

November 20th, 2013

Protest for Withdrawal of MV-22 Ospreys and the Permanent Use of Marine Corps Air
Station Futenma

We express our opposition against the deployment of the MV-22 Ospreys and demand the expedient closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma as well as the return of land. We insist that the Japanese and United States governments meet our demands as expressed on the attached form in a timely manner.

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Request and Protest: Removal of MV-22 Ospreys, Prevention of Expedient Closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, and Return of Land

Marine Corps Air Station Futenma has been operational for over 68 years after the war, serving as an air base for Marine Corps aircrafts.

Both the Japanese and United States governments have agreed under the SACO process of 1996 to return all land currently in use by MCAS Futenma to alleviate the Ginowan City residents of their burden and risks deriving from living in a city which hosts a US military base. However, the two governments have yet to live up to their pledge and the local citizens are reaching their limit in patience.

However, the city of Ginowan was informed in June of last year by the Japanese government of the Host Nation Notification stating the MV-22 Ospreys were to be deployed to MCAS Futenma. Accidents involving these MV-22 aircrafts are continuously reported; thus, the residents of Ginowan are extremely skeptical of the aircrafts' safety and reliability. The city has repeatedly worked with the prefecture to express our opposition against these aircrafts being deployed to MCAS Futenma.

Despite this, the Japanese and United States governments have not only supplied VMM-265 with 12 Ospreys in October of last year, but proceeded to supply 12 more Ospreys for VMM-262 for a total of 24 Ospreys deployed to MCAS Futenma. We, the city, find this to be extremely disappointing and are unable to condone such results. Therefore, we continue to demand the removal of the MV-22's as well as the relocation of training activities.

The main issue of this entire topic is the fact that MCAS Futenma is located amidst a densely populated city. The location of the air station has caused substantial risk of aircraft related accidents and high noise pollution. The presence of the base is also detrimental to our efficiency in accessing and collaborating with other cities in various efforts, negatively influencing the efficiency of the city's development and traffic flow.

Even now, 68 years after the war, 41 years since Okinawa was returned to Japan, and 17 years since the establishment of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa, Ginowan City still carries most of the island's burden of hosting US military bases.

The residents of Ginowan City have been longing for the day the air station is relocated and the land be returned to the government of Japan so that it can be used in ways to better the lives of residents in both safety and financial aspects.

With this being said, we strongly ask the Japanese and United States governments to work towards the realization of the goals stated below:

Note

1. The closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and the return of land as soon as possible.
2. Removal of the MV-22 Ospreys from Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.
3. Immediate implementation of measures to lighten the burden on the city and to lessen the risks and possibilities of aircraft related incidents involving the city and its residents for the time being until the closure of the air station.