



## **Fifth Air Force Commander's Speech**

JAAGA Annual Convention – 9 May 2013

“U.S. Response to the East Asia Security Environment”

Good evening, I would like to thank you for taking the time to attend this year's Japan America Air Force Goodwill Association Convention; a truly prestigious event for Air Force officers here in Japan. I'd also like to thank retired General Yoshida, the President of JAAGA, for inviting me to speak before such a distinguished audience.

I feel particularly honored to be invited today. As some of you may know, when the JAAGA was formed in 1996, I was on my first assignment here in Japan as the Aide to the Commander of U.S. Forces Japan and Fifth Air Force.

The JAAGA's goal is to enhance programs that promote friendship and mutual understanding between the Koku Jieitai and the U.S. Air Force; and to enhance the relationship between Japan and the United States.

The retired Koku Jieitai members that run JAAGA share a mutual appreciation for the strategic importance of air power and a selfless desire to continue their service to the U.S.-Japan alliance. The Koku Jieitai and U.S. Air Force have served as defense partners guarding Japan's skies and ensuring homeland security under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty for more than a half century.

Like the defense alliance they honorably served under, JAAGA continues to stand the test of time as it approaches its 17th year of volunteer service this summer.

I am currently on my 5th assignment to Japan, and every time I've come back I've had the tremendous honor to work with JAAGA. **The**

**U.S.-Japan alliance is built on the power of personal and professional relationships** and JAAGA has continued to play a substantial role in advancing the U.S.'s relationship with our Japanese friends and allies.

The U.S. servicemembers stationed in Japan truly appreciate what the U.S.-Japan alliance stands for; and much like JAAGA, we are truly committed to contributing to, and enhancing, our relationship with Japan, both on and off base.

As a Commander, it always makes me proud to see U.S. servicemembers make a difference in the community. Last month, the U.S. Air Force Band of the Pacific spent three days in Sendai, performing in remembrance of the victims of the earthquake and tsunami that devastated the area. Additionally, hundreds of Airmen and Sailors from Misawa AB conducted their 15th Annual Port Cleanup clean; and Airmen from Yokota AB hosted a mid-air collision avoidance conference for the local aviation community to promote safe aviation practices.

From orphanage visits, to friendship festivals and cultural exchanges, the list of friendship building activities we conduct is endless; because we are part of a team of world champions.

One of the most important things I've learned from my experiences in Japan, and all over the world, is that working towards security and stability is a team sport.

By that, I mean it's everyone's shared responsibility. No single nation can establish peace on its own, especially in a region as large and diverse as Asia. Every country has its own unique culture, personality, interests, and desires.

Despite these differences, the one thing most nations have in common is the desire for security and stability. And international cooperation is required to achieve this goal.

Transnational challenges like terrorism, piracy, cyber security, disease, natural disasters, and declining resources can only be effectively addressed by multilateral solutions because these issues cut across borders and jeopardize international peace for all.

However, such cooperative solutions require advanced strategic planning to be effective. If we attempt to respond to a catastrophe without prior planning, coordination, or training, then we're already behind the power curve, and many lives may be lost unnecessarily. So developing a strategy for multinational engagement is vitally important to the future of this region.

In President Obama's 2012 strategic guidance, he stated that the U.S. **"will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region."** And the U.S. Secretary of State highlighted the Asia-Pacific's cultural, intellectual, and economic importance by calling this decade the beginning of **"America's Pacific Century."** As a result, the U.S. security strategy has shifted toward the Pacific after more than a decade of conflict in Southwest Asia.

At Headquarters United States Forces, Japan, we've developed our mission strategy in support of PACOM directives and the guidance of our civilian leadership.

United States Forces, Japan's mission is to support the U.S.-Japan security alliance and conduct security cooperation with the Government of Japan in order to maintain regional stability and deter aggression. When directed, USFJ also conducts operations in response to regional contingencies.

The methods and strategy that we are using to successfully achieve our mission include:

- Strengthening United States – Japan security arrangements

- Implementing bilaterally agreed upon realignment initiatives
- And enhancing interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces

Our mission and strategy directly support PACOM objectives; and to meet those objectives we must balance critical lines of operation such as: Theater Security Cooperation, Integrated Air and Missile Defense, Power Projection, Agile-Flexible Command and Control, and the Resiliency of our Servicemembers.

PACOM's strategy guides all of our operations, from humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness to full-scale military conflict. In essence, it lays out a flight plan to guide my field commanders, helping them to stay on course and meet my objectives in a manner consistent with national policy.

But a flight plan is just a plan. In order to translate the plan into action, a strategy requires resources. And when resources are abundant, strategies are relatively easy to implement. Unfortunately, we currently live in challenging financial times.

The Budget Control Act has resulted in significant budget cuts across the U.S. government. Locally, we're faced with possibly furloughing some civilian personnel, decreased flight training hours, and scaling back some of our international engagements and exercises. These cuts have had a real impact on the **means** available to accomplish our objectives.

This kind of fiscal environment makes a well-designed strategy even more important; however, our end state will remain the same: to protect U.S. interests in the Pacific, and ensure our forces are prepared for any contingency.

As we say in the Air Force, "Flexibility is the key to Airpower." Remaining flexible and focused on the end state will ensure the United

States' overarching strategy remains viable through the current resource drought.

If long term cuts are made to defense spending the Department of Defense will have to do less with less; however, **we won't do it less well!** Additionally, our focus will continue to remain on the Pacific.

As the United States increases its economic and strategic focus in the Pacific, our main goal will be to sustain regional stability and lasting peace.

In the past, our greatest threat to peace was the possibility of war between multiple countries. Although North Korea remains unpredictable, other nations continue to be open to dialogue because of a mutual understanding that **peace within the region enhances economic growth; benefiting all nations in the Pacific.** And while interstate conflict, most notably with North Korea, remains a dangerous possibility, all responsible nations should continue to trust that international disputes can be handled peacefully and diplomatically.

**Building trust takes time, and involves some risk.** Making forces interoperable requires training and resources. **Bold leadership is required.** As strategic decision makers, you must seek out ways to build international partnerships. After all, our problems cross borders, so our solutions must as well.

**The best way to address challenges is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with friends, working together for the common good.**

But it's often difficult to successfully cooperate with other nations; especially those with differing ideas. Even close allies like the U.S. and Japan have important differences. In many cases, these differences can be a good thing. Diversity is beneficial because it allows us to look at challenges from different perspectives and provide

regional expertise. If everyone had the same outlook, it would be difficult for our countries to grow and learn from each other.

Given the large and diverse nature of the Pacific region, neither unilateral action nor simple bilateral relationships are adequate to ensure long-term regional stability. **A consolidated, multilateral approach to regional security is needed to enforce international norms and the rule of law.** This new multilateral strategy must be based on shared goals and mutual trust.

Many nations around the Pacific are interested in this approach. A good example of this is Exercise COPE NORTH. It originally started out as a bilateral security exercise between the U.S. and Japan.

A few years ago Australia began to actively participate, and this year, we were fortunate to add observers from the Republic of Korea Air Force to the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief portion of the exercise. Today, Exercise COPE NORTH focuses on numerous training scenarios, and continues to grow.

In addition to advancing training initiatives, USFJ works side-by-side with the JSDF and GoJ to make operational defense initiatives a reality. For example, we've begun coordination on the future deployment of an additional TPY-2 surveillance radar to Japan. The focus of this effort is to enhance our ability to defend Japan. It's designed to help forward-deployed U.S. forces, and will be effective in helping protect the U.S. homeland from the North Korean ballistic missile threat.

This continued close cooperation on ballistic missile defense reflects our joint commitment to this alliance and to promoting peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

Another enhancement to our forces in the region is the deployment of the second squadron of MV-22 Ospreys to Okinawa this summer. **The Osprey is important to the defense of Japan.**

It provides twice the speed, three times the payload and four times the range compared to the helicopter it replaces. The Osprey will enable us to more effectively perform humanitarian assistance, disaster relief operations, and fulfill other roles critical to the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Last year's relocation of the ADC to Yokota, as well as this year's relocation of the CRF to Camp Zama, have already improved bilateral planning efforts and command and control capabilities. We continue working diligently with the GoJ; moving forward with Okinawa Consolidation plans, Futenma Relocation Facility agreements, F-35 basing options and introduction of the second X-Band radar.

Initiatives like these build the foundation for regional cooperation and lasting peace and stability. Training and operating together to address shared security concerns builds mutual trust and reduces the chance of future miscalculations.

As with most regions around the world, the Pacific is very diverse in its politics, ethnicity, culture, and religion. Increased cooperation within a common security architecture can also enhance social and cultural understanding between nations; and allow opposing or competing objectives to be identified.

This isn't to say I believe we can avoid conflicts of interest altogether. We can't. But we must control how we respond militarily.

**As defenders of our sovereign nations, we have been entrusted with immense power; and with that power comes enormous responsibility!**

Some of our differences will remain, and sovereign interests will sometimes overshadow international cooperation. But understanding and respecting these differences, and making calculated, coordinated

decisions, will continue to be a part of the allied strategic decision making process.

**The future is bright in Asia; and all throughout the Pacific!** As friends and Pacific nations we have gained much over the past half century; and the U.S.-Japan alliance will continue to grow stronger in the years to come.

The fact that all of you are here tonight gives me great hope, that together we can foster peaceful relations in Asia and among all Pacific nations. **All of our futures are intertwined, but no matter what the future brings, the U.S.-Japan alliance will TOMONI SU SUNDE IKI MASU!**

Thank you again for allowing me to speak to you this evening. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.