**Michael Kirby**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I convene this first day of the public hearings of the Commission of Inquiry of the United Nations Human Rights Council on alleged violations of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. I welcome those who have come to participate as witnesses. I also welcome those who have come on behalf of government, and civil society, and of the media to watch the proceedings and to reflect upon them.

The Commission of Inquiry was established by Resolution of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations in March 2013. The members of the Commission were appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council in May of 2013. I was appointed the chair. I, Michael Kirby, Former Judge from Australia, my colleague Commissioner Marzuki Darusman from Indonesia, Former Attorney General of Indonesia and Special Rapporteur of the United Nations on Human Rights in North Korea was appointed ex officio to be a member, and my colleague, Commissioner Sonja Biserko from Serbia, a Human Rights Expert, was appointed as a commissioner. We are committed by obligations and by a declaration which we have made to act with independence, impartiality, neutrality, and professionalism. One of the purposes of having public hearings is that we may be judged by the way in which we go about our obligation of inquiry into the alleged human rights violations in North Korea. Another purpose is so that light may be shone on the abuses of human rights which otherwise will not become known to or a concern of the world.

The Commission of Inquiry, once it was established, sent an immediate request to the Mission of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in Geneva requesting that they engage with the Commission of Inquiry and offering for facilities for them to do so. In response, that commission declined to do so, contending that the resolution of the Human Rights Council, which was unanimous, was a hostile act against that country. It is not the purpose of the members of the Commission of Inquiry to have hostility to anybody, and we declare that we have no hostility to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and we will look at the testimony that we receive today as the testimony we received last week in Seoul, in Korea, and we will receive tomorrow and elsewhere in the world, we will approach them with impartiality, integrity, and neutrality.

The persons who come before the Commission of Inquiry will be entitled to make statements, and they will be questioned. We did contact the government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea offering that they should have a representative during these proceedings; however, that contact has not been responded to. We contacted the Supreme Leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea making similar offers and requesting the participation of North Korea, but that contact has not been responded to, and we will in due course provide a summary of the main conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry before the final conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry are reached so that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, if it so elects, will have the opportunity to respond, this being a requirement of due process.

The Commission has a full program for the hearing today, and I would ask the participants to bear with us if we have to move things along. It will be a very crowed agenda today as it has been on all of our hearings, and we have some written documentation, and if anybody who comes before us as a witness feels that they cannot fully express what they wanted to say, they can do so by supplementary written material provided in Japanese, Korean, or English and that will be translated and made available to us. The purpose of the public hearings is to permit the public and ourselves to witness the main points of the testimony.

The first person who is on the list of the Commission for the purpose of giving a testimony this morning is Mr. Ishidaka Kenji, and he is at the table. Good morning Mr. Ishidaka. May I ask you as I have asked all other participants who have come before the Commission of Inquiry to give testimony, do you declare that the testimony that you will give to the Commission of Inquiry shall be the truth?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes, I do.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you. You might tell the Commission something about your background and how you would like to proceed. I think you are going to make a statement to us first and then we will ask some questions. You have provided in advance in the English language a written document. Are you happy if that document becomes part of the record of the Commission of Inquiry?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes, I will.

**Michael Kirby**

Very well, we will make that document Exhibit T1, Tokyo 1, the written document of journalist Kenji Ishidaka testimony before the Commission of Inquiry Document T1. Yes, you proceed as you wish to do, and at the end of your statement, the members of the Commission will ask you some questions.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

My name is Kenji Ishidaka. I am now a journalist. I have been directing and producing some broadcasting corporation department of press…

**Michael Kirby**

It may be more useful if you speak in Japanese.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Then I retired the corporation. I am now a freelance journalist.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes, you can give your testimony in the English language or in Japanese. I think it will be useful you will give it in Japanese.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Then I will select to speak in Japanese. But I would like to speak in Japanese so that my statement will be precise. I am sorry that I confused the interpreters.

Well, at the beginning, first of all, I would like to pay respect to the three Commissioners of the CoI and also people who had been engaged in the investigation. I would like to say thank you to all of you.

My time is given up to 60 minutes. So as Chairman Kirby said that I already submitted the English version of my testimony. If you read it, then the content is almost 3-hour equivalent of my speech, so it is better for you to deepening the understanding of what I am going to say. Do you have this? Do you have my document?

**Michael Kirby**

We have it and we have read it.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Thank you very much. With respect to the abduction issue, it is very deep and widespread, and there are so many questions to be answered. Today, since I was given just limited time, I would like to focus on just 8 points. It would take about 45 minutes. I will speak for 45 minutes, and I am ready to entertain your questions from the Commissioners.

I would like to talk the outline of the abduction issues almost like a bird’s eye view of the abduction issue. First of all - well, tomorrow at your public hearings, you will be conducting the hearing, but the defectors from North Korea, and I think you will conduct the interview tomorrow, and the North Korea defector who resides in Japan will testify tomorrow.

But almost 50 years ago, almost 100,000 people, exactly 93,000 people went to North Korea for eternal residence that caused the special movement for them to returning North Korea. The people who went to North Korea voluntarily and the relation to abduction, my conclusion is that the agents who came secretly to Japan to abduct Japanese nationals, those agents had letters and also photos and also recordings of the people who went to North Korea for eternal residence, and the agents handed these letters, and recordings, and so forth to the families who left here, then told them that if you wish for the safety of your family who live in North Korea then you should listen to us. By threatening them, the agents conducted various activities here in Japan. According to my investigations and in interviews I gained this knowledge. I can give you concrete examples.

Up to now through Japanese media, many people have already known this fact, but the first time you hear about this, you may feel that it is almost impossible, it is almost like a movie, or it is almost like mystery novels. This fact does not sound like a fact, but it actually took place in Japan. So, I would like to go into the detail of the fact to convince you.

Agents came to Japan, and they brought or they used the people in North Korea as a hostage or some way of threatening the family who lived here in Japan, and they threatened them to give the financial support or sometimes they forced the family to abduct other people so that they can keep the safety of their family in North Korea. Shin Gwang-Su, please remember his name, Shin Gwang-Su, a major spy in North Korea. Government of Japan already confirmed that Shin Gwang-Su abducted three persons in Japan and he is on the International Wanted List.

1985 April, he was arrested by the South Korean’s Safety Bureau as a spy, and he was sentenced to life imprisonment. President Kim this June pardoned him, and he went back to North Korea, but the fact that I am mentioning now is related to some of the activities and also the investigation of the Safety Bureau of South Korea and also some of the sentences given by the South Korean authority. 1973, he came to Japan through Noto Peninsula, and right after that, he directly went to Osaka City and visited a lady who lives in Osaka.

He brought the pictures of the son of that woman who lived in Osaka from North Korea, and he also showed her the letter from her son. I am sure she was very surprised. In that letter, we presume that there was a message from her son requesting to cooperate with the man who brought her the letter in his own words. Therefore, this lady allowed this man to live in secrecy in her house for about a month. At the time of the landing in to Japan, Shin Gwang-Su wanted to make sure that his actions were not followed by the Japanese police. He wanted to monitor that he is not followed. That is why for about 1 month he spent and lived in secrecy in her house. This is one concrete example of how the family members of Japanese persons were used as a hostage. Therefore, she later cooperated with him.

**Michael Kirby**

[Unclear] (00:16:58) as one of those 93,000 in 1959. What is the link between the 93,000 that came over? Why did you tell us about the 93,000 and then you jump into Shin, what’s the connection?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

The 93,000 people who were returnees who went back to North Korea – well, actually, the lady who lived in Osaka is the mother of one of these returnees, the 93,000, and her son was a returnee.

**Michael Kirby**

In Japanese please.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Her son was one of the 93,000 who still lived in North Korea, but the mother, she was in Japan, living in Osaka. The Returnee Program sometimes was targeting only the children or sometimes the siblings, or sometimes the entire family. Some members of the siblings and family members stayed in Japan and some of them returned to North Korea. Shin Gwang-Su, the North Korean spy came to Japan and suddenly appeared, rang the doorbell of this lady’s house in Osaka and suddenly showed the letter and the photo of her son living in North Korea and threatened her with that. He spent 1 month there to make sure that the Japanese police was not following him. After that, he undertook various activities in Japan. In the 1980, he kidnaps a chef working in a Chinese restaurant in Osaka to bring him back to North Korea. This incident had the involvement of three North Korean Japanese people living in Japan. All these people had some kind of relationship with North Korea and the Returnee Program, these people’s siblings, wife, or family member were in North Korea.

The three people cooperated with Shin Gwang-Su, followed his order, and kidnapped a chef working in Osaka whose name was Tadaaki Hara, and he brought this man to Kyushu where there he was met by other spies from North Korea who sacked him, put him in a bag, and forced him to get on the vessel to take him back to North Korea. This abduction of Mr. Hara was undertaken with the cooperation of the three Korean Japanese people whose family members were part of the Returnee Program, so therefore living in North Korea, and there are many other similar incidents and cases as this one. Sometimes there is cooperation of people who were part of the Returnee Program and sometimes the actual persons who were part of the Returnee Program undertook the abduction. This was one of the earliest cases of abductions.

Another case is abduction of Yutaka Kume who was working as a guard man in Tokyo and who was kidnapped in 1977. The perpetrator of this abduction is still searched by the Interpol. However, he is not in the official list of the Interpol, so I will not disclose his real name. But his name was - we will call him Lee Soon-il. He lived in Tokyo, and his sister was part of the Returnee Program and lived in North Korea. So Lee Soon-il, a little bit before this kidnapping incident, receives a phone call at his own home, and on this phone call, he speaks with an individual who claims that this person has the photograph of his sister who is living in North Korea and he also has the audio recording of the voice of his sister. So come to a park nearby. In this phone call, he was ordered to undertake kidnapping of a Japanese national. The sister who was part of the Returnee Program who went back to North Korea was supposedly very weak and in ill health. Therefore, in order to protect her, he had to follow the order of this man. Therefore, he undertakes kidnapping of Mr. Yutaka Kume who happened to be someone he knew already. He lures him to a trip to Noto Peninsula in Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan and undertakes abduction. The way he lured him to Noto Peninsula was a money-making deal. There in the Noto Peninsula, he works together with other North Korean spies to undertake abduction and passes Mr. Yutaka to the North Korean spy, and since then he has been missing. This man actually is part of the 17 people who is in the official list of the government, the abduction victims, and he is one of the earliest victims of abduction among the 17.

I have been talking a bit more in details about these abduction cases and the presence of these returnees to North Korea from Japan in a way was used in a way and facilitated the abduction of Japanese people to North Korea, it is clear that the presence of these returnees was facilitated, in a sense that they were used as hostages. The abduction is indeed very tragic and cruel I believe. Also, the fact that the returnees to North Korea were forced to be involved in these abduction schemes. I also would like to talk a bit about the fact that one of these returnees who were a part of the abductions was actually sentenced to execution in North Korea. Shin Gwang-Su is also involved in what I am about to tell you.

In 1980, Shin Gwang-Su again kidnapped this chef in Osaka, but before that, he was living in Tokyo, and he was living together with a lady who was a Korean Japanese in Tokyo. For 3 years, he lived together with this lady, and after 3 years, he tells this lady that he is going abroad, and he disappears from her sight. A bit later, Shin Gwang-Su sent her a letter with a detailed address in Pyongyang. However, he didn’t use his own name. He used the name Ryeo Jai-yul, a fake name in this letter. The content of this letter said the following. He writes in this letter that I have given you 2 million yen in the beginning when we started living together, and then soon later that money increased to 4 million yen under her keeping. So he requested in this letter to bring this 4 million yen to someone he knows in Yokohama. I talked directly with this lady, so therefore, I have been writing about her in my book and in TV programs that I appeared in, and what she has told me…

**Michael Kirby**

What is the name of your book?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

The book that I wrote is called the ‘Abduction Order of Kim Jong-il,’ and it was published in September 1996.

**Michael Kirby**

Is that translated into English?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

It’s not translated yet into English.

**Michael Kirby**

I think we have a copy of it. Now, there are many cases referred to in your written statement. You can take it that we know of these other cases from your statement. I think it will be more useful if we have your assistance during the limited time to address the analysis that you have given. Because you have given some analysis in your submission as to when they occurred, how the North Koreans look on the abductions, what was the purpose of them, and what has been the impact of them. I think that is what will help us most.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Well, then in that case because the details are already mentioned in the English language report that I have already submitted, I will not mention that at this time and instead, I would like to talk about the overall analysis.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes, go ahead.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Why did North Korea kidnap Japanese people? That is what I would like to answer now, is that okay?

**Michael Kirby**

One could understand kidnapping a nuclear scientist or a person with special skills in electronics, but why a chef, the guard? It does not appear on the face of things to make much sense, or a housewife, or a student?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

I think at a high level, there are two major objectives of abduction. One is in the case of abduction of the chef in Osaka for example, abducting Japanese people and taking them to North Korea and to hear how they grew up, their personal story, how they work et cetera, et cetera, and then they return to Japan with that information, and they pretend to be that person, they live in their apartment, they move soon after, and they obtain Japanese passport. In obtaining identity – stealing the passport and becoming the Japanese person that they kidnapped. With Japanese passport, they can go anywhere in the world. That was the case at that time, except for North Korea. North Korea was an exception, but anywhere else they could go freely. Of course, North Korean spies can go back to their country, but once they pretend to be Japanese, they can travel to different countries to build the base for various actions. For instance, Shin Gwang-Su who kidnapped the cook, he went to Hong Kong and Thailand to develop the bases for North Koreans, that is already learnt. In other words, pretending completely to be Japanese. That is one thing.

Another is going to Japan, pretending to be Japanese, and conducting espionage activities. Actually, they need people to train these people, educate these people to become true Japanese so that they can pretend to be Japanese, such as teaching them Japanese language or giving them up-to-date information about Japan. So the spies are trained by the abducted Japanese back in North Korea. That is the second purpose. For instance, in 1987, the Korean Airlines aircraft was bombed and the perpetrators were two persons, one of which was a man, and they both had Japanese passports. This person who was caught in Bahrain or died of suicide had this passport of Shinichi Hachiya and Kim Hyun-hee is the female perpetrator, and she had the passport by the name of Mayumi Hachiya. In other words, these two spies if they had committed suicide, then for the time being, it may have not been known who did this act. At the end, they might come to surface. However, they may have mistakenly thought that the bombers were Japanese. In other words, the spies were trained to be able to pretend as Japanese. So they come to Japan to have a Japanese identity. That was the second purpose of the abduction.

I would like to have a broader perspective in analyzing abduction overall. The reason why they conducted abductions? In a simple word, I would say the DPRK, since its establishment, has set up their strategic aims or goals as the following, and that goal was that socialist revolution has succeeded in the northern part of the Korean Peninsula; however, the southern part is in the midst of that process of revolution. Using whatever method and means possible, they wanted to do something about the Southern Korea. In other words, terrorists and other violence was not excluded. Using whatever means possible, the North Koreans wanted to really absorb the southern part of the Peninsula to make that part also a socialist country. That is what Kim Il-sung has reported on in the People’s Congress which was publicized to the rest of the world, and that has always been the biggest and ultimate purpose and target of the country.

In June of 1950, Kim Il-sung, his secretary with the agreement of the Soviet Union actually invaded the South Koreans, and this is clear from the various documents disclosed afterwards. But the US and UK military landed on the Peninsula, and therefore, revolutionary unification with violence was not successful. Since that war, the DPRK changed its course and strategy and instead they tried to have people in the southern part of the Peninsula that would really follow the intention of the north and build an administration in the south that will follow their intentions and have a rational and legal way to really integrate and unify the Peninsula, the two Koreas. To do that, there have been many spy or espionage activities. That is called the spy activities towards the south or in the southern part of the Peninsula.

During the Korean War, the US army or military came in and progressed to Busan and the North Koreans had to withdraw and therefore, they were not successful in unifying the two Koreas. One purpose was to distance the US from South Korea and also isolate United States was another purpose of the DPRK, and that was one of the means that the North Koreans tried to use.

Now, we are talking about abductions of Japanese nationals, but Lebanon in the Middle East was another country where one female was abducted, and this female was able to flee DPRK. But there is information pointing to other possibilities of other abductions elsewhere. But in many different countries, the North Koreans tried to isolate the United States and that was one of the major purposes.

**Michael Kirby**

Is whereabouts of the Lebanese abductee known? Would she be available to give testimony to the Commission of Inquiry?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

I think the Lebanese Government or the journalists, back then there was newspaper coverage there, so I think there must have been journalists covering the story. I cannot really publicize openly, but I can look into this and provide some information about that.

**Michael Kirby**

If you can have any information, provide it to our Secretariat, and we will deal with it with such discretion as is appropriate to the case. Now, you would better move on because we are running out of time, and I do want you to explain to us please the standpoint of North Korea, how they perceive this process, standpoint of the Japanese Government, and the fundamental purpose of the abduction. I think that is the core of your paper. Would you come to that now, please?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Okay, the issue of abductions. It has been more than 30 years since abductions actually took place. Now DPRK for the 13 abductees said officially that 5 survived and 8 died and that was actually the information they gave in 2002 when the then Prime Minister Koizumi visited North Korea, and the 5 survivors came back to Japan as well as their families later. However, the 8 that they said were dead, for those abductees, what we found out later soon was the information, the death certificate and other documents about these 8 were false or fake, and the locations and the timing of their death were not true, except for Megumi Yokota, the certificate had the same stamp of the same hospital and also the remains of the dead abductees, the DPRK said that they do not have the remains because of the flooding and other natural disasters, but that was really unfounded and very untrue.

In 2004, Japan and DPRK, the Working Level Meeting was held and Megumi Yokota who was abducted at the age of 13 or so, North Korea said that she had already passed away; however, in 2004, the DPRK said that this is the remains of this female, and the then Bureau Chief Mr. Yabunaka of the relevant bureau was dealing with DPRK and they conducted DNA analysis, and there were many DNA of multiple men, males. From the perspective of Japanese, as far as abduction issue is concerned, we think that the DPRK has been lying to us all along, that is the impression that we have.

On the other hand, what about the DPRK side? In 2002, Japan DPRK Summit Meeting was held in Pyongyang for the first time and that was the time of the Prime Minister Mr. Koizumi who visited Pyongyang, and he met with Kim Jong-Il who was the ruler there and met with him, and that was in September of 2002, and at that time, Kim Jong-Il admitted that they abducted Japanese, apologized for the deed, and in the following month, the 5 abductees were returned to Japan. Then why did Kim Jong-Il admit abductions and return the 5 survivors? Why?

As for that reason, I think that admitting abduction and returning the survivors would give the impression that this issue is already solved and then that would lead the way to normalization of diplomatic ties between Japan and DPRK. That was I think.

**Michael Kirby**

Was the payment of the large sum of money, do you know about that? Was that publicly disclosed by the Japanese Government?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Large sum of money is allegedly paid. I think that was not the case. I don’t think it was not paid behind the scenes because in 2002, Kim Jong-Il admitted abductions and apologized and returned the survivors. I think Kim Jong-Il thought that the abduction issue is already settled. I think he thought that it was possible to make that impression and the normalization of the diplomatic ties will happen, and then as a result, huge amounts of money, in DRPK view that money may have been considered as a compensation money for the deeds that the Japanese did on the North Koreans during the war, so I think that was what they expected, the huge amounts of money is that kind of money. That is the impression that I got.

**Michael Kirby**

There was a reciprocal apology by Japan in the Pyongyang Declaration providing an apology by the Government of Japan in respect of the wrongs done during the Japanese colonial administration and war? So they were mutual apologies in the Declaration I think.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes, so once they had mutual understanding and the normalization of the diplomatic ties, when that happens then in 1965, Japan normalized its diplomatic ties with the southern part, which is South Korea, and if I remember correctly, it was $900 million back then that was extended as economic assistance to the south at the time of the normalization with the South. Therefore, DPRK must have thought that once this issue is settled and normalization of ties are realized, then huge amounts of money will be provided to North Korea in the form of assistance. I think DPRK believed that, Kim Jong-Il believed that, that is why I think he admitted the abductions and returned the survivors, and he was thinking that this will really bring the matter to an end. However, even after that, we found out that the information they provided to us about the dead abductees were not true and they are very cruel and until today, normalization has not happened between Japan and DPRK.

Thinking of that, the DPRK from their perspective, they admitted the abduction and then they returned the abductees and then they thought that this case would be resolved, but Japan did not actually do something that they expected. They cannot really normalize the diplomatic ties. So I think that the DPRK side also felt like they were cheated by Japanese Government. In 2002 and in 2004, Prime Minister Koizumi visited North Korea himself, but after that the abduction situation did not improve because I think that DPRK felt like they were cheated by the Government of Japan and both parties really felt cheated. I think that is the reason that the abduction issue has not been solved up to now.

**Michael Kirby**

The fact that the bones that were returned were shown by DNA analysis to be not connected with the family of the alleged victim was a reason that then threw doubt on the statements made by the [Unclear] (00:47:56) and I should say also the form of the death certificates and the commonalities of the death certificates as if they had all been written at about the same time all threw doubt on the story that the other 8 had died whilst in North Korea, and therefore, threw open the uncertainty of the position not only of the remaining 8, but of a very much larger number who were suspected to have been treated in a similar way. Without openness and full disclosure, that has left a real cloud of uncertainty over both the total numbers and over what has happened to those persons in North Korea, and that is not solved by simply closing the door and asserting that you have provided all the necessary information because that assertion is not trusted by reason of the doubts that are cast on it by the DNA evidence and by the unsatisfactory nature of the death certificates. Is that it?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes, that is correct.

**Michael Kirby**

Let us move on then. When did the abductions cease happening or have they ceased happening? In your submission, have there been any abductions since 2002 when the statement was made the Government of North Korea and the apology tended? If so, if there have been abductions since then, could you identify them or when they happened and where?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

I do not know. Probably, the coastal line of Japan, the security has been heightened by satellite. Not just Japan, but also US satellite has heightened probably the security and also spy ships of DPRK, they used to come to Japan and they dispatched the rubber boat to abduct the Japanese, but I have not heard that happened after that. But I am not saying that they cannot do it for 100%. I personally believe that there has been no abduction since then, but I am not ruling out 100% the possibility of abduction.

**Michael Kirby**

[Unclear] (00:51:05) the Commission of Inquiry about the total number of persons abducted from Japan in the manner that you have been describing, because we have had conflicting figures given to us, and it will be ultimately the duty of the Commission of Inquiry to report to the Human Rights Council about our estimate of the number of persons who have been abducted in total.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

The Government of Japan and other journalists do not really know the exact numbers. For example, 2002, the DPRK returned 5 abductees to Japan and Hitomi Soga, one of them, and the journalists and also the Government of Japan did not know that Hitomi Soga was abducted. Also 1997, I, myself, discovered that Megumi Yokota was abducted at the age of 13 But at that time, the Government of Japan even did not know that Megumi Yokota was abducted by DPRK.

**Michael Kirby**

What the Government of Japan learnt from the five who were returned from the features of the manner in which the abductions happened, from the details of the very large number of people who were thought to have been abducted whether they reported or whether they live near the coast opposite North Korea, whether their reported disappearance coincided with features of the abduction, whether there were other common elements that could appear to link them to the type of person, age, capacity, skills that would make them likely suspects. They would surely be a way a profile could be drawn which would give a fair degree of accuracy about the total number who are probable or highly probable abductees. Has that kind of analysis happened?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes, we do have many types of analyses, and I included that in this paper. There are a few types of abduction modes. One from coastal line, forcefully taken. Sometimes they were beaten, put in a bag, taken by rubber boat, and taken to the ship. It is one forceful disappearance. Second method is lure them out for something good like they can do some special trading with DPRK or if you go to DPRK, you can get engaged in lucrative trade, so victims are lured out, from Europe sometimes and through Moscow, they are flown to DPRK. In that case, that they were deceived so that the victims wanted to go over there. It is almost like abduction of a kid, like showing the candies or asking the child that the mother wants them to come. That is the second case. The third type of abduction mode is that the ships, spy ships sometimes meet the Japanese fishing boat and sometimes they have to keep the secret of the spy ships so that they really had abducted the fishermen from the ship. Terakoshi Takeshi, he was in the fishing boat, but three of them were taken to DPRK, and in 1988, he wrote a letter from Pyongyang, and for the first time, the family in Japan learnt that he is still alive in Pyongyang. One of the three groups Takeshi Terakoshi still lives in North Korea and married with local woman, and the mother lives in Japan, she can visit him often. But many Japanese believe that Mr. Terakoshi was abducted forcefully. I personally believe that he was abducted, but Mr. Terakoshi who lives in DPRK said that he was saved by DPRK ship, that is public comment. The Government of Japan cannot say that was abduction, but it is in fact abduction. That is the third mode of abduction. So three types.

Thinking of these different modes of abductions, we cannot really say exactly how many were abducted. I do not think - nobody knows the exact numbers, but coastal mode, the forceful disappearance from coastal lines of Japan, that I cannot disclose the particular condition there, but I included that in my paper with many reasons that those people were forcefully taken, and I would say 50 to 100 people were taken from coastline. That is my personal estimation.

**Michael Kirby**

Can I ask you this question? We haven’t made much progress in return since 2002. We are going to have the assistance of some families, we are going to have the help of testimony from families after you, and so they will explain the pain and tragedy that abduction can cause to families. So we will have testimony on that matter. We have what you say in your document. The question I would like to ask you is, is there, from your reflection, because you have done a very thorough analysis of this over a very long time, is there some way of thinking outside the square to try to break the present impasse that has occurred? Have you thought of any way that the Commission of Inquiry could propose that might reactivate under the regime of Kim Jong-un, a new approach that might not just be assertion, counter-assertion. Is there anything the Commission of Inquiry can do that will go beyond just writing a narrative report because we want to go beyond just writing a narrative report? Have you any suggestions of some initiative that could be taken that might succeed that hasn’t really been tried?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Well, it is a very good question. It is very important question too. Diplomatic activities, military activities like saving the abductee from DPRK, but with respect to diplomatic activities, I am an amateur, outsider. The Government of Japan has done the economic sanctions and so forth and Prime Minister Abe, his man visited DPRK this year, and I think that they are also thinking of many ways to break through. Your question is what can you do as CoI, right? But I think concrete fact must be collected so that they can dispute. You must collect the fact and analyze them against the history and the political situation and make sure that these are the facts which cannot be allowed for the purpose of the humanitarian activities, and then you will report that to the Council so that DPRK is proved to be the country which has been violating the human rights in the tragic way and also deplorable way. The fact will be revealed to the world. You communicate the fact to the world. I think that is the best.

In terms of concrete methods like magic, I cannot think of any such magic bullet. However, as I said earlier, the bilateral negotiation between Japan and DPRK is something that both parties are willing to start. Given this situation, and because of the fact that both parties think that the other party is lying, what is important is to have a frank and open discussion so that we can dissolve such suspicions. Japan thinks that DPRK is lying. DPRK also probably thinks that Japan is lying to them from long time ago. So this sense and feeling of suspicion that the other party is deceiving needs to be dissolved and clarified. The first step first of all is for the DPRK to clarify the entirety of the truth under the abduction issues and that should be the first step to go forward I believe.

**Michael Kirby**

Now, I think the other members of the Commission may have some questions for you. Commissioner Darusman.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Thank you. Mr. Ishidaka, thank you. You started by bringing out the perspective 50 years ago, 93,000 to be exact, Japanese nationals went to North Korea to resettle? Is that correct?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

It is right, and there is a record at the immigration office.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Now, then in the course of your presentation, you shifted to Mr. Shin Gwang-Su who you said abducted three persons.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes.

**Marzuki Darusman**

What is the relation between your telling us about 93,000 returnees and the abduction, what is the connection between that because are you implying that 93,000 would now qualify as abductees, and should it be the concern of the Commission of Inquiry to address the 93,000 returnees? If so, why? I am a bit confused about the connection between 93,000 and your telling us about the abductions. What is the connection between them?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Well, this is a very complex issue, and I think it is very hard to understand at the first hearing. However, as I said in the beginning, the 93,000 people were not forcibly abducted, that is not the case and that is not what I am saying. However, for example, in the case of Shin Gwang-Su, and in the case of such North Korean spies acting on the Japanese soil for the purpose of abduction, they utilize these children and family members of people who are living in Japan who are part of the Returnee Program and who are now living in North Korea are used as hostages, as a material to threaten the Japanese people living in Japan to cooperate with them, that if you do not cooperate with me, then we cannot guarantee the safety and wellbeing of your children or of your family members living in North Korea. In that sense, the returnees to DPRK are in a way hostage, are used as a hostage, that is what we can say. But at the same time, I am not saying at all that 93,344 people to be precise, who were returned to DPRK, who moved back to DPRK were not forcibly abducted. They chose through their own free will to go back to DPRK with the belief and idea that they will be living in the Paradise on Earth. Paradise on Earth was a keyword that we heard a lot at that time, and they believed that North Korea is a wonderful country, that was the propaganda that they have heard, and this is something that even the media reported at that time that North Korea actually is a socialist country that provides free education, free medical care, it is indeed a Paradise on Earth that was the publicity that was made at that time, and based on that belief, over 93,000 people have moved from Japan to North Korea. But then, from testimonies of the defectors from North Korea, it became clear that actually they saw hell in North Korea rather than paradise. But what I am saying to reiterate is that these 93,000 people, returnees were used as hostages, were used as a material to threaten the people who were living in Japan as part of the concrete examples, that is what I was saying.

**Marzuki Darusman**

You mentioned in your text here that the whole nation of North Korea was involved in abduction. Can you clarify that?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Basically, I also mentioned about this in 1996 in the book that I published in 1996. Kim Jong-Il is the absolute leader of the country, who made a clear order of abduction, and under his clear order, the abductions were undertaken. There is clear evidence to support this statement. Considering the political situation of DPRK, Kim Jong-Il, and even his father Kim Il-sung had absolute authority, and no one in the country can not follow them. Of course, I am not saying that the whole entire country of DPRK undertook the abduction, but we can safely say that the facts that the absolute leader of the country was absolute authority has given order of abduction, we can say that this is same thing as the country, the North Korea, undertook abduction. It is not the case that some fraction or some illegal group within the DPRK undertook abduction. That is not the case. It was an order given through the national order, and in that sense, we can say that it is a state-sponsored crime.

**Marzuki Darusman**

One last question. On Page 3 at the bottom, you mentioned that you went to Korea in 1995 and interviewed a person who helped Shin Gwang-Su with the abduction. Can we have the name of the person that you interviewed? Do you have the name of the person that you interviewed?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

It was in 1994, in August 1994 that I first learnt about the incident of abduction of Japanese people, and since then, I have been researching, investigating the abduction issues, and it was in 1995 that I was able to interview one of the conspirators of Shin Gwang-Su who was also arrested at the same time. His name was Kim Gil-uk [ph] (01:11:36), and since he committed extremely grave crime, he was given, in 1990s, in the first hearing, the life imprisonment. Later on, he was granted an amnesty and released after a visit by the Japanese head. So he was released in 1990 and he left the prison at that time. This man actually was in Korea, and it was in 1985 that I decided to interview this person directly because that was the only way to know the truth that I cannot just rely my investigation on papers and documentations. That is why in 1995 I interviewed this person, and at the time of the interview which was undertaken on a road, on a public road, he cried and admitted to undertaking abduction, and with tears he admitted that he was extremely sorry for the victim and for what he has done. I have actually a video of this interview. Are you interested in watching it right now if you have time? I would like you to think about why he admitted to everything at that time. It is only a 2 minute and 30 seconds video. At that time probably, I was…

**Michael Kirby**

There are other people who want to speak to us including families. If it is 2 minutes and if it is ready to be shown, we will see it immediately.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Two years before the abduction of Mr. Hara, he was preparing the abduction of another Japanese. But at that time, the abduction condition was not prepared so he has given up on abduction, and he has established, before his arrest, for 17 times, he has been going back and forth between DPRK and Japan for such activities.

Two days after, I spoke with him over the doorbell of the door. “Do you know about this fact, do you know about Mr. Hara? “Well, I do not know, I do not know. “Well, we have undertaken investigation. We know about the fact.” “I do not know. I really do not know. “I know you value your own life, but we still do not know the whereabouts and the wellbeing of a Japanese person. Do you know Shin Gwang-Su?” “Yes.” “Please we still do not know the wellbeing, whereabouts of the Japanese person. I would like to know.” “I was just being used. I just followed Shin Gwang-Su. I feel sorry. That is the only thing I can say. “Why did you do such a crime at that time?” “I don’t know. It was something that Shin Gwang-Su did.” “You do not know, but you had your own thoughts. You took part in this plan?” “He asked me to follow him. He asked me to lead the way, that is all, lead the way in terms of the directions, that was all.” “So what you said in the trial was all true?” “It is true, yes.”

**Michael Kirby**

How do we identify that? Do you know the name of the person who is the subject of your questions in that video? What is the name? Just a moment, we are not getting any translation.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

His name was Kim Gil-uk. But however, at the time of the video, we did not give the name of the person, and we hid his face because at that time he was not the official suspect under Japanese Government in Ipol, but his name was Kim Gil-uk, and I really would like you to think about why he admitted to his crime. His name is Kim Gil-uk.

**Michael Kirby**

We will mark the video film which is just mentioned to the Commission of Inquiry as Exhibit T2, a video showing questions directed to Kim Gil-uk.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Can I just, a final question Mr. Ishidaka? What is the relation between your interview and the abduction of Megumi Yokota? What is the connection? Is there a connection there?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

This person and the abduction of Megumi Yokota, there is no direct relationship. Tadaki Hara was the victim of the abduction, and Kim Gil-uk worked for Shin Gwang-Su who abducted Mr. Hara. So Kim Gil-uk, the one that was interviewed in the video helped Shin Gwang-Su abduct Mr. Hara. This person is wanted under Interpol since 2006.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

I will ask Commissioner Biserko if she has questions.

**Female Translator**

Use the microphone please.

**Sonja Biserko**

According to your analysis, where these abductions were planned…

**Unknown Male**

Own mike please.

**Michael Kirby**

These matters should have been checked before the Commission of Inquiry sat. Please check the microphones before we participate in the next session.

**Sonja Biserko**

According to your analysis, where these abductions were planned? Randomly or were they planned and pre-selected people who were abducted? This is one question, and second, whether this time of abductions, when they started in 70s, whether there were any Japanese groups involved in that, [Unclear] (01:19:37) groups or having in mind that appeal of the DPRK at that time was still strong?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Two questions?

**Sonja Biserko**

Yes.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

The question about whether it was planned, as you saw in the video, the first question about whether it was really planned or not, for Shin Gwang-Su abduction of Mr. Hara supported by Kim Gil-uk, yes, it was planned. It was planned, and the purpose was, as I said before, Japanese person Hara, Tadaki Hara, they were after his passport, the identity as a Japanese, that is what they were after. And Shin Gwang-Su who was the North Korean spy, after the abduction of Mr. Hara came back into Japan once again and he got a Japanese passport as a Japanese national, and he was able to travel to other Asian countries to develop or build the basis for North Korean activities, and he was arrested in South Korea, but at that time of arrest, he entered actually South Korea with the passport in the name of Mr. Hara. So, it was planned in the case of Mr. Hara’s abduction. But if you ask me if other abductions were planned, I don’t know. It may have been more coincidental because it may have been a fisherman that they encountered in the sea or maybe it may have been the case that an agent just entered Japan and abducted somebody that they met and maybe it was the case that on the beach or on the coastline maybe they just brought a Japanese that they got as a prize.

**Michael Kirby**

Please don’t make speculation, just answer.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Okay. The second question about whether Japanese groups were involved, the law enforcement in Japan has looked into this whether there were Japanese groups involved in Japan in any abductions. There has not been any evidence. But hijack in 1970 occurred, and it was the aircraft named Yodo-go and there was this criminal group, nine hijackers that hijacked this aircraft of a Japanese airlines, and the aircraft was nicknamed Yodo-go or Yodo, and these hijackers are referred to as Yodo-go Group. So this hijack took place in 1970, and these are Japanese and a few of them I think maybe received some instructions from the North Korean Command, and they were involved in the abduction of Japanese nationals. That was the involvement of a Japanese or Japanese nationals in the abductions of fellow Japanese.

**Michael Kirby**

I think they were subsequently convicted, they were convicted and sentenced and served a time in prison, is that correct?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Actually, these criminals that hijacked the aircraft and were involved in abduction - actually, they are still in North Korea. They are not arrested. They are still in North Korea now.

**Michael Kirby**

There were some arrests, is that not correct, friends who were related to the perpetrators?

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Two persons were arrested by the Japanese police. One was the person who came into Japan, and in 1988, I think it was in May that that person was arrested. The other one, Yoshimi Tanaka was arrested for counterfeit US dollar bills. But both of the two arrested died already. Two out of the total 9 criminals were arrested. But for these two people, there are no direct ties with abduction.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Could I have one last question, Chairman? Mr. Ishidaka, on Page 4, you mentioned here that Shin is already wanted internationally for these abductions and then this sentence that follows: There is information that he was involved in the education of Megumi Yokota after she was abducted and brought to North Korea. Could you clarify this? Shin Gwang-Su is a Korean, and how would he be involved in the education of Megumi Yokota? Thank you.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Well, it is not publicly confirmed. This is based on the information that I personally received. So, it is not confirmed by the Japanese Government. But my information says that abductees are brought over to North Korea and then to the location where they were lodged. Shin Gwang-Su, the spy came and served as a person teaching this Megumi Yokota who was only 13 years old at that time, and it is likely, it is quite – it is not a fact that has been confirmed, that this is information that I received saying that he is likely to have been involved in the education of Megumi Yokota.

**Michael Kirby**

Just one last question from me. Given that one of the purposes was identity theft, securing a Japanese passport, passing off as a Japanese citizen, do you know in respect of the 183 who appear on the large poster, the 183 possible, probable, some highly probable, I am showing - the officer is now showing the 183. I think it may even be 186 on that poster. Do you know if a stop order has been made on the use of their passports? Is there enforced a stop order so that if anybody tries to use the passport of the 183, the Japanese nationals that that will sound a warning in immigration exits and entrances throughout the world? Do you know that? If you don’t know, just say I do not know.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

I do not know exactly what’s happening, 186, these people, given the situation where they went missing, they are believed that - it is highly likely that they have been abducted by the North Koreans. Again, this is just based on information, and this is information that is likely and the police is acting on that. I do not know about the passports.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes, thank you very much. I would like to thank you Mr. Ishidaka for your assistance to us today, and thank you for the statement which you prepared, which will be of assistance to us. We will take into account what you have told us in preparing our report to the United Nations Human Rights Council. You can stand down now. Thank you very much.

**Ishidaka Kenji**

Thank you very much.

**Michael Kirby**

I now call forward members of the families of abducted persons, perhaps all of them can come to the table if there are sufficient places. But we are going to be taking evidence in the first instance from Mr. and Mrs. Yokota, Mrs. Arimoto, Mr. Izuka Sukuukai. Could those persons please come forward? If other members of the families would like to come forward and sit at the table, they will also be welcomed to do so.

Thank you very much for coming forward to assist the Commission of Inquiry. We are grateful to you for your assistance, and we pay our respects to you and to your families for their suffering. May I ask you all please if you are agreeable to declare before the Commission of Inquiry that the evidence which you are about to give to the Commission of Inquiry will be the truth?

**Mr. Yokota**

Yes.

**Sakie Yokota**

Yes.

**Arimoto Arimoto**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

Do you declare that the testimony that you are about to give to the Commission will be the truth.

**Izuka Sukuukai**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

It would be best in future if the officers could check the equipment before witnesses are asked to come forward. Mr. and Mrs. Yokota, and Mr. Arimoto, and Mr. Izuka, have you decided which ones of you will go first, who is going to make the first statement? May it be appropriate that Mr. and Mrs. Yokota, who are the parents of Megumi Yokota, should give the first statement?

Will the officer please pour out a glass of water so that the witnesses have a glass of water in front of them?

**Mr. Yokota**

The other day I talked to you, so Sakie my wife, I would like her to give her testimony.

**Michael Kirby**

Yes, your reference is to the fact that we met yesterday with a group of families and organizations that help families of abductees and possible abductees, and we spent about an hour with your group, and we have already, in that respect, heard your testimony. But this is in open public hearing, and it is for the purpose of a record and a transcript which will be reported to the United Nations. You understand that is the purpose of today’s proceeding.

**Sakie Yokota**

Yes, we do.

**Michael Kirby**

You go ahead, Mrs. Yokota, and tell us your recollection of the events concerning your daughter Megumi.

**Sakie Yokota**

I am the mother of Megumi Yokota. Megumi was a perky girl. She liked singing, very nice, and she loved animals, nature, and flowers. When she was in my house, she always brightened the atmosphere of the house. She was so perky, and I really felt grateful that she has grown so nicely. But 1977, November the 15th, evening, she was practicing badminton at school with two other friends, and one by one they went home. And at the cross-section, she left with other friends and then came home, came to the direction. It was just around the corner her scent disappeared, that the police mobilized the great group of people and the police dog sniffed Megumi’s pajama. However, the scent of Megumi suddenly disappeared at the corner right before my house, and we did not really know what happened. We were at a loss why she did not come home. We were overwhelmed with the disappearance. So I brought younger twin brothers of Megumi, I called out her name Megumi-chan, Megumi-chan, and I looked for her continuously. But I could not even see her shadow, and I asked her friends and teachers that Megumi has not come home yet. Do you know anything about her? But everyone said that she just said goodbye at the gate of the school. She is not at home, why? So it was really casual. Nobody thought that it will be such a big deal. I was thinking that maybe she would come home soon. I looked for Megumi everywhere. I called everyone. We were so worried. However, since then, we could not learn anything about her. Niigata Prefecture police mobilized the largest number of the investigators. But it was almost like a smoke, she suddenly disappeared, and 20 years past, it was really long, long time we did not know at all about what happened to her. We also appeared in a TV program 5 or 6 times with her photos. Have you seen her somewhere? Please contact us if you have seen her. All those programs other people can find their relatives, but with Megumi, nobody gave us information. We almost went crazy. I really remember the memories of how we happily spent our days in those areas, and really those memories actually depress me so much. Whatever we did, we could not learn about her at all.

But something happened in 1997, for the first time, we learnt that Megumi Yokota exists in Pyongyang. She was abducted by the DPRK agent. Secretary of the Parliamentarian told us that Megumi is in Pyongyang, and it was the first time that we learnt her whereabouts. Every time that murder took place, or every time the remains or the dead bodies or some skeletons were picked up by the net of the fishermen or some rotten bodies were discovered in the sea, every time we were contacted by the police and we felt almost we are going crazy that we just went there every time the contact came and tried to look for Megumi. But 1997, for the first time, I learnt the whereabouts and then we felt so good that she is still surviving.

**Michael Kirby**

Who told you in 1997 that your daughter is still alive?

**Sakie Yokota**

1997 Ishidaka-san first wrote the article – excuse me, he wrote the book, ‘The Instruction of the Abduction’ and that was the book that he wrote in Gendai Korea, and he had information about a girl who was abducted. A meeting was held in Niigata, and people in Niigata learned that a young girl was abducted, and they all knew that it must be Megumi, so they also contacted us.

**Michael Kirby**

And then you say in 2002 you had further news. Just describe what that further news was in 2002. Politician was Mr. Koizumi, the then Prime Minister of Japan?

**Sakie Yokota**

2002 was the time that the Prime Minister Koizumi met for the first time with Mr. Kim Jong-Il, and five abductees who were all here in Japan, the DPRK confirmed five people, and the remaining eight were all dead, that is what DPRK said. Ms. Arimoto and all of us were shocked. We waited for such a long time and why our children died, and we felt so bad. But we strongly believed that Megumi still survives, Megumi is still there, and we have been still waiting for her and trying to save her.

**Michael Kirby**

Did you get any news about Megumi from the five who returned or from any other source?

**Sakie Yokota**

They spent the days with Megumi in a village. That village was almost like a district for the abductees so that those people spent days with Megumi, and Megumi and Kim Young-nam. Kim Young-nam was a South Korean man, and he was at the coastline of South Korea, and he was abducted again by DPRK, and Megumi taught Japanese to that person, and she got married with him. I do not know she was instructed to marry him, I do not know, but they got married and produced a girl called Kim Hye-gyong.

**Michael Kirby**

Have you met their daughter? Have you had the chance to meet their daughter?

**Sakie Yokota**

Not yet. Since then of course it is a great joy for us because we spent such dark days, and we are so happy that such a young girl was produced by her. But her condition, my daughter’s condition is being dead, and the daughter was also told that her mother was dead. So by physically seeing her probably proves that her mother is dead. So I do not want to admit that my daughter is alive. If we admit that she is dead, then we cannot save her anymore. So I cannot make decision and cannot really make a step further, and we have not seen her. That is why we have not seen her yet. The remains of Megumi, they claim that Megumi is dead, and her remains were brought by the Director General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yabunaka, and the remains was in a white vase, and he handed that white vase to us, and I told him that we do not believe that this remain is Megumi’s because we strongly believe that Megumi is still alive. But the white uniform, white blouse uniform and also jump skirt - photos, who was filmed, I think that 6 months after the disappearance, and I have also seen the photo of her in adult, and she wore a white coat or black coat and standing by Mercedes-Benz. I saw the photos for the first time grownup, and we looked for her, looked for her. We wept so much. We cried and we screamed for her. For the first time, I saw her in the photo, and we really were so sad. We looked for everywhere last 20 years, and now she is in Pyongyang, and we felt so bad. I finally discovered her, and still we cannot save her, and we said sorry for her, her younger brothers, and my husband, and I wept so much that we still cannot help her.

**Michael Kirby**

Was DNA testing performed on the remains that were given to you as the remains of your daughter, and if so, with what result?

**Sakie Yokota**

DNA test was conducted by two different labs at the Teikyo University’s Lab and also the Police Agencies Research Lab, so they were conducted twice at different places. And the result from the Teikyo University was that there was no DNA from Megumi, and they discovered two different persons’ DNA from that same remain. So, they concluded that it is not the DNA of Megumi.

**Michael Kirby**

How old would Megumi be if she were alive today?

**Sakie Yokota**

She was taken at the age of 13 and 35 years passed, so 48 years old, and this year’s October, she is going to be 49.

**Michael Kirby**

Have you any idea of what the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea wanted in seizing your daughter because I think they have admitted that she was living in North Korea?

**Sakie Yokota**

I have no idea what they wanted. Most people who were abducted were adults. But in our case, it was a 13-year-old child. She was only in the first year of junior high school. She was a little bit taller. She was 1 centimeter taller than what I am now. So maybe I thought that they thought that she was an adult in the dark or maybe they had other objectives in kidnapping her. We have no idea what their objectives were.

**Michael Kirby**

I ask Mr. Yokota if he wishes to add to what his wife has just said.

**Mr. Yokota**

We were introduced to the story of Ahn Myong-jin who is another DPRK spy, and what we heard is that this spy was about to escape from Japan, but then he encountered accidentally Megumi, and he feared that Megumi will report to the police, and fearing that, he abducted her. That is what we heard. The child is protected by the Human Rights on Children that it is illegal to abduct a child under 18 years old, and Megumi apparently had insisted, had cried many times to go back. But then no one listened to her. But one explanation that was given was that they had thought that she was an adult. But actually they found out that it was a child and that therefore the perpetrator was scolded later on for having mistakenly abducted a child instead of an adult. We feel that the real reason may be was that Megumi witnessed the escaping of the spy, and therefore, fearing that she will report to the police, they abducted her.

**Michael Kirby**

I will ask my colleagues if they have any questions for Mr. and Mrs. Yokota. Mr. and Mrs. Yokota, thank you for coming and for making your statement. We realize that it is a very painful thing for you to have these memories revived, and we are grateful to you for sharing them with us, and we will share them with the world. If you would just remain there for the moment, I will now ask Mrs. Arimoto.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Thank you very much. My name is Kayoko Arimoto, mother of Keiko Arimoto. My daughter was in London. She was to study for 1 year in London. We were all against her decision, and my Keiko was a very shy girl. She was very shy in front of other people, but at that time, when she decided that she would study in the UK, she was very insistent. Even though the entire family was against her will, she really insisted on going abroad to study. She was going by herself, and if some accident happens, I would be very worried, that is how I felt. However, she really insisted on going to the UK.

It was in 1983, at the same time as her university graduation, she left Japan, but since then, she was abducted and then until 1988 when we received a letter from DPRK we had no idea where she was. On August 9, we received this letter saying that she will be going back to Japan, so we were about to go to the airport to pick her up. But then, before that we wanted to make sure that she was actually taking that flight so we contacted the travel agent to make sure that she was on that flight, and we found out at that time that actually the flight was canceled, she canceled this ticket. We asked about who canceled the ticket. We did not know who it was, but it was not a Japanese person. It was a European name. The cancelation was made under someone with a European name, and we had no idea what happened. We did not hear from her. At that time, that letter was dated September, August.

Later around mid-August, we also heard another information from the daughter that she actually got a job offer to do some investigation, market research, and so therefore she will be going away, and then she will be writing soon when she arrives there at the destination. My daughter always wrote with a clear date on the letter, the clear date as well as the month. But at that time, when we got the new letter, it was dated October, but without any specific date. She actually wrote mid-October, but since then, we have not heard from her at all. Five years later, in 1988, on September 6, we suddenly heard a phone call from someone that we do not know from Hokkaido. This person told us about her son being in Europe and then in the 1980s has disappeared since then and that person got a letter from her son who wrote in the letter that Keiko Arimoto was with him as well, and since there was a contact information, we decided to contact you. We have no idea why they happen to be in Pyongyang and living there, but that is what we have heard from the son, and the only way we can go forward is to ask the government to help us. But by receiving this letter, we were able to go forward.

This lady in Hokkaido said that it is only the Socialist Party of Japan who had any connection with the DPRK, so we have to ask the Socialist Party. That is why we visited the Socialist Party headquarter and secretary from the Party was there. But then, we did not hear from the Socialist Party at all. We waited and waited. Therefore, we decided to go to the Lib Dem Party, which was the ruling party at that time in Japan. That was already in the autumn of that year. I think it was already October or something of that year that we went to Tokyo again to visit the Lib Dem Party headquarters. We brought our letter to the father of current Prime Minister Mr. Abe, his father, Shintaro, and then we also went to the police department as well. The police undertook some investigation. We had about 1 hour at the police headquarters, but the police’s answer to us was that if something, the kidnapping occurred in Japan, it is something that is under their jurisdiction, but because this occurred abroad that is not under their jurisdiction. The police department offered to take us to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that was the end of the story.

**Michael Kirby**

Then, I think in 2002, you were introduced to Megumi Yao, and you were told something, is that correct?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

No, that is not the case. We did not get any accurate information. Since then, there is no new information that we were given up until today. In 2002, we were told that our daughter was also dead, and Yokota-san, however, at that time said clearly that Megumi must be alive. But we, on our part, were extremely worried because we had received this letter. When we were told that our daughter was dead, we thought and we believed that our daughter was dead that she must have been killed, and felt that all our efforts for searching for our daughter has been in vain.

**Michael Kirby**

[Unclear] (01:58:30) concerned that your daughter had been involved with a group of political activists concerned to hijack a Japanese plane? Did anybody ever tell you that or not?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

No, not at all. Keiko my daughter, well, in the testimony of the person who said that he kidnapped Keiko my daughter, in this testimony that from late 1970s to early 1980s, the wives of the criminals and perpetrators of the Yodo-go hijacking undertook in Europe, the kidnapping of Japanese people, that is what we were told.

**Michael Kirby**

Did any of them admit to you that they saw kidnapping of your daughter?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Yes, there was. It was the wife of the – her name was Yao Megumi, Megumi Yao, she was the wife of Yukata Shibata [ph] (02:00:04) who was one of the perpetrators of the Yodo-go hijacking. Yao Megumi met me in a hotel in Yokohama for the first time, and there at that time, Megumi Yao who was really in tears, and she apologized, she was on the ground expressing her deepest sorry as soon as she entered the room in this hotel in Yokohama.

**Michael Kirby**

What was the expression of sorrow about, what was she feeling sorry about?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

That she deceived Keiko and sent Keiko to North Korea, she kidnapped Keiko, that was what she was sorry about. She was sorry about kidnapping her and deceiving her and taking her to North Korea, that is what she was sorry about.

**Michael Kirby**

Did she admit that she had kidnapped your daughter? Was that from London or from some other place in Europe?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Copenhagen was where the kidnapping took place.

**Michael Kirby**

Did she have any identification of your daughter or not to prove that she had a connection with your daughter? Or not?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

At that time, she did not have such evidence, but in 1995, the Japanese police brought a photo of Keiko to me asking to identify her whether that is truly our daughter, and we said yes. That time, the police told us that the picture was taken together with Kim U-Jul [ph] (02:02:22) who was a spy from DPRK. They cut out the part of Keiko of that photograph and showed it to us.

**Michael Kirby**

Were you ever shown a photograph of your daughter with another person at Copenhagen Airport?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

No, we have not seen any such photo of Copenhagen. But the photo that was brought to us was a photo of Keiko alone. We heard that Keiko was abducted from Kastrup Airport in Copenhagen.

**Michael Kirby**

Did you hear from the abductees who were brought back to Tokyo from Pyongyang following the visit by Mr. Koizumi and Mr. Abe in September 2002?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

No, we haven’t heard the story of our daughter from these people who returned to Japan. Hitomi Soga who is here with us today said that she met Keiko there in North Korea, and she said she met her in Pyongyang, that the abductees are brought by car to a foreign currency shop and do some shopping together, and Hitomi Soga and another female from Lebanon. This person from Lebanon was talking with Keiko like they were very close friends and the Lebanese lady said we gave birth in the same hospital. That is what Hitomi Soga told me.

**Michael Kirby**

I am sorry, go ahead. Did you later hear about a death certificate alleging that your daughter and her family had died of gas poisoning?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Yes. At that time, I thought this is not true.

**Michael Kirby**

Why did you not believe that to be true?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Because we showed each other the death certificates that we received to see what the causes of the death were, and I think it was Mr. Ichikawa’s family, and they showed us this death certificate saying that his death was due to drowning when he went swimming in the ocean, and his wife was young and still had a heart attack, and that was the reason for the death. So once a spouse is dead and then the other spouse is also dead, I think it was the pattern that the whole family or the couple has to be both dead. I think that was how the DPRK was trying to show the status. I think maybe if they were dead, maybe they may have been killed. But when we showed each other the death certificates, we thought it must have not been true. Therefore, we thought to ourselves that we cannot stop our activities to save the victims of abductions.

**Michael Kirby**

Did you ever receive any remains that were said to be the remains of your daughter Keiko?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

In our case, nothing. No remains, nothing. No more information either.

**Michael Kirby**

Are you still believing that your daughter is alive?

**Kayoko Arimoto**

I believe yes, she is alive. That is what we believe.

**Michael Kirby**

You are now I think 85 years of age and have six children.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

No, 87.

**Michael Kirby**

I want to express the respects for you of the Commission of Inquiry and thank you for coming to assist us with our inquiry, and we are very grateful for the testimony that you have given us, and we are sorry to have had to reopen the wounds of your loss.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

**Michael Kirby**

Mr. Izuka, you are able to talk about your brother Yaeko Taguchi, is that correct?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

Could you make your statement please?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

About Yaeko Taguchi, I talked about her yesterday, but this is my younger sister, and it is clear that DPRK forcefully abducted her. It is clear that she was taken away. Of course, the Japanese police has to admit that this is a fact and it has been done, and she has been recognized as an abductee. However, for information coming from DPRK, they are saying that my sister is already dead and the death certificate and also accident reports were provided, but in anyone’s eyes, it is clear that they are fake. They just made it up. Therefore, we do not believe those documents at all. Traffic accident report that we saw, Mashuku [ph] (02:09:20) Hill is the site of the accident where she collided with a military vehicle, and the remains were buried in a nearby location. Because of flooding, that remains are all gone, that is what the report said. The name and some information on that certificate were blacked out, hidden, and in anyone’s eyes it is rather clear that they are trying to deceive us. It is not true. Therefore, we believe that she is still alive, and they are trying to hide that fact that she is alive, and they are just lying.

What is even worse is the Korean Air Jet explosion, they deny the fact that the DPRK was behind that bombing, and therefore, they do not admit to Kim Hyeon-hui, the perpetrator who was arrested, and they are saying that she is making it up. Also, the person who taught Kim Hyeon-hui Japanese and others that is said to be Yaeko Taguchi, and they do not admit that either. Therefore, they deny everything. Of course, we have investigated this matter as much as we could; however, confirmed information still is missing. But still, from various sources, we hear people saying that they witnessed Yaeko Taguchi, and therefore, of course as to how she left Japan or was forced to leave Japan, we do not know. But it is rather clear that she is alive in North Korea. As long as that is clear, of course what we need to do, including the Japanese Government of course is to save her as soon as possible. In that sense, the bombing of the Korean Air, the DPRK has to admit that, and only after they admit that, can we save my sister.

In 1978, June 10th, since that day my sister disappeared, and she was only 22 years old, and the Japanese police after that tried to trace her, however, despite their efforts, we do not know what happened. According to Kim Hyeon-hui who bombed the aircraft, from the port of Miyazaki, they arrived in Nampo, the ship arrived in Nampo, and then Yaeko was brought to this lodging, guest house. Kim Hyeon-hui made that statement in 1988, and initially, when she said that, we were doubtful. However, we have no choice but to admit that that is the truth and believe that that was the truth we have been trying to save my sister, but there is no confirmed information, including photographs. We do not have photos either. Now she left two children. They were very small, and we felt so sorry about them, and of course, myself and other siblings brought them up. They are over 30 now, 36 and 38 now, and Yaeko Taguchi is 58 years old now. In the past 35 years, she was deprived of the richest moments of her life, taken that away by the DPRK by force, and forced to live in a very difficult, challenging situation as a prisoner in a way. So, I think it is important that we confirm the situation and retrieve her as soon as possible. But it is not only us, the family of Yaeko, it is true for other members here as well. I am sure that there are other abductees and their families that deserve that. But then when it comes to the question of how many total abductees are there, we are asked that question many times, but I think the DPRK, they are the ones that know exactly how many and what happened. Therefore, for us to really understand what happened, it is important that the DPRK Government is forced to provide this list of abductees. I think that is how things should be, and that is the way we need to confirm the facts and make sure that we get them back.

As for the CoI, the Commission of Inquiry of UN, in a way, maybe it might be necessary to sort of force the DPRK to submit such reports and have an investigation in a rather forceful manner. Because in the past we have of course had the support of the UN, but we did not see much results come out, given that - as the Chair suggested maybe we need to think out of the box and approach it differently. Therefore, we are asking that to happen, and we are asking quick actions on this matter. That is my request.

**Michael Kirby**

Your sister had two young children at the time she disappeared, is that correct?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

They were one and a half and two and a half of age and they were being kept in a crèche, and it was the crèche that ultimately telephoned you and told you that your sister had not collected them. That was 2 days after she was expected to collect them. She had to abandon the children?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

No, there is no reason whatsoever to leave them because they were breastfed, they were so young babies, and of course, they were waiting for their mother to come pick them up and they were waiting ever since, but the fact that she never came back. Of course, they do not know the reason why, and they would not understand that their mother is not coming back. But we received this call from the facility where the babies were kept, and it was already 2 days after. Also, we checked with her work, her company, and my sister had been not reporting to the office for 2 days without notice. For a few days, we did not know what happened. So we do not know the reason whatsoever and she was taken away. I think according to DPRK, they were saying that my sister agreed to taking a 2-day or 3-day trip to North Korea, that is what DPRK has been telling us. But think about it, two babies waiting for her, a mother with so small children would never want to travel by herself to North Korea. I think that is rather natural that she would not accept that kind of an offer. With our support, her children are grownups now.

**Michael Kirby**

I think that in 2002, following Mr. Koizumi’s visit to North Korea, you received a death certificate in relation to your sister Yaeko.

**Izuka Sukuukai**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

It said that she had died in a traffic accident. I think that the same cause of death was shown on other death certificates that were given to Japanese nationals at the time. Do you believe that that is a true statement of circumstances of death or do you not believe the death certificate?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

It cannot be believed. I cannot believe what they wrote there because objectively as well when you read the reports of the death as well as the death certificates, it is clear that they are not true, and Kim Hyeon-hui, I asked her about this as well, and this mountain or hill called Mashuku, it is a place where it is so narrow, and it is not wide enough for a truck to pass through, it is going over a hill, and it is so narrow that it must be a fake report, that is what she said.

**Michael Kirby**

How old would your sister be if she is alive now?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

She should be 58.

**Michael Kirby**

Is there anything else that you want to tell us in relation to your sister’s case?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

We have so many information, and some information tells us that she is not so healthy, that is my greatest concern about her. I hope that she is fine. I want to know her whereabouts, whether she is healthy or not, whether she is sick. She often suffered from backaches and hospitals or remedies. I do not think that the remedies or the treatments are sufficient for her. I really want to know the whereabouts of her and also whether she is healthy or she is sick. I really want to see her photos. I really wish to have her photo. That is what I am thinking right now.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you very much, Mr. Izuka. We are sorry to revive the painful experience that you have had. Commissioner Darusman has a question for you.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Thank you. This is a question that is directed to Mr. and Mrs. Yokota and Arimoto and yourself Mr. Izuka. This comes out from an earlier statement by Mrs. Arimoto that she had tried to seek the assistance of the government to find her daughter, and it was years that she undertook that effort.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

It took place in a foreign country.

**Marzuki Darusman**

I am asking this question to all of you. When was it established that the missing family member was stated by the government as having been abducted and not missing. Was it after the establishment of the association or individually were these family members, missing family members already qualified as abductees by the government?

**Michael Kirby**

I add a third possibility that was it after Mr. Koizumi went to Tokyo and came back with a list or subsequently secured a list and the name of your family member was on the list? Was that when you learnt that it was accepted that your family member had been abducted?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

In my case, as I said before, we already submitted the missing persons’ application, but you know the KAL explosion took place in 1986, the incident came out, and they had to admit it was the abduction. Before that I was in a cloud. So there were no special activities. But now we learnt that some people were abducted. So we created an association after that, and I joined it later.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

In my case, 1997 March, the association helping the families were created, and at that time Keiko, my daughter was not admitted as the abductee. 2002 March 11, she was admitted, and March 12, Takagi, the hijacker was taken to a trial, and Miss Yao who gave testimony in that trial mentioned the name of my daughter, and she took her from Europe. At that time, March 12 or actually March 11, it was admitted as the abductee because Keiko, my daughter was not really taken forcefully, but she went there voluntarily, so the Government of Japan did not admit it was abduction. But anyway, that year, March 11, it was admitted.

**Mr. Yokota**

In case of Megumi, 1997, Ishidaka-san’s testimony gave a high possibility of her abduction, and 1997, March, excuse me, 1997 February, the issue was taken up at the Diet Session, and there was high possibility. But officially, 1997, May at the Upper House, Upper House member asked the question that person is a parliamentarian from Niigata Prefecture, and that person asked the question about Megumi Yokota, and the answer was that Megumi Yokota was admitted as the official abductee. So, 1997 May, she was confirmed as an official abductee.

**Marzuki Darusman**

So, it was only after you established the association that the missing family member was admitted as abductees?

**Mr. Yokota**

Yes, this association was established in 1997, March 25, and at that time DPRK themselves did not admit that they abducted foreign nationals. That is why Megumi was not admitted. But the Government of Japan officially confirmed her as abductee in May. But maybe other people suspected that she was abductee like 7 or I think that some other people were confirmed as abductees before Megumi.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Now, I have just one last question, and this concerns the Association of Abductees. What is the position of the association on whether or not there are more than 17 abductees from Japan? Are there views within the association that there may be more than 100,000 abductees from Japan?

**Mr. Yokota**

At the time of Mr. Koizumi’s visit, it was 12. At the time of visit of Mr. Koizumi, it was 12, and Soga was admitted as abductee so she was added, and the mother of Soga was added and also Matsumoto was added later on. So, at the time of Mr. Koizumi’s visit, it was 12, but Matsumoto-san was added later on. But at the time of establishment of this Kazoku Kai, only six or seven were admitted.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Would you be able to state whether the association have any views about the number of abductees from Japan? Would you be able to say Mr. Izuka that the association of Japanese abductees believes that there are so many more abductees from Japan than what is now being acknowledged?

**Female Interpreter**

No microphone. Please turn on the microphone.

**Izuka Sukuukai**

According to the Government of Japan, we know the number exactly how many were abducted. But whether more than 17 were abducted or not those are specialists’ analysis. As an association, we do not investigate ourselves. We do not conduct any analysis so that we are focusing just on the people who were confirmed by the Government of Japan. But we have an impression that there are more than us, so we want to work together with other victims.

**Michael Kirby**

Can I ask each of you if you wish to use this opportunity to speak directly to the government and leaders of North Korea and to say something to them about the pain you have suffered and what you would like the Government of North Korea to do to resolve that pain one way or the other? Is it appropriate for you to start Mr. Izuka? What would you like to say to North Korea through the Commission of Inquiry?

**Izuka Sukuukai**

As for the Government of DPRK, we felt anger, we shared anger to them, but I do not think they actually understood our anger. We have not communicated to them, and even for the nationals of DPRK, I do not think that they shared that information. So what I want to say at this moment is that if the abduction is solved, then the nationals of the DPRK will be happier. The pre-condition is that if we can solve this abduction issue fully, then we can normalize the diplomatic ties with DPRK, which means that we can help them, the Japanese Government can help them so that is a story that we can create. I am sure that the authority of DPRK is aware of that, but I hope that the UN and also other countries will talk to them so that if you solve this abduction case then economically, they will be better off. I hope that you will communicate to them that the DPRK people will be in better condition if they solve the problem.

**Kayoko Arimoto**

As Mr. Izuka said, we share the same feeling. The nationals of the DPRK do not know what is going on outside of the country, so I hope that – it is not just the five or six abductees. All the abductees should be returned by the DPRK. Not just the officially confirmed abductees, but also the missing persons who probably related to the North Korea abduction should be all returned, and if they do that, then massive amount of support, economical support will be provided to DPRK, so I hope that the DPRK people will realize that they will be better off if they solve the problem. Otherwise, I do not think they are ready to solve the problem.

**Sakie Yokota**

My opinion is basically the same as the two preceding comments. Currently, we have Kim Jong-un as the leader of DPRK, and I believe that direct communication between the two leaders, between Japan and DPRK is necessary as we have seen up until now, our lower level consultations and discussions do not really result in fruitful outcome because the message from Japan does not get communicated to the very top through lower level consultations. So I think a better result can be obtained through a more top level, truly top level direct communication. Kim Jong-un is also part of a family. He has a father. He has family members. He should understand how it feels for a family member to lose someone, a beloved one. That is something that I would like to communicate to them through the Japanese Government. These wrongdoings should be stopped from both parties so that we can create a peaceful world from both parties. I hope this kind of communication will be undertaken between the two parties of the two countries. My view is similar to what has been expressed up until now.

In 2008, around August, under the Fukuda administration in Japan, there were bilateral negotiations between Japan and DPRK. At that time, they said that oh, missing persons should be investigated to see if this is an abduction case or not, that this investigation should be completed by the autumn of that year in 2008. However, although that was decided between the two parties because of the change in the government in Japan, this was not pursued afterwards. We have been waiting for another resumption of such a plan every time there was a new administration in Japan, but that has not happened. Therefore, the message and request is that this plan should be resumed and executed so that all victims of abduction can be returned and through such actions, DPRK will also benefit economically. That would also solve food shortage issues for the people of DRPK. My request is that the promise that was made in 2008 be fulfilled.

**Mr. Yokota**

My view is similar to what has been expressed up until now.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you all for your testimony and for your closing comments, which we certainly take into our account, and your record will ultimately be placed on the website of the Commission of Inquiry and brought to the notice of the people of the world as well as the people of Japan and Korea. We hope that in this way we will contribute to greater knowledge of the pain that you have gone through, and that other family members, many of whom are here present as I can see have gone through, you have spoken in a sense for them. If there is any time later in the day we will also hear them that we have statements that can assist us in respect of their testimony, and we thank you all for coming along today, and you are now excused. Thank you very much.

I would ask the interpreters if it would be convenient if we were to – we are running behind, if we were to come back at 1:15. Would that be convenient to the interpreters if we rescheduled the afternoon session so as to take our lunch break now to come back at say 1:20? Is that convenient to the interpreters?

**Female Interpreter**

That will be fine.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you very much. We appreciate your assistance this morning. We will take the next witness Mr. Murao at 1:20 this afternoon and the Commission of Inquiry will now adjourn until 1:20.

**END**