

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

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



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***Mayor, Ginowan City***

Over the course of the last 70 years after the end of WWII, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma has been present in its current location, the center of Ginowan City. The air station has greatly impacted the living environment of citizens by subjecting them to the dangers of aircraft accidents and aircraft noise. MCAS Futenma has also impacted the city's economic activities, specifically serving as a hindrance to the efficient of the city's development in regards to its urban functions and traffic system.

Furthermore, 24 years has gone by since the 1996 Special Action Committee agreement without realizing the return of MCAS Futenma. However, the load and burden on the residents has only increased.

MCAS Futenma base is surrounded by many residences. It has been named the world's most dangerous air base and thus requires a need for the return of MCAS Futenma at the earliest possible time. Included in this calculation is the high frequency of incidents, such as the August 2004 accident in which a U.S. military helicopter crashed at Okinawa International University, as well as the December 2017 accident in which a window fell off a U.S. military Helicopter and landed on the Futenma Daini Elementary School. However, the return of MCAS Futenma has yet to be realized.

**We must prevent the MCAS Futenma from permanently establishing itself in its current location and must refocus on the original agenda of the Land Return Agreement- "Alleviating Danger and Burden."**

We must take all measures to prioritize the return of the MCAS Futenma. Ginowan City intends to continue working towards the closure of MCAS Futenma at the earliest possible date and also have its land returned to the citizens. It is the citizens who desire the permanently closure of the air station and in the meanwhile we must mitigate determents caused by the base.

Also, when viewed from a global perspective, MCAS Futenma is located in a geographically advantageous location, in the middle of the East Asia region and Mainland Japan. The redevelopment of the area is sure to not only be a trigger for the growth of Okinawa, but a driving force for the growth of Japan's economy.

Ginowan City will continue its efforts towards the return of the property at the earliest possible date to transform MCAS Futenma from its current role of ensuring security in the region, to its future role as a vital part of growth to the Japanese economy.

**Ginowan City Military Base Affairs and Policy Dept.**  
**August 2020**



# MCAS Futenma: Located in the Center of the City

Greatly Affecting Daily Lives and Economy



## ➤ Location of Ginowan City, Okinawa





# Ginowan city from above





## MCAS Futenma Surface Area

# 475.9ha



MCAS Futenma is located in the center of Ginowan City and consumes, approximately 24% of the city's total surface area (approx. 19.8 km<sup>2</sup>). Additionally, with Camp Foster taking up another 1.062 km<sup>2</sup> in the northern part of the city, approximately 29.4% of the total city's surface area is occupied by U.S. military installations.

## City's Population Density (as of July 2020)

# Approx. 5,055/k m<sup>2</sup>

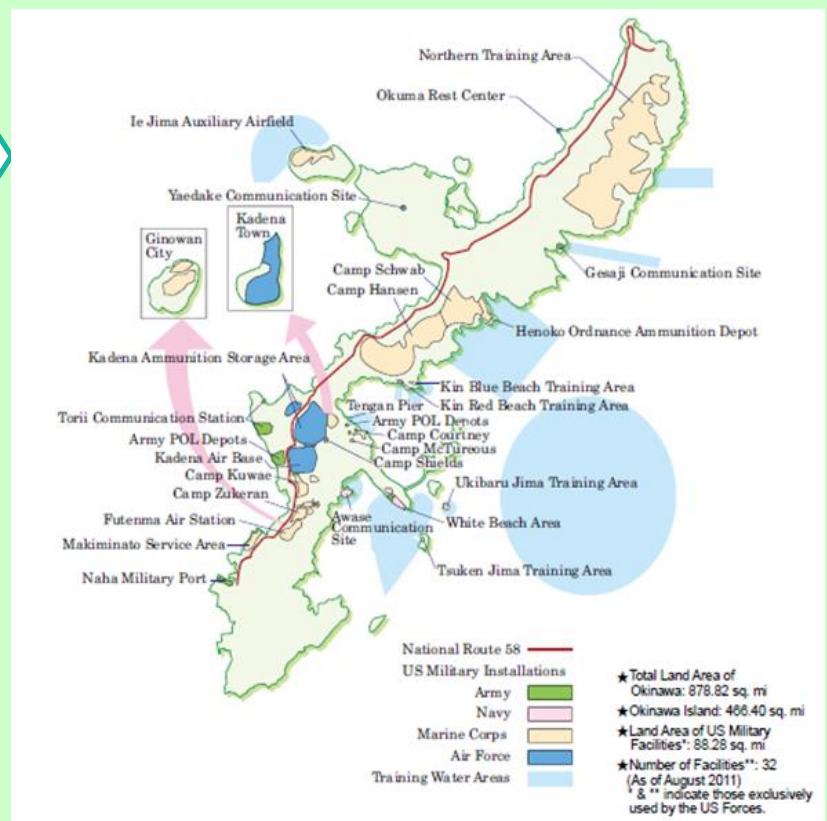
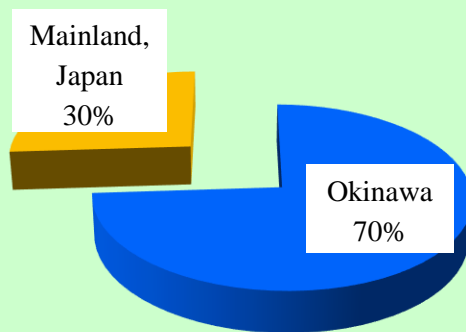
Excluding Base Surface Area...

# Approx. 7,159/k m<sup>2</sup>

## U.S. military Facilities on Okinawa

Okinawa makes up a mere 0.6% of Japan, but 70% of the total surface area in use by the U.S. military in Japan is located in Okinawa.

### The U.S. Military in Japan



## Number of Times Noise Was Detected

**11,871** (Fiscal Year 2019 Ue-Ojana Dist.)

In fiscal year 2019, aircraft noise was detected 32.4 times in a single day by the noise-level meter located in the Ue-Ojana Area. Citizens around the base are left with no option but to live under these burdensome living conditions.



## Highest Recorded Noise-Level

**124.5dB** (May 16, 2019 Ue-Ojana Dist.)

### Night time Noise-Level

**100.1dB** (10:53PM Feb. 14, 2019 Ue-Ojana Dist.)

The highest recorded noise-level in fiscal year 2018 was 124.5dB a noise-level said to be the same level that one would experience standing right next to an active aircraft engine. Moreover, although limited by the U.S.–Japan agreement, night time flight activity is still vigorous.

Noise-Level	
120dB	Next to an active aircraft engine
110dB	2 meters away from a automobile horn
100dB	Under a passing train
90dB	Inside an active factory



## Accidents Involving MCAS Futenma Aircrafts

**149** Total includes accident reports from the time of Okinawa's return to the Mainland in 1972 until July 2020.

There is an annual average of 3 aircraft mishaps involving aircrafts stationed at MCAS Futenma. Considering the location of the air station in the center of a densely populated city, one accident can be catastrophic.



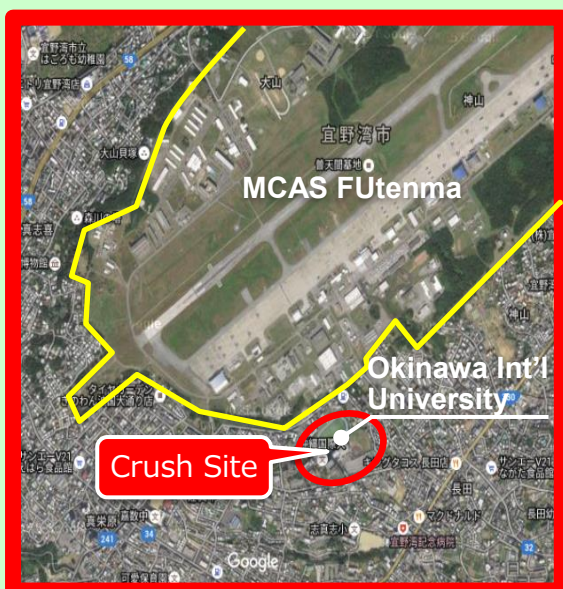
## 24 years since the SACO Agreement...

# MCAS Futenma Land Return Stands at a Halt

- June 1945** U.S. Forces seize land and begin construction of MCAS Futenma in preparation for the Mainland battle.
- Dec 1996** Agreement to “return Futenma Air Station within the next five to seven years, after adequate replacement facilities are completed and operational” based upon SACO Final Report.
- Aug 2004** **U.S. military helicopter crash at Okinawa International University.**
- May 2006** Agreed to make 2014 the completion goal for the MCAS Futenma relocation site under U.S.-Japan Roadmap for Realignment final report.
- June 2011** Revised the 2014 relocation goal and re-pledged to complete the relocation as soon as possible. (“2+2”)
- Oct 2012** Deployment of MV-22 Ospreys begins. (completed Sept. 2013)
- Apr 2013** Japanese and U.S. governments agree to a new relocation goal of “2022 or later”.
- Feb 2014** Okinawa governor and Ginowan City mayor petition to the Government of Japan to have the base closed and relocated within the next 5 years.
- Feb 2014** The first MCAS Futenma Burden Reduction Promotion Meeting.
- Aug 2014** 15 KC-130’s, aerial-refueling aircrafts stationed at MCAS Futenma, are relocated to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.
- July 2017** Returned approximately 4ha of the eastern part of MCAS Futenma.
- Dec 2017** **A Window from a U.S. military helicopter fell onto the Futenma Daini Elementary School.**
- June 2019** **Rubber part fell from a Helicopter onto a middle school in Urasoe city.**
- Aug 2019** **Window from U.S. military Helicopter fell off into the sea off the eastern coast of Okinawa**
- Apr 2020** **Firefighting foam that contains PFOS leaked from MCAS Futenma.**

## U.S. Military Helicopter Crash at Okinawa International University

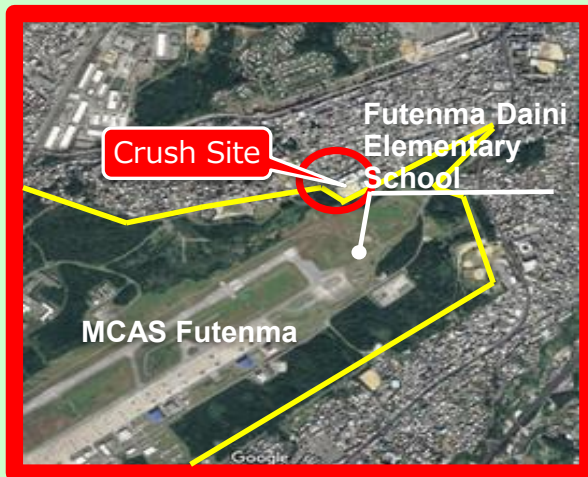
On Friday, August 13, 2004, at around 2:15PM, a CH-53D Helicopter operated out of MCAS Futenma crash landed into the main building of Okinawa International University. The helicopter went up into flames causing a major incident.





# Accident of the Window falling from the U.S. military Helicopter onto Futenma Daini Elementary School

On Wednesday, December 13, 2017, around 10:25 AM, a serious accident occurred in which a window (approximately 7.7 kilograms) belonging to a CH-53 Helicopter that belongs to MCAS Futenma, fell onto the grounds of the Futenma Daini Elementary School. When that accident happened, physical education classes were being held in the sports field that was only 10 meters from the point where the window landed. The marines insisted that their helicopters had avoided the school, protests were held in response to this accident but the helicopters were continuing to fly over the school area a month after the accident.



## Leakage Incident of Firefighting Foam at MCAS Futenma

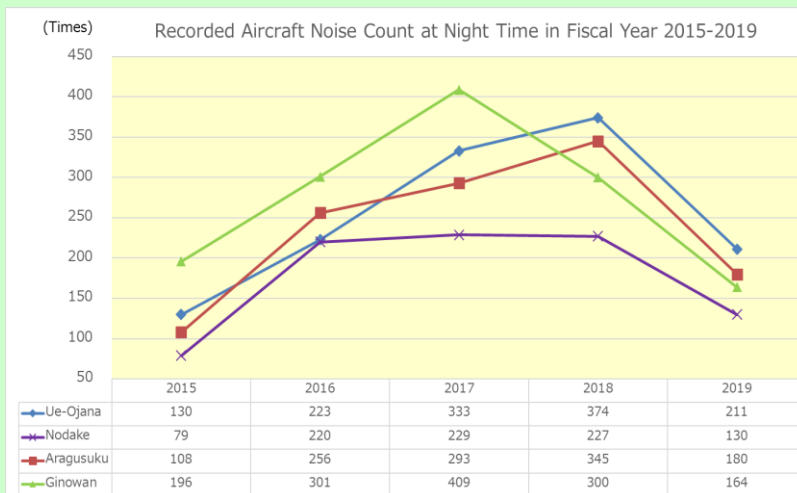
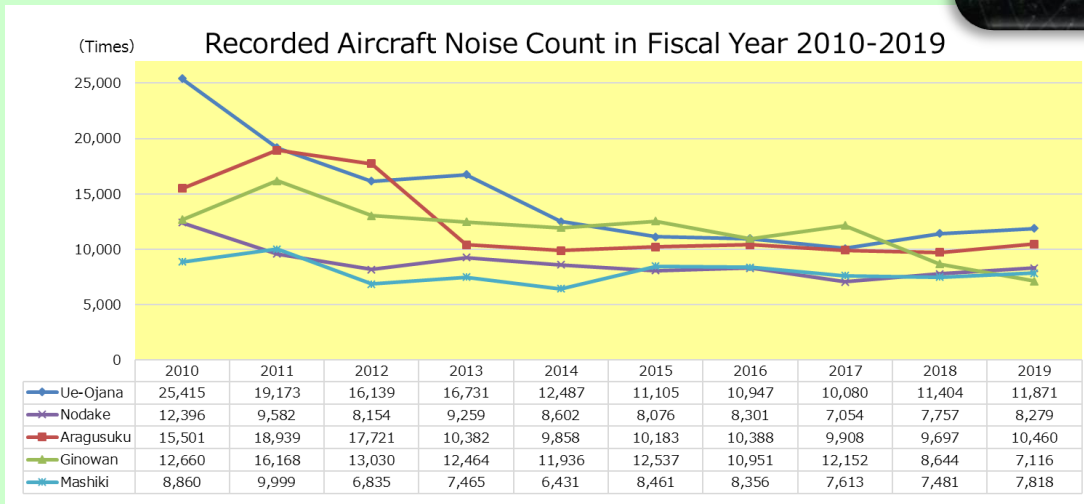
At approximately 4:45PM on April 10, 2020, an incident occurred where the fire suppression system in a hangar at MCAS Futenma activated and the approximately 60,000 gallons of the firefighting foam that contain Perfluoro Octane Sulfonate (PFOS) leaked out. Of the approximately 60,000 gallons spilled, 38,000 gallons of firefighting foam from the air station leaked into a nearby neighborhood and has greatly impacted daily lives of residents.

After the incident, we have made pressing calls for the thorough investigation into the causes, preventive measures, and the switching of the firefighting foam to another product that doesn't contain PFOS at an earliest possible time.

Following this incident, constituents of the Japanese government, the Okinawa prefectural and Ginowan City conducted an on-site investigation on Futenma base for the first time as prescribed under provisions of an environmental supplementary agreement to the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.



# Noise Pollution

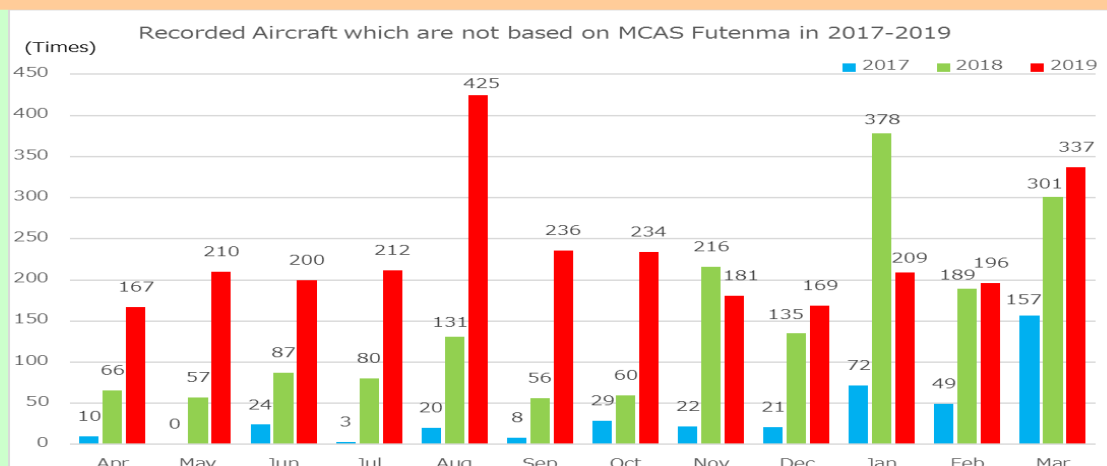


The flight activity of U.S. military aircraft is restricted by the Aircraft Noise Abatement Countermeasures at Futenma Air Station agreed between Japanese and the U.S. Governments from 22:00 to 06:00. However, noise is regularly measured at night throughout the city. Complaints from citizens of the noise pollution caused by the night time flights continues to increase.

In fiscal year 2019, **over 200 night time noises** were confirmed in the Ue-Ojana area.

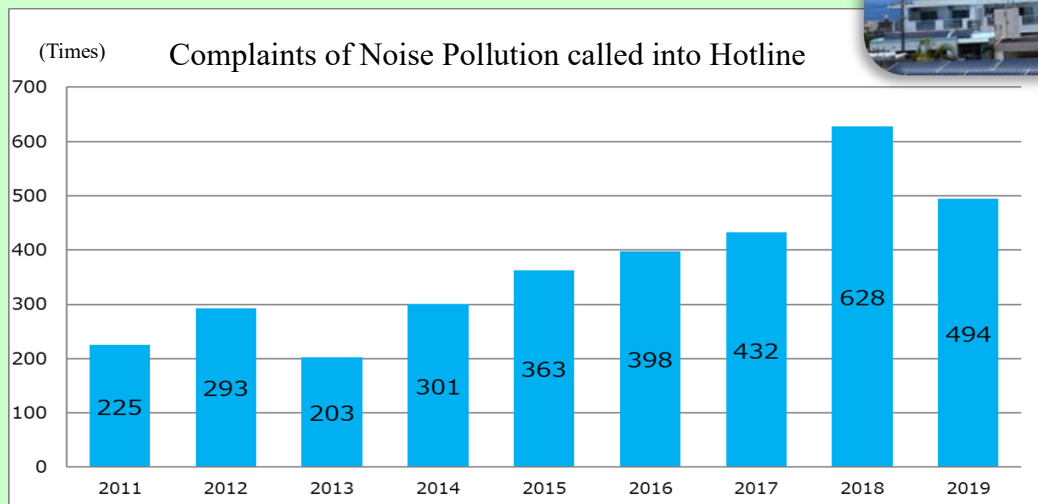
## Traffic and Activity of Aircraft which are not based on MCAS Futenma

The City of Ginowan has requested prohibition of aircraft operations from aircraft that are not based on MCAS Futenma. These fighter jets and large cargo planes tremendously influence the daily lives of citizens. Numerous aircraft that are not based on MCAS Futenma have conducted flight activity at MCAS Futenma at increasing levels compared to last year. The city routinely records noise levels over 100dB by fighter jet activities at MCAS Futenma. This loud noise throughout the city is serious issue.





## Multiple complaints to the Hotline Regarding Noise Pollution



Ginowan City has established a hotline to accommodate complaints made outside of our office hours. The Hotline is an automated messaging system which staff will review the following morning and relay any messages to the mayor, U.S. military and Okinawa Defense Bureau. In the case that numerous complaints are made about the same topic, the city directly petitions to the appropriate entities.

## Actual Calls (translated) Made to the Hotline

May 29, 2020 10:38

The noise from aircraft was very loud last night. I am too old to sleep well but even so I had a tough time going to sleep because of the noise.

June 2, 2020 22:56

It is almost 23:00 but my daughter is fussing because the noise from helicopter and osprey are very loud. Please stop them flying after 22:00.

June 11, 2020 23:43

It is middle of the night but I still hear the U.S. military aircraft noise. It is very loud and I cannot sleep. The noise also woke my baby up causing crying.

June 15, 2020 11:20

The airplanes are flying at low altitude with loud noise. I feel really anxious. Please do something.

July 15, 2020 23:02

I was sleeping but the loud noise woke me up. I cannot sleep because of the aircrafts are flying around 23:00 every day lately.

# Council for Promoting the Alleviation of the Burden of Futenma Air Station



The 5th Council for Promoting and Alleviation of the Burden of Futenma Air Station

“The MCAS Futenma Burden Reduction Promotion Meeting” which consists of the Japanese government, the Okinawa prefecture and Ginowan City is continuously being held accountable for the closure of MCAS Futenma at the earliest possible date and return of the land to solve the root cause of these arising issues. This includes the realization of the agreement to cease all operation MCAS Futenma in the next 5 years and the alleviation of these risks and burdens. One of the achievements, 15 KC-130's aerial-refueling aircrafts stationed at MCAS Futenma, is relocated to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

In addition, since fiscal year 2016, we have implemented 10 times of the Aviation Training Relocation (ATR) program such as Osprey training activity outside the prefecture and abroad, and we will continue to strongly demand it as a measure to reduce the burden that citizens can feel.

## Quarterly Meeting

Quarterly meeting are held throughout the year with the Commanding Officers of MCAS Futenma, Camp Foster/Lester, and the U.S. Naval Hospital, which are all located within Ginowan City, to create an opportunity for each party to address concerns, find feasible solution, and share ideas on a local level. As a result of the Disaster Response Evacuation Agreement there has been some confusion among the ordinary local citizens. If they can pass through the base in the event of an evacuation. After that, the citizens who have entered the base and confirmed the evacuation route will continue to carry out the related training.



We have negotiated natural disaster evacuation procedures to allow locals and emergency vehicles on base.



The first Quarterly Meeting in 2019

## Opinion Exchange Meeting (Futenma Meeting)

Opinion exchange meeting between the mayor and the Commanding Officer of MCAS Futenma, the purpose of the meeting is to hold a discuss on the agenda that can be resolved at the local level or that needs to be discussed to reduce the burden on the base such as the noise pollution from Futenma Air Station, and to reduce it.

We have been requesting consideration for citizens' lives by comply with the Aircraft Noise Abatement Countermeasures agreed between Japan and the U.S. regarding issues such as noise pollution after 22:00, which is a heavy burden for citizens at the meeting.





# The Ginowan City Project

It has been 23 years since the U.S. and Japanese governments agreed to return the MCAS Futenma land, an overloaded base that is a burden, which has remained unchanged in the eyes of the Ginowan citizen. We visited the United States to deliver the unified voice and opinions of the local residents. This voice was; We, the Ginowan citizens, must prevent the air station from permanently establishing itself in its current location. We must also make efforts with a sense of crisis to eliminate the risk of MCAS Futenma and reduce the base burden until return of the land as soon as possible. We exchanged opinions with government officials of the State and Ministry of Defense, the counselors, the Congressmen, and the think tank, to share the necessity of the earliest return of the land. We reaffirmed that both Japan and the United States should cooperate and work toward the return of the land.

In addition, we showed our propose project for “Studying Abroad” for a Middle School in the city who will work from the viewpoint of human resource development looking at the site’s use after the return of the land. We request for the U.S. sides cooperation to meet with the U.S. government officials and visit the government facilities when it this happens.



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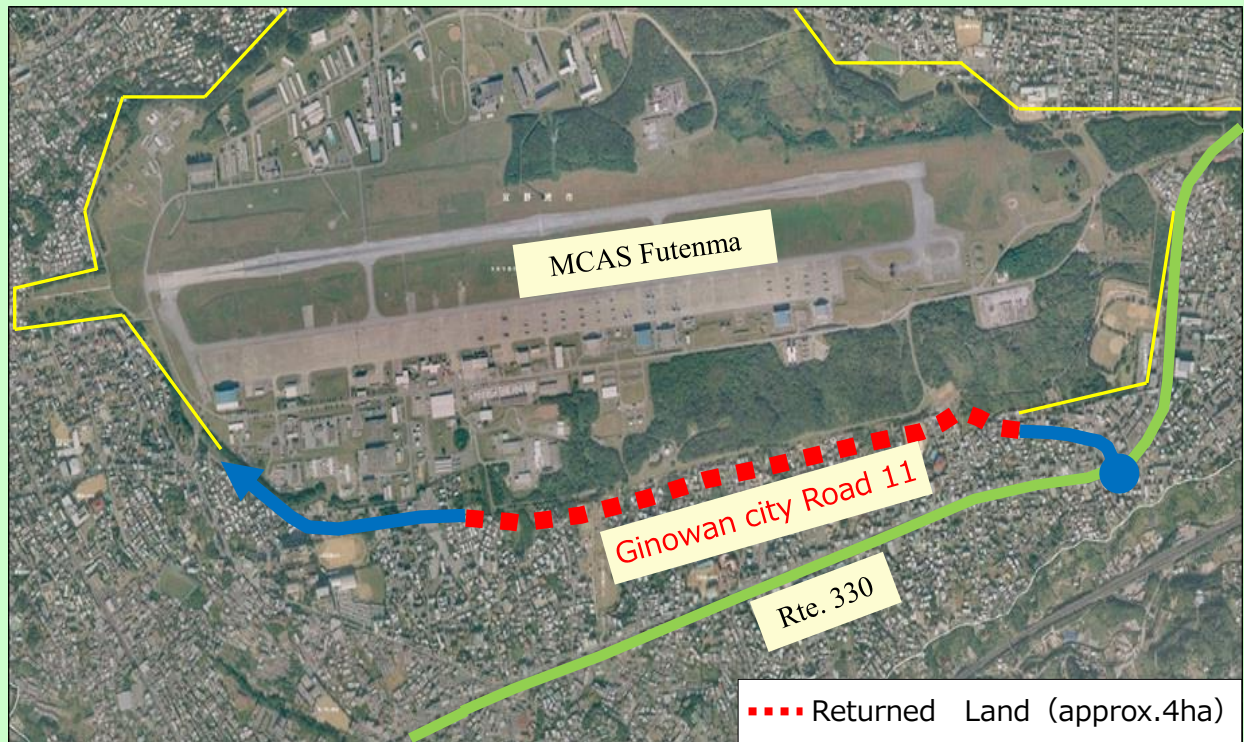


Representative Michael San Nicolas

## 7Main Points of the Joint Statement:

1. To avoid the permanent placement or prolonged usage of MCAS Futenma, and realize its closure and return as soon as possible.
2. To confirm at an early time the date for the return of MCAS Futenma upon the sincere consultation between Japanese and the U.S. Governments
3. Until the return of MCAS Futenma is realized, To increase efforts by Japanese and the U.S. Governments in eliminating the dangers of MCAS Futenma and mitigating the burdens of bearing the military base.
4. To respect “Aircraft Noise Abatement Countermeasures at Futenma Air Station” agreed between Japanese and the U.S. Governments and to cease all night flight activities as well as circular flights above residential areas which essentially have great impact on the citizens’ life.
5. Prohibit operations of aircraft that effect the residents the most such as fighter jet and large cargo planes that are not based on MCAS Futenma.
6. To assure commitment to recurrence-prevention of the incidents of the aircraft stationed in MCAS Futenma as well as the implementation of thorough safety management given the current situation with the series of their incidents and troubles.
7. To relocate MV-22 Osprey stationed in MCAS Futenma to another base.

## Returned land on the East side of Futenma Air Station



On July 2017, the East side of Futenma Air Station land (Approx. 4ha) was returned. Many local residents, Japanese governments and U.S. Military's we're in attendance for the Land Return Ceremony and Reception. The long-awaited return of the land is a step towards the future of Ginowan City and we believe that it is a guide to the full return of the land which has been planned to be returned which in turn will improve the city roads thus alleviating chronic congestion.  
(Start schedule 2020)

