



## Biography



### **Commander Combined Air Operation Center Torrejón**

#### **Lieutenant General Juan Pablo Sánchez de Lara**

Lieutenant General Juan Pablo Sánchez de Lara is the Commander of NATO's Combined Air Operation Center at Torrejón Air Base, Spain.

Lieutenant General Juan Sanchez de Lara (Albacete, 14DEC63) graduated from the Spanish Air Force Academy in 1985 and from the Fighter Pilot School in 1986.

His first assignment was the 21<sup>st</sup> Wing (Moron AFB) flying Northrop F-5 until 1987 when he was posted to the 14<sup>th</sup> Wing (Albacete AFB) where he was promoted to Captain, and flew more than 1.000 hours in Mirage F-1, being aalso flight instructor as well as flight test pilot.

In 1993 he was assigned to the Air Force Academy (San Javier AB) as flight instructor, and from 1995 to 2002 as Fighter Pilot School instructor in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Wing, where he was promoted to Major, becoming Squadron commander and flight test pilot, and finalizing the assignment with a total of 1.700 hours in F-5. Between November 1997 and February 1998 he was appointed Commander of the Spanish Air Control Party Detachment in Bosnia Herzegovina (under NATO SFOR). During the last year of this tour he did the Joint Staff Course.

From 2002 until 2005 he was assigned to the Operations Division of the Air Force Staff as staff officer, where he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in July 2004.

In March 2005, he was selected to serve in the Military Staff of the Household of His Majesty the King until 2007, when he was assigned to SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe), in the Joint Operations Division (J-3), as air-to-ground operations and targeting staff officer, where he was responsible, amongst others, for the ACO Directive 80-70 (Joint Targeting) and ACO Manual 80-70 (TST), as well as the Bi-SC FAC/JTAC Capability Program.

In 2010, he returned to the Air Force Staff, this time to the Plans Division, where he was promoted to Colonel in July 2013 and became Head of the Plans Section. During this period he also served four months as Chief of the Spanish Detachment in Djibouti for EU Operation Atalanta.

In 2014, took office as Director of the Air Force Academy during three years, in which he achieved the full implementation of a new curriculum for Air Force students. Thereafter, he was briefly posted back as Plans Section Head until his promotion to Brigadier General, in December 2017, and his assignment as Plans Division Chief, where he was national Director of NAEW Program, as well as national representative to Air & Missile Defense Committee (AMDC) and Air C2 Steering Committee.

The 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 he was promoted to Major General and took office as the Air Force Canary Islands Air Command. On 28 February 2023 he has been promoted to Lieutenant General and nominated CAOC Torrejon Commander as of 29 March 2023.

General Sanchez de Lara has more than 3.500 flying hours in fighter aircraft. He has been awarded with several international decorations, such as the NATO Medal, the European Security and Defence Medal, the French National Defence Golden Medal and the French Air Medal. He also has been awarded other national civilian and military decorations.

Juan Pablo is married to Asuncion and has three children

## **MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**

Air Merit Grand Cross

San Hermenegildo's Order Gran Cross

Four Air Merit Crosses

Naval Merit Cross

ESDP Service Medal

NATO Medal (Bosnia)

French National Defence Golden Medal

French Republic Air Medal

## **EFFECTIVE DATES AND PROMOTION**

July 15, 1985 - Lieutenant

July 20, 1988 - Captain

March 12, 1997 - Major

July 01, 2004 - Lieutenant Colonel

July 16, 2013 - Colonel

December 22, 2017 – Brigadier General

June 16, 2020 - Major General

February 28, 2023 – Lieutenant General

(Biography current as of 24 April 2023)