which has tightened its control over Hong Kong.

In June, the US Department of Justice recommended that a trans-Pacific undersea cable proposed by Google and Facebook bypass Hong Kong.

The cable, named the Pacific Light Cable Network, was originally intended to link the United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

The Hong Kong landing station "would expose US communications traffic to collection" by Beijing, the department said.

The FCC gave Google permission in April 2020 to operate the link between North America and Taiwan.

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