

## **Resolution of Protest Over the Incident of a Window Falling from a US Forces CH-53E Large Transport Helicopter onto Futenma Daini Elementary School**

At approximately 10:09 AM on December 13, a window of about 90 centimeters by 90 centimeters in size and 7.7 kilograms in weight from a US Forces' CH-53E heavy-lift helicopter fell onto the sports field of Futenma Daini Elementary School in Ginowan City.

At the time of the incident, there were approximately 50 children on the sports field for their physical education classes, and the window landed just ten meters away from them. This incident could have led to an extremely grave incident involving lives, and it has strongly impacted the children, their guardians, and those connected to the school and has caused great fear.

Furthermore, 6 days before in this same city in Nodake, a part from the same model of aircraft was believed to have fallen onto the tin roof of a nursery school causing a large sound at impact. This incident has further pushed the citizens of our Prefecture who are forced to live alongside military bases to live in fear.

Incidents involving US military aircraft have occurred so often and simply too numerous to mention, however, from last year to this year, we have seen a string of crashes and emergency landings involving the AV-8B Harrier Attack Aircraft, MV-22 Osprey, AH-1Z Attack Helicopter, and CH-53E Large Transport Helicopter, as well as emergency landings at civil airports and other locations of aircraft due to mechanical malfunctions. Further, on November 30, a panel from an F-35A Fighter Aircraft fell during a flight drill. Such frequent occurrences of incidents and accidents, in such a short span of time, and due to the presence of military bases, are abnormal.

The present situation where we are seeing incidents and the like involving US Forces' aircraft clearly shows that the safety management frameworks and preventive measures of the US Forces are not working, and the distrust felt by the residents of the Prefecture toward the US Forces are further mounting.

The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly has continuously called for the relocation of the US Marine Corps in Okinawa to outside the country and Prefecture. The lives of our Prefecture's citizens cannot be further threatened, and the US Forces, the US Government, and the Government of Japan must do their utmost to dispel the anxiety felt by our people.

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, strongly protest the series of accidents and incidents involving US Forces' aircraft, and call for the prompt execution of the following three items:

1. Conduct a thorough investigation into the cause of the falling/dropping incident, and promptly disclose the findings to the people of the Prefecture.
2. Cease all flights and drills of US Forces aircraft based at MCAS Futenma above nursery schools, school, hospitals, and residences.
3. Work to realize the promise made by the Government of Japan to cease operations at MCAS Futenma within five years.

The above is resolved as stated on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2017.

Okinawa Prefectural Assembly