

Special Resolution: Strengthen the Movement to Eliminate Eugenic Thought

On February 1, 2018, a fifth-grade student at Osaka Prefectural Ikuno Elementary School for the Deaf was killed while leaving school when she was struck by construction vehicle at an intersection in front of the school gate.

In March 2020, the parents of the deceased child filed a civil lawsuit against the driver and the construction company, seeking compensation for damages. In this case, the defense argued that "the hearing-impaired person in this case had the mentality of a nine-year-old, and her ability to think, speak, and study at the time of graduation from a high school was only at the level of an average elementary or junior high school student. Therefore, compensation should be 40% of that of an ordinary woman." The argument by the defense is offensive to the dignity of all people with disabilities, not just those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and is clearly discriminatory towards persons with disabilities, treating them as lesser human beings.

The Osaka Association of the Deaf launched an emergency petition on May 26 calling for a fair ruling, and collected far more than its target of 10,000 signatures in just four days, and the number of signatures is still growing.

In addition, of the 12 lawsuits filed throughout the nation by victims of forced sterilization under the former Eugenic Protection Law, claims for state compensation were dismissed in five cases due to exceeding the statute of limitations.

The Japan Federation of the Deaf has issued four urgent statements regarding the trial of the former Eugenic Protection Law and is engaged in a Signature Campaign to Demand a Fair Judgment in the Unconstitutional National Compensation Lawsuit for the Former Eugenic Protection Law in Hyogo, led by the Hyogo Association of the Deaf. As a result, 21,046 signatures have been submitted (as of May 20) to the Kobe District Court.

From these two signature campaigns, two things were found to be in common.

One was that activities of discrimination and exclusion from society are not allowed for reasons such as "people with disabilities should not exist in society" or "the ability of people who are deaf is low."

The second is that eugenic thought and eugenic policies are clearly not just a problem of the past, but continue to take root in everyday life and society in areas such as employment, medical care, and education.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guarantees the dignity and rights of all persons with disabilities and advocates the prohibition of discrimination. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities demonstrates how to build an environment and an inclusive society where both people with disabilities and those without disabilities can live happily together with hope. It is our resolution to strengthen the following efforts in order to achieve a mutually beneficial and inclusive society that recognizes diversity.

1. To further strengthen the movement to eliminate eugenic thought, which still permeates society today.
2. To fully support the current signature campaigns organized in Osaka and Hyogo.
3. To whole-heartedly cooperate with support activities for the case involving the student of Osaka Prefectural Ikuno Elementary School for the Deaf.
4. To actively support plaintiffs such as the elderly deaf who were victims of the former Eugenic Protection Law.

Be it resolved as above.

June 12, 2021

9th (72nd in total) General Assembly