

FOREF: Exposing Japan's Covert War on Family Fed - Masumi Fukuda's Urgent Warning from Brussels

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Exposing Japan’s Hidden War on a Minority Faith:
Masumi Fukuda’s Urgent Warning from Brussels

Brussels Press Conference Exposing Political Smears, Judicial Overreach, and the Erosion of Religious Freedom in Japan

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JUL 5



Panel at the Brussels Press Club, June 29, 2026 (L–R): Patricia Duval, Mr. Kondo, moderator Willy Fautre (HRWF), Masumi Fukuda, and translator. Fukuda’s testimony that day sent shockwaves through the international human rights community (Foto: FOREF)

At a landmark hybrid press conference on June 29, 2026, combining live streaming with more than 200 participants attending in person and online from around the world, award-winning Japanese investigative journalist Masumi Fukuda delivered a powerful exposé. As of today, the video recording has already attracted more than 3,570 views on the Brussels Press Club website—clear evidence of growing international interest in a story that many in Japan would prefer to keep out of the global spotlight.

I was there, witnessing firsthand the moment Masumi Fukuda took the podium at the Brussels Press Club.

A prize-winning independent journalist and author with no religious affiliation to the group in question, Fukuda presented a meticulously documented and deeply unsettling account drawn from years of investigative work and her latest book, *Sacrifice to the Nation*. Her presentation peeled back layers of official narratives to reveal what

she described as a coordinated campaign against a minority religious organization—the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (formerly known as the Unification Church). In doing so, she challenged the international community’s perception of Japan as a steadfast model of democracy, human rights, and religious liberty.

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Masumi Fukuda speaking at the historic hybrid press conference at the Brussels Press Club on June 29, 2026. Delivering her powerful testimony from *Sacrifice to the Nation*, she exposed the hidden political and judicial campaign against religious freedom in Japan.

What emerged was not merely a controversial legal dispute but a picture of the systematic erosion of constitutional protections, driven by political agendas, media bias, and judicial overreach.

“We must not turn our eyes away from the truth.” — Masumi Fukuda

Fukuda began by establishing both her credentials and her independence. She has authored seven books, including the bestseller *Fabrication (Detchiage)*, which sold more than 230,000 copies, received major literary honors, was adapted into a successful film, and even topped Netflix charts in Japan. Her latest nonfiction work, *Sacrifice to the Nation (Kokka no Ikenie)*, compiles extensive reporting originally published in a monthly magazine since late 2022.

Readers have responded with astonishment:

“Terrible wrongdoing was taking place where ordinary citizens could not see.”

“This reveals truths that the media refuses to tell.”

“It is filled with facts everyone should read.”

The book’s cover carries a direct challenge: **“We must not turn our eyes away from the truth.”** Fukuda emphasized that she writes not as an insider but as a freelance journalist committed to uncovering hidden realities.

Her central thesis was stark: today’s Japan no longer fully upholds the freedoms its Constitution guarantees.

Following the 2022 assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe—whose attacker harbored grievances linked to the Family Federation—a wave of discrimination engulfed ordinary believers. Jobs were reportedly lost once membership became known. Teachers allegedly told students that the faith was “evil.” Local governments rejected volunteer services from affiliated organizations. Churches were vandalized with “cult” graffiti, while threatening letters and online harassment proliferated. Members encountered barriers to housing, credit, and even medical treatment when insurance records revealed their religious affiliation. Tragically, some believers took their own lives under the weight of relentless social pressure.

This social persecution was paralleled by institutional action.



Taken by the state along with [hundreds of other places of worship](#) throughout Japan: Tokyo headquarters of the [Family Federation](#) of Japan. 600,000 members will lose their places of worship. Photo: Asanagi / Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain](#) image. Cropped

Dissolution proceedings have placed the organization’s headquarters and numerous churches under court-appointed administrators. Believers can no longer gather freely in many of their places of worship and have been forced to meet in private homes instead. Nearly 2,000 staff members have been affected, with many losing their jobs.

For an estimated 600,000 members nationwide, the loss of their sacred spaces represents a profound spiritual and communal rupture.

Fukuda drew a sharp contrast with the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo case, in which sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway killed and injured thousands, fully justifying dissolution because of clear criminality and violence.

The Family Federation, by contrast, has no record of organizational criminal offenses, murders, or acts of violence.

The principal basis for action?

Disputes over donations.



Masumi Fukuda in Brussels during the June 29, 2026 press conference, holding her groundbreaking book *Sacrifice to the Nation*. Standing before the European Parliament’s iconic ‘Democracy’ banner, her message was clear: Japan’s assault on religious freedom threatens democratic values everywhere. **Religious communities naturally depend on voluntary contributions.** Yet Japanese courts have progressively expanded the definition of unlawful donations. Early cases centered on allegations of intimidation through fears of ancestral curses or eternal damnation. More recent rulings have gone much further, invoking theories of “mind control” or hidden psychological influence, effectively suggesting that sincere believers are unwitting victims of their own faith.

Civil settlements were subsequently repurposed as evidence of institutional wrongdoing. Judges speculated about possible future harms without compelling proof and took the extraordinary step of evaluating the group’s doctrines, ultimately declaring them undesirable.

“The court, in effect, assumed the role of an inquisitor.” — Masumi Fukuda

This unprecedented doctrinal scrutiny breaks with long-standing Japanese legal tradition, where judging the truth or falsity of religious beliefs was considered constitutionally off limits. By assuming such inquisitorial powers, the judiciary has blurred the essential boundaries separating law, politics, and theology.

Fukuda traced these developments back to deeper political roots in the 1980s.

During that period, businesses operated by individual church members imported Korean products—including miniature pagodas and stone urns—and sold them at premium prices, triggering accusations of so-called “spiritual sales” (*reikan shōhō*). A network of more than 300 lawyers, known as the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (*Zenkoku Benren*), worked closely with the media to amplify the controversy. Many participants, she noted, held left-leaning or communist affiliations.

Although the commercial practices largely ended by 1987 and no criminal fraud convictions followed, the damage to the organization’s reputation proved permanent. Positive testimonies from satisfied customers—including reports of personal “miracles”—were largely ignored.

According to Fukuda, however, the campaign’s real objective extended well beyond consumer protection.

Church-affiliated organizations supported an Anti-Espionage Law that was fiercely opposed by the Japanese Communist Party, labor unions, and sections of the left-wing media. Leading attorney Hiroshi Yamaguchi openly connected anti-church activities with efforts to weaken conservative political influence.

What began under the banner of consumer protection gradually evolved into a powerful political weapon.

“From its very beginning, the campaign against the Family Federation was not solely about consumer protection. It was also deeply connected with political conflict in Japan.” — Masumi Fukuda

This historical background helps explain how decades of preparation, combined with the post-assassination media frenzy, culminated in today’s crisis.

One-sided reporting portrayed the organization almost exclusively as a predatory cult. Judges—operating within a largely secular environment and inevitably influenced by

overwhelming public sentiment—issued a series of cumulative rulings that increasingly favored dissolution.

The result, Fukuda argued, is a form of **lawfare** that ultimately threatens the rule of law itself.

The broader implications are profound.

If a democratic state can dissolve a religious corporation, seize its property, and effectively criminalize aspects of religious practice without evidence of violence or criminal fraud, the precedent extends far beyond one religious movement. It raises fundamental questions about due process, separation of powers, religious neutrality, and genuine pluralism.

International human rights experts have already voiced concerns. Fukuda’s reporting highlights the dangers of selective enforcement, opaque legal proceedings, and ideological collaboration among segments of the media, activist lawyers, and government institutions.

“Japanese democracy itself is facing a crisis.” — Masumi Fukuda

Her presentation in Brussels was not sensationalism. It was a careful, evidence-based warning.

Sacrifice to the Nation serves as a valuable archive of documents, interviews, and analysis that much of Japan’s mainstream media has either ignored or marginalized. By bringing these findings before an international audience, Fukuda fulfilled one of journalism’s highest callings: holding power accountable and equipping citizens with facts necessary for informed judgment.



A warm moment after the press conference: Masumi Fukuda presents a signed copy of her book *Sacrifice to the Nation* to human rights advocate Peter Zoehrer in Brussels on June 29, 2026. Attending the hybrid event left a lasting impression on me.

The combination of an engaged audience in Brussels and participants connecting from across the globe underscored the universal significance of the issues at stake: freedom of conscience, protection of minorities, and resistance to authoritarian tendencies—even within democratic societies.

As political polarization deepens and governments increasingly seek to shape public narratives, Japan's experience should serve as a warning far beyond its borders.

Masumi Fukuda's courage in speaking uncomfortable truths, despite the personal and professional risks involved, deserves recognition.

Her work challenges readers and viewers alike to question dominant narratives, demand greater transparency, and reaffirm the fundamental rights upon which democratic societies depend.

Japan's campaign against the Family Federation is more than a domestic religious controversy.

It has become a test of whether a modern democracy will uphold its own constitutional principles when confronted with unpopular minorities and intense political pressure.

The hidden story is no longer hidden.

With thousands already viewing the Brussels presentation, international awareness is steadily growing.

The real question now is whether Japan will correct its course toward justice and liberty—or whether the sacrifice of one minority faith will become the precedent for broader erosions of freedom.

The international community, scholars, policymakers, journalists, and citizens of conscience cannot afford indifference.

Turning away is no longer an option.

Once truth is revealed, it demands a response.



EDITOR’S NOTE: *This article is based directly on the presentation and documented research of Japanese investigative journalist Masumi Fukuda, delivered at the Brussels Press Club on June 29, 2026. It is intended to contribute to informed discussion on religious freedom, the rule of law, and democratic accountability.*

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About Peter Zoehrer

I am an independent writer, media analyst, press freedom advocate, and human rights defender specializing in media ethics, religious freedom, and freedom of conscience.

Through my work with FOREF (Forum for Religious Freedom) and on Substack, I analyze how governments — even in democratic Europe — restrict faith communities, politicize church-state relations, undermine press freedom, and erode fundamental rights. From Viktor Orbán’s mass deregistration of over 300 churches in Hungary to broader threats against media independence and religious liberty, I provide in-depth analysis, original reporting, and principled commentary.

Your support helps me:

- Conduct independent research and investigative writing free from institutional constraints
- Cover underreported stories on religious freedom and press freedom
- Promote media ethics and accountability in public discourse
- Amplify the voices of affected communities, journalists, and pastors
- Advocate for genuine democratic reform and equal treatment of all faiths

Every coffee you buy allows me to dedicate more time to this important work. Whether you can contribute €3, €5, or more — it truly makes a difference.

Thank you for standing with me in defense of press freedom, media ethics, and religious liberty.

— Peter Zoehrer

Writer • Media Analyst • Press Freedom Advocate



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