



News Release

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Sasakawa USA Leader Congratulates USMC-JGSDF Exercise Iron Fist Participants *Annual joint military exercise highlights strength of U.S.-Japan Alliance*

Camp Pendleton, CA – Today, Sasakawa USA chief executive officer, Ambassador James Zumwalt, congratulated the participants from *Exercise Iron Fist*, the annual amphibious training program for U.S. Marines and soldiers from Japan’s Ground Self Defense Forces. Ambassador Zumwalt appeared at the closing ceremonies at Camp Pendleton as part of the Japan U.S. Military Program (JUMP), which connects past and present service members, families, and government civilians who have served in Japan. *Exercise Iron Fist* is a joint ‘live fire’ training program for U.S. and Japanese soldiers and is designed to improve USMC and JGSDF’s ability to plan, communicate, and conduct combined amphibious operations at the platoon, company, and battalion levels.

“It is an honor to be here today as you conclude your rigorous training over the past few weeks,” commented Zumwalt. “Iron Fist creates a dynamic and intense training environment for service members from two great nations, and will build mutual respect, trust and friendship that will strengthen a vital global alliance that has served both the United States and Japan well for over seventy years,” he continued.

Exercise Iron Fist is a live-fire exercise focusing on advanced marksmanship, amphibious reconnaissance, fire and maneuver assaults, staff planning, logistical support, medical knowledge sharing, fire support operations including mortars, artillery and close air support, and amphibious landing operations. The Exercise began on January 15, 2019 at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

Leaders attending today’s closing ceremonies included Major General Robert Castellvi, the Commanding General of the U.S. Marine Corps 1st Marine Division, and Major General Shinichi Aoki, the Commanding General of Japan’s Ground Self Defense Forces’ Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade.

About the Japan U.S. Military Program -- Launched in 2015, [JUMP](#) provides opportunities for service members to engage with each other through social networks and events. JUMP provides a powerful foundation for sustaining the solid alliance and relationship that exists between the United States and Japan. JUMP is a collaborative effort between Sasakawa USA, the Embassy of Japan in the United States, and the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

About Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

[Sasakawa USA](#) is an independent American non-profit, non-partisan institution devoted to research, analysis, and better understanding of the U.S.-Japan relationship. Through research and education programs, Sasakawa USA facilitates people-to-people exchange and dialogue between American and Japanese policymakers, influential citizens, and the broader public.

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