

G8: urgent statement protesting unreasonable detainment of independent media

Last night (June 27), three Hong Kong citizen journalists who have been registered with the Citizens' Media Center (Sapporo) were detained by Immigration, and were on the verge of being deported. This morning, Susan George (ATTAC France) was stopped and questioned at the airport. Ms George is 74 years old, and her detention demonstrates a lack of humanity on the part of authorities.

#### REPORTS OF DETENTIONS UPON ENTRY AT TOKYO IMMIGRATION

Recently, as the eve of the G8 Summit approaches, we are seeing incident after incident of non-Japanese being stopped at airports. NJ who are coming here for G8 Summit activities (including reportage and convocations), without connections to governments or major press outlets, are apparently being subjected to background searches. 24-hour detentions are not unusual.

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Similar measures on the part of Immigration are forecast to continue in this vein. Japan, as host to this Summit, is a developed country with a democracy. It is shameful for a member of the international community to treat visitors from other countries in this fashion. And detaining, even refusing entry to, international journalists and media coming in for the Summit is a suppression of freedom of expression.

This is developing into a large international issue, with constraints being placed upon the length of stay for journalists belonging to international journalistic associations. Journalists and international media people often have to cover unforeseen events, and cannot always tell Immigration in advance their exact itinerary or schedule. This is normal. However, people having schedules with free days are apparently being turned away at the border. Journalists who are not members of the major media are also coming to Japan, covering the Summit from the point of view of the general public. Suppressing those people's activities is depriving the public of a chance to have their voices heard, and only promotes overemphasis on the reports from the powers that be.

We wish to draw more attention to this problem so that more visitors can come overseas and enter Japan more smoothly. We would like your help. Anything you can do would be welcome.

Further, here is the phone number for Narita Immigration: 0476-32-6774

Also, the G8 Media Network will be having a press conference on Monday, June 30, with the detained media figures and Dietmembers in attendance. More details here as they become available.

(japanese edition: [g8medianetwork.org/ja/node/183](http://g8medianetwork.org/ja/node/183)

, chinese edition:

[inmedihk.net/node/1000328](http://inmedihk.net/node/1000328))

translated by Arudou Debit

Source: <http://japan.indymedia.org/newswire/display/4528/index.php>

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G8 COUNTDOWN: G8 security steps hit as dangerous precedent

KYOTO - Their region having played host to three Group of Eight ministerial conferences over the past month, many in Kansai are breathing a sigh of relief and hoping the security measures that residents, and even summit participants, found excessive are now in the past.

But human rights activists warn the heavy police presence and security checks seen in Kansai are setting a dangerous precedent for next month's G8 summit in Hokkaido and future international events throughout Japan.

In May, Kobe hosted the G8 environment ministers meeting amid unusually tight security.

Several days before the summit, some local media got wind that a ship belonging to Sea Shepherd, the conservation group that clashed with the Japanese whaling fleet earlier this year, might dock in Kobe during the event.

NGOs present in Kobe suspect the rumor, which turned out to be false, was started by Japanese police seeking to justify the huge amount of money being spent on security this year for all of the related summits.

Kobe's Port Island, the site of the environment ministers conference, was a virtual fortress during the event, with traffic heavily restricted, many roads blocked off and hundreds of uniformed police officers and plainclothesmen patrolling the area.

Inside the Portopia Hotel, where the ministers met, guests and visitors had to undergo strict security checks that surprised even the top U.N. top climate change negotiator.

In Osaka, police began warning commuters in late April of security checks in subways for the two-day G8 finance ministers meeting in mid-June.

Traffic checks on the narrow, always crowded streets around the Osaka International Convention Center - the site of the meeting - tested the patience of many Osakans, a group not noted for their forbearance.

But the Kobe and Osaka events were topped by the security at the foreign ministers meeting in Kyoto on Thursday and Friday. Nearly 6,200 police officers were mobilized for the meeting.

Non-G8 visitors to Kyoto before and during the conference discovered that coin

lockers in Kyoto Station were sealed and the Kyoto Imperial Palace, where the Kyoto Guesthouse is located, was closed off.

The Kobe and Osaka meetings saw no major demonstrations. But on Wednesday night, nearly 300 anti-G8 demonstrators marched peacefully through the streets of Kyoto.

Riot police shepherded the marchers through Maruyama Park and the historic Gion district while plainclothesmen, their faces hidden behind white masks and sunglasses, videotaped the demonstrators.

On June 10, Kyoto police raided the office of a local anti-G8 activist and arrested him on a four-year-old charge of illegally applying for unemployment insurance.

On Thursday, a South Korean labor activist opposed to the G8 meetings was forced to return home after being denied entry to Japan.

Cheong Ui Heon arrived at Kansai International Airport on Wednesday and was planning to take part in a demonstration that night, but was detained by Immigration authorities after allegedly being told the purpose of his trip to Japan was too vague.

Jun Yamamoto, secretary general of Asian Wide Cooperation Kyoto, an anti-G8 NGO, said it was clear both the June 10 arrest and the refusal to allow the South Korean activist into Japan were aimed at intimidating those the government fears, and warned the heavy security seen in Kansai this past month bodes ill.

"The G8 summits have provided a dangerous pretext for the authorities to use preventing terrorism as an excuse to violate the constitutional rights of Japanese and the human rights of foreigners entering Japan. As bad as the security in Kansai was, it's going to be worse at Hokkaido next month, " Yamamoto said.

By ERIC JOHNSTON

Source: <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20080628a5.html>

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China and Japan: partners in repression?

Activists on the NO-G8 e-mail list report that three "citizen reporters" from the Hong Kong alternative website In-media, arriving for the upcoming protests against the Hokkaido G8 summit, have been detained by Japanese authorities at the Tokyo airport. Korean activists from KCTU trade union federation have also been barred entry by the Japanese government.

Meanwhile, political dissidents in Shanghai say they have been warned against speaking with foreigners or visiting Beijing until after the Olympic Games.

The Chinese government has blocked web sites on topics like discrimination complaints by Chinese carriers of hepatitis-and anti-Japanese protests over Chinese claims to the contested Diaoyu Islands (at issue in the recent deal

over hydrocarbon exploitation). (NYT, June 26)

The first Japanese warship to visit China since World War II, the destroyer Sazanami, docked in Zhanjiang, a Chinese naval port in Guangdong province, with a cargo of relief supplies for victims of the Sichuan earthquake-hailed as breakthrough in bilateral relations. (London Times, June 25) It seems there may be downside to this Sino-Japanese warming...

Source: <http://ww4report.com/node/5703>

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Yokoso, internationalistas! [How much do you know about Social Movements in Japan?]

\* Intro

Yokoso means Welcome! So we want to welcome you to join the protests in Japan against the G8 meeting there. In 2008, the meeting of the G8 will take place on the most northern Island of Japan, Hokkaido. From the 7th to the 9th of June 2008 the G8 countries are meeting at the Windsor Hotel at Lake Toya to discuss another year about how to save the Climate and how to develop Africa and it is not hard to foresee that it will be another year of talking and declaring without concrete promises and results.

G8 meetings in Japan - compared to Europe - are just taken place every 8 years, so it is hard to keep an continuous mobilisation against the G8 meeting alive. The last one was on the most southern Island of Okinawa. Because of one speciality of this Island, which is that 70 % of all US-Military-Bases are located there, the protests in 2000 against the G8 were mainly organised and dominated by Anti-Military-Groups and with a focus on Military-Base-Issues.

As Japan being part of the industrial highly developed countries, it is interesting that the Japanese movement is very isolated from most of the movements in other privileged countries. Activist ties inside the western part of Europe seem to be very close and also the connection to US, Canada and countries in Latin America is established since decades. But the view towards and knowledge about Japanese social Movements is kind of none existing. An European Infotour with three Japanese activists has been touring Europe to change this. One of their aims is to explain about topics and movements of political left people and groups in Japan and on the other hand to concretely mobilise people to come to Japan this Summer to join personally up with Japanese and Asian activists.

The hope of the Infotour is that it is not just informing about the protests or mobilising people to actually join the protests in Japan, but to also create more awareness for the political movements in Japan. So if the Anti-G8 or other movements in Japan have to face bad state and police repression, as we e.g. did in front of the Italian Embassy to show that we haven't forgotten the brutality of the Italian police in 2001.

\* 5th of July - International Day of Solidarity Actions

There is a big call out for Solidarity Actions in every part of the world. This

time it is especially necessary, cos it starts to be really hard for people to enter Japan. A lot of the participants of the Counter Summit where hold for interrogation up to 13 hours, some of them were made sign a paper, that said, that they have to leave the country before the summit.

There also have been solidarity actions for the G8 in Heiligendamm in Tokyo. It was also reported from Seoul, South Korea that they had a bike rally and a theater play in Seouls City Center and an Radical Art Collective in Manila made poster to put on the German Embassy. This acting together abroad is a good opportunity to tryout again how movements can support and empower each other, even if they can not work personally together. So the slogan for Day of Global Action during the Anti-G8-Protests is "Strike everywhere", calling to perform actions wherever they are.

It costs too much for most of the people to come to Japan. Also the situation in the Philippines is really to precare to come, and if they would have money for it they would want to spent it on their local projects, which is a quite understandable attitude. It is also very ambigous from an environmental point of view to encourage people to actually come to Japan and join the protests, but there is a chance that lies in the personal meeting of people.

All of the Infotour members are part of the antiauthoritarian Group called "NO G8! Action Japan". This group was formed by people from different groups such as Anarchists, Communists and members of Attac Japan as they prepared together to join the protests against the G8 in Heiligendamm as a delegation from Japan. Contacts to the protest movement in Germany 2007 were made during the Infotour before.

One of the activists has also been at the protest side in Heiligendamm. What astonished him most was the idea and the performance of the Camps. To live together, make the plans of the actions and then just go together to block the roads, was a very good and empowering experience, he said.

"NO G8! Action Japan" has defined itself as antiauthoritarian and is based on the principles of the People`s Global Action (PGA) Hallmarks, meaning e.g. horizontally organised, no lobbying. These guidelines are criticizing the way how NGOs are doing politics and try to develop a way besides hierarchial structures. These Hallmarks are not used as dogmatic statutes, so there is also more or less loose contact built-up to some Japanese NGOs.

These NGOs also formed a Network criticizing the G8 meeting, but they range from more conservative like Caritas and WWF Japan to left-liberal. They are working in the fields of Peace and Human Rights, Environment and Poverty and Development.

The biggest difference in the political styles are that they are planning more on things like Alternative Summit, Earth Day or World Youth Summit, which is actually connected to an official G8 meeting called "Japan Youth G8 Project".

"NO G8! Action Japan" advocate instead to do direct actions. But that shouldn't mean that there won't be festivals and other cultural things. Politic and Art is quite connected and so they are also organising cultural events, but more on a D.I.Y. bases.

Besides our essential differences, we still find the idea of a broad network against the G8 useful to spread the critique and powerfully work against the G8 meeting. In Germany it was somehow possible to act as a bigger movement, even if there had been internal struggles.

Such a big network would be a really novelty in Japan, because of the History of the Left Movement groups are extremely divided and normally the different left groups do not work together. So to form a broad coalition, which is one of the aims of "NO G8! Action Japan", is a very big task. But besides all differences, we should overcome the hostile sentiments against each other and work on the real threats.

#### \* Precarity

One of these threats, where a big coalition to work against it is needed is the issue of precarity. In Japan we can see the lack of social welfare very harshly. Compared to Europe, Japan never had such a social system. Before the first economic breakdown in the 1970ies the companies were kind of caring for everything: housing, kindergarten place, health insurance, retirement money - everything. If people get unemployed in Japan, they maybe can receive money from the state for 6 month maximum, but there are high bureaucratic stakes, so actually not many people get it.

#### \* Women Issue

With this system is also strengthening the dependance on their husband. Japanese women are as well educated as the man of the same age. They go through and succeed equally at the same horrible time at the end of their school career, which is called "examination hell", which is held after a preparation year. The Goal is to attend the best Universities, because it is actually the name of the University that matters the most. But still Japanese women are expected to quit their job, which is also much less paid, when they have their first baby, from then on staying at home and caring for the children and their education. Also a structural trick with taxes. The non-main-earner of a family, which is mostly the wife has to pay a higher percentage of taxes, if having income over a certain level. That makes the women get even less money if they work a side.

#### \* Homeless workers

The constant crisis of that high-developed Japanese Capitalism, has driven more and more people out of the work sphere. A lot of mainly male employees coming from the still even more patriarchal structured rural areas to the bigger Japanese cities end up homeless, living in blue self-made Tents on the street, trying to survive on daily labour jobs. The mainstream make them feel ashamed of their situation, they are made feel that they have "lost their face" as they are seen of not being able to earn an independent living. Because of this construction some people even kind of disappear, which means that at first they try to hide to their families that they got unemployed and if that fails, they feel so ashamed that they break contact completely.

Since some years also younger and well educated people are experiencing the worse conditions of the Japanese Labour Market. The work they are offered is often not more then a parttime Job, so they are also called "freeters", a combination of "free" and the german word "arbeit", which in Japan always

stands as an equivalent for "partime-job" in contrast to "employee".

Especially with the freeters there is the connected phenomenon of the so called "Internet Refugees". An increasing number of mostly people in their 30ies are actually living in Internet Cafes: sleeping there on chairs, finding a new day job in the morning via Internet and returning in the evening to the Internet Café Cubicle. These people are considered "invisible Homeless" and because of their growing numbers, more Internet Cafés now also provide shower or you can buy disposable underwear there.

The "Mayday Tokyo" (related to the idea of Euro-Mayday) is since 3 years celebrated around the issue of precarity and was organised with the help of Homeless and precarious working people. Involved are also political groups such as Homeless Support Groups, Freeter Unions, but also groups like "Anti-Capitalist Action" (ACA) or the "Amateur Riot Party" (Shiroto no ran).

\* Repression against Anti-G8-Movement

For this year the "Mayday Tokyo" is seen as the maybe beginning for the protests against the G8 Meeting in Lake Toya. Offices were raided, people were taken into prison for quite a long time. At least in Osaka this was answered by the workers with 4 days of riots in Kamagasaki, the labourer quarter of the town.

\* Migrants

One group of extremely precarious workers are people from abroad. They are - legally or illegally - on the base of the money and societal pyramid. The fifth biggest migrant community in Japan is coming from Iran. Some also had a "Blue Tendo Mura" (Homeless Tent Village) in Yoyogi and Ueno Park in Tokyo, but these communities and their infrastructure including small shops has been evicted from parks by the authorities. There are also groups who are supporting them and that are also loosely connected to other Homeless Support Groups. There is a bilateral Treaty between Japan and the Philippines called JPEPA, which gives Japan the right to dump toxic waste in the Philippines Island and in exchange more Philippines workers are getting work permits for Japan. Mostly this is in the sector of health and people can order "their" nurse with a click on a picture in the Internet.

\* so called Minorities

Other so called minorities that are discriminated by the Mainstream Japanese Society are the Indigenous People of Hokkaido, the Ainu. Also people from Okinawa are not respected as equal to the "real" Japanese citizens. The same with the Korean and Chinese Communities in some big Japanese Cities such as Osaka. Another - old traditional - minority are the Burakumin, which have been some kind of lowest class, comparable to the Indian cast of the "Untouchables". Even today marrying someone with Burakumin Background is still considered a bad relation.

In this sense also the WTO-Meeting in Hongkong in December 2005 can be seen as a good starting point for the Movements in East and South East Asia to come together. Some connections as the Interlocals.net are still existing networks, but freshening up relations with real contact besides writing mails to each

other is very welcomed.

\* Japanese Fascism, nationalism and the newer right-wing - Yasukuni-Jinja and the Uyoku

Actually there is a connection between Germany and Japan, which lies in their common History. This includes being a fascist regime and starting resp. widening up the Second World War. The Japanese Society still tries to cover their Fascist History as an attempt to free the Asian Countries from the taking over of the Western Powers. The Asian countries which has been conquered by the Japanese Imperialist Army tell a different story. For them it was a clear imperialist colonisation with all the negative and brutal impacts that this always has on states and civilians. It is not unusual that some Japanese officials even go as far as denying the Massacre the Japanese Imperial Army did in the Chinese Town "Nanjing" or the involvement of the Japanese Government in the "Comfort Stations". In these Stations women, who were robbed from conquered areas as the Philippines, Korea and Taiwan were forced to work as sex slaves for the Japanese soldiers. Japan has never really deeply apologized for what they did nor really critically reviewed their History, nor have they paid really just compensations to the victims.

Instead state officials along with survivor families, nationalistic to ultra-extremist right-wing, worship the War Dead in the Yasukuni-Jinja (Shrine) on every August 15th. In this Shinto-Shrine the souls of 2.5 Million people are enshrined, starting in the late 19th century, who died for their country going to war and now are treated like Heroes. Among these souls are 14 high decorated militaries from the Second World War, which were prosecuted as "Class A War Criminals" by the Tokyo Trials and executed.

The official visits of Japanese Prime Ministers are always causing an uproar from China, Korea, Taiwan and other countries who had badly suffered under the Japanese fascist regime. So their protests, sadly a lot of them are more or less nationalistic, heaten up the Anti-Japanese Sentiments and celebrating their own countries, which is not the perspective of the left-radical demonstrations which are held by Anti-Fascist and Anti-Emperor Groups against the Yasukuni-Shrine. Also this Shrine is symbolizing the connection between the religion Shinto, the Japanese godlike Emperor - the Tenno - and the Japanese Nationalism, but can't be explained in further detail here.

Another interesting group which are involved in this commemoration of the Dead Soldiers are the Uyoku. Uyoku stands for the ultra-extremist right wing groups and parties (Uyoku dantai), but means a big diversity of styles and politics. Some Uyoku groups have their roots in the criminal mafia-like structures of the Japanese Yakuza. Therefore being not bothered to much by the Japanese Police. Some relate to (German) National Socialism, some costume up as Kamikaze, most of them are still admiring the Tenno as godlike and deny the Post-War Peace Constitution.

After the defeat of the Japanese Regime by the US Military most right-wing groups were surprisingly much on pro-America and pro-South-Korea, which can be better explained in the historical context of them being Anti-Communists or Anti-Leftists. The new right-wing changed that a lot, playing on the more ancient idea of Japan being the initiator and leader in Asia to bring all Asian countries under the roof of Big Imperial Japan. It is also said, that the



ultra-conservative Ex-Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, gave a big push to nationalist and also right-wing ideas, but without this old traditional right-wing style, being himself hyped by youth like a pop star. He was one of the first Prime Ministers making election campaign with a promise to visit the Yasukuni-Shrine, if he will be elected.

The Uyoku are often seen in public, driving black vans with the Japanese Flag and the Emperor Sign (golden Chrysanthem flower) called "Gaisensha". They are also often called noise cars, meaning agitation or propaganda cars equipped with immensely powerful loudspeakers through which they are continuously yelling slogans at the passersby about the Glory of the Old Imperialist Japan, about paying respect to the Tenno and against Russia, which beneath other bad things has stolen a certain Chain of Islands in the Japanese Sea. If confronted with rude gestures, the Uyoku are not daring to threaten the Anti-Fascist physically.

#### \* Anti-Militarism-Movement

Other important movements in Japan are - as mentioned before - the Anti-Military and Anti-US-Base-Movement. Partially this comes from the problems which people have to experience, if there is an Military-Base in their direct reach such as concentrated abuse of women in prostitution. A lot of male-aggressive, patriarchal behaviour of the Soldiers can be seen on the streets. They are often acting as if there are no borders or laws for them, which is somehow true, cos a long time the Japanese (also South Korean and Philippines) Courts were not allowed to judge cases where US Soldiers have harrassed Japanese (Korean, Filipina women).

Also the crash of a US-Military-Helicopter on a University Campus on Okinawa was not the best promotion. But for sure, you always have to have a close look on the single groups of these Movements, cos sometimes they tend to be just against the US-Facilities and don't have a wider perspective of critiqueing Military in general as an subsystem of the ruling system - just being even more filled with patriarchal and hierarchical patterns and structures and with more direct violent impact on enemies. Also during the Iraq-War-Protests some kind of cooperation with the authorities and police against direct action groups made it impossible to work with them.

\* Article 9 and the Japanese Self-Defense-Army (Jieitai) It is very important to have a close look also on the Japanese Army. According to Article 9 of the Constitution (given to Japan after the defeat over the Fascist Regime), the only task of that Army should be to defend the country against hostile military activities against Japan. Therefore they are called Japanese Self-Defense Army (JSDA). But this constitutional control mechanism is now being softened up. This is comparable to Germany, who also send troops to Afghanistan, kind of sneaking slowly their way back to be a military power in the world.

So there is an official initiative next year to change "Peace"-Article 9 of the Constitution. One Anti-Base-Movement in Okinawa is directly linked to environmental issues. In Henoko Beach the US Military is planning a big off-shore Airbase, which is affecting the coral reefs and the animal life there. Protests on platforms on the sea and with the help of the local fishermen are going on for month now and the companies building the Facility on the Reefs are often behaving rude to the protestors.

#### \* Environment

Other environmental issues are anti-nuclear protests, cos Japan has a some nuclear power plants and there are also some alternative communities in the country side running their farm organically. Another big and very militant struggle for an partially environmental issue was fought by farmers and activists side a side against the building-up of the Narita Airport - 2 hours away from Tokyo. Eco-Activism aside from Greenpeace is more spread in the Philippines, where groups like Food not Bombs are often linked to Earth First Groups working on the question of food safety, which is a big and essential issue there or on the rights of indigenous people. An issue that doesn't have to be really thought of in Europe, cos there are no old tribes left.

#### \* Student Struggles

After the 1970ies the Student Movement like in most countries have not been so active anymore in terms of long going actions, University squattings and strikes. The forming of the United Red Army, a parallel to the other former fascist countries Germany and Italy, brought a desaster of internal struggle with it, which negative impact was the torture and assasination of several members of the Red Army itself. But still student fights had brought the Universities some autonomous zones - mostly in the self-organised Dormitories. When the Waseda University in Tokyo tried to take away that right of autonomy of the student over their Dormitory, they had to call the Police, cos there was quite a big uproar among the students and partially militant protests against it. Also a student movement, that is based on being non-sect, has been started last year and will be involved in the Anti-G8-Protests.

#### \* Gay and Queer:

The Gay Community in Japan is compared to the a lot of European towns very small and not very visible in everyday life. A few Radical activists - defining themselves as queer - also have problems with the gay and lesbian communities being very occupied with parties and not having a broader view on power relations or gender issues. Since only some years transgender people are allowed to undergo transition including sex change, but only if they do not already have children or want to have children in the future.

#### \* rebelling of the Youth

Also some younger people kind of rebelling against the Japanese thight, conservative Society Rules e.g. this means like joining Motorcycle Gangs (bosozoku) in smaller towns, some younger people are not leaving their houses anymore or commit suicide because they were bullied and harrassed as unnormal by their classmates (Ijime). But from this kind of "rebellion", you can't expect serious political organisation against the precarious system, they can feel the menace of the system, which is put upon them, but they don't analyze or try to sketch a vision for progressive changes in the society.

More information see:

<http://www.325collective.com/interviews.html>

Für mehr Informationen: Kritik an der G8 Politik an verschiedenen Beispielen (in englisch) [www.web.net/acgc/issues/g8.htm](http://www.web.net/acgc/issues/g8.htm)

Protestbewegung gegen G8 2008 in Japan

G8 Media Network <http://g8medianetwork.org/en>

Homepage of NO G8! Action Japan <http://linux7.sanpal.co.jp/no-g8/>

Media Network <http://g8medianetwork.org/en>

Informationen aus asiatischen Ländern <http://www.interlocals.net>

G8-NGO-Forum <http://www.g8ngoforum.org/english>

official G8 2008 website:

[www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/info/index.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/info/index.html)

[Anti-G8-Infotour 2008]