



October 8, 2010

Dear Friends

I am taking this opportunity to update you on the situation of our members in Japan. The best news is that one member has kept her faith during almost two months of confinement and was released just days ago! The worst news is that Mr. Toru Goto's case has suffered a setback when the commission that could have reopened criminal charges against his captors decline to do so.

Sadly, I also have to report that in September **two more members have gone missing**, in addition to the two others who were apparently abducted in August.

- On September 13, Ms. YM was kidnapped a second time after not returning from a luncheon date with her parents. They had confined her once before, keeping her at home and only allowing her to go to work. She complied with this because her father threatened that if she tried to escape he would commit suicide. Somehow months later she was able to return to the church. She is 33 years old. Her recent kidnapping came when her father took her to lunch, and then called her pastor from her cell phone to tell him she would return the following day, and hung up the phone. He later called her employer on the same phone and said that she will take a "leave of absence" from work until the end of the year. When church members visited YM's home the following day, they found it dark and empty. To this day there is no answer to YM's cell phone.
- Mr. KM's case was discovered in September, but he actually seems to have been abducted in August. He had been job hunting and had gone home for a visit to his hometown because his parents appeared to be "positive." It is now clear that he is missing.

**HERE IS BREAKING BAD NEWS:** The case of Mr. Goto (the man who was held against his will for 12.5 years) was rejected by the commission of inquiry that could have re-opened the case. We're not entirely clear yet about the next step, but it may be that we have exhausted all options in terms of criminal law. If so, then the logical next step is a civil case. We will keep you updated on this as it unfolds.

**NOW TO THE GOOD NEWS!**

- The Japanese church is making progress on previous abductions of this year. Not sure if you heard, but they succeeded in liberating one sister last spring. I'm sorry I can't give details at this time, but there are plans in progress to liberate some others as well.
- There is also some news concerning another "Ms. YM," who was abducted in February. She was finally released by her captors after several months and contacted the church in July. She needs time to recover but states that she is furious with her parents for confining her and is seeking financial compensation from them for their actions.
- **More good news just in:** Ms. YH, who has been missing since mid-August, has been released and she has kept her faith! She had been kidnapped on at least one previous occasion. Her deprogrammer at that time was a female Christian minister. Although her parents had promised never to put her through such an ordeal again, she was again abducted this summer. She and her fiancé had recently received the church's blessing on their upcoming marriage. Details of how she got out and the rest of story are still sketchy. We'll say more in a future update.
- I hope to have some additional good news for you soon from the US State Department. Please watch the news for Secretary of State Clinton's announcement on the release of their annual International Religious Freedom Report, which could happen any day now. This report will definitely cover our issue in its information on Japan.
- Also, earlier this week there was a major documentary in Korea on what's happening to our Japanese members. By all accounts it was very positive and the anti-UC groups are furious about it. It was aired by SBS, which I'm told is the largest TV network in Korea. We have a rough translation and will send the transcript to you if your request it. **Please contact us at [icrf@aol.com](mailto:icrf@aol.com), with the subject: "Send SBS Transcript" and refer to the Oct Update.**

Unfortunately we are still getting no help at all from the Japanese police, who say it's a "family matter" and take the *captors' word* that the person is not confined, without even checking with the victim. Related to that, Mr. KN's fiancée, Ms. ES is desperately attempting to determine his whereabouts and whether he is acting freely. He was abducted in June and the police refused to recognize that she had any standing in the case. He later wrote letters resigning from the church and supposedly breaking their blessing, but it's not clear whether he did so under

duress. Ms. ES has been fighting this on several fronts, but their blessing is jeopardized at this point.

These situations are so outrageous! The police are clearly turning a blind eye to what they know is criminal activity. We did get Japan's top law enforcement official to state publicly, that in such cases the *police should* find a missing adult and confirm directly whether he or she is confined, not take the family's word for it. In reality when we contact the police, they ignore this public policy and say they have to hear this through proper channels. **So, because Japan's political system isn't doing its job, we need increased international pressure to create linkage between what the officials say and what the local police actually do.**

**In the meantime, I'd like to ask you to add your name to the online petition at the new website [www.stopjapanabductions.org](http://www.stopjapanabductions.org).** The petition calls for Congressional hearings through the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, with which we are communicating regularly. Check this website regularly for news updates too.

Thanks very much for your interest and your support of religious freedom—and especially for your prayers for these heroic brothers and sisters in Japan. They really need the support of our American members at this time. We especially want to express our appreciation to those who have sent in donations as a way to show support. It is extremely meaningful for our work and for our morale. To make a donation to the ICRF work, please go to ICRF's website: [www.religiousfreedom.com](http://www.religiousfreedom.com) and click on the Donate link in the lower left corner of the homepage.

Very sincerely yours,

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