

**Statement Protesting Rape by US Marine in Okinawa  
and Other Frequent Crimes by US Servicemen,  
and Seeking the Downsizing and Removal of US Military Bases in Okinawa**

On February 11, 2008 the Okinawa Prefectural Police arrested a US Marine staff sergeant in Okinawa on charges of sexually violating a 9th-grade schoolgirl in a car. Because the girl did not press charges, the marine will not be prosecuted. According to news reports, however, since that incident there have been five incidents in Okinawa Prefecture in which US military personnel have been arrested or referred to the prosecutor's office. On March 2 an airman second class stationed at Kadena Air Base was arrested on the charge of trespassing. US military talk of "tightening discipline" can be seen as nothing but lip service, and we cannot allow this matter to blow over without being fully addressed.

In Okinawa Prefecture, where 70% of US bases in Japan are concentrated, US military personnel were involved in 201,481 incidents and accidents between 1952 and 2004. The sheer number of cases is scandalous. The number of US military personnel and civilian workers booked for criminal offenses reached a 10-year peak in 2003, at 133. One cannot overlook the large number of sexual assault incidents against women. In September 1995 there was a heartbreaking incident in which three US Marines abducted and gang-raped a 12-year-old girl. The US military, which was targeted by prefecture-wide protests against this incident, has kept talking about "preventing the recurrence" of crimes, but US soldiers just keep committing them.

US military bases are a hotbed of serious crimes and of accidents, and are nothing more than a threat to the daily lives of the Japanese people. We vigorously protest this continuing stream of crimes by US military personnel, and demand the downsizing and removal of US military bases in Okinawa.

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