

**- Okinawa · Henoko Joint Statement 2018 –**

**Revoke the land reclamation plan of Henoko coast for new runways  
and the construction of the new U.S. military base in Henoko !**

We have been expressing serious concerns about the construction plan of a new U.S. military base in Henoko district of Nago-city, Okinawa, Japan. We have rendered a message “Immediately stop the illegal invocation of the state power that violates the human rights and autonomy of the people in Okinawa, and destroys the environment and peace of Okinawa!”, and submitted it directly to the Cabinet Office of the Japanese Government on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016. Two years have passed since then, but Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his administration have completely ignored our request, taking measures in an iron-fisted manner in support of the construction of the new U.S. military base: they are going ahead with dumping dirt and sand off the Henoko coast for land reclamation, a major step towards constructing a new military base. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of August, 2018, Mr. Kiichiro Jahana, the deputy-governor of Okinawa prefecture, taking over the wishes of the late prefectural governor of Okinawa, Takeshi Onaga, has revoked the permission for the land reclamation in Henoko. Although the construction is suspended now, the Abe administration has announced that legislative action will be taken to ensure the construction of the military base. We protest against these outrageous attempts of the Abe administration with our strongest wrath, requesting abandonment of land reclamation of the Henoko coast and further, of the construction of the new U.S. military base in Henoko.

**1. We stand for revoking the permission for land reclamation in  
Henoko, processed by the Okinawa Prefectural Government**

The Japanese Central Government has been continuing the reclamation work ignoring prior consultation with the Okinawa Prefectural Government on the land

reclamation plan as they are in a rush to construct the new U.S. military base in Henoko. This is in violation of “the basic points to consider” in permission for land reclamation. They have also been against the rule defined by Article 4 paragraph 1 of the Public Waters Reclamation Act “national land should be used in appropriate and rational way with due consideration for accident prevention and environmental protection”.

In principle, the Central Government must have obtained permission by the administration of justice for various alterations in the construction plan according to the Clause 13 Article 2 of the above Act, due to a variety of reasons in the course of the base-constructing project. However, in fact, the Central Government has ignored compliance with the above rule in the face of the late Okinawa prefectural governor Onaga’s strong words, that is, “We never allow them to build a new US military base in Henoko!”.

The reason for the revocation of the permission for the land reclamation in Henoko by the Okinawa Prefectural Government has properly pointed out the noncompliance of the Central Government, and is aimed to protect the peace and the natural environment of the Okinawa prefecture, as well as human rights and autonomy of the people in Okinawa. Therefore, we will continue to stand for the revocation of the permission for land reclamation in Henoko.

## **2. We do not allow dumping dirt and sand off the Henoko coast**

It is obvious that the Oura Bay, Henoko, which dugongs, rare corals and sea weeds inhabit, is a hotspot of biodiversity even according to the environmental impact study executed by the Okinawa Defense Bureau. The Oura Bay deserves to be registered as a world natural heritage site along with the Yanbaru Forests. For Okinawa whose land is suitable for residence has been occupied by U.S. military bases and whose natural coasts have largely been lost by unavoidable land

reclamation, the Henoko coast of the Oura Bay is one of the few places where nature remains intact and therefore is a treasure to be handed down to future generations. Dumping dirt and sand into Henoko coast will cause irrecoverable destruction of precious nature, and it also ignores the voice of Okinawa. Therefore, it is entirely unacceptable.

If a new U.S. military base would be an absolute requirement for the Central Government based on the Japan-US Security Treaty, all the prefectures of Japan including Okinawa should equally share the burden of the U.S. military base. However, at this moment, more than 70% of exclusive-use facilities of US military forces in Japan are imposed on Okinawa which occupies only 0.6% of the national land area. This situation is obviously a “systematic discrimination” against Okinawa, which is the common belief among the majority of the Okinawan people. A new burden on the people of Okinawa must not be allowed.

Mr. Satoshi Morimoto, a former Minister of Defense of Japan, who is widely accepted as an expert of military affairs, said “an alternative base for the Futenma Base can be any place in the western half of Japan according to military view points; it does not have to be located in Okinawa. However, it will be located somewhere in Okinawa according to political view points.” His words attest that Okinawa is being systematically discriminated.

The Public Waters Reclamation Act which controls land reclamation defines conditions under which a prefectural governor permits reclamation in its Article 4 paragraph 1. The item (i) describes that a reclamation project must be “appropriate and rational from the stand point of use of national land”. The above statement of the expert of military affairs clearly indicates that the land reclamation project in Henoko does not meet these requirements. The permission of land reclamation is regarded as illegal even with this one point taken into consideration.

### **3. We stand for the resolution of the Aug. 11 Okinawa prefectural meeting**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August (Sat), 2018, when dumping dirt and sand off the Henoko coast by the Central Government was about to be executed, more than 70,000 people of Okinawa came together in heavy rain in the 8.11 Okinawan Meeting: We never permit the land reclamation! We protect corals and dugongs! We demand the Central Government to abandon the project of Construction of the new U.S. military base in Henoko!” The resolution to demand the rescinding of the land reclamation plan and the project of construction of a new U.S. military base in Henoko was adopted in the meeting. We all stand for this resolution in solidarity.

The people in Okinawa have repeatedly been showing their will against the construction of the new U.S. military base in Henoko through various opinion polls and various elections where the construction of the new U.S. military base in Henoko was a major campaign issue. The late Takeshi Onaga won the election for the prefectural governor of Okinawa on November of 2014 with the Okinawan’s will by a huge margin of nearly 100,000 ballots against Mr. Nakaima, the former governor. Mr. Onaga devoted himself to attainment of the Okinawan’s will during his term of less than four years.

Mr. Onaga suddenly passed away just after expressing his intension on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July to rescind the permission of the land reclamation, after the authority of the Prefectural Governor, against the notice by the Central Government represented by the Okinawa Defense Bureau to start dumping dirt and sand off the Henoko Coast scheduled to start on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August. At that time more than 70,000 people came together to the 8.11 Okinawan Meeting which became the place where the people swore to follow his will. There are many more people behind the participants, and now the Central Government should listen to the Okinawan people.

However, the Abe administration has never been listening to the voice of the

people in Okinawa. As soon as Mr. Onaga was formally instated as the Okinawa Prefectural Governor, he tried to deliver the wishes of the people of Okinawa to Prime Minister Abe, but the Abe administration refused to see Mr. Onaga. Quite amazingly Mr. Onaga was at last able to see Mr. Abe after more than 4 months! According to Chapter 8 of the Constitution of Japan, where local authority is described, the national and local public entities, respectively, are equal, and a local public entity has the right of self-government. The negation of self-government will significantly jeopardize the future of Japan, and thus is absolutely not allowed.

#### **4. Towards establishment of Peace in East Asia**

The relocation of the Futenma U.S. military base to Henoko is based on the SACO agreement made back in 1996, 22 years ago, but the situation surrounding East Asia has greatly changed since then. On June 23rd, 2018, in the memorial ceremony honoring those who died in Okinawa during World War II, the late Okinawa governor Takeshi Onaga criticized the relocation plan of the Futenma U.S. military base to Henoko, Nago City, since it was against the current ongoing détente in the East Asia, notably in the Korean Peninsula. We do share this sentiment of the late Okinawa governor Mr. Onaga.

Although negotiation between the U.S. and North Korea, the very parties concerned in the Korean War, is envisioned to have many twists and turns, we must not discontinue historical attempts toward realization of peace in East Asia. The Government of Japan, having historical responsibility in the Korean Peninsula, is asked to actively be involved in the creation of real peace thereby fulfilling its responsibility.

When the end of the Korean War is officially declared, recognition and significance of the U.S. forces in Okinawa and in the Republic of Korea will change. Although there is an argument that a cutback of the U.S. forces in the Republic of

Korea may augment the importance of those in Okinawa, we believe we have to change Okinawa into a hub of international exchange of Asia aiming for peace, taking this opportunity through reduction or abolition of the U.S. forces in Okinawa. Today, in addition to the construction plan of a U.S. military base in Henoko/Takae, a military fortification is underway throughout Nansei Islands by disposition of Japanese Self-Defense Forces. All these movements will end up in an escalation of military forces with neighboring countries because of a security dilemma. This is definitely against the trend of the times.

We request complete abolition of the construction plan of a new U.S. military base in Henoko in order to contribute to the establishment of peace in East Asia.

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