

# *U.S. Military Sex Crimes Increase in Japan*

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Tokyo, February 10 (RHC)-- The number of sexual assaults by U.S. military personnel in Japan is on the rise, as many offending soldiers receive either no or very light punishments.

According to documents obtained by the Associated Press, American military personnel were involved in more than 1000 sex crimes between 2005 and 2013 in Japan.

The report says: "Hundreds of records detailing sex-crime investigations involving U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan show most offenders were not incarcerated, suspects received light punishments after being accused of serious violations, and victims increasingly were wary of cooperating with investigators."

It added that the number of sex crimes by U.S. forces is remarkably high on the island of Okinawa, where around half of the 50,000 U.S. forces in Japan are stationed. Sex crimes against Okinawans have provoked strong protests against the U.S. military presence there.

The report also shows that the judicial process involving these crime cases is very inconsistent. The cases are usually reduced to lesser charges and, in nearly two-thirds of the cases, the convicts have not been incarcerated. Instead, they have been demoted or received a letter of reprimand. Documents show that out of 473 U.S. Marines and sailors accused of sex offenses, only 68 went to prison.

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