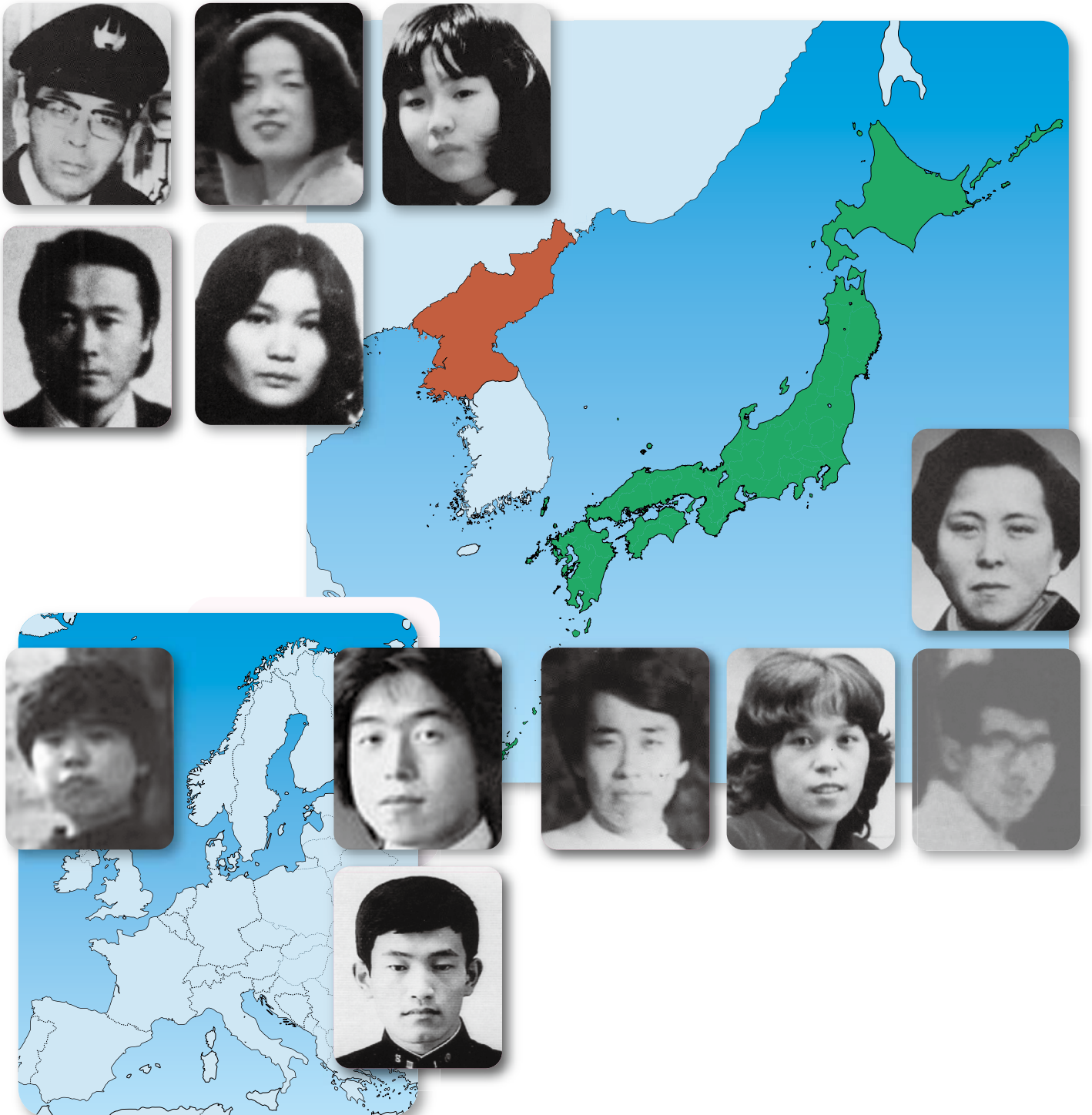


For the Return of All of the Abductees

Points of Contention with the North Korean Position



Headquarters for the Abduction Issue
Government of Japan

Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea

During the 1970s and 1980s, Japanese nationals were frequently abducted by North Korea. At present, 17 people are officially recognized as abductees by the government of Japan. In addition to these officially recognized abductees, there are the so-called “missing Japanese probably related to North Korea” ^(Note) and other persons for whom the possibility of abduction by North Korea cannot be ruled out.

At the first Japan - North Korea summit meeting in September 2002, North Korea admitted the abduction of Japanese nationals and extended an apology. After the meeting, five victims returned home, but North Korea has provided no clear explanations with regard to the remaining abductees.

(Note) “Missing Japanese probably related to North Korea” refers to missing persons that a private organization, the Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to North Korea, has independently investigated upon request by families of the missing persons who suspect their abduction by North Korea.

Points of Contention with the North Korean Position

North Korea has made the following claims:

- Of the 12 abductees whose safety remains uncertain, eight have died and four have never entered its territory.
- North Korea has returned five survivors and their families to Japan. It has provided necessary information for those they found dead through their investigations and handed over the ‘remains’ of two abductees.
- Japan is asking for the impossible by demanding that the abductees, who have passed away, be brought back to life.

The GoJ cannot accept such claims by North Korea for the reasons listed below. The GoJ is not making any “impossible demands.” It is simply asking North Korea to conduct a search for the abductees on the premise that they are alive, as there is no evidence in the explanations presented by North Korea that corroborates their deaths.

The abduction issue must be resolved immediately.

This brochure aims to clarify the points of contention with the North Korean position.

1

Not only are there too many unnatural causes of ‘deaths’ among the eight abductees, North Korea has not produced any objective evidence which corroborates their claim that they have ‘died’.

North Korea claims that most of the eight abductees, who were in their 20s and 30s, succumbed to causes such as gas poisoning, traffic accidents, heart attacks, and suicide. These explanation are not only unnatural, but lack objective evidence as shown below.

North Korea’s account of the eight missing abductees
(in order of name, age, and cause of their alleged ‘deaths’)

Ms. Megumi Yokota	29	Suicide	Ms. Yaeko Taguchi	30	Traffic accident
Mr. Shuichi Ichikawa	24	Heart attack	Ms. Rumiko Masumoto	27	Heart attack
Mr. Toru Ishioka	31	Gas poisoning	Mr. Kaoru Matsuki	43	Traffic accident
Mr. Tadaaki Hara	49	Liver cirrhosis	Ms. Keiko Arimoto	28	Gas poisoning

The above include the case of Mr. Ichikawa, who allegedly died of a heart attack while swimming during an urgent business trip. Mr. Ichikawa was not known to have been able to swim while he was in Japan. In addition, Ms. Masumoto, who was in her twenties, allegedly ‘died’ of a sudden heart attack, but was in perfect health with no previous record of illness before she was abducted by North Korea. These elements, combined with the lack of proof of the unnatural ‘deaths’ of the abductees, leaves the credibility of the North Korea’s claims in great doubt.

(1) No 'remains' of the victims

North Korea claims that the 'bodies' of six of the eight abductees (excluding Ms. Yokota and Mr. Matsuki) had been buried at three burial grounds but were washed away by torrential rainfall.

North Korea handed over 'remains' of Ms. Yokota and Mr. Matsuki to the Japanese side, but DNA tests revealed that they belong to other individuals.

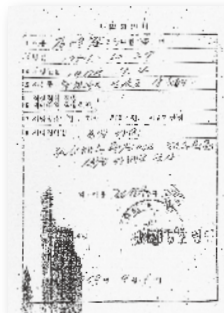
(2) No genuine documents have been put forward to prove the 'deaths' of the abductees.

The 'death certificates' given to the Japanese investigation team in 2002 were thrown together hastily upon the team's visit. Moreover, the names of the victims do not appear in the traffic accident reports.

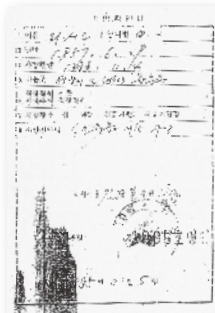
Copies of 'Death Certificates'

Presented in 2002. In parentheses are the 'date of death' claimed by North Korea. Despite the chronological and geographical differences among the 'deaths,' all 'certificates' were issued from the same hospital with identical certification stamps.

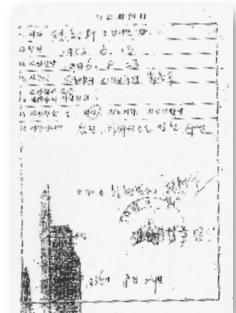
North Korea admitted in 2004 that these 'certificates' were hastily drafted upon the visit of the Japanese delegation in 2002.



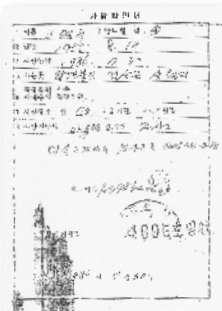
Mr. Shuichi Ichikawa
(1979.9.4)



Mr. Toru Ishioka
(1988.11.4)



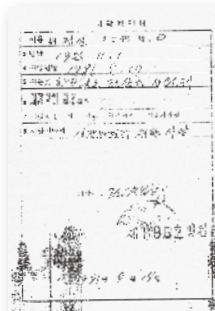
Mr. Kaoru Matsuki
(1996.8.23)



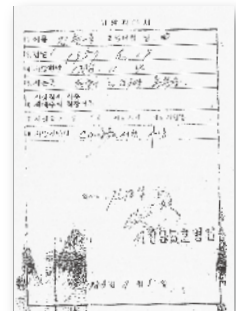
Ms. Yaeko Taguchi
(1986.7.30)



Mr. Tadaaki Hara
(1986.7.19)



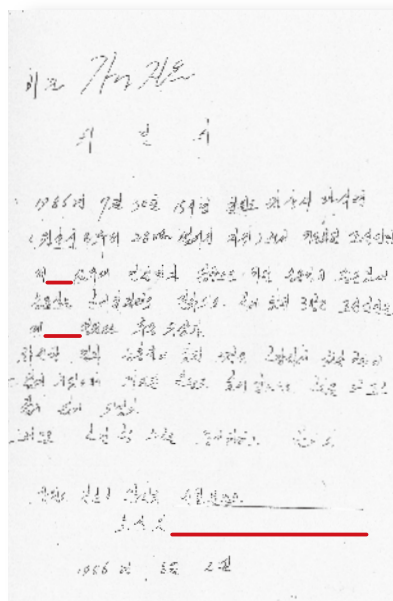
Ms. Rumiko Masumoto
(1981.8.17)



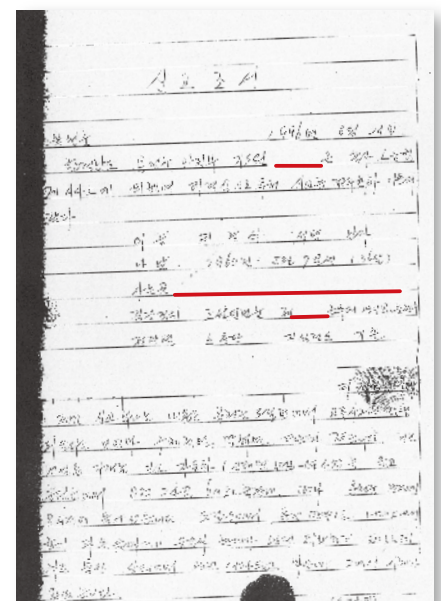
Ms. Keiko Arimoto
(1988.11.4)

'Records' of traffic accidents

Several sentences have been blacked out and no names appear on the 'records.' Such documents hardly prove the claims of North Korea that Ms. Taguchi and Mr. Matsuki 'died' in traffic accidents.



Ms. Yaeko Taguchi



Mr. Kaoru Matsuki

North Korean explanations are unnatural and ambiguous. They contradict the findings in domestic investigations within Japan as well as testimonies of returned abductees. Such contradictions only add suspicion to the credibility of North Korea's account.

(1) Ms. Megumi Yokota

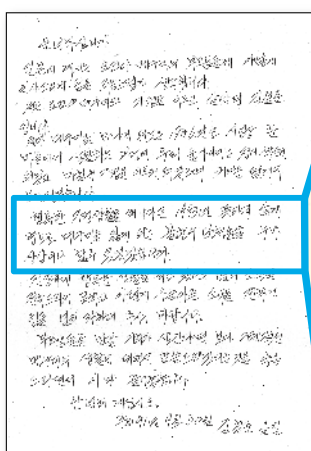
There are a number of ambiguous and unnatural points in the accounts provided by North Korea on the 'death' of Ms. Megumi Yokota. North Korea has altered the date of her 'death' and handled her 'remains' in an unnatural manner.

- 1 Ms. Megumi Yokota's ex-husband and her doctor initially explained that she 'died' in 1993. However, after the Japanese media reported that Ms. Yokota was alive after 1993, they changed their explanation, saying that the year of 'death' was in fact 1994.



Ms. Megumi Yokota
(13, Niigata Prefecture)
(abducted November 15,
1977) (safety unconfirmed)
(North Korea claims that she
'committed suicide'.) (Ms.
Yokota has a daughter Kim
Hye-Gyong in North Korea.)

(The information in the parentheses after the name indicate their age (at the time of abduction) and the location of abduction.)



행복한 가정생활을 해나갔던 1993년 뜻하지 않게
평화로 메꾸어 줄 수 없게 된 불행의 악재들을 누가
상상이나 할 수 있었겠습니까

Translation of the letter (extract)

"Who could have imagined that we would tragically lose Megumi in 1993 due to sudden illness."

(A letter from Ms. Yokota's ex-husband, Kim Young-Nam to her parents (dated September 2002))

The letter mentions that Ms. Yokota 'died' in 1993, but investigations have confirmed that she was alive at least until 1994. Asked about this contradiction, Ms. Yokota's ex-husband explained that it was an 'illusional mistake.'

In June 2006, more than three years after this letter was written, a private Japanese organization questioned the authenticity of the handwriting. Confronted with this statement, the ex-husband confessed in a press conference held in July 2006 that the letter was written by another individual.

The letter uses a false name 'Kim Chol-Jung' instead of the real name of the ex-husband.

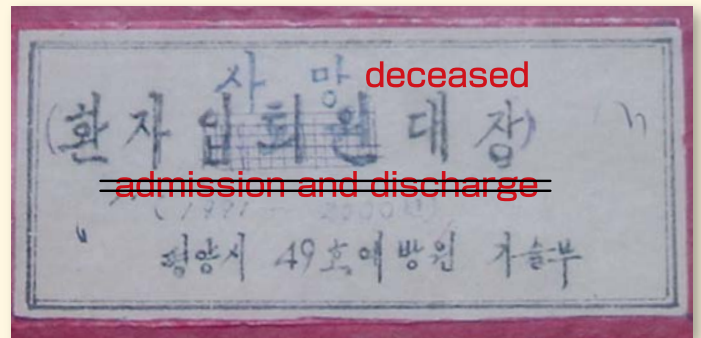
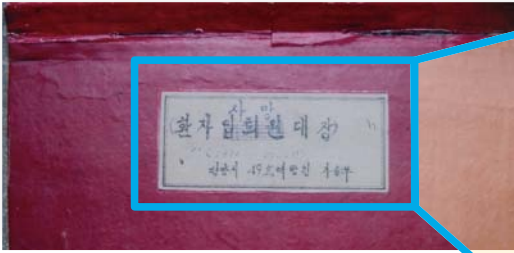
사망 확인서 'Death certificate'

1. 이름	김 병 동	2. 생년월일	남. 1964
3. 나이	1964년 10월 5일생	date of death : year / month / day	
4. 사망연월일	1993년 3월 13일		
5. 사인	3월 13일 사망		
6. 서대주의 직장	부 양		

('Death certificate' written by Ms. Yokota's doctor)

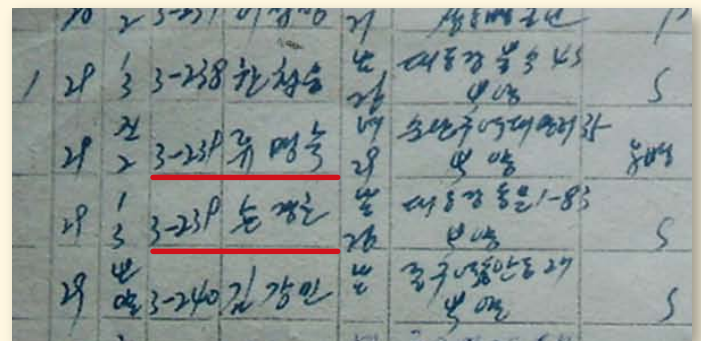
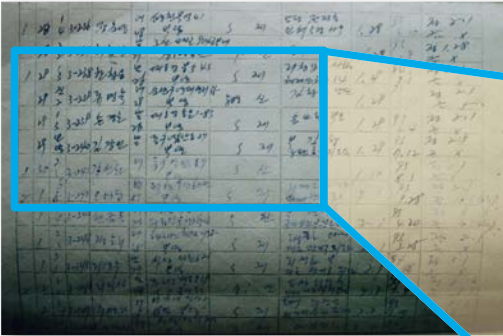
The death date here is March 13, 1993. However, it has been confirmed that she was alive at least until 1994.

2 Hospital records contain many fabrications and errors, making them unreliable.



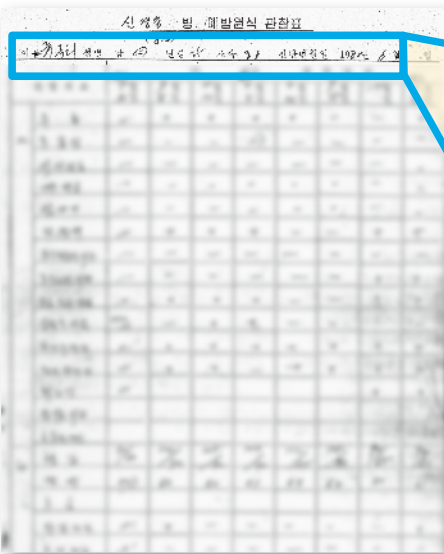
(Cover page of the 'deceased register')

Presented by the North Korean side in 2002. The title was originally labeled 'admission and discharge' but was overwritten to 'deceased.'

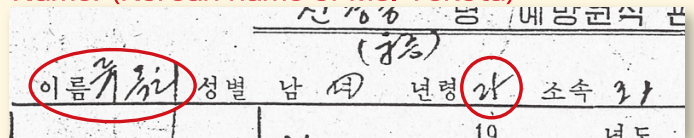


(Identification number in the 'deceased register')

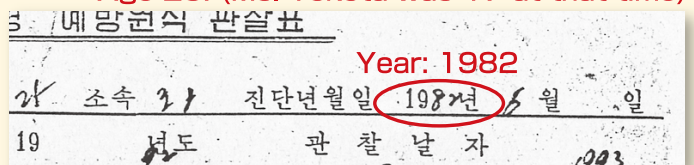
No. 3-239 is allocated for a female alleged to be Ms. Yokota, but the same number is used for a male in the next line.



Name: (Korean name of Ms. Yokota)



Age 25: (Ms. Yokota was 17 at that time)



(Ms. Yokota was born in 1964)

(Medical records of Ms. Yokota)

Presented by the North Korean side in 2004. Descriptions of Ms. Yokota's age in various sections of the medical record contradict her actual age.

3 Ms. Yokota's ex-husband explained that he exhumed her 'body' with the help of his fellow villagers from the burial grounds three years after her 'death'. He explained that he then cremated her 'body' and took her 'remains' back home. These are extremely unnatural accounts. (The ex-husband, himself an abductee from the Republic of Korea, may not have been in a position to freely speak the truth.)



Mr. Kim Young-Nam at the time of abduction (as a high school student)



Mr. Kim Young-Nam at a press conference

(2) Ms. Yaeko Taguchi and Mr. Tadaaki Hara

It has become clear from the testimonies given by North Korean agent Kim Hyon-Hui, who was responsible for the 1987 Korean Air jet bombing and who had disguised herself as a Japanese national, that she had been trained by Ms. Taguchi.

North Korea rejects Kim Hyon-Hui's testimony and denies any involvement in the incident.

However, it is known that Ms. Taguchi told the abductees who returned to Japan in 2002 that she lived together with a female agent called 'Ok-Hwa' (Kim Hyon-Hui's alias) during 1981-83.

North Korea claims that Ms. Taguchi married another abductee, Mr. Hara, in 1984, and that a few weeks following his 'death' in July 1986, she herself 'died' in a traffic accident during a trip to alleviate her grief. An abductee who later returned to Japan, however, has testified that she and Ms. Taguchi lived together until July 1986, and that Ms. Taguchi was not married during that time. Thus, North Korea's account of Ms. Taguchi is highly questionable.

The above suggest that North Korea is attempting to conceal the truth about the Korean Air jet bombing incident.

Ms. Yaeko Taguchi
(22, location of abduction unknown)
Abducted around June, 1978
(safety unconfirmed)
(North Korea claims that she was 'killed' in a traffic accident.)



(Ms. Taguchi Yaeko and 'Lee Un-Hae')

The left is a photograph of Ms. Taguchi. The right is a drawing of 'Lee Un-Hae' who taught Japanese language and customs to the perpetrator of the Korean Air jet bombing, Kim Hyon-Hui. Investigations revealed that 'Lee Un-Hae' is Ms. Taguchi.

Mr. Tadaaki Hara
(43, Miyazaki Prefecture)
Abducted in mid-June, 1980
(safety unconfirmed)
(North Korea claims that he 'died' of liver cirrhosis.)



Kim Hyon-Hui, perpetrator of the Korean Air jet bombing (center)

(Korean Air jet bombing)

In November 1987, North Korean agents Kim Sung-II and Kim Hyon-Hui, with false passports under Japanese names, set a time bomb that blew up a Korean Air jet flying from Baghdad to Seoul.

Results of investigations, including testimonies from Kim Hyon-Hui, revealed that the two agents belonged to the Foreign Information and Research Department of the Korean Labor Party and were instructed to bomb a Korean Air jet to obstruct the Seoul Olympics (to be held the next year).

(3) Mr. Shuichi Ichikawa and Ms. Rumiko Masumoto

North Korea states that Ms. Masumoto and Mr. Ichikawa married in July 1979, but it has become clear from testimonies from abductees who later returned to Japan that Ms. Masumoto lived with another abductee from 1978 to October 1979, and that Ms. Masumoto and Mr. Ichikawa were not married then.



Mr. Shuichi Ichikawa (23, Kagoshima) and Ms. Rumiko Masumoto (24, Kagoshima)
Abducted on August 12, 1978 (safety unconfirmed)
(North Korea claims that they 'died' of a heart attack.)

(4) Mr. Toru Ishioka, Mr. Kaoru Matsuki and Ms. Keiko Arimoto

From the testimonies of the wives of the “Yodo-go” hijackers, it is evident they were involved in the abduction of Mr. Ishioka, Mr. Matsuki, and Ms. Arimoto. However, North Korea vehemently denied the involvement of the hijackers. It can be assumed that North Korea is trying to cover up its involvement in criminal acts committed by terrorists whom North Korea continues to sponsor.



Mr. Toru Ishioka (22, Europe, left picture) and Mr. Kaoru Matsuki (26, Europe, right picture) Abducted in May 1980 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea claims that they ‘died’ of gas poisoning.)



Ms. Keiko Arimoto (23, Europe) Abducted in July 1983 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea claims that she ‘died’ of gas poisoning)

(“Yodo-go” Hijack)

On March 31, 1970, nine armed activists hijacked Japan Airlines Flight 351 and surrendered themselves to North Korean authorities after arriving at an airbase in North Korea.

Japanese investigation authorities believe that the Yodo-go hijackers are deeply involved in the abduction of Japanese nationals. Japan has issued arrest warrants for North Korean resident Kimihiro Uomoto, wanted for the abduction of Ms. Arimoto, and for Yoriko Mori and Sakiko Wakabayashi (nee Kuroda), the wives of two of the hijackers, wanted for the abduction of Mr. Ishioka and Mr. Matsuki. These three have been placed on Interpol’s wanted list.

(5) Mr. Yutaka Kume, Mr. Minoru Tanaka, Ms. Kyoko Matsumoto and Ms. Miyoshi Soga

North Korea claims that the above four abductees have never entered its territory, or that they have not confirmed their entry. However, North Korean involvement is clear from the results of the investigation. North Korea’s claim that they have no knowledge about their safety is unacceptable.



Mr. Yutaka Kume (52, Ishikawa Prefecture) Abducted on September 19, 1977 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea denies entry.)

Evidence shows that Mr. Kume was lured off a beach by an accomplice who was instructed by North Korean authorities. This accomplice handed Mr. Kume over to North Korean agents.



Mr. Minoru Tanaka (28, Hyogo Prefecture) Abducted around June 1978 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea denies entry.)

An accomplice living in Japan successfully deceived Mr. Tanaka and took him overseas. Later on, Mr. Tanaka was taken to North Korea.



Ms. Kyoko Matsumoto (29, Tottori Prefecture) Abducted on October 21, 1977 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea denies entry.)

Evidence, such as testimonies of witnesses at the abduction sight, show that Ms Matsumoto was abducted by North Korea.



Ms. Miyoshi Soga (46, Niigata Prefecture) Abducted August 12, 1978 (safety unconfirmed) (North Korea denies entry.)

A female agent told Ms. Soga’s daughter, Hitomi, who was abducted with her mother, that she and other agents “returned her mother to Japan.” Hitomi returned to Japan in 2002. This female agent must have some knowledge of Ms. Soga’s safety.

3 North Korea’s claim that they have punished those responsible for the abductions is dubious from various angles.

North Korea presented trial records as evidence of punishment of two perpetrators responsible for the abductions. However, numerous sections of the records have been deleted, and references to the abductions are extremely limited. Thus, the punishment of those responsible has not been confirmed.

Furthermore, if the above two figures actually did face trial in 1998 and 1999 as the North Korean authority claims, the North Korean side must have been aware of the abduction of Japanese citizens at that time. Nevertheless, North Korea continuously denied responsibility for the abductions until 2002. This raises serious doubts about the sincerity of North Korea and the credibility of its claim that it punished those responsible.

<Policies and Concrete Measures for Resolving the Abduction Issue>

The abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea is a grave issue which concerns national sovereignty and public life and safety, and urgently needs to be resolved by the government. The government will firmly maintain its basic policy that the normalization of diplomatic relations with North Korea will not occur until the abduction issue is resolved, and will endeavor to ensure the safe return of all abductees as soon as possible, irrespective of whether they are officially approved as abductees. The government is committed to continuing its investigation of the truth and demanding the handover of those responsible for the abductions.

With the initiative of the chief and the assistant chiefs of the Headquarters, all Cabinet ministries should cooperate in achieving the above-mentioned policy, and should make their utmost efforts to meet the following eight goals within their respective areas of responsibility:

- (i) to discuss further countermeasures and promote strict law enforcement under the current legal framework to pressure North Korea to speedily resolve the abduction issue;
- (ii) to take every opportunity, including the Japan - North Korea Intergovernmental Talks, to strongly demand that North Korea take concrete action to resolve the abduction issue;
- (iii) to strengthen the collection, analysis and management of information on abductees and the situation in North Korea;
- (iv) to strengthen the investigation and examination of cases in which the possibility of abduction cannot be denied, and to continue investigating the individuals responsible for abductions domestically and internationally;
- (v) to reaffirm our determination to promote continued awareness of the abduction issue, and to make further efforts to mobilize public opinion on this issue through various domestic and international means, including education in schools;
- (vi) to further enhance international cooperation by strengthening ties with the United States, South Korea, and other relevant countries and by having discussions at UN meetings and other multilateral talks;
- (vii) to take conscientious measures with regard to the family members of abductees, offer ongoing support for returned abductees, and carefully prepare for the future return of abductees; and
- (viii) to discuss all other measures which can contribute to the resolution of the abduction issue.

●●● Request for Information ●●●

If you have information concerning the abduction issue, please e-mail or fax the Secretariat of the Headquarters for the Abduction Issue.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

e-mail: info@rachi.go.jp

Fax: +81-3-3581-6011 (in Japan: 03-3581-6011)

●●● For further information about the abduction issue, ●●●
please refer to the following website:

Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea
<http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/>

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