



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Visit of Japan Defense Minister
aboard USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76)
Admiral Patrick M. Walsh
April 4, 2011**

Mr. Defense Minister, you have given us a day to remember.

And for the men and women who have participated in this operation, it's a memory that will last for a life time. And for the men and women of Ronald Reagan, I ask that you think about what you are seeing today and hearing today.

The men behind me have not rested in three weeks. They are a team that represents the very best in humanity. All of them bear the burden, that there is no rotation, that they will see this through the end.

Defense Minister Kitazawa, on behalf of the men and women of the United States armed forces who have served in Operation Tomodachi, thank you for honoring us with your time, your presence, and your remarks today.

By any measure, the actions that the Japanese Self-Defense Force have taken, the work that they have done, has been heroic and earned the gratitude and the respect of colleagues from around the world. It has been an honor to work with you and to call you our friends. Ronald Reagan, thank you and you make us all proud.

Thank you.