

MCAS Futenma: Located in the **Center** of the City

~ Refocusing on the Main Agenda of the Land Return Agreement: Alleviating Danger and Burden ~



Atsushi Sakima
Mayor

Marine Corps Air Station Futenma has been present in its current location, the center of Ginowan City, since the end of the war 69 years ago. The air station which, consumes 25% of the total city surface area, poses danger and daily-life impairments such as noise pollution; the location of the air station is a crucial hindrance for the city's urban functions, traffic system, and overall development, disturbing the city's financial growth.

Moreover, the city has suffered the tragedy of the U.S. military helicopter crashing at Okinawa International University in August 2004. Even then, we are compelled to take on further base-specific burdens such as the deployment of 24 MV-22 Ospreys to MCAS Futenma in 2012 and 2013.

The expeditious elimination of the dangers and burdens deriving from this air station, widely known as "the most dangerous air station in the world," has been a pressing issue for the city.

After numerous amendments to the original SACO agreement, the U.S. and Japanese governments currently agree to return the land "after year 2022," but meanwhile, the risks and burdens continue to grow along with the city's growing population of over 96,000. The population density has risen to 7,000 per square km.

We must prevent the air station from permanently establishing itself in its current location and must refocus on the original agenda of the Land Return Agreement- "Alleviating Danger and Burden." Ginowan City intends to continue working with the Prefecture of Okinawa and other related entities to achieve our goals to permanently close the air station and recover the property as soon as possible, as well as continue to mitigate afflictions in the meantime.