



Human Rights Now

Human Rights Now

7F Creative One Akihabara Bldg. 5-3-4 Ueno

Taito-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN 110-0005

<http://hrn.or.jp/eng/>

Phone: +81-3-3835-2110 Fax: +81-3-3834-1025

Email info@hrn.or.jp

September 16, 2016

33rd Human Rights Council

Agenda item 3: General debate (including on Report of WG on the right to development and on HC/OHCHR/SG thematic reports)

Speaker: Ms. Elena PORTILLA ODLIANITSKAYA

Thank you Mr./Ms. President,

Human Rights Now expresses grave concern over the ongoing human rights violations in Okinawa, Japan in the course of constructions of the US military facilities.

In Okinawa, southernmost part of Japan, there are 34 US military facilities covering 10% of its area. The United States and Japan plan to build another base in the seaside area of Henoko and six large helicopter landing pads in Takae, two of which have already been built, despite its abundant forest and wildlife.

Peaceful protests against the construction are currently occurring in surrounding neighbourhoods.

The government of Japan has dispatched riot police and violently removed both protesters and journalists with excessive uses of force. Currently 500 to 700 riot police currently surround Takae, with a population of about 160 and continue forcibly removing protesters and journalists.

The excessive use of force constitutes grave violations of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and the right to press.

The government actions in Henoko and Takae also constitutes a violation of the rights of Ryukyu/Okinawa's indigenous people. The constructions will cause devastating impact to the environment of the surrounding lands and oceans, and lives of the indigenous people.

However, the government violently enforces the construction without free prior, informed consent of the indigenous populations.

We call on the Japanese government to immediately cease excessive use of force of protesters and journalist in Okinawa and ensure their rights to assembly and expression.

We call on the United States and Japanese government to respect indigenous rights of Ryukyu/Okinawa people and their rights to traditional land and natural resources.

We urge US and Japanese governments to solve the problem in accordance with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly article 19's principle of free, prior and informed consent.

Thank you