
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE THE UNITED STATES MILITARY PRESENCE IN OKINAWA.

1 WHEREAS, since the time when Okinawa was known as the
2 sovereign Ryukyu Kingdom before its colonization by Japan in
3 1872, the United States has had a long relationship with
4 Okinawa; and

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6 WHEREAS, the brunt of the tremendous number of casualties
7 in the historic Battle of Okinawa in World War II between the
8 United States and Japan were Okinawan civilians, amounting to
9 almost one-third of the population; and

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11 WHEREAS, since then, Okinawa has endured great hardships in
12 its efforts to restore the health of its economy, land, and
13 people on its war-torn island; and

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15 WHEREAS, the population density of Okinawa is approximately
16 two thousand nine hundred persons per square mile, nearly twice
17 that of the island of Oahu; yet Okinawa is smaller than Kauai,
18 at only four hundred sixty square miles; and

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20 WHEREAS, the prefecture of Okinawa comprises only six-
21 tenths of one per cent of the nation of Japan, yet seventy-five
22 per cent of the United States' military presence has been
23 concentrated in Okinawa for over five decades since World War
24 II; and

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26 WHEREAS, the people and the government of Okinawa have
27 repeatedly appealed for land, air, and sea space to improve
28 Okinawa's struggling economy and the well-being and safety of
29 its people; and
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1 WHEREAS, like Hawaii, Okinawa strives to diversify its
2 industries from tourism and the military to strengthen its
3 economy, which requires the return of facilities not needed for
4 United States military purposes; and

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6 WHEREAS, while some progress has been made to return or to
7 provide for joint use of Okinawan facilities by the United
8 States and Japan, facilities such as Kadena Air Base, Futenma
9 Marine Corps Air Station, Naha Military Port, and other
10 facilities, which make up twenty per cent of the land the United
11 States military occupies on Okinawa and are scheduled to be
12 returned to Okinawa, are still under negotiations; and

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14 WHEREAS, since World War II, there have been numerous
15 heinous criminal activities by United States military personnel
16 that continue to damage the military's reputation and
17 relationships locally and internationally; and

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19 WHEREAS, the United States and Japan have both acknowledged
20 the disproportionate burden placed on the people of Okinawa in
21 the 1996 Final Report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa
22 and have pledged to dismantle and return Futenma Air Station by
23 2003 to Okinawa, but the station remains in operation with
24 records of up to two hundred flights from the station that fly
25 over residential and commercial areas; and

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27 WHEREAS, United States military exercises result in
28 recurring deadly accidents, such as the 2004 crash of a Kaneohe
29 Marine helicopter into an Okinawan university near Futenma Air
30 Station where the United States military physically halted local
31 authorities from investigating outside military property; and

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33 WHEREAS, the proximity of military installations to urban
34 populations has been shown to jeopardize the security of
35 inhabitants and the health and development of infants and
36 children around military bases such as Futenma Air Station; and

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38 WHEREAS, the Okinawan people have been asserting their
39 right to self-determination from the United States and Japan's
40 military policies, as expressed in the Okinawa Prefectural
41 referendum on September 8, 1996, which resulted in almost ninety



1 per cent in favor of military reduction and the revision of the
2 Japan-United States Status of Forces Agreement; and
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4 WHEREAS, more recent polls, such as the August 2005 Okinawa
5 Times poll reported eighty-two per cent of Okinawan citizens
6 oppose base expansion; and
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8 WHEREAS, the proposal for a mile-long off-shore heliport
9 base near a world-class reef in rural northern Okinawa has been
10 rejected by prefecture and municipal leaders, as well as the
11 majority of residents who voted against the base construction in
12 a 1997 referendum of Nago City; and
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14 WHEREAS, numerous international scientific bodies, such as
15 the World Conservation Congress, have condemned the construction
16 of the proposed Henoko Village heliport as detrimental to the
17 endangered dugong, an internationally protected sea mammal; and
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19 WHEREAS, the people of Okinawa have symbolically shown
20 their opposition to military base construction through community
21 actions, such as a vigil on-going for over eight years, civil
22 disobedience led by village seniors for over a year-and-a-half,
23 and numerous incidents of linking of hands around entire
24 military bases by peace-seeking peoples, including over 27,500
25 people around Kadena Air Force Base, the largest American air
26 field outside of the United States; and
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28 WHEREAS, the United States is engaged in fighting for the
29 democratic rights of the people of Afghanistan and Iraq; and
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31 WHEREAS, to honor and be consistent with these precious
32 democratic principles, the President of the United States should
33 respect the requests of the Okinawan people and reduce the
34 military presence in Okinawa so that these military bases can be
35 used for peaceful, economically-sustainable uses, as enshrined
36 in numerous international treaties, such as the International
37 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of which the United
38 States and Japan are signatories; and
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40 WHEREAS, the people of Hawaii, including the indigenous
41 Hawaiian community and especially the Okinawan community, have a



1 special bond with the people of Okinawa, as evidenced by the
 2 sister state--prefecture relation that was established in 1985,
 3 and are sympathetic to the feelings and human rights of the
 4 people of Okinawa; now, therefore,
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6 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 7 Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
 8 of 2006, that the President of the United States, the Department
 9 of Defense, and the United States Congress, in concert with the
 10 Japanese Prime Minister, are requested to recommit their efforts
 11 to negotiate and expedite an agreeable solution for a potential
 12 relocation, adjustment, realignment, and overall reduction of
 13 the current presence of the United States military forces in
 14 Okinawa, and other Japanese land areas, with the intent to
 15 return land and facilities not needed for direct military
 16 purposes back to Okinawa Prefecture, as recommended by the Final
 17 Report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa and the Treaty
 18 of Obligations; and
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20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the United
 21 States, the Department of Defense, and the United States
 22 Congress are requested to evaluate the distribution of forces in
 23 Japan and Asia, with due consideration of Okinawa's internal
 24 affairs and the international situation, and to consider the
 25 possibility of reducing and relocating military facilities
 26 within its continental borders; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 29 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
 30 the United States Secretary of Defense, the Commander-in-Chief
 31 of the United States Pacific Command, chairpersons of the
 32 congressional defense appropriation committees, the Governor,
 33 the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, the Consul-General of Japan
 34 in Hawaii, the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation, and
 35 the Hawaii United Okinawa Association, who in turn, is requested
 36 to transmit it to its member organizations.
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