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# Government and People Together Must Address the Resolution of the Futenma Issue

By YUSHITA Hiroyuki

The Noda cabinet has been inaugurated. After a series of short-lived governments of the LDP and then of the DPJ, Japan's domestic and foreign politics seem to have lost confidence. I wish this new administration will prove sustainable and take initiative in rehabilitating Japan. At present, the Japanese politics face a mountain of serious problems from urgent issues like rehabilitation from the Great East Japan Earthquake and management of TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant to deep-rooted concerns like fiscal reform and the Japan-U.S. alliance whose improvement measures can no more be procrastinated.

Fortunately, it seems that Prime Minister Noda's basic principle is to squarely and seriously tackle those problems, from which I expect him to make all efforts for the revival of Japan. However, unless positive results are attained within a certain period of time, it often ends in disappointment. All the problems mentioned above should be quickly addressed and settled, but it might be impossible to immediately take concrete measures against those which require in-advance agreement among political parties.

At the Japan-U.S. summit in last September, Prime Minister Noda was requested to make a concrete progress of the issue of relocating the U.S. Futenma military base, which has deteriorated the Japan-U.S. alliance and the relations between the two countries as well as Japan's security and her relations with the neighboring countries. The Futenma issue dispenses with the above-mentioned trouble of forging an agreement among political parties. For the agreement between Japan and the U.S. is, in fact, that the DPJ administration should implement the plan which was originally agreed upon between the LDP-Komeito administration and the U.S. Therefore, concrete measures can be taken right away.

It is said that the failure of the Hatoyama administration raised an emotional issue in Okinawa. After visiting the U.S., Prime Minister Noda is reported to have started his actions for Okinawa on the Futenma issue. An early resolution will surely make a significant positive impact on Japan's foreign relations. What is more, it also can serve as the first good example of

settling a difficult problem by an all-the-nation effort. The efforts to settle this issue should not be left to PM Noda alone, but be delivered to people in Okinawa by all Japan including the LDP and the Komeito, who used to be the parties involved in the Japan-U.S. agreement.

**(This is the English translation of an article written by Mr. YUSHITA Hiroyuki, former Ambassador to the Philippines, which originally appeared on the BBS "Giron-Hyakushutsu" of GFJ on October 3, 2011.)**