

LTG Mixon
Opening Remarks
Pacific Armies Management Seminar XXXIII
24 August 2009

Fellow general and flag officers, distinguished delegates, observers, and guests; I am honored to welcome you to the 33rd Pacific Armies Management Seminar.

Allow me to begin by thanking our co-host and the team of outstanding professionals from the Japan Ground Self Defense Force. I am confident this event will be a great success because of your detailed planning and extensive preparation.

PAMS is as relevant and important today as it was in 1978 when the first seminar was conducted in Honolulu, Hawaii. Since then, we have conducted PAMS in over 12 countries with 18 co-hosts. Over 760 delegates have participated in this invaluable security cooperation event. Twenty eight countries are represented here today providing an opportunity to exchange information, discuss mutual security concerns, and strengthen our relationships as partners in the Pacific. Together, we face some unique and very tough challenges. Throughout the week, we will carefully consider the experiences, thoughts, and opinions of seminar participants and take an active role in the development of solutions for the challenges of the 21st century.

Recent disaster relief operations in Japan, China, and Tonga demonstrate nations in the Asia Pacific must be prepared to contend with earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones and other natural disasters. These events frequently cross national boundaries damaging economies, societies, and wreaking havoc on the lives of people in the region. We recognize it takes a coordinated international effort to achieve rapid recovery from the impact and effects of these tragedies.

In conjunction with the theme of this conference, we will have the opportunity to discuss ways to conduct international humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. We will share lessons learned from our experiences in coping with past disasters, we will discuss civil-military and interagency cooperation in disaster relief operations, and we will look at ways to increase multilateral military cooperation. All of this is designed to foster collaboration and enhance cooperation through dialogue.

Although we are here to engage in very important activities, I encourage you to enjoy the beauty and culture of our host city, Tokyo, which simultaneously presents a deeply rooted history and rapidly evolving technological contributions.

I am looking forward to meeting with everyone in the days ahead. I am also confident this will be a tremendously successful seminar and once again want to underscore the importance of this multinational security cooperation event.

Many of you traveled great distances to be here. I sincerely appreciate your willingness to attend and participate. Thank you again for your contribution and for enriching this shared learning experience.

Thank You.