

Former Nobel Peace nominees meet in Vieques

Look at military influence on women

BY THE DAILY SUN STAFF

Four women nominated in 2005 for the Nobel Peace Prize including two from Okinawa and one from Vieques, met in Vieques over the weekend to learn more about the effect of militarism on women.

The visit, sponsored by The UNESCO Education for Peace at the University of Puerto Rico and the International Institutes of Education for Peace held several activities of solidarity with women in Vieques.

Professor Betty Reardon, founder and emeritus director of IIEP, and two leaders from Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence met with women to learn more about the situation there and the impact of the military presence on women's lives.

Women from the two islands [Okinawa and Vieques]

met to develop solidarity and to generate strategies of action for demilitarizations and human rights," said Anita Yudkin Suliveres, coordinator of the UNESCO Chair at UPR.

The International Institutes of Education for Peace were created 25 years ago by Reardon to strength education, research and action in favor of a culture of peace.

A professor emeritus of Teachers College at Columbia University, she has long been recognized for her theory and practice in peace education, particularly as she brought the female point of view to the problem of militarization.

She is author of several books on the subject, including *Sexism and the War System* (1996), *Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective* (2001), *Learning to Abolish War* (with Alicia Cabezudo, 2002), and *The Gender Imperative: Human Security vs. State Security* (2010).

Collaborating on this book were the two visitors from Okinawa, Kozue Akibayashi and Suzuyo Takazato, leaders of Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence.

Takazato is the director of Okinawan Women Act

Against Military Violence and member of the Women's Network against Militarism.

The feminist activist for peace has worked the theme of sexism and militarism from the experience of women in Okinawa.

Akibayashi is an active member of the Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence.

She is a university professor in Kyoto, Japan, where she teaches courses in gender and peace education and a member of the board for the Global Fund for Women. She is also a militant in several international networks related to peace and security from a gender perspective.

Four of the women, Betty Reardon, Suzuyo Takazato, Nilda Medina and Judith Conde, from the Vieques Women's Alliance were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as part of the initiative A Thousand Women for the Nobel.

Also sponsoring this encounter are the the Vieques Rescue and Development Committee and Vieques Historic Museum, the Caribbean Project for Justice and Peace and Community Based Institutes on Peace Education.