

RESOLUTION REQUESTING

Understanding for the Will of the People as Shown in the Results of the Okinawa Prefectural Referendum to be Respected in Demanding the Immediate Stop to the Reclamation Work at Henoko Coast and for the Renouncement of the New US Forces Base Construction

During the period under the administrative control of the US military, after the Pacific War and until Okinawa saw its reversion to Japan in 1972, land was forcibly requisitioned to establish the vast US Forces bases. It has been 73 years since the end of that war and still today, 70.3% of all military facilities and bases for the exclusive use by the US Forces in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa Prefecture. Okinawa only has 0.6% of national land area, and because Okinawa hosts these facilities, there are struggles in dealing with incidents, accidents, and crime stemming from the US Forces presence. It is the wish of the Okinawan people to have the land used for MCAS Futenma, the most dangerous military airfield in the world, to be returned, but the Government of Japan has chosen to go against this wish, and is forcing through with the reclamation of the Henoko waters for the construction of a new US Forces base.

On February 24 of this year, a referendum was held in all of the municipalities across Okinawa Prefecture regarding the land reclamation for the construction of a US Forces base in Henoko. The results showed that among the 1,153,600 eligible voters, 52.48% or 605,396 of the citizens voted, with 434,273 (71.7%) ballots toward “Disagree,” 114,933 (19.0%) ballots toward “Agree,” and 52,682 (8.7%) ballots toward “Neither Agree nor Disagree.” The referendum demonstrated the adamant will of the Okinawan people against the reclamation of Henoko coast.

To respect the results of a prefectural referendum held in response to the direct demands of the citizens based on the Local Autonomy Act, and to comply with the results is only to be expected in a democratic nation.

However, despite the clear demonstration in the referendum of the people’s will against the reclamation, the Government of Japan forced through with the construction the very next day, and on March 4, started the construction of a new seawall in Henoko. This is equivalent to saying that local autonomy and democracy do not apply to the people of Okinawa, and this is something that we simply cannot accept. Okinawa’s reversion to Japan was done under the Constitution of Japan, yet the Government of Japan has displayed multiple acts of aggression by denying the will of the Okinawan people, and denying the local autonomy, democracy, and consequently, the Constitution of Japan.

Moreover, although the US Government is directly involved by having their US Forces bases in Okinawa, the US Government continues to reject the requests of the Okinawan citizens, with their stance that “this is a domestic issue of Japan”. This too, is unacceptable for Okinawa. The US Government must also take the results of the prefectural referendum very seriously. Okinawa is not a colony of America. We, the

people of Okinawa Prefecture, desire friendship with the people of America, but we do not wish to be submissive.

The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly has taken the results of the referendum and are calling for the Prime Minister of Japan and the President of the United States of America to “respect the will of the people demonstrated in the prefectural referendum against the reclamation of the Henoko coast for the purpose of constructing a US Forces base, and to immediately cease the reclamation work at Henoko coast, and to renounce the construction of a new US Forces base” and “for the immediate stop to the operations at MCAS Futenma, its closure and withdrawal, as the due date agreed between the Government of Japan and the Okinawa Prefectural Government on ceasing the operations at MCAS Futenma within five (5) years have already passed.”

To that end, we, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, request recognition of the situation in Okinawa Prefecture where democracy is being ignored, and at the same time, we ask for your understanding in our efforts to have both governments of Japan and the United States of America to renounce the construction project for a new US Forces base.

The above is resolved as stated on this 27th day of March, 2019.

Okinawa Prefectural Assembly