



# Seminar on the North Korean Abductions Issue

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1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20004  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

*Please note: This transcript is based off a recording and includes an interpreter's translation of Japanese remarks. Mistranslations may appear in text. A video of the event is available: <https://www.hudson.org/events/1683-seminar-on-the-north-korean-abductions-issue52019>*

**NICK EBERSTADT:** I'm Nicholas Eberstadt from American Enterprise Institute. I'm going to be your moderator today. I'm a ringer from outside. It's an honor for me to be part of this Hudson government of Japan HRNK event. For translation - English, Channel 1; Japanese, Channel 2; Korean, Channel 3. I think we have compelling testimony and commentary for you today. If I could leave you with two thoughts, they would be these. No. 1 - you will see that the abduction issue is not a small, sectarian Japan-only issue. North Korean abductions of innocent civilians occur, victim populations the world over. This is an organized state-run crime syndicate.

Point No. 2 - the North Korean government does not abduct innocent victims from nations abroad as a sort of random, unusual predilection of their state. The violation of human rights that you learn about from worldwide abductions is in the DNA of the North Korean state. And it is the same contempt for innocent victims abroad that you see visited upon the hapless subjects of North Korean state and, also, that you see in North Korea's belligerent behavior in the nuclear crisis internationally. At this point, let me pass over the podium to the three co-chairman. Ken Weinstein, how about if you begin? And yeah.

**KEN WEINSTEIN:** Thank you very much, Nick. You have written widely and with a deep insight and spoken very forcefully on this critical issue for some time to come. Good morning. I'm Ken Weinstein. I am president and CEO of Hudson Institute. One bit of housekeeping before we get underway. I want to welcome our viewers on C-SPAN. I want to welcome our viewers in Japan and our audience here. If you're using the headsets, English is Channel 1. Japanese is Channel 2. Korean is Channel 3. Again, English 1, Japanese 2, Korean 3 as we get underway. We at Hudson Institute are deeply honored to co-sponsor this timely conference on the issue of abductees in North Korea with our friends at Human Rights in North Korea and our friends in the government of Japan. Japan has been critical to Hudson Institute for more than half a century since our founding by the late geostrategist Herman Kahn, who was the first to predict the rise of Japan as an economic superpower. And over the last few weeks, we have inaugurated our Japan chair and an Asia-Pacific Security chair as well with increased dedication to the critical importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

We have a long history of work on North Korea and on the abductee issue. This is an issue that has profound resonance for us here at Hudson Institute. Our senior vice president, Scooter Libby, who will be moderating the second panel, worked on this issue at the White House, at the Pentagon, and since, here at Hudson Institute. Senior fellow Melanie Kirkpatrick has written widely on this issue in her days at The Wall Street Journal editorial pages, and since, with Hudson Institute as well. And her husband, senior fellow Jack David, serves on the board of human rights in North Korea and helped bring us together for this important conference. We're honored to have five members of the Japanese Diet with us here this morning - the state minister of the Cabinet Office, Akira Sato, as well as Keiji Furuya, the chairman of the Committee of Congressional Members to Act for the Early Release of Japanese Victims Abducted by North Korea. These five Diet members and the others as well present here are the latest of a long series of major Japanese dignitaries to visit with us here at Golden Week, including Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishimura, National Security Adviser Yachi-san and Diet member Shinjiro Koizumi, who visited with us yesterday.

But we are most especially honored to have the families of the abductees with us here today. You have shown incredible grace and dignity in immense personal pain which none of us in this room can begin to fathom. With dedication to your loved ones, to seeing them again or to their memories and assuring that this issue remain on the agenda. And I really want to single out

Takuya Yokota and your parents for all you have done and your family has done to raise this issue - Cindy Warmbier, who is a hero to all of us here in Washington and beyond who have grown to love the memory of your incredible son, Otto - Koichiro Iizuka, the general - vice general secretary of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea - Michael Sneddon, whose brother David was kidnapped by North Korea 15 years ago, and Hwang In-cheol, who was a 2-year-old - had his father kidnapped in the 1969 KAL kidnapping series.

Now, this immense, and profound and unimaginable personal pain is something you folks live with every day, and it is very much on our minds today and at every moment when there is a critical period of negotiations between North Korea and the West. We've seen two summits. The Hanoi summit recently concluded without much progress, it should be noted. And the question for us today is, can we see concrete progress on the abduction issue and on Japanese-North Korean relations, on U.S.-North Korean relations and beyond, which are central? And how central is the abductee issue to moving relations forward and to progress in these negotiations? Without any further ado, I am pleased now to turn it over to Greg Scarlatoiu of Human Rights in North Korea (ph).

**GREG SCARLATOIU:** Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, good morning. I'm delighted to meet you today. I'm Greg Scarlatoiu, the executive director of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, HRNK, based here in Washington, D.C. It is truly an honor and a privilege to co-host this landmark conference this morning together with our colleagues at the Hudson Institute and together with the government of Japan. Our organization is also humbled to be in the presence of abductee family members from Japan and South Korea, as well as distinguished representatives of the Warmbier and Sneddon families. They have been through sorrow, and they have not wavered from turning their sorrow into action - into meaningful action from joining us at this type of event. HRNK was established 18 years ago by a group of scholars, former government officials and private sector representatives, all human rights luminaries and visionaries. Two of them represent HRNK here today - Jack David and Nick Eberstadt. They're board members of HRNK.

This is an organization that has been dedicated exclusively to the researching, investigation, the monitoring and reporting on the North Korean human rights situation. Since 2001, we have published 40 reports on issues critical to understanding, appreciating and eventually resolving the North Korean human rights conundrum. Our studies have established our reputational role in the growing international network of human rights, humanitarian assistance and policy organizations committed to opening up and revealing North Korea to most of the world. HRNK has been researching and investigating the abduction of Japanese and nationals of other countries by North Korea for more than a decade. After years of research and close collaboration with friends and colleagues in Japan and other countries, HRNK published "Taken!" - to this day, the most comprehensive English-language report on the abduction of Japanese nationals and nationals of other countries by North Korea. We have provided complimentary copies of the report to all conference participants, and, of course, other publications are available on our website. Japanese citizens have been taken. North Korean missiles have pierced through Japanese airspace, making Japan and the world painfully aware of the danger posed by North Korea, by its missiles, its nuclear weapons and other tools of death. Just like families from 14 other countries, Japanese families deserve to know the fate of their abducted relatives, many of whom are still alive in North Korea today.

Our organization, together with the networks we belong to, are fully dedicated to finding out the truth about the fate of all abductees. We are fully dedicated to ensuring the swift return of those who are still alive in North Korea. If North Korea is approached with the aim of addressing both serious political security concerns and this critical human rights issue - the abduction of foreign nationals by North Korea - human rights organizations will salute this development. Human rights has often been outcompeted by other issues of great concern - political, security, missile issues. We also see this as an opportunity to continue to elevate the importance of the human rights issues that we address - in particular, the abduction of foreign nationals by North Korea. Our ultimate goal this morning is to ensure the return of those who are still in Korea - in North Korea to their loved ones and to bring closure to those whose relatives will not be able to return. Thank you very much. We look forward to a great conference.

(APPLAUSE)

**AKIRA SATO:** (Through interpreter) Good morning. My name is Akira Sato. I am a state minister of the Cabinet Office and in charge of the abduction issue. I would like to start by thanking the Hudson Institute, especially Dr. Kenneth Weinstein and also Greg Scarlatoiu of HRNK for co-hosting today. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Nick Eberstadt of AEI for serving as our moderator today, as well as to Scooter Libby, the senior vice president of the Hudson Institute, to the other speakers, as well as to all of our guests today. Thank you for joining us today. As one of the hosts, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you all. And our theme today is the abduction issues in Japan. It was - as of the 1970s and through the 1980s that many Japanese were abducted by North Korea. In terms of the number of people abducted, the official count by the Japanese government is 17. But there are 800 or more people for whom we cannot rule out the possibility that they were abducted by North Korea. In 2002, five of the abductees did come back to Japan. But since then, we have not been able to bring a single person home. Of course, the victims themselves and also their families who so desperately wait for their return have been suffering and grieving for over 40 years. And that suffering and grief is not something I could put into words.

I personally today am a member of the caucus that is involved in the Japanese Diet in this issue. And we have been working through a variety of opportunities to share this desperation of the families and the fact that we have not yet succeeded at resolving the issue. Nothing could pain me more than that. We see the abduction issue is a serious issue that impacts the sovereignty and also the safety of our people. So we want to take every opportunity that we can in order to bring up the abduction issue with other nations and ask for their help. Recently, the second summit between the U.S. and North Korea was held. And President Trump did bring up the issue of abduction with Kim Jong Un again, and I would like to thank him for having done that. Last week, Prime Minister Abe visited the U.S. And the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to working closely in order to resolve the abduction issue. And President Trump offered his full cooperation, which was very encouraging to us. The Japanese government's policy as regards relations with North Korea is that we need to resolve comprehensively all of the outstanding concerns, including abductions, the nuclear issue and the missile issues to resolve our outstanding issues of the past, and only then to normalize relations. And I would like to discuss our agenda today.

First of all, we want you to hear direct testimony from the families of the victims so that you may understand their anguish. And as a representative - as representatives of the victims' families, we have the Takuya Yokota and Koichiro Iizuka from Japan here today. Mr. Yokota is the

brother of Megumi Yokota, who was abducted on her way home from school when she was 13 years old 42 years ago. And Koichiro Iizuka is the son of Yaeko Taguchi, who was abducted when she was 22 years old and he was only 1 years old. Neither of them have come home as of yet. And from the U.S., we have Cindy Warmbier, who is the mother of Otto Warmbier, who died after having been held by North Korea for 17 months and released in a coma. We also have with us Michael Sneddon, who is the older brother of David Sneddon, who is suspected of having been abducted by North Korea in China.

We also have with us Hwang In-cheol, who is the son of Hwang Won, who was abducted during a hijacking 50 years ago by North Korea. Not only will we have direct testimony from these people, but today, we are joined by Parliamentary representatives from Japan who are involved in the abduction issue, as well as experts on the issue. Government officials and lawmakers are not the only ones working on the issue. We are also working with the members from think tanks and nongovernmental organizations. And we hope that today's seminar will be an opportunity for us to deepen our cooperation. Thank you very much.

**EBERSTADT:** Well, let's begin with our first panel please, if we could have Mr. Yokota, Mr. Iizuka, Mr. Hwang, Mrs. Warmbier, Mr. Sneddon come up here. We'll then have - we'll have each of our speakers testify for six minutes. We are all so very, very sorry for your loss. Up here? I think just - Cindy, Michael. Why don't you sit next to Cindy? I'll sit over here. May I ask our - may I ask the members of our panel to limit their remarks to six minutes if you can, please? And Mr. - Yokota-sensei, I'll ask you to begin.

**TAKUYA YOKOTA:** (Through interpreter) Good afternoon, everyone. I am the brother of Megumi Yokota, who was abducted by North Korean agents. I would like to thank our moderator Nick Eberstadt for his contribution today. Megumi Yokota was abducted in November of 1977 when she was on her way home from school. And she was a completely innocent civilian girl. And when I think about the suffering that she must have experienced, it breaks my heart. According to a former agent of North Korea, she was locked in the hull of a ship and was screaming for her mother. And since she beat the door and scratched at the walls so much, her fingernails were torn off, and her hands were covered with blood. If she had not been abducted, then she would have lived the life that she had dreamed of. She always loved reading. She loved animals and plants, as well as music and art. And she had many dreams for her future. I am sure she would have gone to high school and university and worked to become the person that she wanted to be, finding work and contributing to the world. She would've fallen in love and married and had children and a family. But in a single instant, that was robbed from her by a violent abduction by North Korea. And she continues to live an unimaginably hard life held by them. It goes without saying that abduction is an egregious human rights abuse.

It is also a crime that represents the violation of the sovereignty and the territorial waters of Japan. Any individual or organization or nation that gives aid to North Korea should be condemned. Many countries now know that they have been the victims of North Korea. And we believe that North Korea has committed three crimes. First of all - violated the sovereignty and territorial waters of Japan to abduct a 13-year-old girl. They also fabricated a death certificate in order to cover up what actually happened to her and then provided another person's remains, claiming that they were hers, only exacerbating the grief that her family felt. Thirdly, they have used Megumi Yokota as a negotiation card. And as a result of this, my sister and many other victims are living in conditions so cruel as to defy the imagination. This serious human rights abuse is not something that only affects Japanese victims. We have Michael Sneddon and

Cindy Warmbier here with us today. And there are other countries such as South Korea, Lebanon and Thailand and Romania that have also fallen victim to North Korea. We must remember that. Cindy lost her beloved son Otto because of the violence of North Korea. And it is clear how disgusting the violence that North Korea engages in is. And we must not permit these human rights abuse - when I first met Cindy in the U.S., she said, we must not stay quiet. We must fight this. She cried that and gave us a great deal of courage in doing so.

We share the sadness of the Warmbier family, as well as that of the Sneddon family. I received a badge from the Warmbier family that says Otto, and I continue to hold on to that as I make my plea. My voice is the voice of my sister and also the voice of Otto. All of us here are suffering from something that is - might be happening far away, but it is something that affects us directly. And we need to think about what it is that we need to do as a result. The U.S. has had two summits with North Korea, the first at Singapore. And in Singapore, Kim Jong Un looked up at the starry night sky. What did he think then? Did he - I don't think that he thought, oh, it's a lovely night out. I thought that he must have thought, why is my country still in the dark? There are 25 million people in North Korea whose freedom and human rights have been quashed by violence. And the people there have to think about how to make it through each and every single day. We must remember that the government of North Korea has promised to denuclearize. But they need to immediately bring back all of the abductees together. If they were to do that, then we would be able to ensure the continuation of the Kim regime. And the Kim regime would be able to keep its promise to its people that it has made for three generations - that it will feed them meaty soup.

We believe that North Korea will be completely unwilling to denuclearize. And at the moment, North Korea is suffering economically and politically. Even if there were to be a third summit between the U.S. and North Korea, unless North Korea does promise to completely and irreversibly denuclearize, there will be no bright future for North Korea. If North Korea does make concessions to the U.S., then I believe it will be Japan who will be providing much of the economic aid to North Korea. We need to see all of our abductees return together immediately. Up until now, North Korea has been tricking us, saying that they will restart investigations, et cetera. But we will continue to stand up that. We know that the abductees are under 24-hour watch and that North Korea knows where they are. But North Korea has been saying that they are dead and that they need to look into what happened to them. But we will no longer be fooled by these methods. If we, a victim's family, continue to be derided and mocked, then they will face even greater sanctions.

I personally could never forgive North Korea for having taken my sister. However, that doesn't mean that I am engaged in political activities trying to overthrow the Kim dynasty. All I am doing is saying that I want all of the abductees to come home and that I hope that Kim will make the courageous and right decision. My father is no longer well. He is 86 years old. And the older that my parents get, the greater the risk that they will not be able to see Megumi again. We really have no more time. We must join together, pressure North Korea and resolve the abduction issues and also cooperate with one another so that we can resolve the nuclear issue as well. I look forward to your cooperation and your courage. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**KOICHIRO IIZUKA:** (Through interpreter) Thank you for joining us today for this seminar. I came from Japan. My name is Koichiro Iizuka. My mother was abducted by North Korean

agents 41 years ago, when I was 1 year old, and she has never come home to Japan since. As a result of that, I have no memory of my mother. I don't remember ever having spoken with her or ever having touched my mother. My mother's name was Yaeko Taguchi. When she was 22 years old, as she was raising me and my sister, who was 3 years old at that time, she was suddenly abducted by a North Korean agent. And she remains held by them. In September 2002, there was a summit between Japan and North Korea. And North Korea acknowledged for the first time that they had abducted my mother and said that she had died in a car accident. When I heard that, I thought that I would never be able to meet my mother and got very depressed. I cannot put how I felt at that moment into words, but I do remember that I could not stop crying.

However, that was not true. The information that she was deceased was baseless. At the time, North Korea shared a death certificate that was clearly fabricated. And even in the report of the traffic accident, her name did not appear anywhere. There are many contradictions and errors in the North - in North Korea's descriptions of the fate of the victims. That has become apparent from the investigations of the Japanese government. They have made up a fictional story to try to cover up the existence of my mother. She is still alive in North Korea, and she is still waiting for us to rescue her. Instances of abduction of Japanese people have occurred other than that of my mother. The Japanese government recognizes 17 cases. Five have come home, and the remaining 12 have not. And there are many hundreds of Japanese who may have possibly additionally been abducted by North Korea. North Korea said that eight of the remaining 12 that have not come home have died and that four never came to North Korea to begin with, but there are many contradictions in their stories, and there has been nothing to back the stories of the deaths of some of them. There was DNA testing performed on what were said to be the remains of Megumi Yokota, but it was found not to be her remains. And in addition, the abductions have not only affected Japan.

From the testimonies of the Japanese victims that did come home, we know that there is the possibility that there are also victims from South Korea, Thailand and Romania. In a U.N. report, there are also allegations that there are abductees from Malaysia, Singapore, France, Italy, the Netherlands and China. And so this is a human rights issue for all of the international community. In June 2018 and in February 2019, there were summits held between the U.S. and North Korea. At the summits, President Trump directly urged Kim Jong Un to resolve the abduction issue. In September 2002, there was the summit between Japan and North Korea, and we think that this has provided the greatest opportunity for the head of North Korea to rethink the abduction issue. We believe that Kim Jong Un and North Korea should make the decision to release all of the abductees together so that we can break free of the past and move to a brighter future. We have no intention of opposing the normalization of relations with North Korea if all of the abductees can come home together.

All we want is for our families to come home so that they can lead normal lives. North Korea has threatened the peace of the world with its nuclear weapons and missiles, and the U.S. has held its summits to combat this threat. And as was seen in the summit in February in Hanoi, the U.S. remains wholeheartedly dedicated to those efforts. North Korea continues to only deliver reports that suit its stories, and however, Japan has no notion of falling for such ploys. It has been 30 or 40 years since North Korea began abducting Japanese. Nothing could be more tragic. We cannot make up for lost times, and our families are getting older. We cannot spend any more time on this. And lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to President Trump and also to the

American government for bringing up the issue of the abductions at the two summits. I would like to ask you all for your continued help as we wait to be reunited with our families. Thank you very much.

**EBERSTADT:** Hwang, (unintelligible)?

**HWANG IN-CHEOL:** Yes. Good morning. (Through interpreter) Gratitude to the Japanese government for inviting me and to the Hudson Institute and the HRNK for co-hosting the seminar on the North Korea abduction issue. It breaks my heart to meet Mrs. Cindy Warmbier, who knows the horror of the potent North Korean regime. Mrs. Warmbier, please accept my deepest condolences for your loss. My sympathy also goes to the other family members of the American and the Japanese abductees. Who could ever understand their pain, forever separated from their loved one due to the barbaric regime of North Korea? The pain is truly unbearable and cruel. In this photograph, the little boy is me, and the man holding me is my father. My father loved me very, very much. In the winter of 1969, I was just 2 years old. My father brought a friend to go on a business trip, but the friend was hijacked and then flown to North Korea. In captivity, this is what my father's cried out. Send me back home under international law, international customary law, the humanitarian principles. Send me back home. Send me back home to my loving family.

Despite the huge outcry, my father was taken away like an animal to the slaughterhouse, beaten and tortures for two weeks. My father's name is Hwang Won. And he was a 32-year-old TV producer in South Korea. On December 11, 1969, Korean Air YS-11 was hijacked just 10 minutes after takeoff by a North Korea agent. Due to pressure from the international community, the North Korea regime promised that it would repatriate all 50 people from the plane. That was February 1. But then, on the 14, the North broke its own promise, returning only 39 passengers. Testimony of the 39 peoples who returned revealed that my father was being detained against their will by the regime. On February 6, 1970, my father strongly argues that he should be sent back home. He says (unintelligible), I want to go back in Korea. He kept saying this so as the soldier dragged him out. Ladies and gentlemen, that was 50 years ago.

Since that day, my mother, my sister and I have not seen our father. My grandmother mother spent the last years of her life in agony, longing to see her son again. But for 50 years, North Korea refuses to give us any information. But in 2013, my father, of his own free will, tried to escape from North Korea, but his attempt fails. I felt so guilty because I couldn't help him - help my father. The last I heard, he was living near Sariwon City in North Korea. At the time of his abductions, my father was taken away for no legitimate reasons by North Korea criminal behavior. But now, he cannot go home even though he want. For the past 18 years, I have campaigned for my father's repatriation. Truly, it is so hard and difficult. Only one organization, Teach North Korean Refugees in Seoul, has helped me constantly since 2016. TNKR is composes of foreign volunteers. Thanks to their sense of justice, I can now bring international attention to my father's abduction and dream of his repatriation. There is not a single why my father should remain forcibly detained North Korea. Not just my father - countless number of people are forcibly detained North Korea.

Ladies and gentlemen, aren't you - well, are you going to simply watch the barbaric behavior of North Korea government? Please take actions. The North Korea government hijacked a civil aircraft and refused to abide by the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft. More than anything, I urge you and the international community to demand my father's



repatriation. The same goes for other American and Japanese citizen who are abducted by North Korea. Under the rule of international law and the humanitarian principles, please demand their repatriation so that we can all reunite with our families. Ladies and gentlemen, I want to meet to my father before he die. All the victims should be allowed to meet their families before they die. Please help us. Please help us bring our families home while they are still alive. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**EBERSTADT:** Michael Sneddon, please.

**MICHAEL SNEDDON:** I'll present a letter on behalf of my parents and extended family. Dear friends, distinguished government officials and honored guests. It is now 15 years since our brother and son, David Louis Sneddon, disappeared in August 2004 while hiking through Yunnan province, People's Republic of China. On that fateful summer's day when so much changed, David was just 24 years old. Years passed before we learned, little by little, bit by bit, more about David and the situation. Based upon information, first, from the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea located here in Washington, later, from Mr. Nishioka of NARKN, the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, located in Tokyo and, more recently, from Mr. Sung-yong Choi, president of the Abductees' Family Union located in Seoul, as well as listening to our hearts, we are now sure that David is being held by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the DPRK.

Over the years, our family has shared our frustrations and hopes with you at similar meetings and symposiums. Time marches relentlessly forward. Today's date, as we all know, is Friday, May 3, 2019. What most hear within the sound of my voice may not know is why May the 3 is significant. Today is David Sneddon's 39th birthday. And today is the 15th time that David has celebrated his birthday while being held in captivity. Fifteen years ago this month, David said his goodbyes and left his parents and native land for what he thought would be a few months of studying and experiencing the Chinese language and culture, before returning for his final year of study at Brigham Young University. Even in the context of abduction and captivity, there is reason for hope for David in the present situation. David is trilingual - English, Korean and Mandarin - and has lived within the cultures represented by them. In the present political climate, which has been struggling with denuclearization and normalization of relations between the DPRK and its neighbors in the region, David's presence may be helpful to all concerned in such a critical time. His skills may be useful to negotiators from the DPRK if they should choose to use him behind the scenes.

Regardless of David's present assignment, in our families, certain things have not changed. Indeed, our children and most of all of David's nieces and nephews pray daily for his welfare and safe return. It has been a long journey. But this journey, like all journeys, will come to an end. Today we find hope in the eternal principle that just as the sun rises every morning to chase away the darkness, eventually good always triumphs over evil. If we are patient and work together for that which is good, we can hasten its triumph. My hope is that earlier today, David celebrated his last day of his long - his last birthday of his long captivity. It is dark now where David is sleeping. My prayer is just as the sun rises each morning, David will soon experience the dawning of his brighter day. Through our quest for David's return, thankfully we found many organizations which seek to make a difference. And more important - and most importantly, we have found the many wonderful families of North Korean abductees who also suffer from similar

feelings for the missing loved ones, particularly the Yokota family. If you were to see my mother and Mrs. Yokota side by side, they look so similar. We knew that when you talked. They're the same age. And when they met for the first time several years ago, my mother knew they shared a similar experience. And that was a turning point for our family.

Our hope, our daily prayers of family for all those who have been abducted is that they may also soon return. With this thought, this mindset, we use hope, prayer, perseverance and our own inspired actions to help bring David home. For these abductees, we also pray for and have a faith in the dawning of their brighter day. Further, we thank all families affected by those abductions for the continued courage and concerted fight for the recognition by their governmental leaders. We call upon responsible government officials everywhere, but especially the best friends of the Korean people - the United States, Japan and the People's Republic of China - to effect change. This is the time - the course of human events when that which is morally right - to bring all abductees home - can be accomplished. Yet in this quest, we'd be - we would be selfish - most selfish, I might add - should the return of our loved ones, these abductees, be the sole focus of our efforts. Though we and the abductees suffer personal so we - that we suffer presently and have suffered for many years, millions of innocent citizens of the country of North Korea continue to suffer under oppression, punishment, abuses, malnutrition, fear and other unspeakable tortures brought upon them by their own government. They've endured this long, dark night of pain, oppression, even horror for the entire duration of their lives. Yes, for generations, they have suffered. We would be remiss if - should we forget their plight, their sufferings and not were together for the dawning of their brighter day.

Therefore, with our heartfelt desire to bring home our loved ones, let us not forget the forsaken people of North Korea. Let us also help them find a warm, sunlit spring morning filled with hope, opportunity and freedom as our hearts reach out to all the abductees and the affected families. We pray for the oppressed people of the DPRK. They, like us, suffer. They, like us, shall one day be freed from pain. This is the hope of the Sneddon family - that all will soon be free. We desire with - all within the sound of our voice to pick up the torch of hope while working relentlessly for a brighter day upon the Korean Peninsula. The oppression of people there shall cease. Respectfully yours, the Roy and Kathleen Sneddon family.

(APPLAUSE)

**EBERSTADT:** Cindy Warmbier, please.

**CINDY WARMBIER:** I'm going to wait to see Otto. Hopefully, he'll be up there soon 'cause I always have to pretend like I'm talking to him 'cause I do this for Otto. And I want to thank you all because you all are here for us. And so many people don't care what's going on. And your support keeps me fighting. I'm going to wait. Where is he? I'll tell you a little bit about Otto. Otto was in his third year at the University of Virginia. He was a great student, a fabulous son, great brother, lots of friends. I raised Otto different than I was raised. I have a lot of fear and tentativeness about what I should do, and I wanted Otto to be empowered, to not be afraid to grab on to everything he could in the world and live a really full life. And unfortunately, I had no idea when he took the tour to North Korea what he was walking into. North Korea, to me, is a cancer on the earth, and if we ignore this cancer, it's not going to go away. It's going to kill all of us. We don't even know we have this cancer, so that's why I talk. There is a cancer. I can tell you.

Otto was all about love and goodness. He never got in a fight with anyone in his whole life, and he never got in trouble. He had a job - his dream job on Wall Street as soon as he graduated. He got that his junior year. He always saw the best in people. If I ever was critical, he would call me on it. And he just always saw the best in people. So I know when they took Otto that he thought he'd be released, because he knew he didn't do anything. He thought, if I play by their rules, they're going to let me go. And I know he was sorry he ever went into that godforsaken place. Had I known that North Korea wanted money for Otto, I would have gladly given them money from day one. That isn't what they wanted from Otto in the beginning. First of all, they want everything they can get from anyone they take. Thank you for that picture. They want everything they can get from them. They have no respect for human beings. I don't know if Kim has power anymore. He sure acts like he doesn't, because he is not making the right decisions, and it's obvious to the world that we're onto him. But unless we keep the pressure on North Korea, they are not going to change, and I am very afraid that we're going to let up on this pressure.

So I need everyone here to keep the pressure on - everybody, you can. There are still a lot of families here that deserve to see their family members. I'm going to tell you what it was like when I saw Otto when he got off the plane. Well, no. I went on the plane. My gorgeous boy, who every girl had an immediate crush on, looked like a monster, I swear. The look in his eyes - which I didn't know he was blind at the time - was absolute horror, horror like he'd seen the devil, and he had. He was with the devil. OK, enough negativity. I have to write down positive things so I stay positive. First of all, I have so much gratitude to meet all the Japanese dignitaries, family members who have so much restraint and honor. I'm sorry I can't exhibit the same restraint, but I know they forgive me. Then I want to thank the American government. They brought Otto home. You can see the Japanese are desperately trying to do the same. We have to bring our family members home. We have to come together on this issue. This should not be a partisan issue. This is a problem. This is not only a nuclear problem. This is a problem that - we're dealing with absolute evil. We can ignore it like I would have had this not happened to me, but I can't guarantee that something bad's not going to happen if we leave things alone.

There is a charade going on right now. It's called diplomacy. How can you have diplomacy with someone that never tells the truth? That's what I want to know. I'm all for it, but I'm very skeptical. He lies, he lies, he lies - all for himself. And his regime - oh, my gosh, if you could call it a regime - they only care about themselves. They don't - do not care about all the people in the concentration camps. They aren't gulags to me. They're concentration camps. The only difference between Hitler and him is he's doing it to all of his people and to other people too. I will be strong because Otto always was proud of me for being strong. He was the strongest kid I knew. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

**EBERSTADT:** Before we conclude, I should mention by way of housekeeping that there are reporters in the green room who will want to be interviewing our panelists, so may I ask our panelists when they leave to go to the green room for the interviews. Ladies and gentlemen, we can, I hope, all express our sympathy for the suffering of these families and our solidarity with their cause. We should also never forget this is not an inexplicable tragedy. The suffering these families and so many others have inflicted upon them comes from the logic and the deep DNA of a wicked - I dare say an evil - state. Thank you all very much. We will now move into the next panel.

(APPLAUSE)

**EBERSTADT:** Think our panel members should come up to the front at this point.

**SCOOTER LIBBY:** Good afternoon. I'm Scooter Libby. I'm senior vice president here at the Hudson Institute. It's an honor to be here with the representatives of the families, who are now heading to their next event, and also Minister Sato, the Diet members who are with us and this audience, which bears witness to all that we have heard. The second panel will take a look at some of these issues in depth with regard to the international community. We meet at the start of a new Reiwa era in Japan. Official translation of this is beautiful harmony. Unofficially, it might be rendered as rule-based order for peace. Reiwa struck a note with me because 35 years ago this week, I was part of President Reagan's trip to China. And while at Fudan University - less than a year after one of these abductions, in fact - in his famous speech, President Reagan spoke of living in harmony with friends. There's no harmony. There's no rule-based order that accepts kidnapping and the continued holding of other countries' citizens. I mention this because Japan and South Korea and America together hope to bring about a prompt resolution to this problem. But others - notably China - have a role to play in this too.

When Reagan went to Fudan, he had a second message for the students and all of Asia. He said that Americans believe in not taking what belongs to others. And we believe in the dignity of each man, woman and child and of each individual's special right to make his own decisions and lead his own life. That is one of democracy's greatest strengths, in my view - that we care about each individual life. It's a strength we share with Japan and South Korea and which brings us here today. We must recognize that there are other countries that don't share this dedication, but the Chinese and other states have often spoken of noninterference and their sovereignty. Nothing could be more repugnant to our sense of harmony, of fairness, individual dignity or to a sense of national sovereignty than what we heard today. I hope that people in Asia and across the world will recognize the message of Reiwa and of President Reagan and the terrible wrongs to which we bear witness and stretch out their hands promptly to right it. Our first speaker on the panel will be Diet member Furuya Keiji, 10 terms represented representative. He has focused on the abduction issue, the Constitution and the resilience of Japan. He is the former Cabinet member in charge of this issue and currently the chairperson of the Diet committee for the early rescue of the North Korean abductees.

**KEIJI FURUYA:** (Through interpreter) Good morning. My name is Keiji Furuya from the Japanese Diet. I am a member of the caucus in our Diet. I'm actually the head of that caucus for the rescue of the abductees. Our caucus has over 300 members and is nonpartisan. We collaborate together and are very active. And as a result of our activities, we believe that almost all Japanese are aware of the abduction issue. Today, other than myself, who is the chair of that caucus, I have with us from the Diet Eriko Yamatani, who is the deputy chair, and also a Diet member who is a deputy chair, Mr. Shu Watanabe, as well as Kazuhiro Haraguchi, who is the vice chair, and then Jin Matsubara, who is the secretary-general.

First, I would like to say that these abductions represent the ultimate in human rights abuse and are equivalent to terrorism as they are conducted by a state. We absolutely cannot let this stand. The objective of this seminar today is to make as many Americans as possible aware of the abduction issue and also to resolve the abduction issue, which means to secure the immediate return of all of the abductees. That will result in North Korea regaining its dignity and once again become a member of the international community. We want to send that strong

message to Chairman Kim Jong Un. I want to stress here that it is Kim Jong Il that is the director of the abductions and that his son, Kim Jong Un, was not involved. Our prime minister - Koizumi at the time - met with Kim Jong Il, and they signed the Pyongyang declaration in February of 2002. And in accordance with that, Japan and North Korea - if we were to normalize relations, then the wealth of natural resources in North Korea would be very attractive and the basis for potential economic development in North Korea. And Chairman Kim should be aware of that. The U.S. and Japan must cooperate on this issue.

Currently, there is a very strong relationship of trust between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe. We see this as an excellent opportunity for us. President Trump brought up the abduction issue with Chairman Kim at both of their summits. And we have now moved, as of this month, into the new Reiwa era in Japan. There was a summit between the U.S. and Japan in April, and Trump and Abe talked in depth about the abductions. And President Trump this month will be the first state guest to Japan in the Reiwa era, and the two leaders will also be meeting in June at the G20 summit. So that's three months of consecutive meetings, and I believe that that will serve as significant pressure on Kim Jong Un. Based on reports from the Korean Central News Agency, North Korea is criticizing Japan on a daily basis, and what that means is that the domestic environment in North Korea must be very severe at the moment. I heard this from someone who visited North Korea recently, but apparently, there is not even enough bread at Pyongyang's luxury hotel for foreigners. What it means that North Korea is being so critical at the moment is that it wants aid from Japan. But this is the MO that it always uses, meaning that it plans on making just a - some small concession in order to get as much as they can. That this is its methodology is clear, both in the context of the nuclear and the missile issues and the discussions of them at the U.S. summits as well. There's already been resolutions passed in both the U.S. House and Senate regarding the potential abduction of David Sneddon, which you heard about from his brother, Michael, earlier.

Our caucus in Japan also proactively worked for the passage of those resolutions. We believe that, just as with the nuclear and missile issues, that Japan and the U.S. can also collaborate on the abduction issue because that will serve as a major pressure on Kim Jong Un. We must leave no stone unturned in trying to resolve the issue of the abduction of the Japanese people. However, we must, as Prime Minister Abe has said, deal directly with the leader of North Korea. And we hope to cooperate with the U.S. so that we can have a summit between Japan and North Korea so that we can resolve the abduction issue. And our caucus plans on using any means at its disposal to make that happen. With that, I would like to conclude my comments. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**LIBBY:** Thank you. Our next...

**FURUYA:** (Foreign language spoken).

**LIBBY:** Michael Schiffer, senior Democratic staffer on the prestigious Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, a position close to my heart.

**MICHAEL SCHIFFER:** Well, thank you very much. And it's nice to hear the Senate Foreign Relations Committee referred to as prestigious, still, these days. If I can ask for my - our friends in the press who are in the room - as a staff member, if you can consider my remarks to be on

background, as I would like to continue to be a staff member. And I also want to pass on regards from Senator Menendez from New Jersey, who is the ranking member on the committee. He wishes that he could have been here with you this morning, but know that he is certainly thinking about all of your families and about the fate of the abductees and North Korea. Briefly - and I don't think as a surprise to anybody here - you know, there is a deep bipartisan commitment to human rights in North Korea, not just for the suffering of the people of North Korea, but also for the fate of the Japanese abductees and Americans who have been unjustly imprisoned and worse by the regime in Pyongyang. And I think it's fair to say that for members of Congress, if we can't characterize the regime in Pyongyang as evil, then the word evil has no meaning anymore. And so that is a commitment that I think that you can expect to see continue. It's been one that we've demonstrated and exhibited across Congresses controlled by both Democrats and Republicans and with administrations with both Democrats and Republicans in the White House.

We view it as our role to keep the administration's feet to the fire, to make sure that these issues receive the attention that they deserve. As was mentioned, we passed resolutions for David Sneddon. We passed resolutions for Otto - a truly heartbreaking situation. And I have nothing but admiration for you and your family. It's - well, words fail me. We have also made sure - and increasingly so in the past several years - to include human rights issues in the sanctions legislation that Congress has passed and to include statutory requirements now, starting with the North Korean (ph) Sanctions Enhancement Act in 2016, that will not allow U.S. or international sanctions to be rolled back completely unless there is concrete action by North Korea to address human rights issues, including the fate of the abductees. And I think that is a commitment that you can expect to see Congress continue to hold to.

One can imagine any number of paths for diplomacy with North Korea. But for me and, I think, for my boss - and I dare say, on this issue, I feel safe in speaking for members on both sides of my committee - it's impossible to imagine a solution for the North Korea challenge that does not include resolution of human rights does not address the fate of the abductees and does not include justice for Americans who have been victims of this regime. And so for my Japanese friends, let me finish up by noting that, you know, we take our alliance and our partnership with Japan with utmost seriousness. In every discussion that we have with the administration, members both sides of the aisle, House and Senate, make sure to emphasize how important it is that in any engagement with North Korea, that Japanese equities, including the fate of the abductees, are taken into account. And that's something that we will continue to keep our eye on and something that we will continue to pay attention to. So thank you.

**LIBBY:** Our next speaker is Luci Griffiths, senior legislative assistant for Congressman Chris Stewart, who is a member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in the House and a specialist on foreign affairs. Luci.

**LUCI GRIFFITHS:** Well, I feel like it was just all stated, so thank you - how Congress, the Senate, how we feel - so thank you for those comments. And also, thank you for your bravery, for those that are here as family members to be here and to share your stories. We greatly appreciate that. And then, as my remarks will predominantly focus on David, I must wish him a happy birthday publicly too. What a interesting way to celebrate a birthday, but very grateful that we can be here to not forget him and forget his memory that is - brings us here today - and not just for him, but all those who have also been affected by this regime. So thank you and happy birthday, David. I just wanted to give a little background on behalf of the congressman. And

again, he wishes he could be here, but unfortunately, it did not work with his schedule, so I get the honor. But he first became very familiar with David's case when he first entered office - actually, due to a personal connection through his own son. The congressman's son was actually a friend of David Sneddon's. And they actually interacted due to missionary service.

So David had served in South Korea and then was in a capacity of teaching language skills to those that would continue with missionary service in South Korea. And it just so happened that the congressman's son was one who was going to be serving in South Korea and therefore interacted with David in what they call the Missionary Training Center, where he was learning language and skills to be able to interact with the culture in and to survive, I guess you would say, an international experience for someone that had never had that experience - so obviously, showing that David was a very skilled linguist and also very adept. He's very adept at cultures. So that is the first connection with the congressman and why he became engaged - aside from, obviously, his responsibility as a member of Congress to be engaged on these issues. And then, as was mentioned, an expert in foreign affairs that he is, he took a personal interest in David's case, which led to - and it's been mentioned already, but I'll say it again - to the passage of a House resolution in 2016. There was also one passed in the Senate. That was HRes 891: "Expressing Concern Over The Disappearance Of David Sneddon." The main goal with that, of course, is to keep the relevance of the case there, to make sure that it's not forgotten. And I believe that that can go without saying - that that is not just the relevance of David's case but also everyone else who is in the same circumstance. And as has been noted, it's affecting many countries. Many, many countries have been affected by the abductee situation.

So the main three pillars of that was that the State Department would continue to investigate and consider all possibilities of explanation for David's disappearance. Second would be that they coordinate their efforts through the governments of Japan, South Korea and China, and lastly, that they keep Congress and the Sneddon family informed of those efforts. Through this experience with this resolution, Congressman Stewart was able to interact with various individuals at the State Department. He will tell you that he was impressed and grateful for the good work in which they did, especially in the beginning phases of David's disappearance - the efforts and the pressure that was put on the Chinese government to continue to investigate. But unfortunately, due to turnover of staff and also just the reality of time, the congressman felt that it had definitely fallen off the radar in terms of looking into other options and not just simply accepting the status quo - again, why the resolution came to fruition. Congressman Stewart considers to - or continues to share this concern, along with all the other abductees, and continues to put pressure when possible on the case and the situation that is facing all of the family members here. I wish I had more to report on, to be honest.

I wish I could sit here and tell you right now that we have some big breakthrough. That is not the case, however. As has been noted many times, these high-level talks and the increasing number of high-level talks that are at least becoming public make us hopeful that this is an issue that is continually brought up. Our - President Trump, as has been noted, has brought it up. And we continue to pressure through the State Department and other opportunities - Congressman Stewart happens to be a good friend of Secretary Pompeo - to be able to pressure and continue to bring up the importance of this. I think it's important that it's not forgotten. And that's why we're grateful to be here today and to be able to commemorate that. I could continue on some of the efforts and collaborations from foreign affairs perspective that Congressman Stewart is engaged on. However, I feel like there was a wonderful synopsis that's already been given; no

need to continue and repeat. But just know that, again, we appreciate the collaboration with the Japanese government. We appreciate the collaboration with all of those that have been affected by this situation and, as things evolve on the peninsula, the importance of continuing that collaboration as we move forward. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

**LIBBY:** Our next-to-last speaker is Tom Rose, a friend and a man I admire greatly. He's a top adviser to Vice President Pence who, as many of you know, has been a leading voice on Asian policy for this administration. In each of the two years of the Trump administration, I have been present when Tom has given stunning remarks in Tokyo about American foreign policy. He's also a hero to many over the course of his career on human rights issues. Tom.

**TOM ROSE:** Thank you. Let me turn my clock on here so I don't hit the six minutes. Thank you very much, Scooter and everyone here. Listening to the stories of the abductees - and, of course, our beloved Cindy and Fred - one can't help but think that this world can be a rotten place with rotten people, rotten regimes. But in listening to the passion and the commitment and the continued resolve of those free citizens whose abductees have been gone, whose loved ones have been murdered, it's a reminder - a powerful one - of the beauty in this world, the power of freedom and the sanctity and inviolability of every single human life. Nothing about North Korea should be forgotten, especially in light of negotiations and diplomacy that this administration is attempting to successfully conduct with the DPRK. Since its founding, the totalitarian leadership of the DPRK has exacted unparalleled privation and cruelty upon its subjects. Torture, forced mass starvation, execution, murder, forced abortion and a systemic system of slave labor and innovative perfections of totalitarian control that have been best highlighted by Dr. Eberstadt, who sits here, have been the means by which this regime has retained and consolidated its hold on power.

Now, Cindy said diplomacy with the DPRK is a charade. Well, if human rights isn't part of that diplomacy, Cindy is absolutely right, because no peace can ever come with a regime who treats its citizens in a manner that is simply beyond comprehension of anyone living in the West - public executions, mass forced starvation. The president's been emphatic and direct with Chairman Kim on the two occasions when they've met. I would simply ask of the abductees and of Cindy and Fred something very direct, and that is to never, ever let us forget your stories, to always stay in the spotlight, to never refrain from going on television or addressing conferences like this, to never refrain from voicing criticisms or objections when they feel merited. Listening to these stories today - the Japanese abductees and, of course, Fred and Cindy - I was reminded of something I heard a while ago about the difference between the words history and memory. History, in English, broken out into two words - his story. Memory begins with two letters - me, myself.

I would simply ask of all the abductee families and all those who've suffered at the hands of this brutal regime never to let your stories become history but to always insist that they remain our memory, imprinted on our hearts and in our minds so that their story can become and remain our own. There will never be peace until these issues are resolved. President Trump is committed to that. Vice President Pence is committed to that, and I know all of you are. So again, never let us off the hook. Keep the pressure on - not just the North Korean regime, but keep the pressure on us. Keep the pressure on Congress, on the administration and all of us to ensure that we stay on the right and true path. Thank you very much.



(APPLAUSE)

**LIBBY:** Our final speaker before questions is Melanie Kirkpatrick, a colleague and a friend, a longtime observer of the situation in North Korea, author of an outstanding book related to this subject and author of many superb columns in The Wall Street Journal.

**MELANIE KIRKPATRICK:** Thank you, Scooter. And good morning - (speaking Japanese) - to all of you ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to talk a little bit about the citizens of countries - of all countries who have been kidnapped by Japan - by North Korea. Let me give you a list of the names of the countries. They are South Korea, China, France, Guinea, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Macao, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Romania, Singapore and Thailand. To that is - list, I would add the United States because I believe David Sneddon was probably kidnapped by North Korean agents in 2004. The tragic stories we heard earlier today represent only a few of the victims. There are many, many more. Several hundred Japanese were probably abducted. The number of South Koreans who were taken - fishermen, soldiers, students, ordinary people - runs into the thousands. Lebanese-kidnapped victims who managed to go home reported seeing French, Dutch and Italian women at a North Korean spy institute. Who are they? No one knows. Are they still in North Korea? North Korea won't say.

Most of the North Korean kidnaps - kidnappings that have been documented took place during the '70s and the '80s. Do not, however, make the mistake of thinking that North Korea's history of kidnapping people in foreign countries is a relic of the past. Now, as then, North Korea has no respect for the sovereignty of other countries, the rule of law or for the sanctity of human life. In recent years, North Korea's kidnappers have turned their attention to China, where they have kidnapped Chinese and South Korean citizens and taken them to North Korea. These people were targeted because of their work helping North Korean escapees who are hiding in China. A Chicago-area pastor was kidnapped and taken to North Korea, where he died. This pastor carried South Korean citizenship but was a green card holder in the United States. Since Kim Jong Un took power at the end of 2011, the focus of North Korea's kidnapping operations has been on its own citizens who are living abroad. In 2014, North Korean agents abducted a North Korean student from the university he was attending in Paris. The young man was the son of a senior North Korean official who had just been purged and executed. The student escaped. He fled from his captors at Charles de Gaulle Airport, and he remains in hiding. A similar episode took place in France in 2013, when a North Korean student vanished from another university. A week later, he reappeared on campus guarded by police.

The full story hasn't come out, but we know that French authorities made the decision to protect the student because they believed he was in danger of being kidnapped by North Korea. Who was he? This is where the story gets really interesting. His name is Kim Han Sol, and he is the son of Kim Jong Un's half-brother, the man whose murder Kim Jong Un ordered at Kuala Lumpur Airport in 2017. After his father's death, Kim Han Sol disappeared again and reportedly is hiding in a Western country. Kim Jong Un, who has no sons, may consider the young man a threat to his continued rule. Kim Han Sol is Western-educated, and he speaks fluent English. He has called his uncle a dictator, and he has expressed sympathy for the plight of the people of North Korea, a threat indeed. One final example of recent kidnappings - last fall, North Korea's ambassador to Italy and his wife defected. They left behind, in Rome, their teenage daughter who reportedly is disabled. Four days later, the daughter disappeared. She eventually turned up in Pyongyang, and she is believed to have been kidnapped from Italy by North Korean agents.

Her seizure has been interpreted as a warning to her parents not to go public with the story of their defections.

Early in his presidency, President Trump spoke about North Korea's horrific human - horrific record on human rights. He invited Cindy and Fred Warmbier and a North Korean escapee to the State of the Union address. He and Mrs. Trump met in Tokyo with the mother of Megumi Yokota, the 13-year-old abductee whose tragic story we heard this morning from her brother. Recently, however, President Trump has been quiet on the subject of human rights. In my view, human rights, including the abduction issue, deserve a place on the agenda during the negotiations with Kim Jong Un. I hope the moment will come soon that the United States thinks the time is right to discuss this issue very fully and try to make progress with Kim Jong Un on this issue. As for North Korea, Kim Jong Un has given no indication that he is interested in considering Mr. Trump's proposal to help the North develop its economy in return for denuclearization. Perhaps he understands that developing North Korea's economy would require a far more open society than exists today - a development that could threaten his continued rule. If, however, Kim Jong Un reaches the point where he wishes to signal the world that he is willing to change and is serious about it, there is a way to get our attention - identify and free every one of the abductees. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

**LIBBY:** Thank you all. I want to first thank the panel en masse, thank Prime Minister Abe and President Trump for their leadership on these issues and welcome Nick back up here to help run the Q&A period which follows. Thank you for the panel very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**EBERSTADT:** Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you all appreciate Scooter's panel and what his speakers had to say. We're running towards the end of our time. And this is the place where we can have some questions and interventions from the floor. I'd like to start by inviting Mr. Nishioka, the chairman of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, to offer our group a few words. Mr. Nishioka, nice to see you again.

**TSUTOMU NISHIOKA:** (Through interpreter) Thank you. Listening to today's discussion, I thought that the issue of dealing with the kidnapping is an issue that requires us to fight against lies. And the fact that there have been kidnappings across the world was discussed today. But the lies that North Korea tells - there are two different stages of them. The first is they say that they don't kidnap anyone - that even though they are kidnapping someone, they say - they lie and say they aren't. But we in Japan have won in the battle against their lies. They have said that they never kidnapped Japanese people. Well, we forced them to admit that they did. And the Sneddon case and the Romania case and the Thailand case - these have not yet been showed to be lies. North Korea said that they haven't abducted these people. We were able to force them to admit that they had kidnapped Japanese people. But after that, they said that our abductees had lied. And we put this pamphlet together to show that the Japanese people North Korea has said has lied - have died - there's no evidence that that's the case. In other words, they're lying, saying that the abductees who are still in North Korea have died.

And so my question is, I would like to know - I would like to ask the head of the panels, Mr. Eberstadt and Mr. Libby - I understand that we - Mr. Abe will be meeting soon with the North Korean leader. And we hope that Mr. Abe will be able to get the North Koreans to admit that the

eight people still in North Korea are still alive. In other words, that they have been lying, saying that they had died. I want him to say that they have told lies about the abductees. And then what should Mr. Abe - if he hears that, what should he say in response? I'd like to ask Mr. Eberstadt and Mr. Libby any kind of advice you might have for what our Prime Minister should say if that discussion occurs.

**EBERSTADT:** Thank you very much. Are there questions or comments from others on the floor? Yes, please, in the back. I know who you are. But will you identify yourself?

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I'm kind of amazed by the praise that's heaped upon President Trump and the administration for what they've done about human rights in North Korea. Actually, he - as we know, he hasn't mentioned it, as far as I know, except to ask about the Warmbier case in his last summit with - in Hanoi. What can be done to get President Trump to move on this issue, to say something? And is he afraid that this would disrupt the whole process? Or is it worth disrupting the whole process of attempts at reconciliation? As I say, I'm really stunned by some of the comments I've heard in praise of President Trump when, actually, my impression is he's done nothing, so - lately, that is. So I wonder if you could comment on this. Thank you.

**EBERSTADT:** Before a response from our panelists, maybe we could gather another question - one final question. Yes, please. And please also, again, identify yourself.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I don't believe in giving security guarantees to mass murderers or people who just can abduct. That seems wrong to me. And yet, this business of security guarantees keeps coming up over and over again. How do we get that off the table?

**EBERSTADT:** Thank you. We just have a few minutes left, so I would invite our panelists to offer any comments to these questions or to these observations, maybe starting with Scooter and moving along across. If you have any comments...

**LIBBY:** Nishioka sensei, I'm quite aware of Prime Minister Abe's tremendous skills as a diplomat. I don't think I would offer him advice on how to respond to this tricky situation of someone who has lied repeatedly - a regime and a history in the regime of lying so repeatedly. But I am sure that, as they look across the table at each other, each will know what the truth is.

**ROSE:** Thank you. I would simply respond to the suggestions that this administration has done nothing and doesn't care about human rights to testify to the fact that we're here today. I'm here today. The vice president met with North Korean defectors on Monday. I think it's inaccurate and unfair, but as I said in my remarks, I would very earnestly ask Cindy and Fred and others to never stop commenting, criticizing when they believe it's necessary, to never hold back their voices, to never let us, quote, unquote, "off the hook." The pressure needs to be applied, I believe, externally to a host of sources. Obviously, the DPRK is first and foremost, but pressure needs to stay on us, on our administration, to ensure that we can proceed with negotiations on a critical national security issue. Let's not forget, North Korea has nuclear weapons and the ability to deliver them to the United States, so this is not simply an aesthetic exercise. It's quite real, and it's quite existential to us. And it does require some delicacy, but Cindy is not bound by that. Fred's not bound by that. They're free citizens in a free country who have a right and duty to insist that their voices be heard at all times when they want them to be heard.

**SCHIFFER:** A couple of comments - first, I would hope, speaking on behalf of the Article I branch of our government, which considers itself to be separate and coequal, the congressional

voices on the importance of human rights, the importance of abductees, the importance of achieving justice for American citizens and others who have been unjustly held by North Korea - that that counts for something as an expression of where the US government is on these issues and the central importance that we place as a government on respect for human rights and on justice, on the rule of law and the like. On the question of security guarantees, I guess I would offer that if you look at what we have tried to include in legislation - and legislation is a very, very blunt tool for calibrating policy well, but we have tried to include real, measurable and concrete steps that we believe that Pyongyang would have to undertake if we are going to get to a final deal that address some of these core concerns about human rights.

And I guess I would offer that were we to see Pyongyang undertake those actions, that that would mark an essentially transformed regime that does respect the rights of its own people. And that would be an important turning point that would allow us to engage with them in ways that are fundamentally different than how we can or how we should today. Now, I won't comment here on my expectation that Pyongyang will ever take those steps under its current regime, but we have been very, very clear in laying down those markers and demanding those things in statute as actions that Pyongyang would have to undertake if we were ever to get to a peace deal that would be sustainable and enduring.

**EBERSTADT:** Luci?

**GRIFFITHS:** I'll reiterate again. From the Congressional standpoint, I think it's pretty clear where Congress has come down in terms of human rights when it comes to North Korea, and there's various legislation that would show that. And then I know I'm among experts, so there's no need for me to give you a history lesson other than to say we all know that the question of North Korea takes in immensely complicated matters - very historical matters - and it is much more than one or two or even three countries when we really look at who would be ultimately affected by some of these decisions. And so it is a very delicate matter. That stated, of course, we stand united in saying that human rights must be a very large portion of that. But I will refrain from commenting directly towards the administration, considering that I work for a congressman and I probably should not speak on behalf of him as much as to share that - you know, that Congress has definitely put their foot down and sends - and put their stake in the ground, in terms of where they stand with the human rights question.

**FURUYA:** (Through interpreter) As far as human rights is concerned, I feel that the United States and Japan are the most important two countries, and our relation is most important as far as human rights is concerned. United States and Japan with President Trump and Prime Minister Abe - they have a very deep relationship based on trust. They have a very good relationship, I think, as a result. And the abduction issue really is the ultimate infringement on human rights. And as far as that is concerned, the president himself has brought up the issue very clearly with Chairman Kim. And this is a wonderful thing, I think. So I'd like to repeat that, as I've expressed it before. As far as the domestic issue is concerned, I won't talk about the situation in Japan, but that's my feeling. Also, from Mr. Nishioka, what you had to say - I think that Prime Minister Abe, he would - he has quite a lot of experience in dealing with summits. He has met with over a hundred heads of state. And so I think that he has good experience, good knowledge on how to deal in the foreign affairs area. And so he has a lot of experience, more than even a foreign minister would have. So I think that he does have the wherewithal to deal with Chairman Kim and to overcome the issues of mistrust. I think this is something that is very

important and wonderful. And I think that the Prime Minister will use his past experience to bring about a good result. And that is my hope for what might happen.

**KIRKPATRICK:** I, like Scooter, wouldn't dare to offer advice to Prime Minister Abe. But I'll make a couple of points, if I could. One is that Mr. Abe is passionate about this issue. And he was in Washington a week ago. And you may have seen photos of his meeting with President Trump and noticed the little blue pin on his lapel. He is never without this. And he says he wears it every day to remind him that he must identify and bring home the Japanese abductees. But - and I admire that passion and that conviction. But I would say I am skeptical that a meeting with Kim Jong Un would be successful. We - in the past, we know that North Korea has lied and prevaricated. It even sent back incorrect remains, false remains. So I would say to you, Mr. Nishioka, that I think if this meeting goes through, Japan needs to be prepared for failure.

**EBERSTADT:** Thank you, Melanie. A few final concluding words and comments - first of all, many thanks to our friends at Hudson and HRNK and the government of Japan for organizing this important gathering. And thank you all for joining. Second, to belabor the obvious, to say this for the umpteenth time, these tragedies and violations which we've talked about today are not what we might call random acts of unkindness. There is a deep state logic in the abductions, in the use of the abductees by this mechanism of oppression. Take a look at the HRNK report. Read the chapters on the use of these abductees in the North Korean system. Third, it is heartening to have our Japanese friends here and our American friends here. But as we know - as Melanie and others, Mr. Hwang has mentioned - many of the victims are South Korean victims. Possibly most of the victims are South Korean victims.

We await the South Korean government's awakening and finding of its own voice on this issue. Since this government - since the current administration in South Korea - is so largely composed of self-described human rights activists, we can hope that they will find a place to join in our common cause here. And finally, let me remind some of you that here in little Washington, D.C., this week is designated as North Korea Freedom Week. You can see how much work we have cut out for us. Thank you all for coming. All the best.

(APPLAUSE)