

【From MDS Flyer dated April 9, 2004】

Government Must Not Have Its Nationals Killed Under Its Eyes ! Withdraw Japanese Troops from Iraq ! Give Iraq Back to Iraqi People !

The Japanese Government is ready to abandon the three Japanese civilians in hostage who are threatened to be killed unless Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) troops are withdrawn. Chief Cabinet Secretary FUKUDA Yasuo said, "There is no reason Japan should pull out the SDF troops." When a reporter asked him on the responsibility of political leaders, he snapped back, saying, "What responsibility are you talking about? Terrorism is everywhere no matter where you are."

He and Prime Minister KOIZUMI Junichiro are sending us obvious messages. They never mind about the imminent death of Japanese civilians.

In the southern city of Samawah, where the SDF units are stationed, there is no way they can continue what they call "humanitarian reconstruction activities." The US-led occupation forces are killing the Iraqi people indiscriminately. Now it is clear that humanitarian assistance is nothing but an excuse to send troops to Iraq as part of the occupation forces.

Yet, the government insists that the SDF troops should stay, saying, "Don't yield to terrorism." If we let the war-monger Koizumi government continue to hang on to power, the lives of the three Japanese will never be safe and Japan will be engaged more into the occupation forces killing innocent Iraqi people.

We need to withdraw the SDF troops from Iraq immediately. The government must acknowledge that they made a mistake, to begin with, in sending the troops. It is a violation of international law, the Constitution of Japan and even the Special Measures Law for Iraq Reconstruction which strictly confines the areas of SDF deployment to "non-combat zone."

The SDF troops are not welcomed by the Iraqi people as a liberator but watched with hatred as a helper of the invading power. Withdrawal of the SDF units is the only way to save the lives of the three Japanese and to put a break on the increasing number of the Iraqi casualties.

Already, Spain, Singapore, Honduras and Ukraine announced their decision to withdraw their troops. Others may follow as the Iraqi resistance continues to grow. Let us be united with the anti-war movements of the world and demand that the government announce the withdrawal of the Japanese military.

The US occupation forces have dropped cluster bombs, launched missiles, attacked unarmed citizens with tanks, and killed over 40 civilians praying in a mosque. All of these constitute war crimes prohibited in the Geneva Convention.

The Iraqi resistance for sovereignty and self-determination can never be stopped by military force. The occupation forces should stop indiscriminate killing of the Iraqi civilians. They should withdraw from Iraq immediately and hand over the power to the Iraqi people.

Raise the voice of protest to US Vice-President Dick Cheney, who is visiting Japan, and demand Koizumi that the SDF troops pull out. (April 9, 2004)