

## **The SACO Final Report**

**December 2, 1996**

**by**

**Minister for Foreign Affairs Ikeda  
Minister of State for Defense Kyuma**

**Secretary of Defense Perry  
Ambassador Mondale**

The Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) was established in November 1995 by the Governments of Japan and the United States. The two Governments launched the SACO process to reduce the burden on the people of Okinawa and thereby strengthen the Japan-US alliance.

The mandate and guidelines for the SACO process were set forth by the Governments of Japan and the United States at the outset of the joint endeavor. Both sides decided that the SACO would develop recommendations for the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) on ways to realign, consolidate and reduce US facilities and areas, and adjust operational procedures of US forces in Okinawa consistent with their respective obligations under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security and other related agreements. The work of the SACO was scheduled to conclude after one year.

The SCC which was held on April 15, 1996, approved the SACO Interim Report which included several significant initiatives, and instructed the SACO to complete and recommend plans with concrete implementation schedules by November 1996.

The SACO, together with the Joint Committee, has conducted a series of intensive and detailed discussions and developed concrete plans and measures to implement the recommendations set forth in the Interim Report.

Today, at the SCC, Minister Ikeda, Minister Kyuma, Secretary Perry and Ambassador Mondale approved this SACO Final Report. The plans and measures included in this Final Report, when implemented, will reduce the impact of the activities of US forces on communities in Okinawa. At the same time, these measures will fully maintain the capabilities and readiness of US forces in Japan while addressing security and force protection requirements. Approximately 21 percent of the total acreage of the US facilities and areas in

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Okinawa excluding joint use facilities and areas (approx. 5,002ha/12,361 acres) will be returned.

Upon approving the Final Report, the members of the SCC welcomed the successful conclusion of the year-long SACO process and underscored their strong resolve to continue joint efforts to ensure steady and prompt implementation of the plans and measures of the SACO Final Report. With this understanding, the SCC designated the Joint Committee as the primary forum for bilateral coordination in the implementation phase, where specific conditions for the completion of each item will be addressed. Coordination with local communities will take place as necessary.

The SCC also reaffirmed the commitment of the two governments to make every endeavor to deal with various issues related to the presence and status of US forces, and to enhance mutual understanding between US forces and local Japanese communities. In this respect, the SCC agreed that efforts to these ends should continue, primarily through coordination at the Joint Committee.

The members of the SCC agreed that the SCC itself and the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) would monitor such coordination at the Joint Committee described above and provide guidance as appropriate. The SCC also instructed the SSC to seriously address the Okinawa-related issues as one of the most important subjects and regularly report back to the SCC on this subject.

In accordance with the April 1996 Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security, the SCC emphasized the importance of close consultation on the international situation, defense policies and military postures, bilateral policy coordination and efforts towards a more peaceful and stable security environment in the Asia-Pacific region. The SCC instructed the SSC to pursue these goals and to address the Okinawa-related issues at the same time.

#### Return Land:

- Futenma Air Station - See attached.
- Northern Training Area

Return major portion of the Northern Training Area (approx. 3,987ha/9,852 acres) and release US joint use of certain reservoirs (approx. 159ha/393 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2003 under the following conditions:

Provide land area (approx. 38 ha/93 acres) and water area (approx. 121 ha/ 298 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 1998 in order to ensure access from the remaining Northern Training Area to the ocean.

Relocate helicopter landing zones from the areas to be returned to the remaining Northern Training Area.

- Aha Training Area

Release US joint use of Aha Training Area (approx. 480 ha/1,185 acres) and release US joint use of the water area (approx. 7,895 ha/19,509 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 1998 after land and water access areas from the Northern Training Area to the ocean are provided.

- Gimbaru Training Area

Return Gimbaru Training Area (approx. 60 ha/149 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 1998 after the helicopter landing zone is relocated to Kin Blue Beach Training Area, and the other facilities are relocated to Camp Hansen.

- Sobe Communication Site

Return Sobe Communication Site (approx. 53 ha/132 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2001 after the antenna facilities and associated support facilities are relocated to Camp Hansen.

- Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield

Return Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield (approx. 191 ha/471 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2001 after the parachute drop training is relocated to Ie Jima Auxiliary Airfield and Sobe Communication Site is relocated.

- Camp Kuwae

Return most of Camp Kuwae (approx. 99ha/ 245 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2008 after the Naval Hospital is relocated to Camp Zukeran and remaining facilities there are relocated to Camp Zukeran or other US facilities and areas in Okinawa.

- Senaha Communication Station

Return Senaha Communication Station (approx. 61 ha/151 acres) with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2001 after the antenna facilities and associated support facilities are relocated to Torii Communication Station. However, the microwave tower portion (approx. 0.1 ha/0.3 acres) will be retained.

- Makiminato Service Area

Return land adjacent to Route 58 (approx. 3 ha/8 acres) in order to widen the Route, after the facilities which will be affected by the return are relocated within the remaining Makiminato Service Area.

- Naha Port

Jointly continue best efforts to accelerate the return of Naha Port (approx. 57 ha/140 acres) in connection to its relocation to the Urasoe Pier area (approx. 35ha/87 acres).

- Housing consolidation (Camp Kuwae and Camp Zukeran)

Consolidate US housing areas in Camp Kuwae and Camp Zukeran and return portions of land in housing areas there with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 2008 (approx. 83ha/206 acres at Camp Zukeran; in addition, approx. 35ha/85 acres at Camp Kuwae will be returned through housing consolidation. That land amount is included in the above entry on Camp Kuwae.).

Adjust Training and Operational Procedures:

- Artillery live-fire training over Highway 104

Terminate artillery live-fire training over Highway 104, with the exception of artillery firing required in the event of a crisis, after the training is relocated to maneuver areas on the mainland of Japan within Japanese Fiscal Year 1997.

- Parachute drop training

Relocate parachute drop training to Ie Jima Auxiliary Airfield.

- Conditioning hikes on public roads

Conditioning hikes on public roads have been terminated.

#### Implement Noise Reduction Initiatives:

- Aircraft noise abatement countermeasures at Kadena Air Base and Futenma Air Station

Agreements on aircraft noise abatement countermeasures at Kadena Air Base and Futenma Air Station announced by the Joint Committee in March 1996 have been implemented.

- Transfer of KC-130 Hercules aircraft and AV-8 Harrier aircraft

Transfer 12 KC-130 aircraft currently based at Futenma Air Station to Iwakuni Air Base after adequate facilities are provided. Transfer of 14 AV-8 aircraft from Iwakuni Air Base to the United States has been completed.

- Relocation of Navy aircraft and MC-130 operations at Kadena Air Base

Relocate Navy aircraft operations and supporting facilities at Kadena Air Base from the Navy ramp to the other side of the major runways. The implementation schedules for these measures will be decided along with the implementation schedules for the development of additional facilities at Kadena Air Base necessary for the return of Futenma Air Station. Move the MC-130s at Kadena Air Base from the Navy ramp to the northwest corner of the major runways by the end of December 1996.

- Noise reduction baffles at Kadena Air Base

Build new noise reduction baffles at the north side of Kadena Air Base with the intention to finish the process by the end of March 1998.

- Limitation of night flight training operations at Futenma Air Station

Limit night flight training operations at Futenma Air Station to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the operational readiness of US forces.

## Improve Status of Forces Agreement Procedures:

### - Accident reports

Implement new Joint Committee agreement on procedures to provide investigation reports on US military aircraft accidents announced on December 2, 1996.

In addition, as part of the US forces' good neighbor policy, every effort will be made to insure timely notification of appropriate local officials, as well as the Government of Japan, of all major accidents involving US forces' assets or facilities.

### - Public exposure of Joint Committee agreements

Seek greater public exposure of Joint Committee agreements.

### - Visits to US facilities and areas

Implement the new procedures for authorizing visits to US facilities and areas announced by the Joint Committee on December 2, 1996.

### - Markings on US forces official vehicles

Implement the agreement on measures concerning markings on US forces official vehicles. Numbered plates will be attached to all non-tactical US forces vehicles by January 1997, and to all other US forces vehicles by October 1997.

### - Supplemental automobile insurance

Education programs for automobile insurance have been expanded. Additionally, on its own initiative, the US has further elected to have all personnel under the SOFA obtain supplemental auto insurance beginning in January 1997.

### - Payment for claims

Make joint efforts to improve payment procedures concerning claims under paragraph 6, Article XVIII of the SOFA in the following manner:

Requests for advance payments will be expeditiously processed and evaluated by both Governments utilizing their respective procedures. Whenever warranted under US laws and regulatory guidance, advance payment will be accomplished as rapidly as possible.

A new system will be introduced by the end of March 1998, by which Japanese authorities will make available to claimants no-interest loans, as appropriate, in advance of the final adjudication of claims by US authorities.

In the past there have been only a very few cases where payment by the US Government did not satisfy the full amount awarded by a final court judgment. Should such a case occur in the future, the Government of Japan will endeavor to make payment to the claimant, as appropriate, in order to address the difference in amount.

- Quarantine procedures

Implement the updated agreement on quarantine procedures announced by the Joint Committee on December 2, 1996.

- Removal of unexploded ordnance in Camp Hansen

Continue to use USMC procedures for removing unexploded ordnance in Camp Hansen, which are equivalent to those applied to ranges of the US forces in the United States.

- Continue efforts to improve the SOFA procedures in the Joint Committee

**The SACO Final Report  
on Futenma Air Station  
(an integral part of the SACO Final Report)  
Tokyo, Japan  
December 2, 1996**

1. Introduction.

a. At the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) held on December 2, 1996, Minister Ikeda, Minister Kyuma, Secretary Perry, and Ambassador Mondale reaffirmed their commitment to the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) Interim Report of April 15, 1996 and the Status Report of September 19, 1996. Based on the SACO Interim Report, both Governments have been working to determine a suitable option for the return of Futenma Air Station and the relocation of its assets to other facilities and areas in Okinawa, while maintaining the airfield's critical military functions and capabilities. The Status Report called for the Special Working Group on Futenma to examine three specific alternatives: 1) incorporate the heliport into Kadena Air Base; 2) construct a heliport at Camp Schwab; and 3) develop and construct a sea-based facility (SBF).

b. On December 2, 1996, the SCC approved the SACO recommendation to pursue the SBF option. Compared to the other two options, the SBF is judged to be the best option in terms of enhanced safety and quality of life for the Okinawan people while maintaining operational capabilities of U.S. forces. In addition, the SBF can function as a fixed facility during its use as a military base and can also be removed when no longer necessary.

c. The SCC will establish a bilateral U.S.-Japan working group under the supervision of the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) entitled the Futenma Implementation Group (FIG), to be supported by a team of technical experts. The FIG, working with the Joint Committee, will develop a plan for implementation no later than December 1997. Upon SCC approval of this plan, the FIG, working with the Joint Committee, will oversee design, construction, testing, and transfer of assets. Throughout this process, the FIG will periodically report to the SSC on the status of its work.

2. Decisions of the SCC.

a. Pursue construction of a SBF to absorb most of the helicopter operational functions of Futenma Air Station. This facility will be approximately 1500 meters long, and will support the majority of Futenma Air Station's flying operations, including an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)-capable runway (approximately 1300 meters long), direct air operations support, and indirect support infrastructure such as headquarters, maintenance, logistics, quality-of-life functions, and base operating support. The SBF will be designed to support basing of helicopter assets, and will also be able to support short-field aircraft operations.



b. Transfer 12 KC-130 aircraft to Iwakuni Air Base. Construct facilities at this base to ensure that associated infrastructure is available to support these aircraft and their missions.

c. Develop additional facilities at Kadena Air Base to support aircraft, maintenance, and logistics operations which are currently available at Futenma Air Station but are not relocated to the SBF or Iwakuni Air Base.

d. Study the emergency and contingency use of alternate facilities which may be needed in the event of a crisis. This is necessary because the transfer of functions from Futenma Air Station to the SBF will reduce operational flexibility currently available.

e. Return Futenma Air Station within the next five to seven years, after adequate replacement facilities are completed and operational.

### 3. Guiding Principles.

a. Futenma Air Station's critical military functions and capabilities will be maintained and will continue to operate at current readiness levels throughout the transfer of personnel and equipment and the relocation of facilities.

b. To the greatest extent possible, Futenma Air Station's operations and activities will be transferred to the SBF. Operational capabilities and contingency planning flexibility which cannot be supported by the shorter runway of the SBF (such as strategic airlift, logistics, emergency alternate divert, and contingency throughput) must be fully supported elsewhere. Those facilities unable to be located on the SBF, due to operational, cost, or quality-of-life considerations, will be located on existing US facilities and areas.

c. The SBF will be located off the east coast of the main island of Okinawa, and is expected to be connected to land by a pier or causeway. Selection of the location will take into account operational requirements, air-space and sea-lane deconfliction, fishing access, environmental compatibility, economic effects, noise abatement, survivability, security, and convenient, acceptable personnel access to other US military facilities and housing.

d. The design of the SBF will incorporate adequate measures to ensure platform, aircraft, equipment, and personnel survivability against severe weather and ocean conditions; corrosion control treatment and prevention for the SBF and all equipment located on the SBF; safety; and platform security. Support will include reliable and secure fuel supply, electrical power, fresh water, and other utilities and consumables. Additionally, the facility will be fully self-supporting for short-period contingency/emergency operations.

e. The Government of Japan will provide the SBF and other relocation facilities for the use of U.S. forces, in accordance with the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security and the Status of Forces Agreement. The two

Governments will further consider all aspects of life-cycle costs as part of the design/acquisition decision.

f. The Government of Japan will continue to keep the people of Okinawa informed of the progress of this plan, including concept, location, and schedules of implementation.

#### 4. Possible Sea-Based Facility Construction Methods.

Studies have been conducted by a "Technical Support Group" comprised of Government engineers under the guidance of a "Technical Advisory Group" comprised of university professors and other experts outside the Government. These studies suggested that all three construction methods mentioned below are technically feasible.

a. Pile Supported Pier Type (using floating modules)--supported by a number of steel columns fixed to the sea bed.

b. Pontoon Type--platform consisting of steel pontoon type units, installed in a calm sea protected by a breakwater.

c. Semi-Submersible Type--platform at a wave free height, supported by buoyancy of the lower structure submerged under the sea.

#### 5. The Next Steps.

a. The FIG will recommend a candidate SBF area to the SCC as soon as possible and formulate a detailed implementation plan no later than December 1997. This plan will include completion of the following items: concept development and definition of operational requirements, technology performance specifications and construction method, site survey, environmental analysis, and final concept and site selection.

b. The FIG will establish phases and schedules to achieve operational capabilities at each location, including facility design, construction, installation of required components, validation tests and suitability demonstrations, and transfer of operations to the new facility.

c. The FIG will conduct periodic reviews and make decisions at significant milestones concerning SBF program feasibility.