

## UPF USA: Japanese Senator says Japan's Government falsified evidence to dissolve Unification Church

Michael Jenkins  
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# The Washington Times



## Japanese Senator says government falsified evidence to dissolve Unification Church *When democracy hides authoritarian practices*

COMMENTARY

By Patricia Duval - Saturday, March 22, 2025

**OPINION:**

Instead of focusing its investigative efforts against the assassination of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the Japanese government has stunned political and religious leaders worldwide by targeting the Unification Church.

This innocent third party had nothing to do with the shocking, public murder.

The church and the concept of religious freedom are now battling for survival in Japan's legal system. However, a recent series of events reveal how the land of the rising sun is stripping the church of its due process using a secretive process marred by dated information peddled by church opponents and possibly the manipulation of evidence, as news reports there indicate. The government seeks to dissolve the church and liquidate and absorb all assets. The church will cease to exist.

Neutral sources recently revealed that evidence provided in Court by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry in charge of religious matters, contained fabricated testimonies.

Witnesses cited by MEXT came forward to denounce the re-interpretation and modification of their stories. They say the Ministry tried to reshape them into accusatory testimonies for its dissolution request.

Digging further, a Japanese member of the National Diet formulated questions for the Government and said the procedure would be kept secret without further explanation of the witnesses' claims.

All of this triggers questions concerning the Japanese authorities' lack of incriminating evidence to support their claim for the dissolution of the Unification Church, which owns The Washington Times.

Abe's assassin, Tetsuya Yamagami, fatally shot the Prime Minister on July 8, 2022, for a grudge he held against the Unification Church. He blamed the Church for accepting donations from his mother. With deranged logic, he decided to attack PM Abe for having expressed support to the Church (the Prime Minister sent supportive messages to several peacekeeping events organized by the Universal Peace Federation), a church affiliate.

Under the impulse of the "Network of lawyers against spiritual sales" - a group of far-left and atheistic obedience whose stated purpose is the elimination of the Unification Church—the media soon accused the Church of pressuring followers into making donations and the Japanese government used its power to call for the total dissolution/liquidation of the Church, meaning that all assets would be transferred to the government. The Religious Corporation would then cease to exist.

Japan is also using the "Public Welfare" exception to civil liberties that it has included in its Constitution to support the dissolution request against the Church and to justify its repressive policy against religious minorities in

general. This is especially true when these denominations are foreign, like the Unification Church from Korea or the Jehovah's Witnesses from the US.

### **Fabricated evidence**

On January 27, 2025, Japan's Sankei Shimbun Daily newspaper published an article about some news issued by Japan's Kyodo News Agency.

Kyodo News released an interview entitled: "They are being used to criticize the Church."

In this interview, a female Church believer, Miyuki Yamaguchi (a pseudonym used to protect her anonymity for fear of retribution), in her 60s from Japan's Aichi Prefecture, revealed that after her mother, Kimiko Yamaguchi (also a pseudonym), in her 90s, was interviewed for a statement to MEXT, she thought that her testimony was helping the Unification Church stand against the dissolution. However, her mother explained, "I never asked for my money back" and "I am being used (by those who criticize the Church)." She was shocked that the government completely fabricated her testimony.

In its response to the interview, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology told Kyodo News, "We have not disclosed the contents of the [her mother's] statement, and we cannot comment [on the daughter's claims]."

On March 10, 2025, a male follower of the FFWPU filed a criminal complaint with the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office, accusing officials from MEXT of document forgery and the use of forged documents. This comes amid allegations that MEXT submitted improper and altered statements as evidence in its request for a dissolution order against the FFWPU at the Tokyo District Court.

### **Senator Hamada Challenges the Japanese Government for Using Fabricated Testimony**

On March 13, 2025, House of Councilors which is the Upper House of the Japanese Diet in the House of Councilors' General Affairs Committee, Senator Hamada, from the NHK Party, questioned the "fabrication and falsification of evidence by Ministry of Education officials in the dissolution hearing of the former Unification Church"

Senator Hamada referred to a posting on X by lawyer Shinichi Tokunaga, who stated that "The evidence used in the court hearing was fabricated by a designated representative of a Ministry of Education official who is a public

servant.”

At the same time, the Trump administration, which has made the protection of “religious freedom” its top priority and has taken issue with the discriminatory oppression of the Unification Church in Japan, has begun to take action. If the dissolution order of the Unification Church based on fabricated evidence was approved, Japan would have brought shame to the world.”

Mr. Hamada’s question was: “I would like to ask whether there is any problem with the facts described in this message from lawyer Tokunaga.”

Counsellor Kobayashi of the Agency for Cultural Affairs answered: “I am aware of the content of the statement you are asking about. The request for a dissolution order against the former Unification Church is pending at the Tokyo District Court as a closed, non-contentious case, and we will refrain from commenting on the claims against the former Unification Church outside of court. However, the Agency for Cultural Affairs has carefully collected information from the victims and, as the competent authority, has determined that the request falls under the grounds for a dissolution order set out in Article 81, Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Religious Corporations Act, and has made the request appropriately.”

Senator Hamada concluded that it was “significant that in this response, the fact that the ‘falsification’ and ‘fabrication’ pointed out by Attorney Tokunaga was not denied.”

Noteworthy is that the hearings at the District Court have been kept nonpublic to protect the witnesses’ privacy.

However, since the witnesses themselves have decided to come out publicly, there is no justification for not answering the question that the Diet member asked about those witnesses who claim their testimonies were altered by the government.

The government's argument for secrecy appears to be an easy way to circumvent the right to fair public hearings and hide the weakness of the government's evidence from the public.

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, at the International Religious Freedom Summit, where I spoke on February 4, 2025, said, “I warned back in November 2022 in the Washington Times, it’s clear that the attack on the Family Federation is actually an attack on the Liberal Democratic Party.

That’s exactly what happened, and it was an effort, frankly, by the communists

to create an environment where there could be a closer relationship with China and a more distant relationship with the United States. The government is now in a mess, and the election results were very damaging.

So what's happened is that the government has been trying to destroy the Unification Church. It's gone so far beyond the Japanese Constitution, it's found no crimes and has no basis for what it's doing," he said.

"The Biden administration has already condemned this activity. The United Nations has already condemned this activity. And now, with President Trump, we have somebody who is deeply, passionately committed to religious liberty," Mr. Gingrich said.

"This is going to have grave consequences for the United States' relationship with Japan and our view of what is happening with Japanese politics," he added. Earlier, Mr. Gingrich stated in the Times, "No one should be confused. The current attack on the Unification Church is an effort to undermine and weaken the Japanese-United States alliance and create an opening for a Chinese Communist-Japanese rapprochement."

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***Patricia Duval** is an attorney, and member of the Paris Bar, France, who specializes in international human rights law, in particular the rights of religious minorities. She has published numerous scholarly articles on the State's duty of neutrality in religious matters.*

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