

“Greetings from Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai”

The cherry blossoms are in full bloom all over Japan. I hope all the readers of this website are enjoying this lovely season.

Seven months have passed since I assumed the office of the Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai. In fiscal year 2020, the Koku-Jieitai started to take on new challenges, including efforts on new domains, pursuing the Shinka (Evolution, Deepening and True Values) initiatives. Among various efforts made in FY 2020, there are three things I would like to share with you in particular. First, in May, the Koku-Jieitai stood up the SDF's very first unit dedicated to the space operations, namely “Space Operations Squadron” in Fuchu Air Base. The Koku-Jieitai took a major step into a new domain. Second, we have succeeded in evolving our various abilities under restrictions imposed by COVID-19 pandemic. We adapted ourselves to “new normal”, taking various measures to guard against the spread of infections. With these efforts, we have used our resourcefulness and proactively conducted many exercises including Japan-US bilateral exercise. Third, even under cross-border restrictions, I had the honors to meet with my counterparts from the allied and partner nations to exchange views on regional security. Such opportunities include the meeting with the Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force, who visited Japan in August. My visits to Hawaii in November and to India in December as well as many video teleconferences with international air chiefs successfully contributed to promoting multifaceted and multilayered defense cooperation and exchanges based on the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” vision.

As mentioned above, the Koku-Jieitai carried out various activities in FY 2020. I strongly believe that we owe our success to your understanding and support. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude once again.

The security environment surrounding Japan is increasingly severe. This trend is expected continue in FY 2021. The COVID-19 is also likely to keep restricting part of our activities. We will continue to take thorough measures to prevent infections and be fully ready for various exercises including Japan-US bilateral exercise, standby alert and scramble mission. In order to reinforce the defense of Japan, we will be committed to building a truly effective air defense capability that organically fuses all the domains including space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum, while pursuing true values of the Koku-Jieitai. To achieve these goals, all the commanders will properly exercise their leadership, each man and woman will adhere to fundamental principles and remain resourceful and imaginative, and I will reassure myself of my important responsibility as the Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai and devote all my energy to fulfill my duties.

The Koku-Jieitai looks up in the sky 27/7 and carries out missions to protect the peace and security of Japan. Thank you very much for your continued understanding and support.

The Reliable Koku-Jieitai Is Just by Your Side
Looking Up at the Sky 24/7

April 1, 2021

General IZUTSU Shunji

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