

## **Resolution of Protest Over the Repeated Emergency Landings and Flights Over Futenma Daini Elementary School by US Forces' Helicopters**

At approximately 8:05 PM on January 23, 2018, an AH-1Z attack helicopter from MCAS Futenma made an emergency landing at a heliport in Tonaki Village. As this heliport is located approximately 300 meters from Tonaki Village Office and Tonaki Elementary and Junior High School and is close to a residential area, one mistake could lead to a serious accident involving the residents of the island. So far this year, we have seen accidents involving the UH-1Y helicopter and AH-1Z helicopter making emergency landings in Uruma City and Yomitan Village. There have been three (3) emergency landing incidents within just over half a month, and such highly abnormal state has raised voices of indignation and concern among the residents.

Moreover, the flights of one (1) UH-1Y helicopter and two (2) AH-1Z helicopters above Futenma Daini Elementary School were confirmed by the surveillance camera and agents of the Okinawa Defense Bureau easily ignoring the request "to halt flights above the school" placed by the school principal at the end of last year, when the window of a CH-53E fell onto the school grounds. Okinawa is not a colony of the US Forces, and so the requests and demands of the Okinawa Prefectural Government and the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly should be taken seriously and complied. Already, the voices of the citizens of Okinawa Prefecture calling for the withdrawal of the US Marine Corps from Okinawa are spreading steadily with each passing day.

Without sufficient explanations as to the cause of the incidents, the US Forces have repeatedly engaged in flight drills and exercises based on their unilateral decisions, and this neglect of attention to the people of Okinawa Prefecture by the US Forces is absolutely unacceptable.

The Government of Japan must take a firm approach toward the US, with a strong commitment to ensure safety for the people of Okinawa. Furthermore, the US Forces and both governments of Japan and the United States must implement a drastic review of the safety management system of the US Forces, and at the same time, take effective measures to prevent recurrences.

To that end, we, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, in our duty to protect the lives, safety and the living environment of the people of Okinawa, solemnly protest against the repeated emergency landing accidents and incidents and strongly demand the prompt execution of the four following items:

1. Immediately halt all flights and drills of US Forces aircraft stationed at MCAS Futenma above nurseries, schools, hospitals, residences and other civilian areas.
2. Immediately cease operations of MCAS Futenma before the promised date by the Government of Japan of the end of 2019, and let the athletic grounds of Futenma Daini Elementary School be used again.
3. Fundamentally revise the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement. In particular, eliminate the "Act on Special Provisions of the Civil Aeronautics Act upon the enforcement of the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement", and comply with the aviation laws of Japan.
4. Relocate the US Marine Corps on Okinawa to outside of Japan/Okinawa Prefecture at the earliest stage possible.

The above is resolved as stated on this 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2018.

Okinawa Prefectural Assembly