

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Japanese Youth Fear State's Robbery of Places of Worship

Knut Holdhus
March 27, 2025



Nozomi Kojima (center), representative of "The Second-Generation Association for Protecting the Human Rights of Believers", speaking at a press conference on 26th March 2025 in Shibuya, Tokyo.



Second-generation believers speak out against Japanese state's robbery of all assets and places of worship

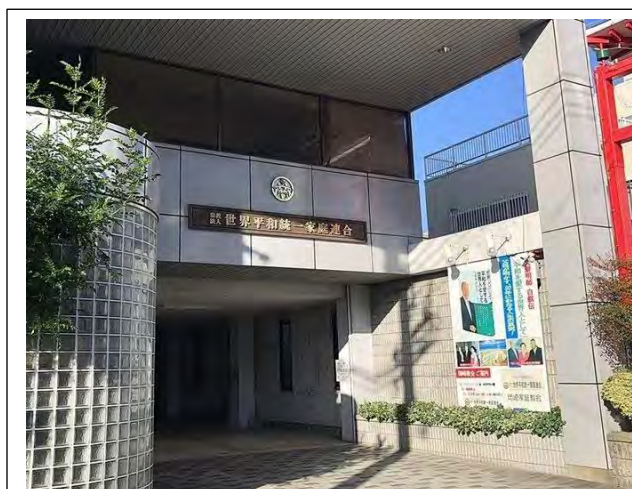
Tokyo, 27th March 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

Fear of Being Robbed of Their Places

Court Order to Dissolve Family Federation

[See editor's note below]

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



Fear of being robbed of their places. Here, Okazaki Family Church of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (Koseidori Higashi, Okazaki City, Aichi Prefecture)

Second-Generation Association Representative Kojima: "Believers Are Hurt"

Following the Tokyo District Court's decision to [order the dissolution](#) of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)), the "Second-Generation Association for Protecting the Human Rights of Believers" - led by Nozomi Kojima (小嶋希晶) - which consists of second-generation believers of the [Family Federation](#), held a press conference in Shibuya, Tokyo, on 26th March. They expressed concerns that believers are suffering, feeling hurt, and anxious about losing their place.

Kojima stated,

"Journalists often ask me, 'Even if the organization is dissolved, you can still continue your faith, right?'"

There's no problem, right?' But our [church](#) is built on community activities, including volunteer work."

She added,

"Being told by the government that we are not allowed to exist is deeply painful for many believers."

Masaki Shirasu (白敷将明 - 25), a resident of Osaka, compared the situation to losing something irreplaceable, saying,

"Losing our places of faith feels like losing something fundamental to our lives. It's like telling a singer to sing alone on a deserted island."

Makoto Imanaka (今中誠真 - 29), a staff member of the [religious organization](#), acknowledged that there are people who have suffered harm from the [organization](#) but argued that the media's coverage has caused even more believers to suffer. He emphasized,

"I want people to understand that many believers are experiencing immense hardship due to the media's portrayal."

Expressing concern over the widespread negative perception of religious organizations, he expressed his determination to help people see the true nature of the [Family Federation](#).



From the press conference 2025 26, Shibuya, Tokyo. Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga is first from the left

Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一), who represents believers and affiliated groups in legal proceedings, also attended the press conference. He criticized the [Tokyo District Court's decision](#), stating,

"I am extremely dissatisfied with whether sufficient consideration was given to the disadvantages of stripping the [religious organization](#) of its corporate status, particularly in terms of believers' freedom of religion."

Tokunaga lamented what he saw as a lack of respect for the core religious value of forming a community where people with shared beliefs coexist. He also pointed out that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) had used the [organization](#)'s partial refusal to answer certain government [inquiry questions](#) as a basis for presuming its wrongdoing. Looking ahead to the Tokyo High Court case, he asserted, "This will be a battle to overturn that presumption."

[Editor's note: The phrase "Fear of Being Robbed of Their Places" in the headline refers to the anxiety and uncertainty that members of the Family Federation (formerly the Unification Church) feel about losing their religious community and support system due to the court-ordered dissolution of the organization.]

For many believers, their faith is closely tied to a community where they worship, engage in volunteer work, and share a common identity. The dissolution order threatens to take away this communal space, making them feel displaced or without a spiritual "home". The article highlights how members are concerned that their sense of belonging, religious practices, and way of life will be significantly disrupted.]

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Statement On Japan's Court Ruling On Dissolution



• March 27, 2025 • Knut Holdhus



Statement from Family Federation of USA as Japanese court ruling sets dangerous precedent for freedom of religion

by Rev. Demian Dunkley, President, Family Federation USA

March 25, 2025








We Are Deeply Grieved – But Not Surprised

The *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification* in the United States stands in solemn solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Japan following the **court's decision** to allow the Japanese government to dissolve FFWPU Japan.



Rev. Demian Dunkley, here in May 2023. Photo: Screenshot from FFWPU YouTube video.

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The church and the concept of religious freedom are now battling for survival in Japan's legal system."

(All quotes sourced from *The Washington Times* unless otherwise noted)

Let Us Be Clear: No Crime Was Committed

For the first time in Japan's postwar history, a peaceful religious organization is being dismantled by the state without a single criminal conviction. The court's decision does not mark justice – it marks a turning point in Japan's democratic identity.



Prime Minister Fumio Kishida swayed by communist campaign. Here, 16th April 2023. Photo: 首相官邸ホームページ/Wikimedia Commons. License: CC Attr 4.0 Int

Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) conducted a thorough investigation and concluded that the Family Federation violated no criminal law. On October 17, 2022, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stated in Parliament that the church could not be dissolved on that basis. Yet the very next day, Kishida reversed course, claiming the government could pursue dissolution based solely on civil complaints. This reversal opened the door for a legal reinterpretation that undermines religious freedom not just in Japan – but globally.

As the U.S. State Department observed, this move "marked a deviation from the norm" in Japan's treatment of religious organizations.

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This Is Not Justice – It Is Lawfare

On March 13, 2025, Senator Satoshi Hamada publicly questioned the Ministry of Education about falsified evidence used in the court proceedings. Referring to a post by lawyer Shinichi Tokunaga:

"The crime of the century: MEXT filed a request for a dissolution order based on falsified statements. A designated agent of MEXT, who is a government official, falsified evidence to be used in court proceedings. If Japan grants the dissolution order based on fabricated evidence, it will become a disgrace to the world." – Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (on X)



Senator Satoshi Hamada (浜田 聡, House of Councillors, NHK Party) here speaking in Yokohama City, Japan on 26th January 2025. Photo: Yasuhiro Uno (宇野泰弘)

Hamada asked if the Ministry had any response to the charge that the government had purposely fabricated witness testimonies in order to smear the church. As if in admission of guilt, the Ministry's representative did not deny the charge.

Hamada concluded that the government's failure to respond was "significant," calling the legitimacy of the entire process into question.

"The government seeks to dissolve the church and liquidate and absorb all assets. The church will cease to exist."

Who Are the Architects of the Dissolution Campaign?

The driving force behind this case is a political-legal alliance. MEXT has relied heavily on the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (NNLASS) – a group of leftist lawyers formed in the 1980s to oppose the Unification Church and its anti-communist stance.

In 1987, NNLASS founder Hiroshi Yamaguchi stated plainly:

"The aim of the lawyers' association is to convince the Ministry of Education to revoke the religious corporation status of the Unification Church."

That campaign, dormant for decades, is now being carried out – under the pretense of protecting "public welfare."

The Real Reason: Ideological Hostility



Hiroshi Yamaguchi, founder of National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales

For over 60 years, the **Family Federation** has stood for **God**, family, and freedom. **Rev. and Dr. Moon** founded the *International Federation for Victory Over Communism* (IFVOC) to counter **Marxist ideology** with spiritual truth. In Japan, IFVOC worked closely with leaders in the *Liberal Democratic Party*, including Prime Minister Abe and his predecessors. This made the movement a prime target for ideological opponents.

*Against Spiritual
Sales (NNLASS).
Photo: Bitter
Winter*

*"This is the **final war** against the **Unification Church**." –
Kazuo Shii, Chairman, Japanese Communist Party.*



Declared the 'final war' against the **Unification Church**: Kazuo Shii, here 30th March 2023. Photo: Attribution: [首相官邸ホームページ / Wikimedia Commons](#). License: [CC Attr 4.0 Int](#). Cropped

Based on the evidence and statements presented in the Akahata and Sunday Mainichi [\[See editor's note below\]](#) interviews with Kazuo Shii, it is clear that this war was never about **FFWPU's** religious practices or political controversy – but the endpoint of an organized, **45-year ideological war**.

However, it gets worse.

Religious Freedom in Japan Is Under Threat – And It's Spreading

Governments in Rwanda, Kenya, and the Czech Republic have already followed Japan's lead in restricting or shutting down religious organizations based on a reinterpretation of the law to revoke religious freedoms. If Japan – a respected liberal democracy – can do this, others will follow.

At the 2025 **International Religious Freedom Summit**, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich [issued a warning](#) that could not be clearer:

*"A government which can block you from approaching **God** can block you from anything. This is a key test of the future of Japan – a key test of the future of religious liberty."*



Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives in the American Congress 1995-1999, here delivering a video message to the **IRF Summit** in Washington DC 5th Feb. 2025. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission.

Our Response

Silence is not an option. Sign the petition. Share it with your friends and family. Let Japan know we are watching.

PETITION TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN JAPAN

<https://peacestartswithme.lpages.co/religious-freedom-petition>

To our members: remain steadfast in faith. We are preparing our appeal and we will not stop until this injustice is overturned. The **Family Federation** was born to stand for truth and freedom – and we are not afraid.

Rev. Demian Dunkley
President, **FFWPU** USA

[Editor's note: "Akahata" (Red flag) is short for Shimbun Akahata, the party organ daily newspaper of the Japanese Communist Party. The "Sunday Mainichi" is the Sunday edition of "Mainichi Shimbun, one of Japan's largest national dailies.]

Featured image above: Entrance of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) headquarters of Japan (Tokyo, Japan). Photo: Asanagi / Wikimedia Commons. **Public domain** image. Cropped

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