



# Greetings

from Chief of Staff,

**Koku-Jieitai**

Japan Air Self-Defense Force

I hope things are going well for all the visitors to Koku-Jieitai's website for consecutive days of scorching heat.

In July, torrential rain triggered floods and landslides across the country, renewing my recognition of the threat of natural disasters. I would like to extend condolences to those who lost their lives in this disaster and hope that those who were affected will be able to get back to a normal life as soon as possible. Amid such a situation, the 33rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, located at Kamo Sub Base in Oga City, supplied water in the disaster-stricken area at the request of Commander of the 21st Infantry Regiment, JGSDF, who received a disaster relief request from the governor of Akita Prefecture. We would be glad if we could help you even just a little.

As part of defense cooperation and exchanges, I visited Germany and France in June and Mongolia in July. In Germany, Koku-Jieitai was the only observer outside the region to participate in Air Defender 23, the largest multilateral exercise in NATO's history, hosted by the German Air Force. I witnessed the great efforts of NATO member states and the strong unity of the air chiefs from each country. In France, the next destination, I visited companies' booths at the Paris Air Show and deepened my understanding of trends of cutting-edge aerospace technologies. Throughout my trip in the two countries, I also interacted with the air chiefs of the participating countries and made efforts to deepen mutual understanding and trust. I was encouraged to often hear, "The Indo-Pacific and the Atlantic are now connected." Regarding Mongolia, following the visit to Japan by the Commander of the Mongolian Air Force in November last year, we realized the first official visit to Mongolia as Chief of Staff of Koku-Jieitai, which marks a significant step forward in the relationship between the two air services.

Also, July was like an exercise month. First, we participated in a Japan-U. S.

bilateral exercise, Northern Edge 23-2 and a multilateral exercise, Mobility Guardian 23 to improve multilateral as well as Japan-U. S. joint response capabilities and tactical skills. Next, at the end of the month, we were able to successfully complete the Japan-France bilateral exercise in Japan for the first time. I would like to express my heartfelt respect and gratitude to the French Air and Space Force, which came to Japan after traveling approximately 19,000 km including some transfer points. Through this exercise, I felt that we have been able to share the vision of “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.”

On the other hand, North Korea successively launched ballistic missiles including presumably ICBM-class missiles during this period, and these series of actions are completely unacceptable. Koku-Jieitai has continuously engaged in information gathering and warning and surveillance around the clock and will continue to engage in warning and surveillance in cooperation with relevant units.

We would like to ask for your continued understanding of Koku-Jieitai.

July 31, 2023

General UCHIKURA Hiroaki

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