



HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES FORCES, JAPAN
APO AREA PACIFIC 96328-5068

6 APRIL 2017

To Deputy Director General Keiichi Ono:

I am submitting this statement with regards to the information disclosure of a part of the Minutes of the 1st U.S.-Japan Joint Committee established under Article XXV of the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) for the purpose of confirming the exchanges of communication between the Government of the United States of America (USG) and the Government of Japan (GOJ).

The USG and the GOJ are in constant communications via e-mails, telephone calls, and meetings in various issues related to the SOFA and the operations of U.S. Forces in Japan, including disclosure of related documents. This case has been also carefully taken care of between our staff and our colleagues of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA).

The practice of not releasing Joint Committee matters without mutual agreement is a longstanding practice and the foundation for maintaining a strong, trusting, and consultative relationship between the USG and the GOJ.

The USG was aware that an excerpt of the minutes of the 1st Joint Committee were submitted to the court for an ongoing case by the GOJ. In fact, both governments agreed to this GOJ's action restrictively for the specific case prior to the submission to the court. This was an exceptional action considering the practice of not disclosing the documents.

Regarding the request to release the portion of the Minutes of the 1st Joint Committee, a MOFA official, Ms. Yuki Okada and Mr. Nathan N. Frost, U.S. Joint Committee Secretary, consulted whether to disclose an excerpt of the Minutes of the 1st Joint Committee between June 25th 2015 and June 30th 2015 via emails and telephone calls, upon the inquiry from the GOJ. Confirming that an excerpt of the requested document had already been submitted by the GOJ for another case, both the USG and the GOJ conducted serious and careful consideration on this information request. On June 30, 2015, the USG conveyed its position not to disclose the document in concern. The USG understands the GOJ took necessary procedures accordingly and notified the plaintiff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. S. Chiarotti".

CHARLES G. CHIAROTTI

Major General, U.S. Marine Corps
U.S. Representative, Joint Committee