



Greetings

from Chief of Staff,

Koku-Jieitai

Japan Air Self-Defense Force

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

I wish all the visitors to Koku-Jieitai's website a Happy New Year. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your understanding and support for Koku-Jieitai's activities throughout the past year.

Koku-Jieitai, which marked the 70th years anniversary of its establishment last year, took a mighty step today to open a new chapter in the story which leads us to "Japan Air and Space Self-Defense Force" and other stepping stones.

At the beginning of the new year, once again I would like to express my deepest condolences to those who lost their lives due to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake occurred on New Year's Day and subsequent Noto Peninsula Heavy Rain Disaster in September last year. My thoughts and prayers are with those who have been affected by the disasters. Members of Koku-Jieitai, including those from Wajima Sub Base located at the area worked as one and dedicated themselves to host local people at Koku-Jieitai's facilities as temporary shelters, conduct Search and Rescue operations, and provide emergency relief like water, food and medical care in cooperation with related local municipalities and Self-Defense Forces. They are currently putting all their efforts for restoration and reconstruction together with local communities.

The international community is facing unprecedented challenges, including geopolitical destabilization and energy and food supply disruption, due to Russian invasion of Ukraine and the increasingly turbulent situation in the Middle East. In the areas surrounding Japan, since last summer we have observed a series of airspace violations by Chinese and Russian military aircraft in addition to two days of joint flights by bombers of both militaries. Meanwhile, activities that threatened Japan's security and gave rise to grave concerns, such as North Korean intermittent ballistic missile launches, were repeatedly observed. Units of Koku-Jieitai have responded to those activities with composure, accurate decision-making and resolute attitude. Also, Koku-Jieitai's aircraft have constantly been on standby to transport Japanese citizens and foreign nationals from Israel and Lebanon as tensions flared up in the Middle East.

Despite the intense international situation, air forces from European countries came to Japan one after another to conduct joint trainings at Koku-Jieitai Bases. Participants of the trainings improved their tactical skills, and deepened mutual understanding and trust through joint trainings and various exchanges with the common recognition of "the security

of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific are inseparable.” For the event, Air Force Forum in Japan we invited air force leaderships from various countries as part of its 70th Anniversary events, 20 representatives from 19 nations including 10 air chiefs gathered in Tokyo. We shared the views and recognitions on importance and significance of realizing “Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” and felt a sense of solidity.

This year, Defense Buildup Program reaches the middle of the five-year milestone. We will promote a fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, including the establishment of new units such as that for F-35B. Koku-Jieitai will also enhance interoperability and promote integration among ally and like-minded countries, while reinforcing deterrence and response capabilities through defense cooperation and exchanges.

Koku-Jieitai, taking the initiative in Japan in safeguarding the sky and the stable use of space, will diligently carry out our missions this year as well. We would like to ask for your continued understanding and cooperation with Koku-Jieitai.

We hope that you will have a peaceful year, filled with happiness.

January 1, 2025

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

General UCHIKURA Hiroaki

