

Abduction is a global issue

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We cannot just “know” about the abduction issue. If Megumi and her family had not been abducted, they would still be living an ordinary, happy life. Such a daily life was interrupted by the abduction.

In August, I participated in the “Junior High School Summit on the Abduction Issue.” There, I listened to a lecture by Takuya Yokota, the younger brother of Megumi Yokota, a victim of abduction.

The abduction refers to the incident about fifty years ago when North Korea abducted young Japanese citizens to train their agents. Although North Korea admitted the fact, only 5 out of 17 abductees have returned. Even after half a century, the abduction issue remains unresolved.

What we can do to solve the abduction issue is to first watch the anime “Megumi.” At the summit, Mr. Yokota emphasized the importance of thinking about it as a personal matter. It is crucial to watch it with the mindset of “What if my beloved family or friends were suddenly taken away?” After the summit, I watched “Megumi” again. It looked completely different. The first time I watched it was when I was 7th grade. At that time, I watched it as a bystander. Now, I can feel the pain and suffering of the family. I understood the meaning of “as a personal matter” that Mr. Yokota mentioned, and I became able to assert it in my own words.

According to a public opinion survey, the percentage of people interested in the abduction issue is 73.6%. As the awareness of the issue fades over time, it is necessary to spread the abduction issue. The internet and social media are used by a wide range of age groups, from young people to the elderly. By utilizing information and communication technology, it is possible to disseminate information widely.

The families of the abductees are aging, and Megumi’s father, Shigeru, passed away in 2020 without meeting his beloved daughter. Therefore, the abduction issue is a race against time.

Conflicts continue around the world today, such as the invasion of Ukraine and the conflict in Palestine. It is common to see reports of conflicts when you turn on the TV. However, we must not forget about the abduction issue. It has been a silent battle for much longer than wars.

From Mr. Yokota’s lecture, the desire of the abductees to “return to Japan as soon as possible” touched strongly in my heart. The abduction issue is not the past, and Megumi and others are still waiting for help with the single-minded desire to “meet their families.”

Therefore, I believe that raising our voices in cooperation with the world for the early return of the abductees will be the driving force for their rescue. As a participant in the summit, I felt a mission to disseminate the abduction issue. It is necessary to widely disseminate the current situation of the abduction issue and what we can do. I want to actively participate in future activities for the early return of the abductees.