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General Atomics, Iki base "Guardian" demonstration experiment

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Planned for three weeks in May, the largest experiment for peaceful purposes will be conducted

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems held a press conference in Tokyo on 17th April. During May this year, based at the Iki airport in Nagasaki prefecture, the remote controlled unmanned aircraft, the MQ-9 "Guardian". The demonstration will be carried out over 3 weeks with 10 separate flights of 5 hours each. In the demonstration, the Guardian will collect data for weather, disaster, ocean observation support, aid for salvage aid, as well as aeronautical, communications and industrial use support.

At the press conference, Terry Kraft, Vice President of International Strategy Development in the Pacific Region, said this will be the first time a demonstration experiment of unmanned aircraft will take place in Japan. In addition, he explained that the reason for choosing Iki Airport as a base for the demonstration experiments was for "deep local understanding." About a year ago, they began preparing for this event, in cooperation with Iki city, Nagasaki prefecture and related ministries and agencies. In this experiment, he also mentioned that this will be "the largest demonstration test ever and is aimed at peaceful use."

By the way, the "Guardian" brought to Japan is equipped with a collision prevention system including automatic long distance ocean search radar, automatic correction optical infrared video camera, and short distance air-to-air radar. These are expected to be almost the same as sensors installed by the Homeland Security Department of the United States for sea observation.