

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Thousands Protest Japan's Criminal Persecution of FFWPU

Knut Holdhus
December 10, 2024



Toru Goto, representing the National Association of Victims of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Religious De-Conversion (center), delivering his speech 8th December 2024, Shinjuku, Tokyo. The posters behind him carry pictures of Toru Goto hardly able to walk after more than 12 years of forcible confinement



15,000 protesting in Tokyo and throughout Japan in demonstrations against organized criminal persecution they have suffered for decades

Tokyo, 9th December 2024 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

"Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Renunciation of Faith Are Crimes"

Protest in Shinjuku, Tokyo Against Unfair Reporting and Dissolution Request

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

"We will not tolerate religious oppression!"

"Abduction, confinement, and forced renunciation of faith are crimes!"

"Withdraw the request for dissolution!"



Getting ready. From the demonstration at Shinjuku ward, Tokyo December 8, 2024

These were the slogans heard on 8th December 2024 at the east exit of JR Shinjuku Station. On a busy Sunday, amid the bustling crowds, members of the Tokyo congregations of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) staged a protest. They sought to draw attention to what they called human rights violations against [Family Federation](#) believers. Around 120 people participated in the demonstration.

Before the demonstration began, members did street preaching to highlight the human rights violations the [Family Federation](#) has faced. Toru Goto, representative of the National Association of Victims of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Religious De-

Conversion, took the stage and emphasized,



*From one of the many demonstrations in Japan
Dec. 8, 2024*

"The reporting about the former [Unification Church](#) is extremely biased. The voices of current members are not being reflected at all."

Goto also recounted his personal experience, mentioning the abduction, confinement and attempted forced de-conversion that he himself went through for [12 years and five months](#). He pointed out,

"The Supreme Court has recognized this as abduction and confinement."

Toru Goto shared about his own ordeal and could also convey the voices of [other victims](#).

The protesters began their march around 3:00 pm at the east exit of JR Shinjuku Station, near Alta. They protested against the government's request for a court order to dissolve the [Family Federation](#), marching from Shinjuku Station's south exit to the intersection in front of Shinjuku Ward Office. Along the way, they

chanted slogans such as

"The dissolution order request is unconstitutional!"

"Withdraw the dissolution request!"

"Protect freedom of religion and human rights!"



From one of the many demonstrations in Japan on December 8, 2024

On the same day, similar protests were held at approximately 200 locations nationwide, involving around 15,000 [Family Federation](#) believers and supporters.

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In a Nutshell

Name: Unification Church

Founded: 1954 in Seoul, South Korea

Founder: Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012)

Faith: The **Unification Principles**, a series of revelations **Father Moon** received from 1935 to 1944.

See: **Brief about the teachings**. See: **In a nutshell**

Goal: A **Kingdom of Heaven** on Earth, a harmonious world family, where everyone can experience peace, security, freedom and love.

Distribution: Largest in South Korea and Japan, but widespread throughout the free, democratic world. Representatives to 120 countries already in 1975

Europe: First representative here in 1965.

Discontinued: 1997. The **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification** took over many of the tasks of the Unifications Church.

Frequently asked questions: See: **Faq**

History:

The Unification Church

The Unification Church was **founded** by **Sun Myung Moon** (1920-2012) and a handful of followers in 1954 in Seoul as the "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity".

It was established based on **Sun Myung Moon's vision** of creating a big global family under **God**, where all people become like brothers and sisters in a world of freedom, peace, happiness and love.

The Unification Church was dissolved 43 years later, in 1997. The **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification** took over many of the Unification Church's functions.

Father Moon first turned to the Christian world, which he believed should have a central role in the work to realize such a vision. Large parts of Christian teachings coincide with his own message. At that time, he explained what he was teaching, by frequent use of Bible quotations. Many Christians then also began to follow **Father Moon**.



The Unification Church logo



Sun Myung Moon with early followers in 1954

Those who opposed him, eventually began to call the movement a sect. However, a narrow-minded, introverted sect that believes it has a monopoly on the truth, is about as far from his vision as you can get.

Because the leaders of the Christian world in Korea were not open to his message and did not cooperate with him, he decided to create his own organization.

The Unification Church was the first of several organizations that came into being as the movement grew and became what we call the Unification Movement, of which the Unification Church was the central part.

However, the Unification Church was discontinued in 1997. Then **Father Moon**

The movement began to be called the "Unification Church", which is far easier to say than the original long name. **Sun Myung Moon** himself also began to use this name, although he never intended to establish any church.



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declared that it had served its purpose. He claimed that the age of the different religions was over, and that we therefore no



First meeting place in Seoul

we therefore no longer needed a movement that had been founded for the unification of world christianity.

The required foundation had been laid for a much larger and universal movement more in line with his original **vision**. Therefore, from the end of the 90s, he started to set up many peace organizations. The **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification** took over many of the tasks of the Unification Church. In many countries, e.g. in the USA and Japan, people continued, often for purely practical reasons, to use the name Unification Church long after 1997.

The **Family Federation** sees the family as the key to world peace. If there is harmony in the family, there can also be harmony in society and the world in general.

So the name, and also the times we live in, have changed, but the goal is still the same: to create a big global family under **God**, where all people become like brothers and sisters in a world of freedom, peace, happiness and love.

[More about the Unification Church](#)



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