

# **Petition**

**Aug 2020**

**Ginowan City**

Aug, 28, 2020

Request for Cooperation in Promptly Resolving the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma Issues including Earliest Closure and Return.

I would first like to take this opportunity to express my sincere respect for your cooperation toward solving various issues between Japan and the United States.

Over the course of 70 years after the end of WWII, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, which takes up approximately 24% of the city, has greatly impacted the living environment of citizens by the dangers of aircraft accidents and aircraft noise. MCAS Futenma has also impacted the city's economic activities as a hindrance to the efficient city development of its urban functions and traffic system.

In 1996, the Governments of Japan and the U.S. agreed to return MCAS Futenma within five to seven years under the Special Action Committee on Okinawa. However, 24 years have gone by with the return of MCAS Futenma unrealized.

In the interim, a U.S. military helicopter crashed on the Okinawa International University Building in 2004. In addition, there was also a serious accident that occurred in 2017 where a window fell off a U.S. military Helicopter and landed on a school athletic field of the Futenma Daini Elementary School. The various dangers brought by the base remain unchanged. There has been constant and enduring noise caused by the activity of aircraft operations day and night. The city continuously receives heartfelt messages from the citizens regarding the noise caused by aircraft operations much of which is from fighter jets and large cargo planes that are not based on MCAS Futenma. The number of complaints continues to increase year after year, and the heavy impact of the base is placed on local residents.

Also, on April 2020, massive firefighting foam containing PFOS and PFOA chemicals, which are no longer manufactured in the U.S., had leaked out of U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. The foam was floating through the air near residents' homes and it had a big effect on the residents' life.

The citizens of Ginowan city are the ones who have suffered the most in the past 24 years, and they are close to reaching a point where they cannot accept the situation.

“The starting point of the agreement on the return of MCAS Futenma is to remove risks and mitigate the impact of base. Therefore, we must prevent the permanent use of the air station in its current location.”

Therefore, we, the Ginowan city, would like to request the points as follows with regard to the prompt resolution of MCAS Futenma issues, which is the shared desire of the citizens of the city, and we hope to receive your cooperation along with the Japanese Government:

1. To avoid the permanent placement or prolonged use 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 the Japanese and the U.S. Governments.
3. Until the return of MCAS Futenma is realized, to increase efforts by the Japanese and the US Governments in eliminating the dangers of MCAS Futenma and mitigating the impact of the military base, to the extent that the citizens can feel the improvement.
4. To respect “Aircraft Noise Abatement Countermeasures at Futenma Air Station” agreed between Japanese and the US 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 relocate MV-22 Osprey stationed in MCAS Futenma to another base.
7. To assure commitment to finding the cause and prevent any reoccurrence of incidents where firefighting foam leaked at MCAS Futenma on April 2020. The implementation of thorough safety management given the current situation with the series of their incidents and troubles these incidents have caused. The replacement of the firefighting foam containing PFOS as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

Masanori Matsugawa

Mayor,

Ginowan City