

Consul General Joel Ehrendreich
American Consulate General

Atsushi Sakima
Mayor
Ginowan City

Protest: Emergency Landing of Aircrafts Operated out of MCAS Futenma

On 6th January 2018, the city received notice from the Okinawa Defense Bureau in regards to an UH-1 Helicopter which operated out of MCAS Futenma making an emergency landing at Ikei island beach in Uruma city. Furthermore, the city received notice from the Okinawa Defense Bureau on January 8th in regards to an AH-1 Helicopter operated out of MCAS Futenma making a preventive landing at Yomitan Village.

Regards to Aircrafts operating out of MCAS Futenma which made numerous emergency landing a lot since last year, we have a strong sense of crisis. At each opportunity, the City of Ginowan has requested a thorough prevention plan for recurrence, but similar incidents continue to occur. It is not something that can be neglected at any time, and I have strong doubts on the crisis awareness and safety management system of the U.S. military.

The MCAS Futenma base located in the center of the city is said to be the "world's most dangerous base" which given its location can lead to catastrophes involving citizens. Citizens are constantly living their lives with anxiety while standing side by side with danger. Repetitive troubles of aircrafts belonging to MCAS Futenma cause anxiety to the citizens, cannot be condoned and in order to eliminate anxiety, more effective efforts than ever are necessary.

I, the Ginowan City Mayor whose duty is to protect the lives and assets of over 98,000 citizens, strongly protests and demands the following terms be met:

Note

- Thorough investigation of the cause of the recurrence of all preventive landings, including this recent event, as well as publication of specific measures taken to prevent recurrence for the disclosure of information to ease the anxiety of residents.
- For all aircraft belonging to the MCAS Futenma carry out a total inspection of the safety management system including the maintenance system, strictly conduct safety checks again, and stop all flights until safety is confirmed.
- As an emergency response, between Japan and the U.S. should seriously consult with each other, promptly show concrete measures to mitigate the burden of the base that the citizens who have an overload burden as well as can feel, and make sure to implement it.
- To fully redeem the MCAS Futenma, which is a citizen's desire, take all measures and realize it as soon as possible.
- Suspend operation within 5 years and make efforts with a sense of crisis and realize steadily to eliminate the risk of MCAS Futenma and reduce the base burden until returning.