



ENSURING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

Speech by

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“Japan and the United States are at an important crossroads. The decisions we make and the actions we take today will drive our future ability to provide security and stability for Japan, for the region, and ultimately, the global community.”

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Good afternoon and thank you for the honor of again addressing this prestigious group.

Japan and the United States, are at an important crossroads. The decisions we make and the actions we take today will drive our future ability to provide security and stability for Japan, for the region, and ultimately, the global community.

As you know, our governments have committed to transforming our security alliance. The goal is to ensure our security partnership is as effective in the future--in the next 50 years--as it has been in the past. We began by identifying the many strategic objectives we share in common.

Based on this, we built an ambitious framework to realign US military forces in Japan and the region, and, much more importantly, to review and enhance our roles, missions, and capabilities. We did this in 2005. Early last month, on May 1st, our two governments reaffirmed our commitment to our shared vision, both in terms of the security objectives we hold in common, and the path we are taking to meet emerging threats and diverse contingencies.

This afternoon, I'd like to review some of the progress Japan and the United States have achieved in transformation and realignment since my visit to the Japan National Press Club last May. Sometimes we focus on individual issues in such detail that we lose sight of the "big picture." From my perspective as commander of US, Forces, Japan, I have seen unprecedented progress since the historic October 2005 transformation and realignment report was signed by our two governments. And I look forward to the continuing progress we'll see in the months ahead.

Here are some of those accomplishments:

- In the area of ballistic missile defense, we have deployed the advanced FBX radar system to Northern Japan. As part of a defensive system, the FBX detects ballistic missiles early in their flight. This radar is part of an overlapping system of sensors that support our ability to cooperate and intercept hostile missiles.
- We've deployed a Patriot missile battalion to Kadena AB. Patriot missiles are both a deterrent and a defense. They deter because potential adversaries know their attacks are less likely to succeed. They defend by shooting down incoming

missiles.

- We've implemented a major redesign of Yokota air space to facilitate civilian air traffic in the Kanto Plains region while ensuring we're able to continue mission critical training. The changes save aircraft time, fuel, and increase efficiency of the air traffic control system.
- In close cooperation with our Japanese partners, we've planned and executed several air training relocation events. During these exercises, our aircraft, aircrews, and maintainers deploy to a Japanese air base for several days of training with our Japanese Air Self-Defense Force partners. We learned from each other on the flight line. The friendships that result, and I'm talking at all levels, are simply another form of combat power.
- We've had the opportunity to train closely with our very professional and capable Japan Self-Defense Force partners. The command post exercise KEEN EDGE 07 held this past February enabled us to work with ADM Saito and his Joint Staff Office to practice real-time coordination and response to a variety of challenging contingency scenarios.

Those are just some highlights. A great deal of planning and coordination is ongoing every day to implement the comprehensive, inter-related initiatives of transformation and realignment. You are well aware of the work being done by the Japanese Government in this area. As we work to fulfill our commitments under Japan-US agreements, we will succeed in enhancing our alliance's deterrence and capabilities while also reducing some impacts on Japanese communities that host US installations.

We've made other notable progress this year which only underscores my confidence in our mutual commitment to this alliance.

- Last month, we concluded a highly successful deployment of the F-22 to Japan. This was the first-ever overseas deployment of the F-22. We validated our ability to deploy the Air Force's most modern weapons system. We conducted some effective training in a new environment. And we again trained with our Japan Air Self-Defense partners.

- We are on track for the arrival of the USS George Washington to replace the USS Kitty Hawk next year. We will replace the oldest ship in the US Navy with one of our most modern, safest, and most capable carriers, a very visible sign of our security commitment to Japan and the region. The George Washington has superior speed and endurance, more deck space, and greater survivability.

What's significant is how this progress strengthens deterrence and our ability to respond to contingencies. Our security alliance has matured. We saw that in how the US and Japan worked together before, during, and after North Korea's missile launches in July 2006. We were able to appropriately share information and coordinate throughout the process. Our security working relationship, I would suggest, was the foundation that enabled the strong, immediate, and successful diplomatic response by our governments.

Let me close by taking a moment to express my pride in two outstanding organizations. The first is Headquarters, US Forces, Japan. USFJ will commemorate 50 years of serving the Japan-US alliance next week, an alliance which I believe is exemplary for the world. Shortly after fighting a horrific war, our two countries looked to the future and built a friendship and a partnership based on common values. As the 21st serving commander of US Forces, Japan, I'm proud of the role we've played in an alliance which has benefited Japan, America, and the region.

I'm also proud of the Japan Self-Defense Force and the Joint Staff Office. Admiral Saito and his team face the same challenges all nations and all militaries face: how to provide the greatest defensive capability possible while working with budget realities. I value his leadership, his counsel, and his friendship. The more closely we work together, the better I believe all of us become.

Again, I thank you for your time and this great honor of addressing you today, and I look forward to your questions and our discussion. Domo arigato.