

**RESOLUTION OF PROTEST  
OVER THE  
REMARKS MADE BY GENERAL ROBERT NELER,  
COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**

According to newspaper reports, on May 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year, General Robert Neller, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps stated, “Futenma Air Base is very old. It goes back to World War II. And if you look at pictures, Futenma when it was built was – there were no people living within several kilometers. Now the cities around Futenma are right up to the fence.” This statement gives an impression as if the residents gathered to make their homes around Futenma Air Station only after its construction, and particularly disregards how the City of Ginowan came to be and denies the history in which the local residents had led their lives here before the base was built.

Up to the present, there have been comments made by others including the former US Consul General to Naha, Mr. Alfred Magleby, who said that it seems strange that many local people have chosen to live around the base. As well as by a Japanese fiction writer who stated, “Futenma Base was built in the middle of farm fields, and there was nothing around it. Everybody moved to the vicinity of the base believing they can make money doing business, and people spent decades making their homes around the base.” Such remarks grossly ignore the history of Okinawa and the circumstances in which the US bases were forced on its people, and lightly spread information that are against facts which simply cannot be overlooked.

The Village of Ginowan before the War was where the Village Office and the national school were located and there was a main thoroughfare lined with pine trees, which is a nationally designated natural treasure, and many villagers and others from around the Prefecture used this main road called Jinon-Nanmachi (Ginowan Pine Road) that stretched south to north. Even with this history, the Futenma Air Station was constructed in the central region of Ginowan Village, stretching across 14 communities among the total of 22 communities in the Village. The documented history of Ginowan City and the accounts made by the local people make it clear and evident that many residents lived their lives in these 14 communities where Futenma Air Station was built.

To that end, we, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly strongly protest the comments made by the Commandant of the US Marine Corps. The remarks made are hurtful and inexcusable to the people of Okinawa Prefecture and for the residents of Ginowan City in particular, who live in the surrounding communities of Futenma Air Station. We strongly call for the following two items to be carried out.

- I. For General Robert Neller, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, to promptly withdraw his earlier remarks and apologize to the people of Okinawa Prefecture.
- II. Immediately halt operations at MCAS Futenma, and return the land at the earliest possible stage.

The above is resolved as stated on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2018.

**Okinawa Prefectural Assembly**