

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Dissolution Amounts to Deprivation of Rights

Knut Holdhus
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Participants listen to Marco Respinti's lecture in the afternoon of December 9, 2024, Naka Ward, Nagoya City



Japanese authorities' ill-advised measures against minority religion and requesting its dissolution amount to deprivation of rights for 600,000 members

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Request for Dissolution of the Former Unification Church Amounts to "Deprivation of Human Rights"

Italian Journalist Gives Lecture in Nagoya

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



Marco Respinti speaking in Japan December 2024

A rally on the theme of "The Crisis of Religious Freedom and Democracy in Japan" was held on 9th December 2024 in Nagoya City. Marco Respinti, an international journalist and director of the Italian online religious freedom magazine [Bitter Winter](#), and Seishiro Sugihara (杉原誠四郎), president of the International Historical Debate Institute (国際歴史論戦研究所), delivered keynote speeches. They argued that politics should not oppress religious freedom, which is a fundamental human right.

Respinti criticized the Japanese government's request to dissolve the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the Unification Church), calling it "a grave violation of human rights, an attack on democracy, and a dismantling of freedom". He analyzed that the government's decision was influenced by lawyers, socialists, and communists labeling the [organization](#) as a

"cult".

He further emphasized that "protecting the right to freedom of religion or belief is an obligation of the Japanese government." Infringing on that right constitutes "an injustice not only to all Japanese citizens of every religious belief but to the entire world."



Professor emeritus Seishiro Sugihara

Sugihara, an expert on religious issues, described the dissolution request as "misleading leadership by then-Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (岸田文雄)." He urged members of the [Family Federation](#) to assert their legitimacy through social media and international human rights organizations.

In addition, Pastor Paula White, who serves as a religious advisor to the upcoming U.S. President Donald Trump, sent a video message. She warned that the Japanese government's handling of the [Family Federation](#) could have "severe implications for [...] the global perception of Japan's commitment to human rights" as well as its relationship with the United States. She called on Japan to "to uphold religious freedom for all."

The event was hosted by the Japanese Committee of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom (ICRF), represented by Professor Emeritus Shoichi Ito (伊東正一) of Kyushu University, and the Aichi

Prefecture Peace Ambassadors Council. Approximately 2,300 attended the rally.



Paula White delivering a video message at a conference on religious freedom in Tokyo December 8, 2024

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