

Change of command ceremony for Commander, United States Forces Japan and Fifth Air Force

On August 27, a change of command ceremony for Commander, United States Forces Japan and Fifth Air Force was held at Yokota Air Base. Lieutenant General Ricky N. Rupp took command from Lieutenant General Kevin B. Schneider, who has deep understanding of Japan and the Koku-Jieitai, and contributed to strengthening the Japan-US alliance, as well as peace and stability of the region since he was assigned the position in February 2019 for over two and a half years.

Outgoing commander stated *“This day is filled with many emotions ... A bit of sadness as well as the pride that goes along with having been part of this amazing alliance at such a critical time in history.”* on his speech. After leaving his current position, he will be transferred to the post of the Director of Staff, Air Force Headquarters. As he has profound understanding of the security situation surrounding Japan and the Koku-Jieitai, his assignment to the key position means a lot to national security of Japan. We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations and wish for his further success in future.

As Lieutenant General Rupp assumed command of USFJ and 5AF, he remarked *“I am truly honored to work with our incredible allies from Japan, and to advance the readiness and combat capabilities of our two militaries.”* and declared the unwavering and strong Japan-US alliance.

Lieutenant General Rupp had served as Deputy Commander of 8th Air Wing at Kadena Air Base and he is well acquainted with Japan and the Koku-Jieitai. On his inauguration to the new position, we, the Koku-Jieitai extend our heartfelt congratulations and will continue collaborating closely with US Forces.

