



Greetings

from Chief of Staff,

Koku-Jieitai

Japan Air Self-Defense Force

“Greetings from Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force)”

Thank you very much for visiting our website.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force). First of all, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for your understanding and support of our activities. At this remarkable moment, I would like to review the past achievements and inherit the traditions as well as to dedicate ourselves to the evolution of Koku-Jieitai, including the space domain. We also would like to commit ourselves to strengthen the cooperation with our ally and like-minded countries as well as to promote understanding and build trust with all Japanese nationals.

Koku-Jieitai was established on July 1, 1954, along with the renaming of National Security Guard to Japan Ground Self-Defense Force and Coastal Safety Force to Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force as well as the inauguration of the Defense Agency.

Since our foundation, the security environment surrounding Japan has been changing, and Koku-Jieitai has played the role required at each time.

During the Cold War era, we concentrated our efforts to improve our capability together with the U.S. cooperation to avoid any “power vacuum” in the vicinity of Japan.

In 1987, Koku-Jieitai fired its first-ever warning shots against the USSR aircraft intruding into our territorial airspace over Okinawa since we had started taking measures against intrusions into Japan’s territorial airspace.

In 1998, North Korea launched a ballistic missile that flown over Japan giving us a turning point to promote the development of Ballistic Missile Defense system, which is now playing a vital role in air defense.

In 2003, we organized an airlift support team for the humanitarian relief operation in Iraq based on Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq, which became our first long-term overseas deployment. The mission had continued for around five years, with 16 dispatches and completed without any major accidents.

Looking at recent events, we established the first new space domain mission unit

in 2020 and started missions regarding Space Domain Awareness last year. We are strengthening the cooperation with the U.S., like-minded countries and relevant organizations for the stable use of space.

As mentioned above, Koku-Jieitai's mission has responded to the security situation and its range has expanded from the vicinity of Japan to overseas and now to space. We are planning to rename "Koku-Jieitai" to "Koku-Uchu-Jieitai(Japan Air and Space Self-Defense Force)" due to the positioning of operations in space domain as one of our primary missions being equal to air operations. In order to match our new name, we will continue conducting our missions firmly to contribute to the defense of air and the stable use of space domain.

All Koku-Jieitai members unite our souls in one to further develop air defense capability includes space operation capability enable us to conduct missions and trainings with great confidence by encouraging each other. Even we are facing several security challenges, in order to achieve "To the Sky and Beyond", we have these two quotes in mind. One is "Ungai-Souten(blue sky after clouds)" whose meaning is "bright future(blue sky) is waiting for you as you overcome the challenges(clouds) in front of you" and the other is "Banri-Ikku(thousands of miles, but the sky is one)" whose meaning is "continue what you are doing (thousands of miles), with great confidence (sky above you is always one)".

I would like to again express my sincerest gratitude to all of you who greatly dedicated yourselves for the development of the Koku-Jieitai together with reaffirming our resolve, facing this last memorial opportunity as "Koku-Jieitai", to build our organization to have both strength and kindness in order to firmly protect the Japanese nationals including our beloved families and friends. I would also like to ask your continued support and understanding of "Koku-Jieitai".

25 April 2024

Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force)

General UCHIKURA Hiroaki

