An International’s Call for Global Solidarity

By Naka (Naka is an international volunteer from Japan)

Initially, my motivation to travel to Jeju came from the unfortunate paradox in which a land of peace and夹缝

scenery could be encompassed by its own exacerbation of military might. The village’s worries from such a paradox are no doubt justified and realistic. Such worries encompass a paramount arm race with China, the rise to a re-

enactment of Korea’s past of the U.S. military’s ‘achostokhara campaign’ and the destruction to a land that is home to more UNESCO World Natura-

Heritage sites in any single location. But since my stay I’ve discovered a much deeper, simpler truth, Jeju being my first international trip. I’ve seen in all the villages the same smiles, tears, hopes and urge for liberation that exist in every corner of the world. It exists in every caring mother or growing child. From Palestine to Okinawa, Brazil to Jeju; we are all an entangled web composed of the same motivations to fight for what we think is true. As the Mayor of Gangjeong recently stated, "Our government and corporation run "Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity" a conference with the aim to offer an alternative counter forum in response to the annual gov-

ernment’s "scorched earth campaign,", such worries encompass a potential "Obliteration of Business" and damage to the environment. As the Mayor of Gangjeong stated, “The South Korean government should enact a law to protect the nature environment in the places they less.” She also expressed growing anxiety over the changes of “Obliteration of Business" and damage to the environment in the villages. The Jeju Island government regrets this ongoing disaster while filling for renewed status. Moreover, it is now seeking to promote Jeju as the world’s first "Environmental Capital" by 2020, a giant international fraud, co-sponsored by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separ-

ated from the rest in a kind of optical delu-

sion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to em-

bracing the whole of nature in its beauty.” It is now my motivation, for no man or woman who acknowledges this simple truth should allow his or her self to accept an island of great beauty to perish.

On June 4, 2013 Magaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, visited Gangjeong to meet with villagers and activists and see the situa-

tion. The visit came as part of a two week visit to South Korea, visiting Ko-

re’s unfortunately numerous areas of struggle for human rights and justice, such as Milyang and Gangjeong. In the afternoon, from 1 pm to 3 pm, a meeting was held in the village cere-

monial hall with the villagers and activ-

ists to hear of their struggle. Sekaggya said that she will take her findings from her visit to Korea and would compile a report to be released in March of 2014. In that time the report will be released to the Human Rights Council in Geneva as well as to the Korean government and publicly.

In a press conference on June 7, the Rapporteur emphasized the need for “impartial and objective" power on participants of peace rallies and guarantees of residents’ participation in national policy processes such as the Jeju naval base project. She said this should be guaranteed, saying, “most local residents pointed out that the biggest cause of their complaints has been the lack of effective consultation process and of residents’ participation in the village.” The villagers are claiming their rights to live in a clean and healthy environment, as well as to protect the natural environment in the places they less.” She also expressed growing concern over the changes of “Obliteration of Business” and damage to the environment in the villages.

Residents need to be assured and/or charged under the “Obliteration of Business” while they carry out their rights to pass a large size development projects. They also get the right to oppose large size development projects. They also get the right to oppose large size development projects.
It was my extraordinary privilege to stand in solidarity with the people of Gangjeong and other supporters during the month of April. Since the morning of my departure from the village I have struggled to articulate my feelings.

As a part of the founding chapter of Veterans for Peace, I have been aware of the campaign on Jeju nearly from the beginning. The consequences of the United States’ exceptionalist dedication to militarization has long been my focus. Before learning of the proposal base in Gangjeong I knew the stories of the Chagos of Diego Garcia, the Inhabitants of Thulus, Greatland, the Chamorros of Guam, and the people of the Marshall Islands. They represent only four of the population of the islands’ lands whose lives, livelihood, environment, whose very culture have been violated by a colonial America that built on a genocidal past. Gangjeong is not unique. Since the middle of the last century, still lack return and retool to reclaim the lands.

The construction of the military bases that forever altered their lives was as inexorable as it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without struggle. While the Maine victory over corporate power serves as a hopeful testimony to organizing each of our countries that has no respect for the environment, none for its human rights. But to all who recognize they were not wanted and had withdrawn their application.

In my witness-bearing narrative, I have sought to highlight the stories of people from places as diverse as Gangjeong and the Chagos Islands, Diego Garcia, and Jeju island. The stories of these people are not unique. But they are the root of other similar histories as well. The stories from the Chagos of Diego Garcia, the Inhabitants of Thulus, Greatland, the Chamorros of Guam, and the people of the Marshall Islands.

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