**Michael Kirby**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. We convene the second day of the public hearings of the Commission of Inquiry established by the United Nations Human Rights Council on the allegations of human rights abuses in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The first session of this day will be addressed to issues of human rights arising in relation to returnees and the Paradise on Earth Movement. I think we have three witnesses who are here to give testimony on that matter; Mr. Yamada Fumiaki, Ms. Saito Hiroko, and Ms. Chiba Yumiko. Would you please first introduce yourselves, so that we can introduce your evidence? First of all Mr. Fumiaki, you are here, thank you very much for coming to assist the Commission of Inquiry, and I will ask you as I have all persons who have given testimony before the Commission of Inquiry whether you will make a declaration that the testimony that you give to us will be the truth. Are you happy to affirm that you’ll be giving truthful evidence?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yes, I do.

**Michael Kirby**

Now, we have also Ms. Saito Hiroko and I gather that Ms. Hiroko is here. We welcome Ms. Hiroko, thank you for coming along to help the Commission of Inquiry. Do you affirm that the testimony that you will give will be the truth.

[Japanese]

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you. Ms. Chiba Yumiko, you are here also and do you affirm that your testimony will be the truth?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, I do.

**Michael Kirby**

Now, I think we also have Mr. Kim present. So, Mr. Kim if you are going to give testimony, would you affirm that your testimony will also be true?

**Mr. Kim**

Yes, I do.

**Michael Kirby**

Well, Mr. Fumiaki you perhaps can lead off and tell us something about Mamorukai; the society to help returnees to North Korea and give us an insight into this particular chapter of the history.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Thank you very much. I am the head of the society to help returnees to North Korea. First of all, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to give my presentation on behalf of the members. I would like to explain about the special movement of the returning to North Korea, which created a special relationship between the North Korea and Japan.

This returning movement itself bridged the North Korea and Japan, and also this is origin of the violation of the human rights in two countries. First of all, 1959 December up to 1984, this special returning movement was conducted. I would like you to look at numbers too; 1959 December up to 1984 during this time 93,340 North Korean residents in Japan went back to North Korea. However, among them 6730 Japanese and 7 Chinese were included that were evident in the statistics, and also so called Japanese spouses who got married with the North Korean residents in Japan were numbered to 1828 that is according to the answers given by the Head of the Immigration Bureau at the time of the Lower House Committee and these numbers sometimes fluctuate according to different statistics.

With respect to this movement, please look at the PowerPoint; 1959 December was the starting time and 1960 and 1961, especially these 2 years many people went back to North Korea. So 93,340, among them 80.1% of them actually went back to North Korea within these 2 years and 1 month. In another word, after 1962, the number dramatically decreased and tapered, so only remaining 20% went back in a very few groups. I would say that ’60 and then ’61 were the peak years, and after that dramatic shift in there; why is that? That’s because the people who went back to North Korea started writing letters to the families in Japan, and they started writing that the life in North Korea was very hard, especially financially hard. Lots of things were lacking and missing, and they wrote the fact of the North Korea to the families in Japan and the people who learn about the reality in North Korea actually made the people less reluctant to going home.

So peak years – 2 years were mainly the movement years and Chongryon insisted to continue this special returning movement, so that’s why it kept until 1984. The beginning of this movement; I would like to explain little bit about the reason for that. In the past, this was the understanding of the beginning of the movement. In 1958 August 11th, the Kanagawa Prefecture, Kawasaki branch, Nakatomi meeting of Chongryon; first, the wish was stated by the North Korean residents in Japan, they wanted to go home to North Korea, and then they sent letter to Mr. Kim Il-Sung. August the 13th commemorating the 13th anniversary of the liberalization from the Japanese colonizations, they had the special event, and at that time, the North Korean residents in Japan sent the letter to Kim Il-Sung that they wanted to go back home.

Responding to their wishes, September the 8th, Mr. Kim Il-Sung stated that North Korea will guarantee all their life so that their comrades can come home to their home country. Since then, the returning movement started proliferating into Japan, and North Korean residents in Japan at that time who had difficult time, specially the financial difficult times, they couldn’t really see much of a hope for the future in Japan. Therefore, they wanted to go back to home voluntarily and that was understanding of the past. However, according to the recent research and investigation, it seems like there were new aspect to that. Thanks to the publishing of the new documents; reading the documents from the Soviet Unions and ambassadors in the former East European countries sent some letters, and we started learning new facts. These Nakatomi meetings was said to send the letters in August 11th of 1958, but almost 1 month before that 1958 July the 14th, Kim Il-Sung explained the new policy about North Korean residents in Japan to Ambassador Perisenko [ph] (10:52) of USSR, “That we will be announcing that all the comrades who live in Japan will be solicited to come back to North Korea.”

Two or three years ago, because of economic situation, we could not really provide homes and also works for 100,000 families if they come back from Japan but now we do have the capability of providing houses and also works. We are lacking labors in Pyongyang and also the industrial sites in rural areas. Therefore, we can provide the work for the industrial production and also coal mining and also farm land and if they can have returnees from Japan, then the great benefit, not just from the economic aspect, but also political aspect will be realized, that was the point that Kim Il-Sung pointed out.

Also, the Central Committee of Korean Workers’ Party already worked on the basic preparations so that the North Korean residents in Japan can come back to North Korea and they understood that the North Korean residents in Japan themselves can take initiative proposing the movement of returning home, and the Chongryon, and also the Government of Japan, and also the Government of the Republic can state on those matters. This returning movement itself was initiated by the Kim Il-Sung and also he had scenario in his mind beforehand, and the Chongryon planned it and systematically implemented it.

The Returnee Program proceeded according to such plan, as I explained. The reality of the Returnee Program was as follows; at that time, first of all and as it is the case today, there was no diplomatic tie between Japan and North Korea. Therefore, the Returnee Program between the two countries were undertaken based on the agreement between the two Red Crosses in two countries. The Japanese Government and Japanese Red Cross has received the request of those who wanted to join the Returnee Program and paid for the travel expenses as well as the per diem for these returnees to go to the Niigata Port and leave from Niigata. The actual transportation from Niigata Port to DPRK and any later costs were shouldered by North Korea. The Chongryon as a whole promoted this Returnee Program to make it possible for as many people as possible to return to DPRK. The symbolic keyword at that time was ‘Paradise on Earth’.

Please, take a look at this slide. It might be hard to see, but this is a newspaper that was published by Chongryon; in 1959 on the 7th of September this newspaper article was issued. If I enlarge a part of this article, you can see this. It was only 11 years after the establishment of DPRK and it uses the word ‘Paradise on Earth’ to describe this nation. This keyword was used repeatedly by Chongryon, and this article says the following, “Cements, chemical, fertilizers, iron ores, steels, and coals in all these areas and sectors, the productivity per capita in DPRK will increase beyond the level in Japan.” It also says the following, “The productivity of cereals has increased drastically. Just last year, 37 million tons of cereals were produced and the basic problem of food shortages was already solved. This year we expect the production level of 5.17 million tons of cereals in 2 or 3 years’ time. The productivity will increase to 7 million. Although, it was the case in the past that in the northern part of the Korean peninsula, there was food shortage that is not the case and there is even a surplus, but it is clear even today that this is not true to the fact in reality.”

Chongryon received the support and help from the North Korean Government and through various medias, such as cinemas, projections, photos, and words, they continue to publicize that North Korea was paradise on earth, and in such way promoted the return of people to North Korea. However, unfortunately, there was very few information that tells the true reality of North Korea and that was not considered to be important at that time in that society. This unilateral publicity and propaganda from Chongryon regarding the ‘Paradise on Earth’ was communicated to many people who decided to go back to North Korea based on false information. The claim that they can go back to Japan temporarily after 3 years was also a lie. Chongryon created a committee of Returnee Program around Japan and recruited many people who wanted to participate in the program, created an organization of returnees around Japan, also created a committee on the liquidation of assets for the people who were part of that program, created groups for transport of people to Niigata and decided on the priority of those who will be getting on the ship first. They forcefully made the returnees to decide to go back to DPRK and so it was Chongryon itself who undertook this Returnee Program and send people back to DPRK. As a result, the lives of 93,000 people were destroyed and created considerable difficulty for the relatives and families of these people in Japan. As a result, it created great damages to many people, but first of all, I’d like to talk about the damages to the returnees themselves. The person who will be testifying after me who has experienced being part of the Returnee Program and who later defected from North Korea and came back Japan will be talking.

I, at this point, would like to talk about the main points about the thoughts of these people who participated in the program. Most people thought that they were tricked into going back, so when did they realize that they were tricked? That moment was when the vessels left Niigata Port and went across the Sea of Japan and arrived at the Port of Chongjin, when they saw the first sight of the Chongjin Port that they realized that they were tricked. This is something that many of these defectors commented.

In yesterday’s testimony, it was also mentioned that a personality called Yoo-Gee-Won[ph] (19:45); he was a secretary to the leader and he was also in charge of receiving the returnees who came to and arrived to DPRK, and he arrived in 1963 to South Korea. So I was able to meet this person in Seoul and he also came to Japan where I was able to interview him and the content of the interview was as follows…

**Michael Kirby**

When did he go to South Korea?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yoo-Gee-Won went to South Korea in 1963. At that time, he was influenced by the situation in Soviet Union, and the fact that he was married to a South Korean wife, so he was in danger. So that’s why he fled to South Korea. The timing of his visit to Japan was some time in the late 1990s, but I don’t remember the exact time.

What he said was that he was in charge of receiving the people who were in the Returnee Program at Chongjin Port, but there were some who refused to get off the ship at Chongjin Port. They realized the difference and the gap between the Chongjin Port and the Niigata Port in terms of the poor level of facilities and infrastructure at the port, and when they realized the miserable state and clothing of people who were at the port. Some of the people refused to get off the ship because they said that the same ship will be going back to Niigata Port, so they will be going back with the ship to Niigata, but the police arrested these people and forced them to get off the ship. That’s what we have heard. Similar stories actually were mentioned repeatedly by many people who defected from DPRK and came back to Japan. So many people said refused to get off the ship and panicked. It was clear that there was a huge gap in terms of the economic situation and infrastructure between these two countries.

A child was a part of the Returnee Program together with his or her father from Kyushu, that person was a leader of people who came back to Japan. At the time of the arrival at Chongjin Port, there were people who greeted them with DPRK flags. However, it was mentioned that realizing the lagging economic situation in North Korea, the father was extremely disappointed and he threw away the North Korean flag into the sea. That person by the way has also defected to South Korea and living in South Korea currently. Another lady who fled and came back to Japan said the following; that arriving in the Chongjin Port, her mother was extremely shocked and she was bedridden, and since then she was bedridden therefore the child – the daughter had to undertake all the household works and that was the level of the gap between the economic situations between two countries at that time.

Some letters that arrived from North Korea to Japan also mentioned similar stories. I only have time to introduce you to some of the letters because of the limited time; for example, this kind of letter arrived. This was the letter that was sent in 1962 and a letter that was published in the book by Saiku-Kise [ph] (24:18) that many supplies were not available in the market, but the government claims that things will get better starting next year. Also, the letter said that it is better for the relative to get married in Japan before going back to North Korea, but the person we are talking about has a child of 3-year-old. We were talking about 3-year-old child which means that it’s better that the 3-year-old child to get married before going back, which means that that person should never go back.

When we look at the letters that were sent in the early ’60s, it seems clear of the deplorable situation in North Korea, so that is when the censorship started by the North Korean Government. They took the samples of various letters to undertake censorship, and if the content is problematic, then the letter is refused. Since then many letters used coded languages. This is one of such coded letters, and it says the following, “For those who are returning, please make sure that they bring the secondhand clothing for children, toothpaste, the sockets for electricity, and rain wears, soaps, shampoos, sugars, and shoes, and sanitary napkins, etcetera that moist sanitary napkins were taken away for the returnees program.” Anyone who is going back to North Korea, please tell them that they bring everything that they need, even to one single nail. These letters and these messages clearly communicated the true situation in North Korea and that is why there was sudden drop in the number of participants to the Returnee Program.

I’d like also to show you the following letter. Someone who left Japan also had suspicions about the true situation in North Korea and so therefore this person talks with brother and discussed with his brother said that the true message from DPRK will be written on the backside of the stamp not the letter itself, so please look for my messages and that was around August 1960. The brother receives the letter indeed from DPRK with the message behind the stamp, he keeps the letter. The expeditor of the letter successfully defects from North Korea and goes back to Japan and they got reunited eventually. They still had that stamp and I believe this is a product of historical importance that’s why I still have this stamp and this is the message behind the stamp.

**Michael Kirby**

The stamp which bore the normal imprint of the stamp of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; now secondly you’re showing us some writing, which you say, is on the back of that same stamp giving a message to the recipient in accordance with the preceding arrangements.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

By the way, this is not coded message, because this is in the back of the stamp that it will not be noticed, so therefore this is a normal language used in the message without any coded languages. The content by the way of this message is as follows, “No freedom of going out freely from the village. Older brother you should not come here. Our mother says I want to see you again. Our sister who lives in Toyama must not come here either. What Bunto’s [ph] (29:03) father said was correct.” That is what is said behind the stamp. It means that nobody is able to get out of the village, therefore older bother you should not come. However, the mother wants to meet you again and the sister in Toyama – actually, it says younger sister, but it was actually an older sister. The writer made a mistake, but he tells her not to come, and Bunto’s father is a friend’s father and the friend’s father has always said, “You should not go to North Korea. The Korean War was just over. You should not go back because I don’t believe reconstruction work has gone that far.” This person’s words were true. That was the contents of the message written on the other side of the stamp. There are many evidences like this.

**Michael Kirby**

An enlarged facsimile both of the stamp and of the message on the back of the stamp, and I’ve taken a note of the English language translation of the message on the back of the stamp, and those two documents will be marked as an exhibit in the proceedings; Exhibit 8A and 8B-T. So that the 8th exhibit 8A-T – Tokyo and the other is 8B-T, they are exhibits in the proceedings. Yes, thank you.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

If necessary we will probably be able to get the ‘okay’ from the person who sent the letter. We will try to give you the original if it is necessary after getting permission from the message sender.

**Michael Kirby**

I think this is sufficient as the person should hang onto the original but may have some historical significance. It should be kept in Japan. Yes, please proceed, Mr. Yamada.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

This Returnee Program, before that one other thing I’d like to explain. The people who returned within this program, they had to endure many hardships. Especially going back from Japan to North Korea, people were living in capitalism; therefore, the North Koreans were suspicious of these returnees. Therefore, once they were back, people were separated into three layers; the core, the wavering, and hostile and they were discriminated when they were to fulfill certain functions in society. Kim Jong-Il when he came to power, he had a firmer grip and once there were suspicions about spy in the family; *Magujabi* [ph] (32:42) was the word that was used, meaning that they will be cleaned all out together. Everybody would be captured and will be sent to labor camps or they will be tortured, because people were suspicious that they were spies, so they will be tortured until they said and admitted that they were spies. This is what I heard from one defector from North Korea, and these people have been supported and people were sending money from Japan. Relatives have been supporting the family that went back to North Korea. The relatives here in Japan were also suffering, because families went back. It’s not just the returnees but also the families here in Japan that suffered.

**Michael Kirby**

You mean by saying that Kim Jong-Il had a firmer grip; what do you mean by that?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Well, he succeeded his father and his dictatorship had a firmer grip. He had a stronger dictatorship under his rule. I believe you will hear this, and he created this thought system the *Cheju* [ph] (34:05) Ideology

**Michael Kirby**

The *Juche* Ideology I think, but you say the son was firmer in position of an autocratic form of government?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yes. He made his father become a guard in order to have a firmer grip in the dictatorship, and yes he utilized this *Jechu* idea to create the *Jechu* Political System, so the leader will control everything under this system. This is what happened in the early part of the 1970s.

**Michael Kirby**

…contact with North Korea in much more recent times, since the advent of Kim Jong; as to whether there has been any improvement in the treatment of the returnees since the change of regime from Kim Jong-Il to Kim Jong-un?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Well, I do not have any direct contact. I unfortunately do not have any information to that effect. In the 1990s, one woman came back to Japan. She is not a defector. She came to Japan with an official of North Korea; with a North Korean ticket she came in legally, so a returnee coming back to Japan with officials of North Korea. There are many examples like this, but these are examples where these returnees will visit their relatives here in Japan to collect money – donation. Especially, when these relatives living in Japan are rich, and this woman I’ve talked about played that role when she came back to Japan, she was told to visit her relatives here in Japan to collect money. In the past, the family has been sending a lot of money to North Koreans, so they tried to reject and they did not pay the money that the woman asked for. This woman was threatened by the Chongryon executive.

The executive said that, “We would make you taste what it is like to be in our organization.” Meaning that she will understand how harsh the organization is; the Chongryon as well as the North Korean Workers’ Party, so this is a threat. Although, she was threatened, she rejected to collect money from relatives and she went back to North Korea via China. In such cases, the fee that it took for the travel and also not being able to collect money from the relatives; that person will be held responsible for that and this woman knew that. Actually, this family decided to defect from North Korea and they went to China and then came back to Japan after that. This family economically they are not suffering, however, they were afraid to be persecuted and therefore they decided to leave North Korea, and came to Japan and talked about what has happened to their family.

I was hoping that she would speak today. However, because she has many families back in North Korea, she is not here with us. But there are many examples like this where the families here in Japan had to bear a very heavy economic burden, because they have families in North Korea; these families are like hostages taken in North Korea and the family cannot do anything.

Now, why did Kim Sung proceed with this Returnee Project? I believe there may be five reasons behind this. Number one; after the Korean War in order to rebuild the economy, labor was necessary, and in 1958 that was when the Chinese army went back to China. The Chinese soldiers they took part in the Korean War and many remained in North Korea after that. They provided the labor and necessary skills to rebuild the economy. Under Mao Zedong in China, there was special need for labor and therefore after that the soldiers were brought back to China. In the fall of 1958, these soldiers returned to China; meaning that North Korea had a more severe lack of labor and engineers. The second reason is many facilities have been destroyed during the war; there were no factory facilities. Therefore, North Korea wanted people to bring back facilities from Japan to fill in the gap, for example, the returnees some of them would have skills to process vinyl or using sewing machines, and also people who can create shoes, and people who had the skills of weaving, or automobile repair and automobile maintenance, or people who have been managing factories in Japan.

North Korea made a whole group out of the factory workers to come back to North Korea. The third reason was Kim Il-Sung wanted to show his political strength to the world. Between Japan and Korea, the diplomatic ties were about to be re-established and of course this could have been another reason to bring back many people from Japan. The fourth is to create a lot of agents and spies to send to Japan and also to hold people hostage in order to pursue such activities. Yesterday, Kenji Ishidaka has talked about this. Concerning Mr. Ishidaka’s case, we have talked about this, so I’m not going to go into detail. Fifth, the returnees to North Korea; the amount of cash they were able to bring back was about ¥45,000. This was to be exchanged with the Sterling Pound that was the only amount of money that could be brought into Korea. Therefore, many people asked the Chongryon to keep the money.

There were many people with lot of assets and properties and all these things were given to Chongryon and Chongryon gave people a document saying that they will be managing their assets. Ogi-Won [ph] (42:38) said that when they were suffering in North Korea, they remember that they had this document indicating that they have given some part of their assets to Chongryon, so they sent a letter to Chongryon. However, the answer was that “The country is assuring your life and livelihood you should not ask for what you have given up.” This Returnee Project led to the Chongryon having a lot of assets and that has all flowed into North Korea. However, rather than saying that this was the initial target; once, they started with the Returnee Project, they realized that this is an added benefit and added profit out of this project.

So based on the objectives of Kim Il-Sung, they tricked the North Korean residents in Japan to go back to their country, and I believe that this constitutes objection and kidnapping. The 93,340 people were abducted into North Korea, this is a big crime, and we wanted to clarify this in court. However, they said that the statue time has run out. However, the time passed because all the people who wanted to file a lawsuit were trapped inside North Korea, and they were unable to come back or file a suit and Chongryon and North Korea – just because the time ran out, could we say that they will not be pursued about their crimes? This kidnapping and abduction within this; when people were to board the ship, they were many who started to say that they want to remain in Japan, they did not want to board the ship. Members of Chongryon have written certain books indicating what would happen. They would intoxicate these people. They would give them alcohol and intoxicate them and make them board the ship, and if they still reject, they would say that, “Just board the ship once and I’ll take you back out later.” However, the ship was already notified and these people will be trapped inside one room within the ship.

All these facts have already been written in the book. In other words, this is the abduction and it is the forceful abduction. Including the forceful disappearance or the abduction itself is included in this enormous amount of abduction. The crime of abduction and also other crimes have been conducted by the Kim Il-Sung and also their groups, and this has started from the beginning. Mr. Suh Dae-Sook who worked at the Hawaii University wrote all the facts about Kim Il-Sung. So I would like to talk about this a little bit. According to his book called ‘Kim Il-Sung’, it is written like this – even before he got the leadership in North Korea, he was working as a leader of guerilla. He wrote like this, “If you look at the Kim Il-Sung troop to supplement the number of soldiers, they used the coolies [ph] (46:37) of Chinese and also Kim Il-Sung used the Korean farmers, and they took them as hostages every time they attacked villages and also towns, and then trained them and made them as soldiers. If you look at the procurement of the food; when they get the hostages, then usually forcefully ask the wealthy Koreans to submit money. Sometimes, they attack trains or small villages, so they can procure food, and they threatened the farmers to provide food and also money.” This was the fact that Professor Suh Dae-Sook of Hawaii University collected in his research. I personally think that these methods they didn’t think it was bad or wrong. I would like to give you one more fact that very unique *Chuje* Concept. In many places, I’m sure that you already familiarized yourself with *Chuje* idea, but it says…

**Michael Kirby**

…and I understand it. It is said that many North Koreans don’t really understand it and some of it is very unclear and very vague. The *Juche* ideas appear to be based around a core principle of self-reliance and pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps and finding resilience within yourself and particularly within a pure Korean racial environment. Is that a fair understanding, do you believe of the core idea?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

No, that’s a surface. Just the one aspect of the *Chuje* idea. They explained sometimes like that, but they can also add saying that the Japanese society is like a human body. You need to have a brain to control the body and that brain should be superior so that you can actually work as the *Chuje*, so that the nation should work as hands and legs according to the brain control, then they can get extreme self-reliance and the brain is Kim Il-Sung and Kim Il-Sung is the brain and the nationals are hands, arms, and legs, so the brain is Kim Il-Sung and you must work for him, you must follow his idea. That is the very basic core idea of *Chuje* idea. And the…

**Michael Kirby**

The idea of communism was a global international movement. It’s symbolized by May Day celebrations throughout the world of workers of the world. By its motto, workers of the world unite and by its songs which refer to the universal brotherhood of workers throughout the world. Whereas, *Juche* appears to be a very nationalistic and almost an idea based upon the purity of the Korean race, which is under assault from outside and has to be defended against outside influences. My understanding is correct or not in your view?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yes, that is one aspect of the *Chuje* idea. USSR ideology and also Chinese ideologies were isolated from this *Chuje* idea. I think that the *Chuje* idea was developed according to the needs and demand of the North Korean country development. But Marxism, and Lenin’s, and Engels; this socialism has no common elements in the *Chuje* idea. I would say that those socialism ideas, communist ideas are hostile to *Chuje* idea and Kim Il-Sung used this somewhat cult type of idea of *Chuje* to protect him.

**Michael Kirby**

…for time. It might be useful if you were to conclude soon so that we can have questions directed to you and move on to the other members of the panel for this session. The remaining points.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

This *Chuje* idea, they separated the brain life and also body life and body life is like animal and that the political life or the brain life are the most important things, and this is Kim Il-Sung’s idea and the people who are equipped with *Chuje* idea are the only one who can be categorized as the brain life, and the people who are away from the *Chuje* ideas are just animal life. That was the idea that they taught and Megumi and also the Hitomi had instructor called Song-Gun-Su [ph] (52:45) and I think that Song-Gun-Su’s work was to educate them with *Chuje* idea. They wanted to reform them to be the people who can follow *Chuje* idea and the abduction for them, the center or the core of the North Korean Government do not think abduction was wrong. They abduct them and also bring them into the idea of *Chuje*; this is better for them so that they can be equipped with very happy correct idea and Korean’s actor and also director Cheuni [ph] (53:22) and also I failed to remember another actor’s name, but when Cheuni was abducted and Kim Jong-Il welcomed that person at the port, and that person was abducted but the leader actually went there to welcome that person. They believe that abducting them and inviting them to the country is almost like making them happier. So that’s why we cannot really convince them that what they are doing is wrong and you really have to base on that pre-condition. Time is limited, so that’s all from me.

**Michael Kirby**

…at the end. We’ll take questions at the end. We’ll take [Unclear] (54:22) for each speaker. Yes, thank you very much Mr. Yamada and thank you for the clarity of your exposition and for explaining the history that lies behind the Returnee Movement. Now, I understand that Mr. Kim is not going to give an oral statement. He was sitting at the table with you, but if there is time at the end of the panel, then he can say anything he wants to say, is that satisfactory? Very well. Now, Ms. Saito perhaps if you would make a submission to us now. Thank you once again for coming to the Commission of Inquiry today.

**Saito Hiroko**

Thank you very much. Well, again thank you very much for coming to this session in spite of this hot weather. In DPRK, I experienced various matters and I’d like to share my experience with you. There are frontal side and back side in the reality of North Korea. Frontal view of the apartment; you may think that this apartment is beautiful, beautifully decorated by tiles and so forth, and that is the building in Pyongyang, but if you go back to the back of that apartment, then you can see dark and dirty apartment. In North Korea hiding something dirty or the bad is the best thing to do, so as much as I experienced; I’ve never been to Pyongyang myself, but the life has been always the same. I felt that I shouldn’t keep being deceived, but once you go there, you have to really bear that life. With my Korean husband, I decided to go back to North Korea and Chongryon asked me some questions. Japanese spouses can go home after 3 years of stay in North Korea. Many times Chongryon guaranteed me that I could go back after 3 years. However, over 1800 Japanese spouses thought that 3 years is a short period, so it’s probably okay. The life in North Korea is really a paradise on earth as the previous speaker said that we were told that we were going to the paradise on earth, but that was the hell of the earth, and I really wanted to communicate the reality was the hell of the earth. I’m grateful for you COI people to allow me to share my experience with you.

Now, I would like to share my experience in DPRK. Yang-gang the Hyesan – and the history of the families were already sent to North Korean Government, like person A’s family had this family history and working background and so forth. So before even we went there, the government already knew our background and as soon as we arrived there at Chongjin, I realized that it was a big mistake that I decided to come. Men were wearing very old pants and women were wearing jeogori [ph] (59:13) the traditional Korean clothes, but very, very old. Even though you had financial difficulty in Japan, the situation there in North Korea was horrible. I also saw that the – I’ve never seen such a dire situation even in Japan like 5 or 6-year old boy; he wore a shirt, but the bottom he was naked and people who were onboard saw the reality and realized that it was a big mistake that he decided to come.

I went there in 1961 and at that time, there were already six Japanese spouses approximately, and these people said that they refused to get off the ship, they cried, they created a scene, but one person told me that they were not to hand the luggages and baggages to people who do not have a special sign; a band of sash [ph] (1:00:46). That is why I realized that our belongings will be taken away, and when I realized that I really made a great scene, and later on someone from North Korea told us and persuaded us to get off the vessel, and we will solve the situation after getting off the vessel. So that’s what we did; over thousand people got off the vessel and once we were at the port, we were told to go to a large gymnasium about the size of this room, and we were put into this gymnasium and we were locked in. We were not able to get out.

I had about 10 family members and they were all scattered around sitting in one corner or the other in the gymnasium. We did not talk. We were silent and several hours passed and after that we were taken to places where we are supposed to go. That is how I arrived to Hyesan, a place called Hyesan and there my husband had special skills for manufacturing glasses, because we were from Fukui Prefecture where there are many plants and manufacturers of glasses. We were worried that if he will be able to continue making glasses there, but then we were told to go there, because we had relatives there, and so we stayed there and we lived in Hyesan for several years. But truly during that time, we had shortages of food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. We do get the rice ration for 15 days, but we get one ration portion, which is 15 days’ worth of rice. But if we were to eat normally, then that provision gets depleted in just 1 week, and so we have to find other sources of food but there is nowhere to get food elsewhere.

When we returned to DPRK, they told us that there is nothing to worry about. We did not bring anything from Japan, but that was not the case, and that is why later people started bringing belongings to DPRK; clothing and other belongings. These goods were brought to DPRK and they were exchanged – bartered with food and that’s how we survived for several months, and during that time, many things happened. Because we need to continue our business but I had no idea how we can continue to live. At that time, the food flour was imported from Soviet Union and 700 grams of flour was provided to people who work and those who cannot work him or herself got 300 grams, students got 400 grams of flour as ration.

Of course, the same amount of rice could maybe fulfill someone, but then we had to survive on this amount of flour. How can we survive on this much amount of flour? I had to make lunch boxes for my husband, but we did not know what to make the lunch boxes out of. For a family of three, we had about 1 kilogram of rice ration, which is to last 15 days, but we didn’t know that in the beginning. Therefore, when we got the ration – the first day of receiving the ration, I cooked the whole kilo of rice for the family, we finished it very quickly, so after that we only had the flour provision and that’s around the time when we heard rumors from people around us that there are other returnees coming from Japan to DPRK, and so that is why we started making requests about brining various belongings and goods from Japan, so we can do the barter.

In DPRK, while we were living there, people were working, but then once a year we had to go to various provinces to help out the people there. You can volunteer but there were not many people who’ve volunteered to go to various provinces to help out and work. We had family of six and we brought one of them for such program. My eldest son was working in a company and I told him that, “If you go to a province and if you do some farming then maybe we can get some food, so maybe it would help us out. So why don’t you move to a province?” He agreed that, “Yes, we will. Our family will move to this province and do some farming to the rural area.” So that’s why we sent the family of my eldest son to this rural area that was around 1998.

My son in that year went to the rural area first and I then visited my son where he was living. He was creating farm lands out of mountains. He was planting corns, etcetera, and meanwhile when I saw this landscape of the rural area, I noticed the following. In each of the houses and the properties in this rural area, there are poppy plants that were planted; poppy is used of course for drug production. What I noticed was that at least three or four poppy flowers were planted in between each of the houses and gardens, and that was because they were used to manufacture drugs, because of the lack of medicines. So families used the poppies as painkiller when they had toothache or when they had some health problems to relieve their pain, that’s what it was used. In rural areas in North Korea, each household had a poppy planted. The government actually ordered the planting of poppies. Planting and farming of gardens was ordered from the government, so that’s what was happening.

My husband in 1993 had to use some poppy fabricated medicine as well. His neighbor made a medicine out of the poppy flower – the poppy seed and he took that at that time in 1993, but he died as a result. This was the condition of people in North Korea, but unlike Japan the government did nothing in order to prevent these kinds of tragedies or deaths. The marijuana was planted everywhere in mountains in North Korea, but people there didn’t know how to use marijuana. Anyway, before I went to this rural area what I did was the following; well, the thing is that without black market and black transactions – secret transactions, it is impossible to survive. The greatest way and best way to make money is to send electrical parts and electronic parts to China. It takes about 5 to 6 hours normally to reach to this place in China by train if the train is running normally, but of course there are many disruptions in the train systems or sometimes it takes a day, sometimes we have to wait 7 to 8 hours for the transportation, and even if the train is running, the trains are often packed with people who are going back to where they are from or people who are going to cities and markets to barter rice, and there is not even a window in these trains; all the windows are broken.

I actually experienced riding on top of the roof of the train as well. That’s how I went to a place called [Unclear] (1:11:18) in China in order to make some transaction. It is necessary to go at that time at the cold season, because we need to wear coat to hide the products and provisions that we wanted to sell underneath the coat. I don’t know if you can imagine, but at that time, many soldiers used to put provisions by wrapping them around a rope on their feet, so that’s what we did. We have this gaiter, which is a type of a legging and that’s what we use to put and hide provisions around, not our legs, but our body. On top of that, we would wear a very thick coat and that’s how we get on the train to China. Again, the train is packed, but even there are criminals on the train as well. If people are wearing a big backpack, some people would use razor to cut the backpack open and that criminal would be taking things out of the backpack and would be handing out these stolen goods to their conspirators, because they often act in a group.

In that way, people went to this market in China and people know that you were there to sell things. That’s how we exchanged goods, because there was no other way. Often times, we would pretend that we were selling apples – five to six apples in a bag and underneath the apple, we would hide electrical wires that we wanted to sell, and we would sell it from the window of the train. Of course, our feet is still on the train, but then our body is hanging out of the window trying to sell, but then police are there inspecting as well. We help each with our friends saying, “Oh, we saw a police there, beware of the police,” etcetera. At that time, however, I was alone, so I was quiet, I was silent, and I was standing there and right in front of me, a lady who was around her 20s was there standing with her baby on her back. I think she was also there for some kind of transaction and she was on her way back. In that sense, a lot of people in North Korea really suffered from food shortages, but then North Koreans were really kind, they have kindness in their heart. This lady with the baby on her back; she was standing in front of me, and she was trying to make sure that her baby is not crushed. People would be helping her out saying that “Make sure the baby is not crushed.”

But after 5 hours or 6 hours, the baby never cried, and people were saying that the baby is enoughly quiet baby, but the police came by me and when he brushed by, the police suddenly asked me to come with him. I had to follow the police and I followed him and the train conductor’s room that was where I was taken. I was told to sit down inside and I was locked in. I was sitting there. It was rather comfortable, but I didn’t know what will happen after this. I was sure I’ll be taken to the police and then the woman that was sitting right in front of me, she came along with the police, and I was wondering what kind of business this woman was doing. She only had a baby on her back and she had a very small bag in her hand, and I was wondering why she was caught. But I was waiting and the police came back – this time, he was with nobody. It was just me and the woman. I asked her, “Don’t you want to feed your child; it’s been a long time.” She says, “It will be okay.” I was really wondering why the baby was so quiet even after 6 hours or 7 hours ride on the train.

We had to ride the train all the way up to the terminal station and the police told us that we will be transferred to the police at the terminal station, so we waited there for about an hour, and we arrived at the station, and at the ticket gate, the police was waiting for us and me and the other woman were taken to the Hyesan police. During the interrogation, I was asked where I am staying and I said the address in Hyesan. I was asked where my husband was; I said that he died. But he was working as the President of eyeglass factory in Hyesan. I was asked, “That says that you are Japanese,” and I said, “Yes,” and then the police told me to go back as long as I left all the goods behind. When I was about to leave, I was really worried about the woman. After my interrogation was over, the police told the woman to put the baby on the desk, and suddenly the woman started to cry and I was wondering why. The woman did not put the baby down, she just kept crying and the police also was wondering why. The woman was using a cloth, a wide band to tie the baby on her back, and she took the baby off and laid it on the table, but then I suddenly realized that the baby was probably 18 months old or less than 2 years old; it was a boy, but inside the stomach I saw red blood around the stomach, and the police asked what this was all about. The woman was simply crying and the police suddenly ripped the baby’s torso apart and about 2 kilograms of copper wire was found inside the baby’s stomach. This just told me that this is how far you have to go in order to keep living here in North Korea. I don’t remember what happened after that, because I left soon after.

**Michael Kirby**

Please just pause there and have a glass of water. It’s a very distressing story just pause for a moment. I am sure any human being would understand you’re upset, but especially a mother seeing that happen; a very distressing story.

**Saito Hiroko**

Well, after that, I decided that I will stop doing this copper wire business and I went back to the province with my son and decided to live there together. But we had to do something or else we would not be able to eat. Back in the rural area, my son’s family was on the fourth floor of an apartment, and the group leader was living on the third floor and I rented a room at the far end of the third floor. My second daughter who is alone still in North Korea; my second daughter and myself lived with the group leader on the third floor. When we had nothing to do, the group leader suddenly said that, “Tomorrow first thing in the morning go to the front entrance of the apartment,” and what were we told to bring? It was a big backpack and some scissors. I was wondering what this was about with scissors, ever since we moved to this apartment, well, it was only several months, so I didn’t have any idea what this was all about. It was close to the Hyesan Airport. Of course, it’s an airport but there are no airplanes; it wasn’t being used. But in the morning at 6 a.m., we gathered at the front entrance of the apartment and the clock – actually this was a present from Japan on the birthday of Kim Il-Sung, and so we were able to tell the time, and so we gathered at 6 a.m.

The people who lived in the apartment; there were four families on the first floor or on one floor, so it was a four-story building, so there were six families and I was borrowing a room with the group leader. There should have been 16 families living together, and me and my daughter had nothing to do therefore we brought a big rucksack and a pair of scissors and followed everyone. There was a heavy fog that morning, you can only see less than a meter away. It was very foggy and we were living up in the mountains, so it always turned very foggy, and from there we were to walk about 1-hour, I was asked, “If it would be okay.” I said, “Yes,” and so we went. After walking for about an hour, the group leader suddenly ordered us to go inside and I was wondering why the leader suddenly said that. We couldn’t see what was 1 meter in front of us, and I just followed my neighbors and I was wondering what I was supposed to do. There was this paddy field in front of us. It was fall, it was time for harvest, and rice was put up to dry.

There were these 10 or so stacks of rice put up to dry in the paddies, and one neighbor living in the same apartment took the scissors and cut off the head of these bundles of rice and put these heads inside the rucksack, and I realized, yes, this is rice that’s how we get food. It was not a paddy field that was owned by an individual, it was a paddy field used to grow rice to give back to the government. I was not able to see what is in front of me, but I just tried to find rice and cut off the top and gathered rice, and in about an hour my rucksack was full, and then the fog started to disappear. The group leader said that it was time to go, and suddenly he said, “Come out of the paddy field now.” There were people whose backpacks were still half filled. They had just small rucksacks, it could be already full, but we carried them on our backs and we stared to return, and I realized that we were stealing rice from the field.

My daughter and myself, we both had one rucksack each and we went back home with our rucksacks full, and what do we do with the rice after that? You have these grinding materials here in Japan where what that you make – or motor for pounding rice to make rice cakes, but Japanese motors are made of wood, but in North Korea, it was made of steel and you put rice in and you pound, and then the husks come off, and with that we were able to cook rice to make little rice balls and we made sushi to sell. Back then from China a lot of material was coming in, but of course if we don’t have money, we can’t buy anything. But before getting rice, we would go up to the mountain to pick dandelions and other edible plants found in the mountain. On a good day, dandelions and other edible plants, we will get a pile of them, and we will be able to sell them for a certain amount of money. But after a long time, they were wither away many people would not buy that, so we would sprinkle some water on top of the plants and make the pile seem bigger and more fresh. But in any case, that was how we got the rice and we had to work, and after coming back, I take a walk, and then if I find grass and weeds along the street, I often wonder if there are any edible plants among them.

I still remember those days when we had to find something to eat in the mountains. We also made some alcoholic drinks. We don’t use rice to make *sake*. Acorns and also powered corn is used to make *sake*. You boil the acorns and then you pound them and grind them into powder, and then you make alcoholic drinks. Of course, the government does not allow us to do that. It’s not like Japan, you can’t go to karaoke to enjoy and drink, but the men were really enjoying these liquors that we made and I also learned how to do that.

But during the lunch time, the policemen patrolling around, so you can’t really brew the *sake* during the daytime, and only at nighttime you brew *sake*, but if you see smokes coming out from the chimney of a house, and usually people suspect that the *sake* is brewed so that the men go to that house and drink *sake*, and they barter the food to *sake* like corns and also rice powders. For one bottle of *sake,* they get 2 kilograms of flours, so it’s barter not getting cash. Men want to drink even though the families are suffering from the shortage of food, so sometimes husband steal food from the family and barter them against the *sake*, but the taste or flavor of *sake* are different in each household. Some house sells lots of *sake*, some are not and they don’t use special cups to measure them. What they do is put wet – to judge the alcohol degree, they don’t have a measurement method, so they use a wet newspaper and fire them, and when you see blue fire out of that newspaper, then they judge like this is very high degree of alcohol and like 98 degrees or 90 degrees and so forth. The lowest one is the 25th degree…

**Michael Kirby**

…of the food situation and the harshness of life, and you’ve now reached the limit of the time that we had for your submission. Is there anything that you want to put to us in closing that will be helpful?

**Saito Hiroko**

Well, I do not know if I should say this or not, but what I want to say is that the people or Japanese spouses who still are left behind in North Korea, and also abductees in North Korea, and also refugees in North Korea, the refugees are old, so maybe numbers are not so big, but I really want to help them those who are left behind in North Korea, and Japanese spouses and also the abductees. They are approaching these categories of people separately, but I personally think that you should just help all the Japanese ethnics – ethnic Japanese who are left behind in North Korea. Japanese spouses are probably in 80s and in 90s, because I am part of the youngest generation, so all of them are very, very old and I don’t know how many are still alive but even one ethnic Japanese should be saved. You should not segregate the category such as the Japanese spouses or Japanese abductees, you should just help them, you just save ethnic Japanese. I can’t do much by myself. Even in Japan 2011, we had big earthquake and tsunami, so many people suffered from these natural disasters, many died. Still people who are here can help them, but the ethnic Japanese in North Korea, unless we help them, nobody will save them. My personal wish is; I hope you will agree with my wish that ethnic Japanese should be saved somehow, please do that.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you very much indeed for your testimony Mrs. Saito. Now, I think Ms. Chiba we have a submission from you.

**Chiba Yumiko**

2005 July the 28th, I was saved by Mr. Yamada, who is here, and finally I went back to Japan my home country. I was called Ho-Jon-Me [ph] (1:36:13) in North Korea. First of all, I would like to say thank you for the United Nations, who gave me the opportunity to give a testimony at this precious situation. In 1960 June 27, I was born in Osaka and 1963 when I was 3, October with the Returning Movement, I went back to North Korea with altogether seven family members. Mangyongbong number 92 now, but at that time Mangyongbong 34th and second one is Mangyongbong, at any rate we travelled through the ocean. My brother-in-law Kim-Jong-Tae [ph] (1:37:21), he was 15 years old, and then he first felt the smell of the North Korea was different. My brother-in-law said that we should not disembark at North Korea; we should go home to Japan. When he said that, then the authorities of North Korea in the boat summoned my parents and just, “Calm him down, otherwise, he is going to be nuisance for others.” My father was serving as executive members of Chongryon, so he understood what’s going on. When his son would make noise, then he was afraid something would happen to him, so he calmed him down. Still my brother-in-law wanted to go back to Japan, and then he said that, “What’s wrong with saying that I want to go back to Japan?” Authority of the North Korea in the boat took him away somewhere. As soon as we arrived in North Korea…

**Michael Kirby**

You see your brother shortly afterwards or did he not come back to the family?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Well, so I asked someone – well, my parents; my mother and father asked for 5 years for his whereabouts. In the hospital called Number 49, and we were told that my brother-in-law went crazy, so he was hospitalized in the hospital called Number 49, and he was treated at the psychiatrics. After 5 years, a special grant was given and we were ready to pay visit to him at the hospital; my parents, my older sister, and myself were ready to visit, that was 1968 May. Six o’clock in the morning, military car approached to our apartment and we were told that we have to ride that truck and with the lunch box that my mother made – well, I was 8 years old at that time, and four men in military uniform took us. It was pitch black, because it blocked all the lights by curtains, and we rode several hours, and when we got off from the truck, it was deserted area, it’s in the mountain. They said that we can’t drive anymore, so we had to walk. I was on back of my mother, and we climbed, climbed, climbed the mountains, and in front of us we saw white walls or fence and the military men were standing there, and our lunch box were taken. We went inside and huge iron structures were there; big, round barbed wires were there, so it was the structure.

We could see some 20 people, but it was very hard for us to distinguish if they were animals or human. Their hairs were messy and inside that barbed wire, only a few were standing. All of them lied down; their skin’s color was so dark and dirty. I couldn’t even see their faces; I was 8 years old at that time. This was the first time for me to see such a scary scenes. I had to overcome this fear, because I have to see my brother, and I was so scared but I had to overcome this fear. My mother held my hand so strongly, and she crushed her teeth, and in front of the barbed wire fence, the guard was holding a key, and the people were lying down, and sometimes the guards were pulling their hair and moving the people. One by one the guards tried to make the person stand in front of us; pulling their hairs and everything, and my father tried to identify if those people were his own son or not, but he had to lie down and try to look at them. He couldn’t say anything at that time. He didn’t say anything and he just left the fence. I was 8 years old, that was a scene I witnessed with my own eyes. They were human beings, but they were treated like that, and that was an experience that I had at 8 years old. In 1972, one day my father told us together and showed us – he produced one paper and the paper was like a certificate of death. As soon as my mother saw it, she burned it, and my father told us, in 1968, we visited that special facility and we received this death certificate, but never tell this fact to anyone, because our life will be threatened if we mentioned about our visit to the facility or certificate of the death.

In 1970s, Kim Jong-Il, the successor became widely known in the country, and around that time the family of returnees who happened to be living in the city suddenly disappeared one day, and similar things happened everywhere in the early 1970s of families of returnees disappearing suddenly, and gradually rumors spread that similar things happened among many families. We had families who were returnees as well, and we spoke in Japanese. We were friends and we were speaking in Japanese and that was the only reason why these things happened. Just because you spoke Japanese, you are chatting in Japanese, you were put in prison – the family. That person who spoke Japanese were executed and their family were put into prisons. In March 1976, my father never returned home that month, and at that time in March 1976, my mother realized and said that, “This thing happened to our family as well,” but if we have one hope, if we can keep that hope, we would like to continue looking for my father. Every day she would go out and all day long until very late she kept looking for my father and eventually we came across someone who worked under my father, a subordinate, who came to us that this is something that has to be confidential, because it will threaten his life, but he said the following; he said that our father went to somewhere – a factory that manufactured bricks, but later he realized that the brick factory was in fact not a factory, but it was a prison and that he witnessed my father going into a prison or a camp. Since then we feared that any day they could come and get us to put into prison camps, so it could be any day.

On the 31st of August 1976 – oh actually, on August 20th, the Korean War occurred and the situation in the society was extremely difficult, and on the 31st of August, we heard a knock on the door. My mother came out and greeted a group of people who looked scary. We also got outside of the house and realized that that was the day that they came where we had to go as well.

My sister told us not to move away that we have to stay together that even if we were dispersed that we will never forget for the entire rest of our lives. That’s what my sister said. At that time, they took us into the room and they called my father’s name, and they said that “If there is any need of treatment then please give treatment, if there is any food that the person wants then please provide the food,” and that’s what they said, and then they brought in a man; actually that was my father. He really was wearing something very shabby and just wearing underwear actually, and he was full of flees and he was about to collapse; he just collapsed. All his toes were broken and all crooked, and eventually he was able emit some words. Actually, it was around December 1976; at the end of the year that he finally was able to emit some words and speak some. We realized then that he was put into a tiny, tiny cell that was made of cement and that he was put a stone in his mouth and that he was not allowed to get out of the cell unless where there was torture occurring.

When I saw my father and how he looked like, by then I was 16-year-old and the thought in my mind was why did he had to be treated in that way. I asked him where were you and all this time he said that he could not say. He was tortured. He was put in a tiny, tiny cell and during torture, he was asked to extend his hands only and the torture was undertaken by hitting on his fingers and hands. He was really confined in a small cell where he could only just sit and bend his back, and because he was not able to move around, his muscles of his bottoms got infected and rotten, and his muscles and flesh rotted away so much so that his bones were exposed, and we extremely feared the situation. I know the time is limited so I’m really summarizing the experience that I lived through. Eventually, he was able to walk. Of course, he had to promise that he would never talk about what he experienced in the cell when he was eventually released from the prison, but eventually he got better and he was able to walk with a cane but around that time someone came for him to again pledge that he would never talk about what he experienced.

My father said, “The returnees left Japan to go to DPRK, and I was part of the elite group of the Chongryon, so we also emitted the propaganda to make people go back to DPRK, and we also eventually came back to DPRK and in that sense, I failed to be even a human being. Why didn’t I realize this before? I was born as a human and I don’t want you to ever experience similar treatment and fate as a human being. We might not be able to leave this country, but then if we can survive and if we can go somewhere, then the first thing I would like to ask you is the forgiveness.” To forgive the father. Days passed, years passed; in 2001, I left DPRK.

**Michael Kirby**

What happened to your father after that? You said he was able to walk with the stick and get around. Did he survive?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, my father survived. Yes, he worked in a factory for propaganda purpose – for publicity purpose, he stayed on and he was able to work in factory, but he had ill health and 4 years later he passed away.

**Michael Kirby**

So that was in 2004, was it?

**Chiba Yumiko**

It was 2003. No actually I’m so sorry, it was 1993.

**Michael Kirby**

Right. Just pause for a moment and have a glass of water, because we are going to turn now to your own story.

**Chiba Yumiko**

It actually was in 1981 that my father died and it was 1993 that my mother died, to rectify. It was 1981 that my father died.

**Michael Kirby**

It was your father who really wanted to go back to North Korea. Was he the main member of the family who wanted to go back or was it both of your parents in the first place back in 1963? Who had been the moving force for the family going back to North Korea?

**Chiba Yumiko**

We did not return by our own will. My father was working in Chongryon and at that time starting 1959, there was a movement to promote the returnees, because they needed more people to go back to Korea. So the families had to bring all their wealth back to North Korea in a sense as a contribution. It was in the fall of 1973 that most of the elites and the management of Chongryon had to go back to Korea and that was within that movement that we also returned.

**Michael Kirby**

Were your parents both ethnic Koreans living in Japan?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, that’s right.

**Michael Kirby**

They decided that this would give them a new life, and they thought it would be to the advantage of them and their children?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, of course.

**Michael Kirby**

They have read the propaganda which we saw on the screen earlier today by Mr. Yamada?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, that’s right.

**Michael Kirby**

They were full of hope in going back there, then there was the terrible incident that affected your brother and that tragic outcome, but your father was for a time allowed to join a kind of elite class, and he even went to a university and graduated, and then he fell into disregard and was sent to a prison. Now, do you know why that happened, why he was confined to a prison, what did he do that he deserved the punishment that you’ve described of being put in a tiny cell, and cement control, and with a stone in his mouth? What did he do to deserve that as somebody who’d gone back to North Korea full of idealism and hope?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Personally, the reason was suspicion for spying. The communist university, actually he was part of the elite university and although the entire number of the returnees was 93,000, there were only few people and actually our father was the first one to enter this elite university in 1971, and then later on about 4 years some people were selected and used as a propaganda to enter that university – this elite university, and having graduated.

**Michael Kirby**

At that stage, he was doing well, even though he’d had the horrible experience with your brother, everything looked fair, but then suddenly he fell into disregard and he was imprisoned. Now, why did that happen, why did he go to prison for such cruel punishment, what was his heinous offence?

**Chiba Yumiko**

In 1970s, as I said earlier, speaking in Japanese, singing in Japanese, using Japanese language was also target of punishment, and Professor Yamada talked about *Magujabi* period, so in ’70s and ’80s many people did not commit any crime per se, but without any reason many people disappeared. This was something that was quite ordinary that happened in North Korea.

With Kim Il-Sung’s special regard, he was able to graduate university and was given a new workplace, but my father once declined that offer and that led that he had wrong ideas. Somebody may have suspected he was a spy or maybe there was a code in some of the things that was sent from the Japanese relatives. We had no idea and he was tortured until he accepted these crimes and offences up until – well, he was called a traitor, because the country was showing such consideration. However, he needed this education to correct his ideas and thoughts. He is rejecting these kind offers, because of his wrong ideas and therefore he was a spy.

**Michael Kirby**

He was a bit like your brother who had said, “What is so wrong with saying I want to go back to Japan?” Your father was an independent minded person?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Well, yes. It’s kind of the same, although it’s quite different in other aspects.

**Michael Kirby**

When you went back and saw your brother, did he ultimately recognize you that memorable day when the family went back to visit him. He stood up – I think he was held up and did he actually speak with your mother and father that day?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Well, he wasn’t able to even open his eyes. His eyes were really blank and maybe mumbled but not really speak.

**Michael Kirby**

I think your father collapsed when he saw him, is that correct?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, from that day onward whenever – we had lived in tears since then. For about a week, my father has been hospitalized and he had very bad dreams, so it was really tough.

**Michael Kirby**

We’ll come back now to the point where I think you were given some opportunities at high school and you were told by your father to go to university, and in fact you did that. So you had some advantages given to you at this stage in your life?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, compared to other returnees.

**Michael Kirby**

Why did they do that to you, especially given your father’s background as political prisoner was unreliable? Why did they favor you, do you think?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Well, in North Korea, that’s what they do. Now, under Kim Jong-Il [Unclear] (2:04:41) also was sent to prison for several years. Well, there are two sides among the top ranks. Every minute things can change, so my father was told to pledge that he would not talk, but my mother’s parents sent a lot of presents and money; cars and things like that, and so among the 93,000 people – people were classified into different ranks and classes, and depending on the classes people were sent to mountains. Many Japanese people were sent to mountains, they were not able to live in cities, but in my case there was an incidence of my brother, but Chongryon checked about all the family members before leaving Japan; this information was sent to North Korea, therefore, we knew that we would be going to Pyongyang when we boarded the ship. However, in 1976 after that incident, the consideration of Kim Il-Sung and the Workers’ Party; they are so generous and so warm, and that was the propaganda that had to be made, so we were taken around.

Although, he had wrong ideas, he was able to go back to the factory and also was given an executive position, so that was for propaganda purpose, and because of that I was able to go to university. All around the world if people want to go university, you have to pass an exam, you have to study hard and pass an exam, but in my case, the North Korean Workers’ Party simply gave the order. It was a teacher’s university, but I was just told to fill in some papers, and then suddenly I was a university student without taking any exams. In North Korea, there are many scary mysterious things that we don’t know. There are no words to express what is happening inside the country. I wanted to talk about what happened to my family, to my father, what I experienced. It is really hard for me just to talk about my own experience, but if there is still some time, I would like to talk about what happened in 2003 when I was sent to prison.

**Michael Kirby**

We only have about 10 minutes. Could you just give us a brief summary of what happened in your own life because that was itself very strange? You studied, you’ve graduated, and you actually became a university teacher, and then in 2001 at the age of 40, I think you went to China, is that correct? In China, you were arrested; were you sent back to North Korea then or not?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, I was deported back to North Korea. The security forces in China sent me back. US, Japan, South Korea; these three countries were trying to help the people who left North Korea and were in China, and I was able to meet these people and I boarded a boat and I was hoping that I would be able to leave North Korea, but in Shandong village, there were about 80 people. In January 2003, there was a big incident, and I was one of those people. In China, an anti-city [ph] (2:10:00) of I think Shandong Province in January 2003, so 80 people…

**Michael Kirby**

You were there in China with a family member, and you were trying…?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, me and my daughter were helped to come to Japan. Actually, we were separated in China, so I was the only one taken.

**Michael Kirby**

You were sent to a political prison I think after you were sent back from China to North Korea. What happened to you daughter then, did she go to the prison with you?

**Chiba Yumiko**

My daughter was able to escape. She was not captured in China. I came back to Japan and after that I asked Mr. Yamada and my daughter was able to come back to Japan in December 2005.

**Michael Kirby**

How long did you serve in Bo-wi-bu in North Korea?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Just half-a-year, 6 months or so.

**Michael Kirby**

You were then released – were you then sent back to your hometown in North Korea?

**Chiba Yumiko**

I was sent to a farming area and…

**Michael Kirby**

And you escaped from there pretty quickly and went back into China?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

That would be very risky for you if you were caught again and returned to North Korea?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes, it was risky.

**Michael Kirby**

But you felt you had to take the risk, is that right?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

Have you been reunited with your daughter by this stage?

**Chiba Yumiko**

My daughter from China, she was sending me money and through several people in the northern part of North Korea – well, if I was alone, it may have been impossible, because I was almost like a living corpse. I couldn’t even move, but my son was deported back to North Korea first that was before my release, and he was with my sister and so my son said that he couldn’t find hope living in North Korea, because we were called traitor, we were seen as a hostile category. My son said that he will carry me on his back and he asked me to escape together, and his words gave me strength to attempt a second time to leave North Korea.

**Michael Kirby**

In China, you made contacts that led to your being received back in Japan, and you came back to Japan and since you came back here, I think you were one of the persons who filed the process in the Osaka City Court, bringing proceedings against the organization Chosen Soren, which had tricked your family, as you say, to going back to North Korea. But those proceeding were held to be out of time, because of Article 724 of the Japan Civil Code, which limits process to be brought within 20 years of the wrong and you were not content to stop there. You then appealed against that decision to the Appeal Court and I think you even appealed further to the Supreme Court of Japan, is that correct?

**Chiba Yumiko**

Yes.

**Michael Kirby**

You lost these proceedings, but they also show what a determined person you are.

**Chiba Yumiko**

Thank you. If it was just about myself and my family, I don’t think I would have had the courage to do this, but the Japanese wives, including them nearly a 100,000 people went to North Korea and now they are in the third or fourth generation. They are all suffering, and they are suffering to simply live, and also they are suffering mentally not just physically. They are like slaves. I have experienced that for over 40 years. I taught at a university and I have also had that experience, but this is all about these many, many lives at stake. I just want people to understand the reality in North Korea. I’m really grateful that I was given this opportunity to share my information and the people who are still there in North Korea, as Mrs. Saito said, that they are taking the returnee as a hostage and the Mangyongbong-92, the boat itself is the boat for abduction. The North Korea took advantage of people and if they cannot use them, they throw them away, and throw them away that means they kill them. Every day, I’ve seen those facts, and I am still alive, I am still witness, still live in this world. I really want to communicate this to the world so that I really want to save people; Japanese-Korean returnee, I really want to save them. That’s my wish. But situation is very challenging that I understand.

But my wish is that as soon as you are born, even at 6 years old, you have to belong to an organization and even at the kindergarten, nation’s people are brainwashed are revering Kim Il-Sung and others. All the people in the world try to send information to the people in North Korea, but they are brainwashed. We really have to solve this situation, we have to [Unclear] (2:18:24) them from their brainwashed. So the paradise on the earth, they are told, but if you go outside of North Korea world is there and that you can really have your own human mind. We have to teach them, so time is running out and their lives are threatened, and we really have to tell them the reality. They sometimes do not understand because they’ve been brainwashed since younger children, and so even one more North Korean that we have to let them go out from the country so that you can be full blown human being. We the people who are outside of North Korea must tell them that, “Now, I am outside of North Korea, and I am much happier and as alive witness, I really do my best, so please help us.” Thank you once again.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you very much Ms. Chiba. Just one question; there is of course as you would know a great deal of concern in Japan, a great deal of concern about the abductees. Those Japanese nationals seized from Japan taken to North Korea without warning a terrible shock to their families and to themselves and a very few had been brought back or have come back. There is great concern about that. There appears to be much less concern about the situation of the so called “Returnees” even though you say that they were also living peacefully in Japan and they went there in large numbers as a result of misinformation and were tricked, but there doesn’t seem to be the same amount of concern, nothing like the same amount of concern although there are many more involved. What would your explanation be? Do you think that is because of the fact that, well, they made an original decision to go away from Japan voluntarily and they have to live with the consequences of that decision? Do you think it’s because of the fact that ethnically most of them are not Japanese, but Koreans, and they are regarded basically as a Korean problem that has to be sorted out in Korea? Or do you think it’s because the abductions happen more recently and this is a very old story that began in 1960 and its ancient history and therefore not something that engages the mind of people in Japan today? Or is it some other explanation? You must have thought about this. I think the Commission of Inquiry would be helped about the differentiation and what if anything should be done about it?

**Chiba Yumiko**

This is my personal opinion, but levels of concerns are different. When I returned home to Japan, Japanese abductees were discovered. I realized after I came back home and I felt so sorry for them, and Government of Japan and Japanese people – I felt that maybe it is difficult for them to work for the returnees, because they are working harder for the abductees. I, who left North Korea, feel that way, so the Japanese people or Japanese politicians who do not know much about the returnees probably feel that way. It’s old or whether abduction is more recent, I don’t think it is the reason. Japanese abduction existed since olden days and it still continues. Japanese people are not fully aware of what’s going on and returnees and abductees both of the incidents has been taking place for such a long time, so I think we have to take our mission fully, and we really have to share this information in front of Japanese and also the people of the world. I really feel the mission to appeal to the people about this. North Korean residents in Japan 96% or over 96% of them were from South Korea, and they were deceived and through Chongryon, they went back to North Korea. Japanese people were abducted and we were foreigners and though the Korean peninsulas were divided into northern and south, we share the same blood, so we can’t really ask the government authority to do it, because we are not really – but the life is so precious. The United Nations, the United States, they feel life is precious, so yes my wish is that they will cover much more areas than just abductees. Even though there are some levels of gravity of the incidence, but you must save people. You should not differentiate the levels of concern, but you have to really save people.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you. Yes, I think you wanted to say something Mr. Yamada?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Well, to your question, the returnees numbers are much more than the abductees, but it seems like the level of concerns are different. In 1994, our Mamoru Kai was established, and since then we had been conducting the campaign. Finally, in 2000 judged that these returnees deception was the abduction, it was a crime, and it was the first time in 2000 we realized that; 1959, that was the beginning of the Returning Movement. There was the idea and there was a special association to help the North Korean residents in Japan to go back to North Korea, and all the political parties at that time submitted one or two people to help North Korean residents in Japan to go back to North Korea, so that was in 1959.

That movement, nobody realized that it was a crime, and only in recent years like started looking at the paper and a document from USSR, and intent of Kim Il-Sung, then we finally started realizing that it was a crime. Finally, we investigated the incident and papers and a document of the Chongryon were discovered, and through the people who left North Korea when they realized that they were deceived or where they realized that, and finally we judged that it was a same category as abduction; it was a crime. In Japan, at the beginning, people did not really realize that the Returning Movement was the crime and also even now people do not realize that it was a crime. At the litigation, I wanted to change the mindset of the people that that was a crime; it’s not just a movement campaign. Also, the Korean residents in Japan do not have a voting right, so that’s why politicians did not really listen to what they said, and the family here in Japan knew what’s going on in North Korea, but politicians didn’t really pick up those voices. Also, the number of the returnees; most of the family here in Japan have someone who are still in North Korea, so those are the hostages and the people here in Japan couldn’t really criticize Chongryon or couldn’t really criticize North Korea and that was one part of the reason too. Yesterday, at the public hearings among the Korean residents in Japan, nobody actually became the witness. I think that is the current reality you must understand. Thank you.

**Michael Kirby**

Thank you very much. I’ll ask my colleagues if they have some questions.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Yes, thank you Mr. Yamada, and Ms. Saito Hiroko, and Ms. Chiba. I just want to ensure that we are clear on aspect to this issue. Would you be able to tell us if we are able to know if all returnees want to go back to Japan?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

For that particular matter, we cannot confirm their intention directly, but I would say all of them would want to go back to Japan, I believe.

**Marzuki Darusman**

It has been asked earlier by Mr. Kirby on the role of the Government of Japan. I will perhaps reword it, because it seems that there is this hesitation to come out with a clear view on this. With regard to what should be expected from the government in assisting the people who do want to return, which apparently you believe are almost everyone that you would feel that your human rights would be much more fully enjoyed if the government were to be more concerned about this. Is that a view that you would accept, would you say that that was the correct way of looking at it?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yes, that’s my view absolutely. Japanese Government is saying that for those Japanese nationality if they want to go back to Japan, then they will support them, and they tend to show enthusiasm in helping Japanese spouses to go back to Japan, but when it comes to the Korean-Japanese people and the Korean nationals who returned to DPRK, they haven’t shown so much willingness to rescue them, and this is a grave problem, because the Korean-Japanese people are permanent residents of Japan and they are full part members of the Japanese society, and the fact that their families are experiencing difficulties in DPRK is something that the Japanese Government should be responsible about. In other words, at the time of the Returnee Programs, we already knew that there was one-way information. Had there been more objective information without focusing too much on the one-way information about the Paradise on Earth, then the situation might have been different, then in that sense there is failure on the part of the Japanese Government not to have given more objective information.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Would you be able to provide us with a copy of the lawsuit Ms. Chiba that was filed with the court in the first instance and up to the Supreme Court in 2004, was it?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Yes, I have Japanese documents only, but I can provide all the related documents. It has gone all the way to the Supreme Court, and I am willing to put the PDF version of entire documents in the CD-ROM and provide it to you.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Is there a translation of these files?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

I am sorry to say that it is not translated into English.

**Marzuki Darusman**

So, we will find a way. Thank you very much.

**Michael Kirby**

The CD-ROM containing the record of the courts of Japan, including the decision of the Supreme Court of Japan when provided by Mr. Yamada or Mamoru Kai will be Exhibit T9 in these proceedings. Yes, thank you. Yes, Commissioner Biserko.

**Sonja Biserko**

Mr. Yamada in your statement you mentioned that there are enormous numbers of abductions. Could you be able to tell us the approximate number, because there is great difference in what we have heard over the last days?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Are you talking about the entire abduction of Japanese people in Japan or are you asking about the abduction what we can consider as abduction within the Returnee Program, which is the number you’re referring to?

**Sonja Biserko**

About abduction of Japanese and altogether, I mean Japanese and Koreans from Japan?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

If I may respond based on my imagination, the most important data is 868 people from the police department. We already found 5 people of the 868, so now we have the latest number, which is 863 people. These are the people – the entire people whose possibility of abduction cannot be eliminated. Of course, we are not saying that the entire 863 were abducted, and also we have to take into consideration that there are people who are not included in 863. But I think the most important number is 863, and based on that we have to figure out how many people had been abducted. But then it is impossible in Japan to determine who was actually abducted or not that’s the reality. From DPRK side, I believe that they know the accurate number, and DPRK Government undertakes a very meticulous control of information, so they probably know accurate number of people who they have abducted. But in the course of the abduction, some people might have been killed in abduction using ships. In some cases, ships were sunk and the abductees were killed, but we are not sure at this point if they know entirety of the number of victims of abduction, including these people who were killed in the course of abduction. So, in that sense, it’s very difficult to get the accurate number. But I believe it is possible to think that at least there are 200 to 300 people who were abducted, and it could be even more; 863 people that the police department reported that has to be the basis of our estimation.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Mr. Yamada, just one more. You mentioned about Russian sources. In your analysis of the Paradise on Earth Movement, could you then also indicate to us the source of these Russian documents?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

I personally had only access to the secondary information, so it is hard for me to answer your question, but one person called Tessa Morris-Suzuki, and this person wrote a book called ‘The Exodus from DPRK’ and in that book he mentioned some information and I utilized that information as well. This professor teaches in Australia, so I think the original language of the book publication is in English. In Japan, we have Yoshiaki Kikuchi, who is a journalist who obtained the original document and based on that he wrote several papers. Professor Yoshiaki Kikuchi had undertaken various researches. There are two sources Professor Kikuchi and also Tessa Morris-Suzuki who wrote the book called ‘Exodus to DPRK’ and there are also additionally diplomats in the Eastern Europe who wrote related information. So I utilized these kinds of secondary information.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Thank you. I was not able to write down everything, could you just list down all these points that you made on a separate memo and then give it to us?

**Yamada Fumiaki**

I would do that.

**Marzuki Darusman**

Thank you.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

I understand.

**Michael Kirby**

Professor Tessa Suzuki Morris, who is a professor at the Australian National University, who has studied this issue specifically and the Commission of Inquiry will make direct contact with her to get information from her, and of her studies, and possibly copy of her book if that’s available. Well, we’re very grateful to all participants; their stories that they have given us have been very stressful for them and we are regretful that having to give evidence has revived those stories. But it’s important that they be told and they have been told to us and we will tell them to the world. We thank them for attending. The Commission of Inquiry will now adjourn for lunch and resume at 1:30 this afternoon after lunch, if that’s convenient to the interpreters, so that we can get back into our scheduled routine, because we have to conclude on time this afternoon. The Commission stands adjourned until 1:30.

**Yamada Fumiaki**

Earlier, I made a mistake about the number that was given from the police department. Current latest number is 863 people; these are the people whose possibility of abduction cannot be eliminated. Thank you very much again.

**END**