

Japanese Protest Against U.S. Military Presence



Tokyo, June 13 (RHC)-- In the Japanese capital of Tokyo, about 100 people took to the streets Sunday in protest against the military presence of the United States on Japan's southern island of Okinawa and the crimes committed by U.S. soldiers there.

The demonstrators marched through the streets of downtown Tokyo to denounce a plan by the government to relocate a contentious U.S. military base on Okinawa. The angry protesters chanted slogans against the plan holding banners that read: "No more base." A major demonstration with a similar objective is planned on Okinawa for next week.

A U.S. base employee was recently arrested following the rape and murder of a local woman. The move prompted recent anti-U.S. protests. Police found DNA matching the dead woman's in a car belonging to Kenneth Franklin Shinzato, a former U.S. Marine who works at the U.S. Air Force's Kadena Air Base in Okinawa. The man is suspected of having murdered the victim and disposed of her body.

Last week, another U.S. sailor was arrested for drunk-driving the wrong way down a street in the region injuring two people. In 2013, two American sailors admitted to raping a woman in Okinawa a year earlier in a case that sparked huge anti-U.S. sentiments in Japan.

The gang rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl by three US servicemen in 1995 also sparked mass protests.

Okinawa has become known as the site of enduring tensions with the US forces deployed there. Pacifist inclinations as well as security and safety concerns have prompted the Japanese to protest against the deployment.

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