

**“WE DISAGREE WITH
ANY KIND OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND MILITARY PRESENCE”**

People living in Okinawa always face the brutal possibility of becoming rape victims due to U.S. Military presence. Okinawans are also in danger of perpetuating this cycle of sexual violence by silencing their outcries against these horrendous crimes. We, Project Disagree, strongly protest the present situation of Okinawa, where the permanent presence of the U.S. Military and the Japanese Self Defense Force continue to sustain the systematic violence of rape that controls people of Okinawa. We raise our voices, from the very venue of Okinawa, stating strongly that “We Disagree” with any kind of sexual violence perpetuated by the very presence of the U.S. Military in Okinawa and abroad.

In February 2008, in response to a series of continued rape incidents committed by U.S. servicemen, most recently in Hiroshima (October 2007) and Okinawa (February 10 and 18, 2008), all the city/town councils of Okinawa and the Assembly of the Okinawa Prefecture passed a protest resolution in opposition to these grievous crimes. These efforts embody the outrage caused by these heinous acts and represent a growing resentment with U.S. military operations in Okinawa and Japan. Such criticism, however, is on the verge of being entangled in political bargaining between Okinawa, Japan and the U.S. This includes Okinawa’s request to the U.S. Military to enforce strict disciplinary measures on U.S. soldiers and the appeal for the consolidation and reduction of U.S. military bases. The Japanese government is exploiting this dire situation by drafting ominous plans to enforce the further monitoring of civilians by proposing such “remedies” including the deployment of security cameras and the increased presence of U.S. Military Police in civil districts. Project Disagree is extremely concerned about the current oppressive state and its future consequences in which voices of dissent are ultimately forced into silence. This is heightened by media outlets’ slandering of rape victims, who are overlooked for the sake of so-called “state security.” Adding insult to injury, some public figures even imply that “rape is merely a petty issue secondary to state security.” Project Disagree asserts that such an argument is nothing but an act of rape. We believe that protests against these crimes should be intrinsically tied to the refusal of any kind of armed forces that systematically maintain sexual violence.

These heinous incidents, which have long tormented countless people of Okinawa, represent a continuation of decades of rape crimes stemming from the Battle of Okinawa during WWII, U.S. Occupation, and the current militaristic hegemony under the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty order. Project Disagree deeply empathizes with victims of rape and whole-heartedly supports those who are in pursuit of the condemnation of these unspeakable crimes. We demand the abolition of U.S. military bases that continue to foster numerous rapes. We vehemently refuse any kind of political bargaining, which ultimately perpetuates the continual U.S. military presence in Okinawa and abroad. Project Disagree strongly strives for a society free of the chains of systematic violence continued by the U.S. Military. We, hereby, raise our voices and firmly state, “We Disagree” with any kind of sexual violence and military presence.

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