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NEWS STORY

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2,500 Japanese students in Osaka protest against Iraq war

TOKYO, March 30 (AFP)

Some 2,500 mainly university students formed a human chain in

Japanese characters spelling out "No War" in Osaka on Sunday to

protest against the ongoing US-led military campaign in Iraq.

"We cannot forgive this war," Miyako Fuji, 20, one of the rally's

organisers told Jiji news agency. "I want to join together the

feelings of each of us as individuals who oppose the war."

Protesters, who exceeded the 2,000 expected to show up at the park at

Osaka Castle in the city's downtown neighbourhood, carried placards

that read "Stop war" and "Love and Peace" while forming the human

chain after 3:00 pm (0600 GMT), Jiji said.

The protest follows a string of others involving tens of thousands of

peace activists across Japan since January.

According to a poll by Kyodo news agency released Saturday, 78 of 100

people surveyed opposed the military action in Iraq.

A separate poll of 1,846 adults by the leading Yomiuri newspaper

published Tuesday showed 64 percent felt Japan had "no choice" but to

back the United States, with only 12 percent saying Japan had "every

reason" to back the war.