

97-GS-44 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Withdrawal of U.S. Bases from Okinawa."

RESOLUTION AWITHDRAWAL OF U.S. BASES FROM OKINAWA@

WHEREAS, the women of Okinawa were instrumental in raising awareness of the negative consequences of militarism;

WHEREAS, although Okinawa Prefecture comprises only 0.6% of the whole Japanese territory, 75% of all military installations in exclusive use by U.S. Forces-Japan are concentrated in Okinawa;

WHEREAS, 90% of Okinawans oppose the presence of U.S. bases on their land;

WHEREAS, through the years U.S. nuclear weapons, poison gas, excessive aircraft noise and the live-firing of military exercises cause serious accidents, physical ailments, fear and psychological damage to civilians especially children, and lasting environmental destruction;

WHEREAS, a major part of the main seaport used for international commercial trade to enhance economic development of Okinawa is occupied by the U.S. military;

WHEREAS, the Okinawan people are asserting their self-determination from U.S. and Japan's military policies;

WHEREAS, U.S. newspapers recently announced that the U.S. will give back about 20% of the land it occupies on Okinawa, including Futenma Air Base; experienced Okinawans do not believe U.S. promises since Okinawa military bases have been put on closure lists before, and some remain active nearly twenty years later;

WHEREAS, the closing of Futenma is merely rotating the soldiers and installations to other locations in Okinawa and does not represent gradual removal; and

WHEREAS, our partner church, the United Church of Christ in Japan (the Kyodan), and the Okinawa District Assembly of the Kyodan have issued several public statements calling for the removal of all U.S. military bases from Okinawa;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges the U.S. government to implement immediately a phased removal of all U.S. military bases and personnel from Okinawa and a clean-up of remaining environmental pollutants;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges all members of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to support the present prefectural and local governments of Okinawa and the vast majority of the Okinawan people in their unceasing efforts to achieve the complete removal of U.S. military bases and U.S. military personnel in Okinawa Prefecture and to return these lands for peaceful, people-oriented development;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges the President of the United Church of Christ in consultation with the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the U.S. Secretary of State, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, the Prime Minister of Japan, Governor Ota of Okinawa and all representatives and senators in Washington, D.C., and the Okinawa district assembly of the Kyodan.

Subject to the availability of funds.