

## PRESENTATION

# Issues with Human Insecurity in Japan: The Case of US Military Bases in Okinawa<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

The Japanese Government has been done much to promote the idea of Human Security in International Society. The government itself has come out with the human centered policy for its development aid.

Today the Commission on Human Security's definition: to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfillment, has been generally accepted. We may consider it as a kind of universal value. It may appreciate that Japan's performance to contribute to realize the values in the world.

On the other hand, there are many people suffered insecurity within Japan. The government has not sufficiently protected and supported the people exposed downside risks, but also they have been carrying out a discriminatory policy that sacrifice a kind of people using the public welfare as an excuse. Japan's such contrary policy between

external and internal cannot be disregarded.

Firstly, this paper will examine the insecurity situation in Okinawa as a typical case of the discriminatory policy. It will propose a social structure that forced the insecurity onto the Okinawan people by analyzing the stakeholders. Secondly, it will propose the possibility of change the policy through changing the stakeholders' perception, i.e. sharing the human security values.

**Keywords:** Human security, Human Insecurity, Okinawa, the US military bases, a sacrificial system

## 1. Human Insecurity in Japan

The Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 dispelled the longstanding “myth of Japanese safety.” In particular, the collapse of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, over and beyond the calamity of unanticipated disaster, exposed how the government's industrial and energy policies took priority over the safety of local residents. The Japanese government has not been seen to take any appropriate response to the blows to industry and adverse health effects suffered as a result of the dispersion of radioactive materials. Moreover, the designation of evacuation areas and zones contaminated with radioactive materials has created a large group of “nuclear refugees,” which resulted in a renewed recognition of how the citizens of Fukushima have carried a disproportionate burden in the interests of the power supply that maintains the economy and society of the Tokyo metropolitan area.

While Japan ranks highly in terms of peace and affluence in rankings on the Global Peace Index and Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), it must turn its

attention to the fact that it has been assigned a low ranking for human rights relative to other developed countries.

Kazuko Ito, of Human Rights Watch, makes the following point:

For example, with regards to criminal trials resulting in false charges, despite repeated UN recommendations for improvements, there has been little progress with reforms, such as increased transparency with regards to interrogation.

In addition, there is also the problem of Japan's long and harsh working hours, represented by the so-called "black companies" and death from overwork (*karōshi*), for which improvements have long been sought by the UN as a human rights issue.

Furthermore, there are as yet no laws that prohibit types of discrimination, such as on the grounds of race. Vicious hate speech and demonstrations against foreign nationals have run rampant in recent years, and the government has been slow to implement legislation or other measures to protect minorities.

Measures to improve the position of women, such as positive action, also remain insufficient.

The human rights of the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear power plant accident have also been neglected. In May of this year, the UN Special Rapporteur recommended that fundamental policy changes be made in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident, but the government has refused to comply.

(December 8, 2013 <http://www.bengo4.com/topics/1028/> )

We can say that the collapse of the Fukushima nuclear power plant as

a result of the earthquake disaster has made the state of human rights in Japan more apparent by bringing them to the fore. The Japanese philosopher Tetsuya Takahashi, who understands the Fukushima plant to symbolize what he calls the “sacrificial system” of Japanese society, also points to the burden imposed by military bases in Okinawa as a manifestation of this sacrificial system, which he describes in the following terms:

In a sacrificial system, the profit of one person (or persons) is obtained and maintained through a sacrifice in the living conditions (life, health, everyday life, property, respect, desires, etc.) of another person (or persons). The profit of the sacrificer cannot be obtained or maintained without the sacrifice of the sacrificed. This sacrifice is ordinarily either repressed from view or aestheticized and legitimated as a “noble sacrifice” carried out for the sake of the community (state, nation, society, company, etc.). Hence, even should this concealment or legitimation become difficult, or the sacrifice be accused of being unfair, the sacrificers will deny their complicity, and flee from their responsibility. The existence of this country's sacrificial system encompasses the “system of irresponsibility” proposed by Masao Maruyama.

(Tetsuya Takahashi, *Gisei no shisutemu Fukushima Okinawa* [The Sacrificial System: Fukushima and Okinawa], Shueisha, Tokyo, 2012, pp. 27-28)

[Translation adapted from Bourdaghs 2013]

(<http://bourdaghs.com/blog/2012/06/02/takahashi-tetsuya-on-fukushima-and-okinawa-japans-sacrificial-system/>)

The problem of the legitimation of sacrifice in Japan to which



Takahashi refers is also indicated in the following recommendations by the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR):

The Committee reiterates its concern about the restrictions which can be placed on the rights guaranteed in the Covenant on the grounds of "public welfare", a concept which is vague and open-ended and which may enable restrictions exceeding those permissible under the Covenant. Following upon its previous observations, the Committee once again strongly recommends to the State party to bring its internal law in conformity with the Covenant. (1998)

([http://blhrri.org/blhrri\\_e/news/new105/new10503.htm](http://blhrri.org/blhrri_e/news/new105/new10503.htm))

The State party should adopt legislation defining the concept of "public welfare" and specifying that any restrictions placed on the rights guaranteed in the Covenant on grounds of "public welfare" may not exceed those permissible under the Covenant. (2008)

(<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/hrcommittee/japan2008.html>)

Following the earthquake disaster, although many citizens as well as the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) insisted on Japan's abandonment of nuclear power generation, the influence of bureaucrats, politicians, and corporate capital that had promoted nuclear power have been working to bring nuclear power plants back into operation. The contents of the Basic Energy Plan resolved by the Abe Cabinet in April 2014 position nuclear power as a "key base-load energy source", and emphasize a stance that seeks to return nuclear power production to the same point as prior to the nuclear accident three years previously. Despite so much sacrifice (as of March 2014,

approximately 130,000 residents of Fukushima Prefecture remain unable to return to their homes), this situation may also be said to indicate the unchangeable nature of the system that forces sacrifice for the national policy of maintaining nuclear technology and securing power production.

On the other hand, the situation in Okinawa, that is, the fact that approximately 74% of U.S. military facilities in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa, has been described as a key part of forming a deterrent that is necessary for the international security of Japan and the Far East. Much like nuclear power, it is positioned as a noble sacrifice on behalf of the national policy. Hence, the problem of the security of the citizens of Okinawa who are sacrificed to this purpose, or in other words of their “human insecurity”, has been neglected.

The case of Okinawa, more so than that of Fukushima and other communities that are host to nuclear facilities, has been forcibly sacrificed, despite the explicit demands of the local populace for an improvement in their conditions, that is, the stipulated demand for the reduction or removal of military bases. Yet, it is a valid question whether a security policy made possible only by a burden imposed against the wishes of the local populace can really create a sustainable peace.

In this presentation, I consider the “sacrifice” of “the living conditions (life, health, everyday life, property, respect, desires, etc.) of another person (or persons)” indicated by Takahashi as a threat to human security – that is to say, as “human insecurity” – and investigate the possibility of strengthening human security through the elimination of these conditions of insecurity.

First, I assess current conditions in Okinawa, saddled with the burden of military bases against the wishes of the local populace on

the grounds of state security, and investigate responses by the Japanese government, which has actively imposed this burden on Okinawa. Next, I take up the argument that such actions on the part of the Japanese government are inconsistent with the promotion of human security as a key policy of Japan's foreign relations. In recent years, human security has achieved growing recognition internationally as a universal value, and I continue by touching on the possibility of shaping an attitude within the government and society of Japan that pursues human security not only in its foreign policy but also in its domestic policy. This results from my belief that the pursuit of human security inside Japan's borders could be an important perspective from which to condemn and rectify discriminatory policies against Okinawa.

## **2. Human Insecurity in Okinawa: The Problem of the Concentration of US Military Bases**

The burden of military bases in Okinawa has been characterized as “a situation that has arisen where 73.8% of the total territory dedicated to U.S. military facilities across Japan are concentrated and located within the confines of a prefecture that accounts for no more than 0.6% of the land area of the nation, where they account for 10.2% of the land area of the prefecture and 18.3% of the land area of the main island of Okinawa” (*Okinawa no Beigun Kichi* [U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa], Okinawa Prefectural Government pamphlet, 2013, p.51). Let us consider the damages this concentration of bases has inflicted on the citizens of Okinawa.<sup>2</sup>

### **(1) Impairment to Industrial Infrastructure Development**

Along with the extensive presence of dedicated U.S. military facilities in Okinawa, the use of not only the land but of the air and seas has been restricted, including twenty-eight marine and twenty airspace locations that have been set aside as districts for use in U.S. military exercises.

This has been a “major obstacle toward achieving regional development such as the development of industrial infrastructure, as well as desirable urban planning and transportation systems.” ([U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa], 2013, p.51)

Since the Futenma Base, as the focal point of base consolidation and reduction in Okinawa, is located in central Ginowan city, residential areas, commercial areas, and public facilities have been forced to take shape as an urban sprawl on the periphery of the base. This has resulted not only in everyday inconvenience, such as with inefficient transportation networks and emergency services, but has also become an obstacle to regional development.

### **(2) Noise Pollution from Aircraft**

As the aircraft noise that occurs on a daily basis as a result of military exercises and the like exceeds the environmental standards set by the Ministry of the Environment, it interferes with education in schools around the base, and has led to health problems among local residents, including sleep disorders and hearing loss.

### **(3) Crashes by U.S. Fighter Planes, Helicopters, and Other Aircraft**

A total of 540 accidents involving U.S. military aircraft (43 of which have been crashes) have occurred since the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972 alone. Recent incidents (as of 2012) include the

crash-landing in August, 2004, of a U.S. Marine Corps CH-53D helicopter on the campus of Okinawa International University, where it burst into flames, and although there were fortunately no fatalities, damages were suffered to university buildings as well as to nearby residences and vehicles. Another incident occurred in October of 2008, when a Cessna aircraft belonging to the Kadena Air Base Aero Club, crash landed in a field in the northern part of Okinawa Island. “The nature of aircraft accidents is that the slightest mistake could lead to a catastrophe involving civilian casualties, which is a major concern not only for local residents but for the citizens of the prefecture as a whole.” ([U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa], 2013, p.51)

#### **(4) Forest Fires and other Ordnance-related Incidents**

Regular live ammunition exercises at the Camp Hansen training grounds of northern Okinawa Island have been associated with the outbreak of forest fires, leading to damages to the irreplaceable natural environment, including the loss of important vegetation and exposure of the mountain surface. Moreover, the same training grounds are known to house vast amounts of unexploded ordnance, for which removal is expected to take many years at huge expense.

#### **(5) Environmental Pollution Resulting from U.S. Military Bases**

Aquatic pollution including that caused by waste oil discharged from U.S. military bases up until the 1970s had also been a problem. While such direct damage has been improved in recent years, harmful substances such as cadmium, mercury, PCBs, lead, and arsenic have been found in some of the lands returned after use by the military.

In addition, flows of red soil resulting in part from the destruction of forests in exercises and for the construction of base facilities have

compromised the quality of rivers and coastal waters, “leading to the deterioration of both the natural environment and lived environments including changes to natural habitats and the loss of landscape, significantly impacting the promotion of industry, and creating a major challenge for environmental conservation in the prefecture.” ([U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa], 2013, p.65)

#### **(6) Incidents and Accidents Involving U.S. Military Personnel**

According to crime statistics maintained by the Okinawa Prefectural Police, criminal offenses by U.S. military personnel, civilian employees and their families, account for only approximately 1% of arrests for crimes committed across the entire prefecture. However, over the 40 years between 1972 and 2012, the number of criminal offenses committed by U.S. military personnel or their associates has amounted to 5,801 incidents, 570 of which were counted as serious crimes and 1,045 as violent offenses. Most problematically, even in cases where a member of U.S. military personnel commits serious crimes (e.g., fatal traffic accident, rape, robbery, or assault), under the provisions of U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement, they are not held liable by the Japanese judicial system, creating an extremely problematic situation in which victims receive insufficient remedy or compensation.

As described above, the people of Okinawa have been forcibly saddled with burdens including the endangerment of life, environmental pollution, and obstacles to their social and economic development. While this burden of U.S. military bases may be described as a situation of insecurity in Okinawa, an even greater problem is the response of the Japanese government, which has continued to neglect the will of the people of Okinawa, who have continued to insist that this burden be eliminated.

### 3. The Response of a Japanese Government That Has Actively Imposed This Burden on Okinawa

Okinawa has an extremely long history of enforced sacrifice. After the so-called the *Ryūkyū shobun* (“disposition of Ryukyu”) in the Meiji period, in addition to a major enforced sacrifice during the Pacific War that culminated in violent land-based combat, Okinawa was placed under the control of the United States after Japan’s defeat in the war and forcibly transformed into a military base station. (In Okinawa, the Battle of Okinawa in the Pacific War is seen to have been a strategic move to use Okinawa as a “*suteishi*” (sacrificial stone) to stall U.S. forces. Okinawa is also considered to have been cast off by Japan at the time of Japan’s rehabilitation in the international community.)

While Japan returned to the international community in 1951, with the intensification of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War, this “independence” was achieved only under the aegis of American control. Despite the ostensible end of military occupation by the Allied Countries (i.e., the United States), the stationing of U.S. forces continued under the auspices of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which was signed at the same time as the San Francisco Peace Treaty. With the swelling of opposition and harsh criticisms arguing that the Japan-U.S. security arrangements could once again involve Japan in war, as well as the recurrent damages caused by the bases, including noise pollution and accidents, the U.S. military had little choice but to move towards consolidation and reduction.

On the other hand, Okinawa remained under U.S. occupation as a military base against China and the Soviet Union, and it was reinforced as a military base for this purpose with the escalation of the Vietnam War.

Resistance to the U.S. occupation policy, which was seen to promote base expansion “with bulldozers and bayonets”, emerged in the form of a movement in support of Okinawa's return to Japan among people who hoped to break away from such foreign domination. This was also a sign of people's expectation to be able to lead a peaceful life, enjoying the basic human rights guaranteed under Japan's Constitution.

And while Okinawa achieved a return to the homeland in 1972, its expectations of human rights guaranteed under the Constitution were betrayed. Now, it was the Japanese government that came to impose the continued presence of the U.S. military bases that the people of Okinawa had sought to reject.

It seems fair to say that maintaining a Japan-based American military presence in the Far East region was consistent with the interests of the governments of both Japan and the United States. Even so, after twenty years of independence, the expansion of U.S. military bases on Japanese mainland had become difficult, so the continued siting of the bases in Okinawa seemed an eminently rational decision for the Japanese government.

This policy of the Japanese government was symbolized in the passage of the “Law for the Provisional Use of Land, Etc., for Public Purpose in Okinawa” legislated in 1971, prior to the reversion of Okinawa to Japan. Under this law, lands that had been used for “Public Purpose” (i.e. military bases) under the U.S. military occupation could continue to be utilized for a period of five years after the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, irrespective of the wishes of landowners. In 1977, which would have been the deadline for the use of land under this act, a “Law on Clarification of Land Position Boundaries in Okinawa Prefecture” (legislation that established the ownership of the “public



lands” used for bases) was enacted, which included supplementary provisions that extended the deadline for the continued use of “public lands” to ten years following the reversion. Just when the Japanese government should have been preparing to return the property (i.e. lands) of the citizens of Okinawa, it was proceeding with the legitimization of its compulsory acquisition.

Article 95 of the Japanese Constitution includes the following provision: “A special law, applicable only to one local public entity, cannot be enacted by the Diet without the consent of the majority of the voters of the local public entity concerned, obtained in accordance with law.” Despite this Article, the Diet worked to ensure the continuation of the bases against the wishes of the people of Okinawa.

After the reversion, whereas 58.7% of dedicated U.S. military facilities on Japanese soil had been returned, no more than 18.2% of such facilities had been returned in Okinawa. This widening gap between the main islands and Okinawa was evident even among movements seeking the elimination of the damages arising due to the bases. In the case of Okinawa, citizens' demands were rejected despite the fact that those demands were for the restoration of their basic human rights, that is, the recovery of their ancestral lands and their own property, over and above the elimination of base-related damages.

With the arrival of the deadline for the continued use of lands under the “Supplementary Provisions to the Law on Clarification of Land Position Boundaries in Okinawa Prefecture,” the government applied the “Special Measures Law for USFJ Land Release” that had been enacted in 1952 for the first time in twenty-one years, legalizing the forced use of land. This allowed the prefectural governor in the final instance to sign land leases as a proxy in the name of landowners who were unwilling to provide lands for use by bases.

This law was recognized by Okinawa's successive governors until 1995. Why should the governors of Okinawa have permitted the forced use of their citizens' property? While the government worked to legalize the continued presence of bases in Okinawa, it also carried out public works that brought the benefits of economic development as an alternative to the demanded reduction and return of bases.

The influence peddling behavior of the Japanese government appeased those who had demanded pecuniary compensation and financial support that were expected to take immediate effect, driving a wedge among the people of Okinawa who were demanding the restoration of their legitimate rights. The target of this patronage by the Japanese government (i.e., the Liberal Democratic Party) was the conservative element in Okinawa. The Ryukyu Democratic Party, which was established around the figure of Shuhei Higa who had served in an administrative capacity under the American-led occupation. Re-integrating the various sects that had been riven by factional antagonism, the party became the Okinawan branch of the national Liberal Democratic Party in 1970, during the lead-up to the reversion.

These efforts to secure people's immediate interests resulted in the formation of a group among the proponents of this conservative element who, although citizens of Okinawa, supported the bases, or at least disagreed with their abolition.

However, the 1990 Okinawa gubernatorial election saw the defeat of the conservative incumbent, Junji Nishime, in favor of Masahide Ōta, who was elected on the strength of an anti-base platform. However, with regard to the forced use of lands by the military, Ōta complied with the proxy signature as governor. Historian Moriteru Arasaki points out that “Although it was reported that [Governor Ōta's]

intention to reject the bases was initially strong, the national government put pressure on the governor by linking the proxy issue to the Third Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan. In addition, via the former defense secretary, Taku Yamasaki, the government also offered the possibility of a trade-off in exchange for an investigation of a period of notice for the return of military lands and compensation to landlords for the return of lands used by the military” (Moriteru Arasaki, *Okinawa gendai-shi* [Contemporary Okinawan History, New Edition], Iwanami Shinsho 2005, p. 124).

Nevertheless, Governor Ōta eventually refused his signature as proxy, amidst a growing prefecture-wide movement demanding the dismantling and removal of the U.S. bases that was prompted by the sexual assault of a young girl by three U.S. soldiers in 1995.

The government brought a suit against Governor Ōta for refusing to carry out his administrative duties. In March of 1996, the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court handed down a ruling ordering the governor to sign as proxy, but the governor appealed to the Supreme Court. However, the Supreme Court rejected the appeal in August of the same year, affirming the lower court decision.

The Supreme Court confirmed that ruling in August, showing remarkable promptness and equally remarkable contempt for Ota by dismissing his arguments in two curt sentences: “We reject and dismiss the appeal. The court expenses shall be paid by the appellant” (i.e. Ota).

(Gavan McCormack, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States*, Rowman & Littlefield Pub Inc (2012/7/20) p. 139)

Governor Ōta accepted the decision and in September of 1996

announced his compliance with the proxy signature. Ōta describes the circumstances of this ruling in the following manner:

Even had I felt there was no chance of winning, I believed that if I could only pave the way for a brighter future by refusing to the end to carry out the posting of land papers for public inspection on behalf of municipal heads, I could do something meaningful. However, far from being able to open up the future, the expectation was that the outcome would be for the worse. This is to say, the prefecture is faced with a number of other issues requiring immediate resolution aside from the base issue, for which the government's financial support is essential, whether we like it or not.

The Supreme Court has issued a decision, and while I am not satisfied with the substance of that decision, I will work together with the government by complying with the proxy action. It is my judgment that this way will hasten the resolution of the aforementioned issues.

(Masahide Ōta, *Okinawa heiwa no ishiji* [Okinawa: Cornerstone of Peace]. Iwanami Shinsho, 1996, pp. 205-206)

Even so, the following year, in 1997, the government adopted a revision to the Special Measures Law for USFJ Land Release” that was approved by overwhelming majorities in both houses of the Diet. With this, the government was given almost limitless powers to divert land in Okinawa to military use.

#### 4. Contradictions in the Japanese Government's Security Policy: A Human Security Perspective

I have identified that conditions of insecurity exist in Okinawa in the sense that these have been imposed on Okinawa as a minority within the Japanese nation-state.

The Japanese government, on the premise that the military bases will continue to exist indefinitely, has trivialized demands for the reduction and removal of bases from Okinawa as an issue of “easing the burden.” As a result, the conditions of insecurity that afflict the people of Okinawa remain unchanged. The government has attempted to obscure the fact of how its people have been sacrificed in this way, fashioning conditions in which the majority of citizens remain unaware of the reality of the situation. Furthermore, we may also say that in its inability to sustain a campaign denouncing the sacrifice of this minority, the Japanese mass media has also been complicit in this concealment.

While the violent sexual assault of a young girl in Okinawa in 1995 and the breakdown of the Fukushima nuclear power reactor in 2011 have alerted many in Japan to the existence of people who have been sacrificed so that the majority may benefit, the sort of social changes that might result in the elimination of such sacrifices have yet to gain any nationwide traction in Japan. This is because for the many Japanese who have no direct connection with Okinawa or Fukushima, such sacrifice is accepted using the logic of unavoidable injustice.

Okinawans who denounce the sacrifice that has been unjustly forced upon them frequently point out that “the problem of Okinawa is a problem for Japan (and the Japanese).” By this, they mean that it is the Japanese majority that has created the sacrifice of the minorities of

Fukushima and Okinawa, and that there can be no resolution of these issues without changing Japanese policies and the criteria by which these are determined.

I believe it is important to recognize that achieving security as a public value by burdening the people of Okinawa amounts in fact to a social injustice, and that this recognition be shared with the government (i.e. bureaucrats and politicians) which works to ensure the continued presence of the bases. I would like to focus once more on the concept of “human security” as a breakthrough that might bring about such a change in awareness.

Since the late 1990s, the Japanese government has been announcing its intentions to emphasize human security as a fundamental concept in its foreign policy, and has in addition been active in promoting awareness of this concept as a new guiding principle in the international community. While these initiatives have served to heighten the evaluation of Japan's foreign policy, the concept of human security, which is summarized in the 2003 report of the Commission on Human Security, has become established within the modes of thought that should be emphasized as part of a variety of policies, including conflict resolution and development assistance.

I would like to point out the contradiction between the attention to human security concerns that Japan has expressed in its foreign policies and the injustice and inequalities that appear in its domestic policies, and to recommend that the concept be made to serve as a basis for driving a change in domestic policy (i.e., the consolidation and reduction of U.S. military bases). Making efforts to think about human security as a Universal Value in the context of domestic politics can contribute to the real elimination of conditions of insecurity. Moreover, this may be considered to be “useful” for the national

interest in the sense of boosting Japan's standing within the international community as a state that promotes human security.

The Japanese government has announced its efforts towards human security as follows:

Japan stands committed to the promotion of “human security”, which it has taken up as a principle for international cooperation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Japanese government is involved in various efforts in order to promote the concept of human security, both through the dissemination and support of the concept domestically and in the international community and on the ground in locations where human security concerns can be addressed in practice.

At home and abroad, it is crucial that an understanding of the importance of human security be achieved among stakeholders, who include governments and international organizations as well as civil society.

Japan, in addition to contributing to the ongoing effort to realize human security, is contributing to the debate towards the development of Post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and efforts towards achieving development objectives, including MDGs guided by the philosophy of human security.

(Pamphlet “Post 2015 Development Agenda and Human Security”,  
March 2014)

While the Japanese government positions human security as the basic philosophy of the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), a human security perspective is also incorporated in a medium-term policy brief issued in 2005 as follows:

(1) Japan's position on “human security”

- i. Growing globalization in recent years has resulted in the international community becoming interdependent to an unprecedented degree. At the same time, there has been an increase in humanitarian crises resulting from transnational threats such as terrorism, environmental destruction, the spread of infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, international organized crime, sudden economic crises and civil war. In order to address these threats, the perspective of “human security” that places the focus on individual human beings needs to be introduced, in addition to global, regional and national perspectives.
- ii. “Human security” means focusing on individual people and building societies in which everyone can live with dignity by protecting and empowering individuals and communities that are exposed to actual or potential threats. In concrete terms, this means protecting individuals from “fears,” such as conflict, terrorism, crime, human-rights violation, displacement, disease epidemics, environmental destruction, economic crises and natural disasters, and “wants,” such as poverty, hunger and lack of educational and health services, and empowering people so that they can choose and take action against these threats.

While we can laud the suitability of policies that recognize the universal value of human security, encouraging the government to work towards the consistent realization of these values in both domestic and foreign policy could be a starting point for generating a desirable change in consciousness and conceptual understanding among the majority of Japanese citizens and the government (both



bureaucrats and politicians).

Naturally, the policy problems of the Japanese government that I have discussed here have been raised before by many other researchers and activists. However, I believe demanding that we “seek the achievement of universal values (i.e., human security)” may do more to facilitate a change of attitude on the part of the Japanese government than seeking simply to “scrutinize injustice.” It would be difficult for the government and the present administration to be seen to act in a way that goes against their efforts to realize this universal value, and the expectation that reputation of the administration might be improved by changing its policies could prove to be a major motivation for changing its policy stance.

In order to foster recognition of the benefits of policy changes among policy makers, civil society organizations and the mass media (including web-based information dissemination tools such as social media) can be expected to exert an even greater influence in future.

#### Notes

- 1 This paper was prepared for the presentation at 25th IPRA GENERAL CONFERENCE in Istanbul on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- 2 As to the US military bases in Okinawa, please refer to “Military Base Affairs Office's Home Page” of Okinawa Prefectural Government also.  
<http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/chijiko/kichitai/592.html>