

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Protesting Japan's Government's Prejudice Against Unificationists

Knut Holdhus
November 21, 2024



On 17th November 2024, members of the "Fukuoka Prefectural Association for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom of Religion" participated in a protest march through the bustling streets of Fukuoka City, Japan



Persecuted minority raises its voice against ugly discrimination and injustice locally and nationally

Tokyo, 18th November 2024 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

Former Unification Church: "Strongly Oppose the Unjust Dissolution Order"

Fukuoka Protest March

by the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)

On 17th November 2024, members of the "Fukuoka Prefectural Association for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom of Religion" held a protest march through Fukuoka City's bustling downtown area. The group, composed of followers of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) and its affiliated organizations, denounced what they claim to be discriminatory practices, such as being barred from using public facilities.

Approximately 350 participants marched for about an hour around Fukuoka City Hall, raising their voices against the discrimination.

With a campaign vehicle leading the way, participants gathered in Tenjin, one of Fukuoka's busiest districts, chanting slogans such as, "We firmly oppose that Fukuoka City without legal grounds refuse to rent out public facilities!" Another slogan was "We are vehemently opposed to the unjust dissolution order against the [Family Federation](#)!"

A man in his 20s who joined the protest stated,

"It feels meaningful for us believers to continuously raise our voices and highlight the injustice of the dissolution order. I want to keep on actively participating in protests and rallies in the future."

A man in his 60s shared his joy, saying,

"While we were marching, a young couple passing by joined in our chants, raising their fists in support. It was so uplifting."



Victims of discrimination and social exclusion

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In March last year, believers representing the [religious organization](#) and the above-mentioned association filed a lawsuit against Fukuoka City, seeking 22 million yen in damages for what they describe as discriminatory treatment. The legal proceedings are still going on.

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Japan: Exhibition Exposes Horrors Of Persecution

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Panel exhibition reveals the horrors of persecution in Japan, the land of abduction, confinement, and forcible faith-breaking

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Location of the city mentioned, located on the southern island of Kyushu.

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Confinement, and Forcible Faith-Breaking

by the editorial department of *Sekai Nippo*

A panel exhibition showcasing the reality of religious persecution faced by members of the [Family Federation for World Peace](#)

[and Unification](#) (FFWPU, formerly known as the [Unification Church](#)) was held on 17th and 18th November on the second floor of the south exit of Kokura station in Kitakyushu. The exhibition, titled "Abduction, Confinement, and [Forcible Faith-Breaking](#)", was organized by the "Kitakyushu Citizens' Association to Protect Human Rights and Religious Freedom". Many members of the association provided explanations of the panels to passersby, highlighting the horrors of abduction and forcible detention.

Among the panels depicting the intensity of the persecution was an image of Toru Goto (後藤 徹), who was [held in confinement](#) by his relatives in a single apartment room for [12 years and 5 months](#) but still refused to renounce his faith. The panel showed his emaciated appearance. One of the organizers said,

"When people saw the panel of Toru Goto, they were shocked to realize that something like this could happen so close to home. And when we told them about cases like a woman who developed severe atopic dermatitis due to her confinement and passed away at the age of 48, they listened attentively."

On Sunday, with many tourists and shoppers passing by, 750 flyers introducing the activities of the above-mentioned association were distributed. The person in charge said,

"We want people to understand our daily activities. Currently, there is an ongoing dispute due to the Kitakyushu City Council's resolution to sever ties with the [Family Federation](#). We want people to understand the details of that issue as well."



Photo used at the panel exhibition: Toru Goto in 2008, barely able to move after being held in forcible detention by his own family in league with professional faith-breakers for more than 12 years. Photo: Kazuhiro Yonemoto / [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#)

Featured image above: A panel exhibition on victims of abduction held at the south exit of Kokura Station in Kitakyushu City on the southern island of Kyushu, Japan on 18th November 2024. Photo: Kennosuke Teraguchi (寺口露之介)

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