Mustin, 7th Fleet Band Sailors bring joy to Cambodian children

By MC3(SW) Devon Dow,
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Equipped with trumpets, tubas, donated clothes, Hula-Hoops, toys and lots of energy, Sailors from *USS Mustin* (DDG 89) and the 7th Fleet Orient Express Band visited the Goodwill School in Sihanoukville, Cambodia Dec. 4.

From the moment the Sailors arrived, they engaged in activities with the children by playing games, coloring, drawing pictures and entertaining them with a free concert while making new friends.

"This entire event by the 7th Fleet Band and *USS Mustin* Sailors has been great," said Sabine Nerling, Goodwill School operations manager. "While I personally love the music the band is playing, I think it's far more important and so special for the children. I think in their lives, this might be the first time for many of them that they have ever heard live music or been able to see first hand musical instruments, and the Sailors are just amazing with the children. I think this is an event that these young people will remember for their whole life."

Created in 2004, the Goodwill School initially served as a school to teach English to local children, it has sense evolved into a local community center where children can come and participate in educational and extra curricular activities. While it is not a substitute for the public education system in Cambodia, it offers local children a place to study, learn social skills and participate in recreational activities.

For Vall Colle, the trustee of the Help the Cambodian Children, which the Goodwill School is supported by, said she was very pleased with the day's events.

"Just looking around at all of the smiling faces and seeing all of the high-five hand slaps between Sailors and the children, I think it is absolutely fantastic," Colle said. "We are really grateful, and it means an awful lot to our organization and to the children. What you have all done here today is quite amazing. We are a very small organization and for you all to come spend your personal time and to donate all of the lovely things is greatly appreciated."

MU3 Zachary Buckwash shows a sousaphone to children at the Goodwill School in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, during a community service project with *USS Mustin* (DDG 89) Sailors Dec. 4. The U.S. 7th Fleet band, Orient Express, is embarked aboard *Mustin* visiting Cambodia as goodwill ambassadors.
U.S. Navy photo by MUCS Adam Vincent

"This was awesome," said Chief Operations Specialist (SW) Stacy Johnson, from Chicago. "It was a great chance to meet the children - who were great - and it was a great opportunity for us to get out into the community and show some support while we are here as their guest. It is nice to know that we are making a difference when we visit ports, because every little bit helps, and just from the smiles I saw today, I think we've accomplished that."

Following the community service project, Mustin Sailors said they appreciated having the opportunity to visit the school and said that it was the interaction with the children and the feeling of making a difference that brought it all together for them.

"I could have stayed there all day," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Edward Smith, from Jacksonville, Fla. "Today really opened my eyes up to what the Navy talks about when it says that we are ambassadors to our country. It makes me feel proud that I am assigned to a ship with Sailors who have just as big of hearts as me and want to make a difference in the world."

U.S. Navy, JMSDF Sailors work side-by-side during Keen Sword

By MC3 Juan Pinalez, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) personnel and their U.S. Navy counterparts aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) worked side-by-side Dec. 5 to increase interoperability and improve the alliance during Keen Sword 2011.

(Left) JMSDF Vice Adm. Katsutoshi Kawano and Rear Adm. Sakata learn about the roles of plane handlers aboard the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) during exercise Keen Sword Dec. 6.
U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Cheng S. Yang

Keen Sword officially kicked off Dec. 3 with dozens of ships from the U.S. Navy and JMSDF taking part. The exercise places a major focus on integrated air and missile defense as a key component in the defense of Japan.

"We have already gained ground in terms of increasing our interoperability," said JMSDF Adm. Umio Otsuka. "This exercise does a good job of preparing us to work as one entity although we are two individual nations."

Nearly 30 sailors from the JMSDF were aboard *GW* working side-by-side with their U.S. Navy counterparts. From monitoring the waters for enemy contacts to being fully integrated with Commander Task Force 70 (CTF 70) staff, these Japanese sailors have overnight, merged their skill sets with the U.S. Navy with both nationalities learning from each other.

"With the cooperation from the *GW* crew, this exercise has allowed us to learn about new tactics and technology," said JMSDF Capt. Atsushi Tanaka.

From the flight deck of *GW*, one doesn't have to look far to observe the interoperability of the U.S. Navy and the JMSDF. The *USNS Tippecanoe* (T-AO 199)conducted a Fueling at Sea (FAS) Dec. 5 with Japanese ships, *JS Hyuga* (DDH 181), *JS Ikazuchi* (DD 107) and *JS Kongo* (DDG 173). Shortly thereafter, Ikazuchi pulled alongside *GW* to practice the always challenging maneuver of sailing next to a carrier while conducting a FAS. The two ships successfully maintained their course less than 150 yards apart.

"Today's successful FAS is a testament to the excellent Sailors from both of our navies. Both the JMSDF and the U.S. Navy train very hard to maintain a high safety standard and this part of the exercise demonstrated our professionalism and ability to get the job done together," said Capt. David Lausman, *GW* commanding officer.

Keen Sword 2011 is the 10th joint-bilateral field training exercise since 1986 involving Japan Self-Defense Forces and the United States military. The timing of this exercise coincides with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the US-Japan Security Treaty.