

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

I believe that many of you were encouraged by the enthusiastic efforts of the athletes at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which Japan Self Defense Force officially supported. I hope you all are staying safe and healthy.

From the 24th of August to the 3rd of September, I officially visited to the U.S. and participated in the 36th Space Symposium, Space Chiefs Conference, and PACS-21 (Pacific Air Chiefs Symposium 2021), then visited Columbus AFB and Maxwell AFB.

At the Space Symposium, we shared our recognition and vision of the stable use of space. At the symposium, I emphasized that although space has no borders, satellites are controlled by the ground control equipment which belongs multiple countries, therefore multilateral cooperation is crucially important for keeping space order. I also participated in a panel discussion titled “International Military Collaboration” and introduced the outline of Japan’s space policy. In addition, at the Space Chiefs Conference hosted by U.S Space Force, we exchanged our views on issues and future defense cooperation in the space domain. Moreover, at the PACS-21, Chiefs of Staff around the Indo-Pacific region shared our understanding of the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and affirmed the significance of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).

Aside from these conferences, I observed a pilot training squadron at Columbus AFB and encourage the student pilots dispatched from Koku-Jieitai. I also had fruitful discussions with Commander of both Columbus and Maxwell AFB and President of Air University.

During my visit, I received many compliments on the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games from various people who participated in the symposium and the conferences. Some of them said, “Only Japan could have hosted the Games during such a severe COVID-19 situation”, and “I could feel the warm mind of the Japanese people”. I was glad to hear these words, and I felt that not only the staff members involved in hosting the Games but also of all the Japanese people offered their hospitality.

Through this official trip, I had bilateral meetings with about 15 high-ranking Air Forces’ officials from various countries, and also exchanged opinions with Chiefs of Staff of Air Forces who participated in the conferences. Deepening mutual understanding and confidence with the U.S. and other countries’ chiefs was a great achievement in promoting defense cooperation and exchange view point. As the security environment has become increasingly severe and uncertain, international cooperation including peaceful and stable use of space

is essential to ensure the regional peace and stability. I strongly believe this visit will promote Koku-Jieitai's future defense cooperation and exchange with our great allies and partners.

On the other hand, while I was in the U.S, we conducted the air evacuation mission in Afghanistan, and an inappropriate smoke use incident by Blue Impulse arose with shame. I received reports on these mission and incident at the U.S. promptly. We would like to analyze the issues and problems swiftly and sincerely to derive further improvement and preventive measures so that we would thoroughly implement them.

We look up into the sky 24/7, and will carry out our mission to protect the peace and security of Japan. I hope you will continue extending the same understanding and support to the Koku-Jieitai (JASDF) this year ahead.

The Reliable Koku-Jieitai (JASDF) Is Just by Your Side
Looking Up at the Sky and Space 24/7

September 29, 2021

General IZUTSU Shunji

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



Space Symposium



Presentation by Chief of Staff,
Koku-Jieitai



Commanding General, Philippine Air Force
(Left Side)



Deputy, Under Secretary, USAF
(Second from the right)



Deputy Chief Of Staff,
French Air and Space Force
(Right Side)



Commander, Royal Canadian Air Force
(Right Side)



Base Commander, Columbus AFB
(Right Side)