

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: US President's Advisor, Paula White, Challenges Japan's Dissolution of FFWPU

Knut Holdhus  
February 15, 2025



*Paula White in a video message December 8, 2024 to a conference in Tokyo organized by Japanese Committee of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom (ICRF)*



### Japanese lawmaker submits written enquiry to governing party about US religious advisor and US and UN religious freedom bodies opposing state persecution of religious minority the Family Federation

Tokyo, 11th February 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

U.S. Religious Advisor Opposes Dissolution Request

Senator Satoshi Hamada Submits Inquiry

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

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Concerns over violations of religious freedom



*Senator Satoshi Hamada, House of Councillors, NHK Party) speaking on January 26, 2025, in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan*

On the issue of the request for a court order to dissolve the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the Unification Church), NHK Party lawmaker Satoshi Hamada (浜田 聡) submitted a written inquiry on 7th February 2025. The inquiry concerns opposition expressed by Pastor Paula White, a religious advisor to U.S. President Donald Trump, citing reports from the U.S. State Department and the United Nations.

On 8th December last year, White sent a video message to a conference of the Japanese Committee of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom (ICRF). In her message, she stated that the issue of religious freedom in Japan has "raised serious concerns worldwide" and called for the protection of religious freedom for all individuals.

Hamada's inquiry references the U.S. State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, which, in its 2022 and 2023 reports, "expressed serious doubts about Japan, and that it is violating religious freedom". The enquiry from Hamada also cites

White's statement that "the Japanese government's request to dissolve the [Family Federation](#), despite the

[organization](#) not violating criminal law, deviates from established norms." Additionally, a U.N. report from April 2024 states that the [Family Federation](#) "has become a victim of intolerance, discrimination, and persecution campaigns in Japan."



The headline of the part on Japan in the 2023 report of the U.S. State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom

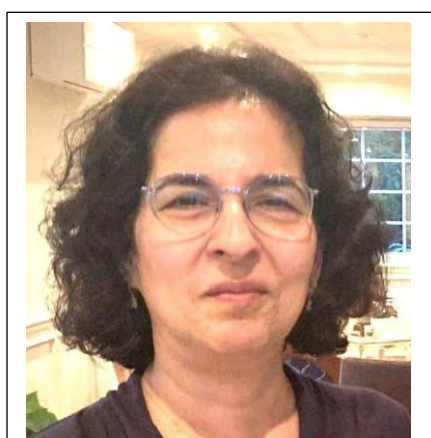
The inquiry seeks the government's response on the following points:

Whether the government has reviewed the reports from the U.S. Office of International Religious Freedom.

Whether the dissolution request violates constitutional protections for religious freedom.

Whether the government acknowledges that it has not accepted a request from a U.N. rapporteur to visit Japan to investigate

potential violations of religious freedom against minority religions.



One of the UN Special Rapporteurs who sent formal UN request to Japan, without getting a reply: Nazila Ghanea, UN Rapporteur on Religious Freedom since February 2023. Here, visiting Oslo August 22, 2023

On 10th February, Hamada posted on X (formerly Twitter) that he is considering submitting an opinion statement to the U.S. Office of International Religious Freedom regarding what he describes as biased reporting by Japan's old media against the [Family Federation](#).

Meanwhile, Paula White is set to assume leadership of the faith-based office established by Trump at the White House.

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# Huge Scandal: "Ministry Is Falsifying Affidavits"

• January 21, 2025 • Knut Holdhus



**Several witnesses claim Japanese government ministry has been falsifying multiple affidavits in current case against the Family Federation**



Logo of the Sekai Nippo

Tokyo, 21st January 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

**[Breaking News] Elderly Mother: "I Never Said 'Get the Money Back'" – Ministry of Education Falsifies Affidavits**

by the Religious Freedom Investigative Team of the editorial department of *Sekai Nippo*

See also "Poorly Compiled Evidence Including Falsehoods"

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The *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* (MEXT) has filed a dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (commonly known as the [Family Federation](#), formerly the [Unification Church](#)) with the *Tokyo District Court*. It has come to light that affidavits prepared by MEXT and submitted to the court contain statements that differ from the truth, as alleged by individuals identified as “victims”. Although the trial is being conducted behind closed doors, there appear to be multiple cases in which affidavits, submitted as evidence of “unlawful acts” to justify the dissolution of the [Family Federation](#), were not written by the purported victims themselves and contained false information.



“Well, to tell the truth, I never asked (son’s name) to get back the money I donated. So they’re just using me for their puposes.”

Kimiyo Sagayama (pseudonym), a resident of Aichi Prefecture whose name appears on MEXT’s affidavit, said this to her daughter, Miyuki Kawaguchi (pseudonym). Last summer, upon learning that her mother’s name was included in MEXT’s affidavit, Miyuki visited her mother, who lives alone, to confirm whether she had personally written the affidavit, which listed a total damage amount of approximately 35 million yen.

The mother then stated to her daughter, whom she had converted to the faith, “I don’t even want the money back.” Miyuki, who is over 60, has practiced the faith alongside her mother for more than 30 years and knew that Kimiyo had made donations of her own volition.



*Disputed donations. Here, woman offering donation that her son later wanted refunded. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 21st January 2025.*

However, the affidavit bearing Kimiyo’s name claimed that she had been “incited”

to make donations by Miyuki. The unnatural claim that her mother, who had introduced her to the faith, was influenced by her own daughter left Miyuki exasperated but unsurprised. “That’s what I thought,” she said, suspecting that MEXT may have embellished the story by drafting a template of alleged victim narratives and supplementing it with details obtained through interviews. It is highly likely that Kimiyo, an elderly individual, was made to sign the affidavit without fully understanding its contents.

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Kimiyo, who is over 90 years old, has been a member of the [Family Federation](#) for 38 years and introduced her daughter Miyuki to the faith. Both Kimiyo and Miyuki also converted their respective husbands, and in 1992, they participated in the International [Blessing Ceremony](#) held in Seoul, South Korea, to renew their marriages in the ceremony of the [religious organization](#).

Kimiyo has been devout in her faith, but as she has aged, and her health has declined, she has become less able to attend church. Then, two years ago, the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe occurred, which triggered a wave of intense criticism against the [Family Federation](#).

In early 2023, Miyuki was summoned by her elder brother during the New Year holiday. With their younger brother also present, Miyuki faced pressure from her brothers to “leave the [Family Federation](#)”. Miyuki refused on the spot. However, according to her, Kimiyo is now effectively estranged from the [federation](#) against her will due to the influence of her sons. Miyuki laments,

Send us a message

First Name \* Last Name

Email \*

Your Message \*

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"Taking advantage of her dependency on them in her advanced age and frailty, they have forced her to deny her entire life's faith. That's unfilial."

Having heard her mother's voice directly state, "I never said I wanted the money back," Miyuki feels a deep fear that the government is leveraging family members' anxieties exacerbated by the critical media coverage, along with affidavits containing falsehoods, to force the dissolution of the [Family Federation](#).

The request for a dissolution order against the [Family Federation](#) is currently being deliberated in the *Tokyo District Court*. According to reports by NHK and major newspapers, four hearings have been held so far.



The flag of NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai), the state-owned Japan Broadcasting Corporation, [Public domain](#) image. Cropped



Logo of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japanese national daily, the largest in circulation of the country's "big 3" dailies. [Public domain](#) image

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* online edition (13<sup>th</sup> December 2024) reported that "current members claim that the allegations by former

members contain falsehoods."

According to sources close to the [religious organization](#), two witnesses presented by MEXT during the hearings admitted that there were discrepancies between the actual facts and the contents of their affidavits.

### Basis for dissolution order wavers

It is not only the Sagayama family who are alleging that MEXT (*Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology*) falsified their affidavits. A 60-year-old male believer, Shinji Toyama (pseudonym), claims that MEXT's affidavit wrongly stated that he had been threatened by other believers, who told him he would face misfortune if he did not resolve ancestral grievances, leading him to make donations. Toyama, however, had informed relevant parties that "the motivation for his donations was different."

Toyama has been a believer for about 30 years and has consistently donated to support Japanese believers involved in missionary and volunteer activities abroad. Around the time of the former prime minister's assassination, however, financial difficulties left him struggling. He contacted a helpline, the number for which he found on a TV program discussing



Japanese man offering a donation to support missionary work. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 21st January 2025.

the [Family Federation](#), hoping to get his donations refunded. He was then referred to a lawyer who facilitated a meeting with two MEXT officials, where he cooperated with their inquiry.

When his refund efforts stalled, Toyama approached the [organization](#) directly, engaged in negotiations with its representatives, and ultimately reached a settlement. Regarding MEXT's affidavit, Toyama stated, "That document wasn't written by me." The affidavit concluded with the sentence, "I only hope that the [organization](#) will be dissolved," but Toyama insists he never made such a statement during the MEXT interview. Furthermore, he claims that MEXT officials never informed him that the affidavit was intended to support a dissolution order against the [organization](#). Toyama requested multiple corrections to the affidavit, but none were made.

Similarly, Mayumi Adachi (pseudonym), a current female believer living in Nerima Ward, Tokyo, discovered that an affidavit submitted by MEXT under her mother's name had been filed. Upon directly asking her mother, Adachi was told clearly, "I didn't write it."

Adachi's father had previously sought a refund of their donations, represented by Hiroshi Yamaguchi, a lawyer affiliated with the *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales*. However, the donation repayments had already been completed and the matter resolved

amicably. Why an affidavit supposedly written by her mother, who denies authoring it, was submitted in the trial for a dissolution order remains entirely unclear.

According to one source, some affidavits prepared by MEXT touch on the [Family Federation's](#) doctrines, referring to the biblical figure of humanity's ancestor as "Eve" in English. However, within the [organization](#), they follow the terminology of the Japan Bible Society's version of the Bible, referring to her as "Eva". "This discrepancy alone shows that the document wasn't authored by the individual but was instead written by MEXT," an affiliate of the [religious organization](#) stated.

The emerging pattern of MEXT using believers' names to include false or exaggerated claims in affidavits highlights concerns about the ministry's approach. Moreover, since the trial is closed to the public, there is no mechanism to check MEXT's potential abuse of power, which remains a troubling issue.

The main basis for MEXT's request for the dissolution order against the [Family Federation](#) is the [organization's](#) loss in 32 civil lawsuits and the submission of approximately 300 affidavits from alleged victims. However, claims from these "victims" that MEXT fabricated the contents of affidavits to align with the ministry's objectives are mounting. This development significantly undermines the credibility of MEXT's arguments.

See also ["Poorly Compiled Evidence Including Falsehoods"](#)

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**Featured image** above: Miyuki Kawaguchi (pseudonym) during an interview on the afternoon of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2025, in Aichi Prefecture, Japan. Photo: Takahide Ishii (石井孝秀)

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