

Proposed U.S. Military Buildup on Guam Outrages Area Residents



Hagatna, August 2 (RHC)-- The United States is proposing to send an additional 5,000 Marines to the Western Pacific island of Guam, which is already 28 percent occupied by the U.S. military. The move will add to the increasing tensions between U.S. Army personnel and the residents.

Human rights attorney, Julian Aguon, likened the U.S. presence on the island to that of colonization. He told reporters in Guam's capital, Hagatña: "The story of militarization on Guam is inseparable from the story of colonization."

Aguon went on to explain the tense impact U.S. personnel have on the ground, saying: "Honestly, it's hard to respond to the question of how the military impacts people on Guam because it's way too big. The military-industrial complex is in full swing here."

The new plans are thought to commence in 2022. Six thousand U.S. military personnel are currently stationed on the island, and the new proposed 5,000 Marines (two-thirds on a rotational basis) and another 1,300 dependents would nearly double their presence.

The planned U.S. Marine redeployment in Guam is thought to help reduce tensions on the Japanese island of Okinawa, where more than half of the 47,000 U.S. military forces in Japan are stationed. In June, some 65,000 protesters called for the closure of U.S. bases on the Japanese island.

The U.S. territory of Guam in the northwestern Pacific Ocean also holds strategic geo-political importance. The U.S. Navy has been operating in the disputed South China Sea, despite rising tensions with China.

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