

GIKISHO NO.21

August 14, 2015

LtGeneral John Wissler
Okinawa Area Coordinator
III Marine Expeditionary Force

Atsushi Sakima
Mayor
Ginowan City

Protest and Request: Noise produced by aircrafts at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma

19 years since the SACO Agreement to return the land currently used by Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, the base remains in the center of our city, adjacent to residential areas. MCAS Futenma is still fully operational as one of Okinawa's main U.S. military bases and the nearby residents continue to live amidst the dangers and burdens of hosting this installation. The residents' threshold of patience has come to their limits.

The accident involving the UH-60 helicopter which occurred on August 12 shocked the residents, reminding us all of the accident at the Okinawa International University 11 years ago. This recent accident has reemphasized the dangers of MCAS Futenma.

Yet the military's night-time and other flight activities circling over residential buildings seem to have intensified this week. The city's military affairs hotline has received 24 complaint phone calls in the last 3 days. Contents of the calls include concerns such as "They are not even treating us as people. This is too much," and "I'm afraid the aircraft is going to crash on us next," referring to the accident which occurred on the 12th. It has become more apparent that the aircraft activities are posing negative impact on the lives of the local residents. Thus, the City of Ginowan, responsible for the well-being of these 97,000 residents, is extremely disappointed in this situation.

The City of Ginowan strongly protests the night-time and other flight activities conducted over the residential areas and request for the U.S. military to operate in a more considerate manner towards the daily lives of local residents.