

GIKISHO NO.61
September 6, 2018

Mr. Robert T. Koepcke
Consul General
American Consulate General

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Deputy Mayor
Ginowan City

Protest: UH-1 Helicopter preventive landing on the Kume-Jima Airport

Ginowan City received notice from the Okinawa Defense Bureau on September 5th 2018, in regards to a UH-1 helicopter operated out of MCAS Futenma making a preventive landing at the Kume-Jima Airport.

Regarding to Aircrafts operating out of MCAS Futenma which made numerous preventive landing numerous times since last year, at each opportunity, the City of Ginowan has requested a thorough prevention of 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 it is 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.

It has been 22 years since the SACO Agreement to return the land, the residents' threshold of patience has come to their limits. I definitely can not leave this current situation as it is.

As Ginowan City Mayor whose duty is to protect the lives and assets of over 98,000 citizens, current conditions can not be condoned. Thus, the city strongly protests and demands the following terms be met:

Note

- Thorough investigation of the cause of the recurrence of all preventive landings, 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.
- The closure of MCAS Futenma at the earliest possible date and return of land to solve the root of these arising issues, as well as realization of the agreement to cease all operations on MCAS Futenma in the next 5 years and the alleviation of risks and burdens.