

Junior High school Category

Second prize

Yume Tanaka

“Wishing for the Earliest Rescue of Abductees”

A girl about the same age as myself was kidnapped and abruptly taken to an unfamiliar country all by herself. Watching the animation “Megumi” made me realize the true horror of the North Korean abductions issue, which I had only heard of or read about in news or newspapers.

I belong to my school’s tennis club and practice every day. Similarly, Megumi was enjoying a fulfilling time every day as a member of her school’s badminton club. If the kidnapping had not taken place, she would have led a happy life, working toward her dream with support from her family and friends, like I do today. Her life was turned upside down when she was abducted by North Korean agents. I could not even imagine how much fear, sadness, suffering and frustration she must have gone through.

The incident also ruined the lives of her family, still waiting for her return in Japan.

The other day, I read a newspaper article about the Citizens’ Rally on rescuing all the abductees. What left a strong impression was Megumi’s brother’s statement that “the issue must be resolved early so that the activities of the Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea would not have to be carried forward to next generations.” As many as 17 Japanese people are confirmed to have been kidnapped by North Korea. After learning that there are many Japanese people who have suffered the same suffering as Megumi and her family for the last 40 years, I have come to feel that North Korea’s abductions of fellow Japanese people are an outrageous act that should never be forgiven.

The Japanese government has engaged in negotiations with the North Korean government, demanding the return of all abductees, and managed to bring five of them back to Japan. However, the situation is far from a full resolution. Even if all the victims of North Korea’s kidnapping should be rescued, they would never regain the time lost while in North Korea.

In this sense, this issue would never be fully resolved in a true sense. Yet, North Korea must identify all the abductees and return them all to Japan.

To this end, each and every Japanese citizen must gain firm understanding about this

dreadful case of human rights violation, and join the call on North Korea to allow all the victims to return to Japan.

What I can do as a Japanese citizen is to learn and understand, in greater depth, more about the North Korean abductions issue at school and other avenues, to never forget the fact that there are still some Japanese abductees trapped in North Korea, and to spread the word about this tragic issue to as many people as possible, so as to achieve the return of all the victims back to Japan.