

## PREFACE

In accordance with the Treaty of Mutual Co-operation and Security between Japan and the United States of America (Treaty No. 6 of 1960), and the Agreement under ARTICLE VI of the Treaty of Mutual Co-operation and Security between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan (Treaty No. 7 of 1960), Kadena Air Base and Futenma Air Station are provided to the U.S. Forces as the “Facilities and Areas” for aircraft service and other such activities in addition to operating and managing the bases.

The negative impact of military activities on surrounding communities of the U.S. bases and facilities is extensive among which the chronic aircraft noise exposure around Kadena Air Base and Futenma Air Station situated in the midst of cities has caused serious disturbance to local residents due to incessant jet noise and helicopters as well as frequent engine tunings. Extremely intense aircraft noise occasionally exceeding 120 dB occurs in the area of the residences below the flight path of the U.S. Forces’ aircraft that land and take off on the runways of the bases. In the air space over Kadena Air Base, touch-and-go flights and flight manoeuvres by the U.S. military aircraft have been conducted regularly as well as frequent engine tunings. At Futenma Air Station, individuals residing around the airfield have been exposed to intense noise generated by landings and departures during flight exercise and helicopter flight manoeuvres conducted in the air space over the base as well as over the surrounding residential areas.

The aircraft noise around the airfields in Okinawa had been recognised so tremendous that the noise has often been expressed “murderous” or “lethal” and that it has also been said that the residents suffer from various kinds of damages due to the noise exposure. In fact among scientists are accepted that noise does not only interfere with speech/conversation and sleep but also disrupts classes, jams TV/radio broadcasts, and is considered to cause physical and mental strains such as loss of hearing, fatigue and neurosis. The number of

individuals affected by the aircraft noise exceeding the environmental standard for aircraft noise set by the Environment Agency, Japan, in 11 municipalities in Okinawa is estimated to be about 480,000, 38% of the prefectural population. However, there had not been comprehensive surveys undertaken on the effects of the aircraft noise in Okinawa.

Under the circumstance, the prefectural government undertook a study survey on the state of noise exposure and the possibly adverse effects of noise on the health of residents near Kadena and Futenma airfields from 1995 to 1999 under the supervision of the Research Study Committee of Aircraft Noise Influences to Health which consisted of 18 medical scientists, environmental engineers, medical doctors and epidemiologists headed by Dr. YAMAMOTO, Takeo, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University. This is the English summary of a part of the report of the project.

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