



Media Release

Wednesday 28 October

Activists from Okinawa and Guam join IPAN Conference and protests at Pine Gap

“Just when will Australians realise that the Pine Gap military installation does not serve our national interests?” asks Nick Deane from the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN).

“This facility, largely run by and for the US makes Australia an accomplice to many of America's questionably legal activities, from invading sovereign countries to the use of military drones in targeted assassinations.

“Looking back 60 years Prime Minister Menzies gave the nod to the UK dropping nuclear weapons on Aboriginal land and 10 years later gave Aboriginal land to the US to host a military facility, Pine Gap, that is pivotal in the event of a nuclear war,” Mr Deane said.

Professor Kosuzu Abe, who will address both the public forum in Alice Springs and the Conference, knows all too well the consequences of a nuclear war affecting the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the ongoing military presence in Japan.

"Military power is not the best provider of security for ordinary

people. This is what the people of Okinawa have learned through the battle for their island. The installation of foreign military facilities on Okinawa has gone way too far. It is simply a form of colonisation and, as such, is unacceptable." said Professor Abe.

"The US Military's recent policy of the 'Asia-Pacific Pivot' does not ensure security at all. All it does is provide justification for the 'other side', in this case China, to increase its military readiness and intensify the conflict." she said.

Dr Lisa Natividad from Guam, another speaker at the conference, agrees. "We in Guam are opposing the militarisation and colonisation of our region. The U.S. military empire continues to stretch its tentacles across the globe to destroy our aboriginal sacred places. Pine Gap plays a significant role as a US surveillance base with drones for air strikes and a missile defence system functioning to militarize the world," she said.

"We are here in Australia as we are facing the same issues of striving for independence from the US and for peace in the region."

The IPAN Conference is on Saturday 1 October at the Chifley Hotel in Alice Springs and a Public Forum, *Secrets in the Centre*, will be held on Friday 30th September also at the Chifley Hotel. Professor Abe and Dr Natividad are speaking at both events.

Contacts: Professor Abe and Dr Natividad are available for interview on : 0448229736 after 11am.

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Professor Abe background:

Department of Policy Science and International Relations Faculty of Law and Letters, University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa.

Beginning with the anti-offshore platform construction struggle in Henoko, Nago City, Professor Abe has been deeply committed to the protest movement against US military bases in Okinawa. Set up an affinity network "Project Disagree" with her friends to protest JP-US agreement in October 2005, she is struggling with continuous non-violent direct actions by loosely connected people. Professor Abe is also one of the sit-inners of Takae, Higashi Village, where the Japanese government has been forging ahead with construction of U.S. military helipads(i.e. Osprey pads) since July 2007.

Professor Lisa Natividad background:

Dr. Natividad is an Associate Professor of social work at the University of Guam. She is a native CHamoru who has research interests that include the impact of colonization and militarization on her people. Dr. Natividad is the President of the Guahan Coalition for Peace and Justice and has shared Guahan's plight with militarization in countries all over the world and at the United Nations.

Dr. Natividad is a core country representative and steering committee member of the International Network of Women Against Militarism and was the chairperson for organizing a meeting of the network on Guahan in 2009. She is featured on two documentaries examining militarization on Guahan- *Living Along the Fenceline* (which was aired on NPR stations throughout the US) and an NHK documentary that was aired on NHK World. She has published numerous articles on the

militarization of Guahan and continues to be a voice elevating the concerns of her people.