

Regarding the nomination of Mageshima Island as the site for the U.S. Navy's Field Carrier Landing Practice operations,

WE, THE RESIDENTS OF TANEGASHIMA AND YAKUSHIMA ISLANDS STRONGLY PROTEST AGAINST THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND THE DEFENSE MINISTER TOSHIMI KITAZAWA

At the "2 Plus 2" high-level talk between the Defense and Foreign/State Cabinet officials of the U.S. and Japan on June 21st, the Defense Minister Kitazawa has just tabled the plan to move the U.S. Navy's Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) to Mageshima Island, a tiny island off the coast of Tanegashima Island. This is in utter disregard for the will of the local residents. Our trust in the Defense Ministry fell flat due to the fact that the Ministry had chosen Mageshima Island as the site of the national project despite numerous legal violations by Isamu Tateishi, the owner of the island.

Having declared Mageshima Island as the candidate on June 1st, the Defense Minister Kitazawa clearly indicated Mageshima as the candidate site of the FCLP to U.S. Secretary of Defense Gates on June 3rd, and on June 8th the Vice Defense Minister Ogawa directly communicated the Ministry's intention to the Governor of Kagoshima Prefecture where all three islands involved are located. The Defense Ministry convened with the U.S. counterpart on June 21st in the "2 Plus 2" talk, totally ignoring the staunch opposition against the plan by all 4 municipal Mayors of Kumage District of Kagoshima Prefecture in which the three islands of Mageshima, Tanegashima and Yakushima lie tightly together.

This also goes against the responsibility of the Japanese Government as the current Chair of the UN Convention on the Biological Diversity since COP 10 in Nagoya last year to take part in the blatant destruction of the biodiversity of Mageshima Island, characterized in the predicament of Mageshika, the endemic subspecies of Japanese deer, a tiny colony of which survive only on this island. They stand on the brink of extinction by the act of gross development by Mr. Tateishi over the last decade. We will never accept the magnitude of irresponsibility on the part of the Defense Ministry.

Therefore, we, the residents of Tanegashima and Yakushima Islands, are resolved to oppose any decision by the "2 Plus 2" meeting with regard to Mageshima, and hereby declare that we will keep standing firm against the plan by the Defense Ministry to move the U.S. Navy's FCLP site to Mageshima Island.

Representatives of the residents of Kumage District of Kagoshima Prefecture