

GIKISHO NO. 21

Jun 2, 2017

Lieutenant General Lawrence D. Nicholson
Okinawa Area Coordinator,
III MEF

Atsushi Sakima
Mayor,
Ginowan City

Protest: CH53-E Helicopter Precautionary Landing

Ginowan City received notice from the Okinawa Defense Bureau on June 1st in regards to a CH-53E helicopter operated out of MCAS Futenma making a precautionary landing at the Kume-Jima Airport.

The city has requested additional information from the Okinawa Defense Bureau such as the cause of the precautionary landing and the unit in which the aircraft belongs, but the aircraft has left Kume-Jima Airport and returned to MCAS Futenma without any information being provided.

The citizens of Ginowan City are exposed to the risk of accidents daily and are constantly anxious. This recent decision to operate the helicopter without neither clarifying the reason behind the precautionary landing nor confirming the safety of the aircraft is a clear testament to the lack of consideration towards the people of Ginowan and other surrounding neighborhoods. This situation is unacceptable.

Thus, we demand a thorough investigation of causes and an effective plan to prevent recurrence as well as your cooperation in expediently and thoroughly sharing information in regards to accidents and incidents.

Moreover, we strongly insist on the closure of base at the earliest possible date to resolve the ongoing issues from its core, as well as termination of all activity on MCAS Futenma within the next 5 years and mitigation of base related risks and burdens.