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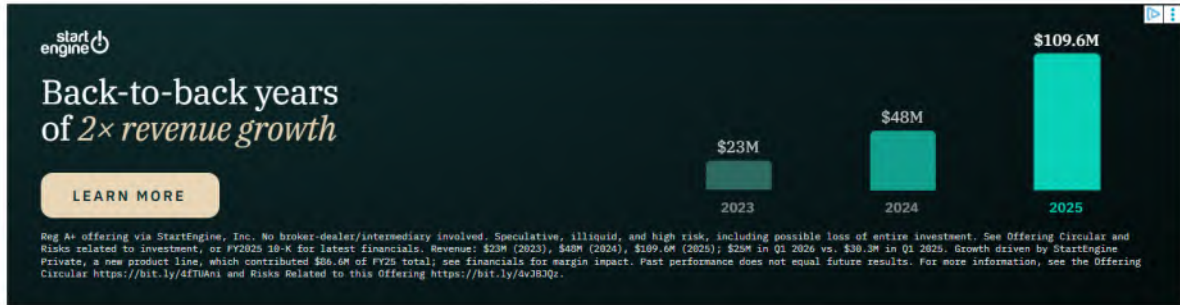


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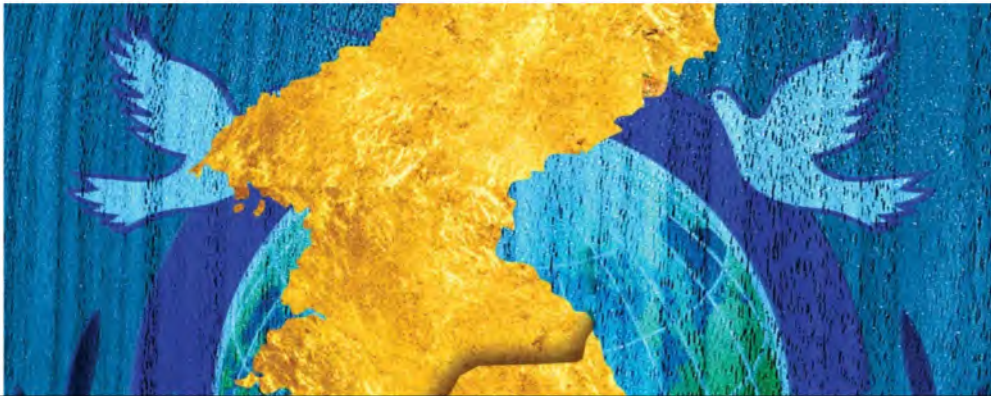
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How the Unification Church could help reconcile the two Koreas

Dr. Han has a special relationship with Kim Jong Un



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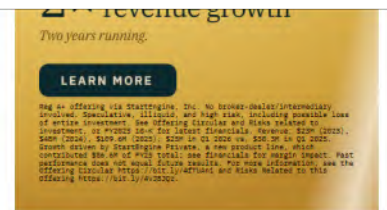
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COMMENTARY

By Joseph R. DeTrani - Thursday, September 3, 2026

OPINION:

In 2005, the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (Family Federation), founded by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, established the [Universal Peace Federation](#) (UPF), a nongovernmental organization that has maintained a close relationship with North Korea.



The sentencing on Monday of Dr. Han — the federation’s leader since the 2012 death of her husband — to two years in prison on bribery charges must have confounded the leadership in Pyongyang.

In 1991, the late Rev. Moon and Dr. Han visited North Korea and formed a close personal relationship with leader Kim Il Sung. When Rev. Moon died, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (the grandson of Kim Il Sung) sent a message of condolence and a floral wreath to the family and posthumously awarded Rev. Moon North Korea’s National Reunification Prize.

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During the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) World Summit in 2022, on the 10th anniversary of Rev. Moon’s passing, Mr. Kim sent a floral tribute and a formal condolence message to Dr. Han. The accompanying message read, in part: “Reverend Moon worked for the sake of world peace ... and his achievements and legacy will be remembered for eons.”

One of UPF’s primary objectives is the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas. This resonated in 1991 when Rev. Moon and Dr. Han met Kim Il Sung and it continued to resonate in 2022, when Mr. Kim sent his condolence message.

Unfortunately, the following year, North Korea formally declared its “two hostile states” policy. In 2026, it legally codified the doctrine into its constitution. It was North Korea’s official abandonment of the goal of reunification and it defined inter-Korean relations thereafter as those between two separate, hostile entities.

Efforts from the Lee Jae Myung government in South Korea to resume a dialogue with North Korea have failed.

MY TIMES

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The Family Federation has members in over 140 countries. These individuals look to Dr. Han for leadership. They believe in UPF’s mission: world peace and the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas.

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Family Federation spiritual leader jailed for 2 years in South Korea

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FRONT PAGE PODCAST

THE WASHINGTON TIMES FRONT PAGE

Friday, September 4, 2026

00:00:00

Although Dr. Han's two-year sentence will be appealed, another issue has developed: the long-term status of the Family Federation and UPF.

Indeed, any effort on the part of the South Korean government to consider the abolishment of these organizations will be viewed as a stark assault on freedom of religion.

Regardless of one's religious or areligious beliefs, we live in democracies that guarantee the right to worship freely.

One would hope that South Korean government would want to work with the Family Federation and UPF to reestablish a relationship with a hostile [North Korea](#), given the excellent relationship UPF has with [North Korea](#).

There is extreme tension on the [Korean Peninsula](#), with [North Korea](#) now aligned militarily with Russia North Korean combat troops are in Russia to aid Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine. Pyongyang also provides Russia with artillery shells and ballistic missiles and in return, Russia is likely giving [North Korea](#) technical military support.

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None of this augur swell for a peaceful [Korean Peninsula](#) or stability in Northeast Asia.

UPF and Dr. Moon have a unique relationship with [North Korea](#) and its leader, Mr. Kim. South Korea should use them to help resume talks with [North Korea](#), with the goal of an eventual peaceful reunification of the [Korean Peninsula](#).

• The author is the former associate director of national intelligence. All statements of fact, opinion or analysis expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official positions or views of the U.S. government. Nothing in the contents should be construed as asserting or implying U.S. government authentication of information or endorsement of the author's views.

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Joseph R. DeTrani

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COMMENTARY



Kelly Sadler

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Billy Hallowell

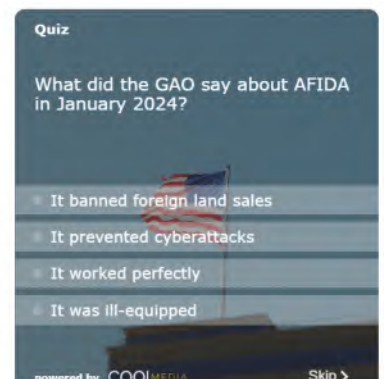
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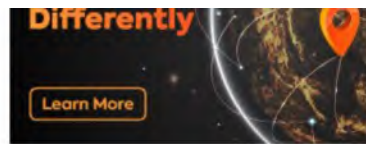
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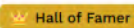
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