

Unification Movement Schismatic Groups (2012-Present)

Massimo Introvigne

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A supporter of Hyun Jin Moon

UNIFICATION MOVEMENT TIMELINE

1920 (January 6, lunar calendar: the date is commemorated in the Unification movement according to the lunar calendar): Reverend Sun Myung Moon was born in Chŏngju, in present-day North Korea.

1943 (January 6, lunar calendar: the date is commemorated in the Unification movement according to the lunar calendar): Hak Ja Han was born in Sinli, in present-day North Korea.

1960 (April 11, solar calendar: this date and all dates hereafter, solar calendar): Reverend Moon married Hak Ja Han, his second wife, in Seoul, Korea. They became known as "True Parents" in the Unification Movement.

1961 (January 27): Ye Jin (Nina) Moon, the first child of Reverend Moon and Hak Ja Han, was born

1962 (December 29): Hyo Jin (Stephen) Moon, the second (and first male) child of the True Parents, was born.

1965 (August 14): In Jin (Tatiana) Moon, the fourth child of the True Parents (if we include the third one, Hye Jin, who died in infancy in 1964) was born.

1966 (December 4): Heung Jin (Richard) Moon, the fifth child of the True Parents, was born.

1969 (May 25): Hyun Jin (Preston) Moon, the seventh child of the True Parents, was born.

1970 (July 17): Kook Jin (Justin) Moon, the eighth child of the True Parents, was born.

1976 (July 11): Sun Jin (Salina), the tenth child of the True Parents, was born.

1979 (September 26): Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon, the twelfth child of the True Parents, was born.

1984 (January 2): Heung Jin (Richard) Moon died in a car accident.

1987 (March 31): Hyun Jin Moon married Jun Sook, daughter of Reverend Chung Hwan Kwak, one of the most prominent elders of the Unification movement.

1996: Reverend Moon launched the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), with Reverend Kwak as president.

1998: Hyun Jin Moon was appointed as vice-president of FFWPU.

1998: Nansook Hong, ex-wife of Hyo Jin Moon, exposed his flaws in a sensational book.

2006: Reverend Sun Myung Moon moved from Seoul to the Holy Ground of Chung Pyung, the theater of the mediumistic phenomena of Hyo Nam Kim, a woman channeling the spirit of the deceased mother of Reverend Moon's wife.

2008 (March 17): Hyo Jin Moon died.

2008: Hyun Jin Moon was replaced in most of his leadership positions in the Unification Movement by his younger brother Hyung Jin Moon, who became president of FFWPU.

2009: Hyun Jin Moon launched in Manila the Global Peace Foundation, as an independent alternative to the FFWPU-controlled Universal Peace Federation.

2010-2011: Hyun Jin Moon and his followers formed in the Seattle area the Blessed Family Community, later Blessed Family Association.

2012: In Jin Moon resigned from her positions in the Unification Movement after disputes with her mother, made worse by the fact that her relationship with FFWPU musician Ben Lorentzen, became publicly known. She would later divorce her husband, Jin Sung Pak, and marry Lorentzen.

2012 (September 3): Reverend Moon died in Chung Pyung, Korea.

2012: Mrs. Moon started removing Hyung Jin Moon and his brother Kook Jin Moon from their leadership positions in the Unification movement.

2013: Hyung Jin Moon, with the support of his brother Kook Jin, established the Sanctuary Church as a separate organization from FFWPU.

2015: Sun Jin Moon was appointed as president of FFWPU.

2015: Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon broke with Hyo Nam Kim, the Chung Pyung medium, who launched her own separate movement.

2016: Supporters of Hyun Jin Moon founded the Family Peace Association as a separate organization from FFWPU.

FOUNDER/GROUP HISTORY

Reverend Sun Myung Moon, the founder of the Unification Movement, died on September 3, 2012, in Cheung Pyung, Korea. As often happens in religious groups, the movement separated into rival factions, although the conflicts had roots in events that preceded Reverend Moon's death.

The schisms in the Unification movement were rooted in conflicting claims to authority principally by (a) Reverend Moon's widow, Hak Ja Han; (b) Reverend Moon's eldest surviving son, Hyun Jin (Preston) Moon; (c) a group of individuals ("the clerics") holding legal institutional control of various major organizations founded by Reverend Moon; (d) the founder's youngest son, Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon; and (e) Hyo Nam Kim, a medium who claimed to channel the spirit of Reverend Moon's mother-in-law and gained considerable prominence in the movement.

Reverend Moon (1920-2012) had fourteen sons and daughters from his 1960 marriage with Hak Ja Han, his second wife after he divorced Sun-Kil Choi (1925-2008), whom he had married in 1945. Hak Ja Han is referred to in the Unification movement as the "True Mother," and Moon as the "True Father." Their family, including their fourteen "True Children," is referred to as the "True Family" and its role is central to the faith of the Unification movement, where Reverend Moon is considered the "third Adam" (the "second Adam" being Jesus Christ) (Chryssides 1991).

The "True Children" include seven sons and seven daughters, of which one died shortly after birth in 1964. The first True Child is a daughter born in 1961, Ye Jin (Nina) Moon. The eldest male True Child was Hyo Jin (Stephen) Moon (1962-2008). Well before 1998, when a sensational book by his ex-wife Nansook Hong damaged the Unification movement (Hong 1998), it became clear that Hyo Jin Moon had personal problems and was not a potential successor to his father.

The second eldest male True Child was Heung Jin Moon (1966-1984), widely revered in the Unification Movement as a young man with a high-level spiritual inclination. He was killed in a car accident at age seventeen. According to Unification theology, Heung Jin Moon performs a crucial role in the spiritual world. In 1988, a Unification Church member from Zimbabwe, Cleophas Kundiona, claimed to be an incarnation of Heung Jin Moon and was accepted as such by Reverend and Mrs. Moon and the church leadership for a while, before becoming controversial for his violent and unpredictable behavior and being ultimately rejected by the movement.



The death of Heung Jin Moon and the problems of Hyo Jin Moon left Hyun Jin Moon as the eldest male True Child best suited to succeed his father in a leadership position. Hyun Jin Moon was born on May 25, 1969, and as a teenager started being prepared by his father to become a future leader in the Unification movement. On Christmas Eve 1986, at age seventeen, Hyun Jin became engaged to Jun Sook Kwak, who turned nineteen that day. [Image at left] The two married on March 31, 1987 and later had nine children. Jun Sook was the daughter of Reverend Chung Hwan Kwak, one of the most prominent elders of the Unification movement and one of Reverend Moon's most trusted companions throughout most of the latter's life.

Preparation for leadership included Reverend Moon's indication that his son Hyun Jin, a promising middle school football player, should switch his sport activities to horse riding. He did this successfully, and was part of the Korean national equestrian team at both the Seoul (1988) and Barcelona (1992) Olympics. In 1998, Hyun Jin Moon earned a MBA degree from Harvard Business School. He also has a BA in History from Columbia University and a MRE from Unification Theological Seminary. He holds an

honorary doctorate from Sun Moon University, the accredited university operated by the Unification Movement in Korea (on the basis of which he is normally referred to as "Dr. Moon") and an honorary professorship from Uni-Anhanguera in Brazil. Confident in his son, Reverend Moon bestowed institutional responsibilities upon him in various areas of the Unification movement. He also decided in 2000 that Hyun Jin should become the first person on Earth to inherit from him and his wife the right to bestow the marriage Blessing, the central sacrament of the Unification movement.

In 1994, Reverend Moon proclaimed the end of the era of the Unification Church and in 1996 launched the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), with Reverend Kwak as president. In 1998, Hyun Jin Moon was appointed as vice-president of FFWPU. At the large inauguration ceremony in New York, attended by dignitaries from around the world, Reverend Moon proclaimed that his son would complete his mission and accomplish greater works than himself, alluding to Hyun Jin as the fulfilment of the "Three Great Kingships" (two generations of a family rooted in God) and the "Fourth Adam." The appointment of Hyun Jin Moon and the move from the Unification Church to the Family Federation shook the organization to its core, since it was interpreted as a radical change from a "church" to a "movement," i.e. from a sectarian to a nonsectarian model, and was a seminal reason for the various schisms that followed. It laid bare what Hyun Jin's followers later saw as Reverend Moon's intent to pass his ultimate spiritual authority to the best suited son and not to his wife, and to dismantle any legacy of the clerical order from the Unification Church era.

Between 2000 and 2001, Hyun Jin Moon became president of Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) and the Youth Federation for World Peace. In 2001, he founded Service for Peace. In 2006, he became chairperson of UCI, a U.S based nonprofit company which controls some of the movement's assets. In 2007, he became co-chairman of the Universal Peace Federation and started organizing Global Peace Festivals.

Hyun Jin Moon's assumption of all these positions was part of an effort by Reverend Moon to dismantle the church structure of the past forty years and to transfer core positions in the Unification movement to the "1.5 generation," consisting of young leaders in their forties. Moon believed that his son Hyun Jin, being himself part of this generation, would manage the younger leaders more easily. In fact, they resisted Hyun Jin's authority and reforms, denounced him to Reverend Moon as unorthodox, and eventually poisoned Hyun Jin's relationship with his parents.

Unification Theological Seminary professor and scholar of the Unification movement Mike Mickler, himself a member of Mrs. Moon's branch that is now hostile to Hyun Jin Moon, believes that the latter took at face value Reverend Moon's post-1994 statements that this was now "not a church but an association," while in fact the elder Moon's intention was to maintain a "creative tension" between the religious and nonsectarian models. When, Mickler argues, with the establishment of the Chung Pyung shrine and the coronations of himself and his wife as King and Queen of Peace, Reverend Moon emphasized again the religious theme, breaking up with his son Hyun Jin became unavoidable (Mickler 2013, 48-50). Hyun Jin, on the other hand, continues to maintain that his father never intended to found a religion and that the coronation ceremonies were intended to be a coronation of God through representatives on Earth rather than a shift back to a sectarian perspective.



Until 2008, Hyun Jin Moon was widely recognized as Reverend Moon's future successor. From then on, his relationships with his parents and siblings dramatically changed. In that year, his mother and some of his siblings implemented various leadership changes and communication campaigns to undermine Hyun Jin's reputation and influence within the Unification movement. [Image at left] He was replaced in most of his positions by his younger brother Hyung Jin Moon. His father-in-law, Reverend Kwak, was equally maligned, and forced to step down from all organizations controlled by Hak Ja Han. Hyung Jin became known as Pastor Moon and was inaugurated as international president of FFWPU. Other positions were given to yet another brother, Kook Jin (Justin) Moon. The latter was born in 1970, fourteen months after Hyun Jin.

In the chronological sequence of "True Children," he was followed by Kwon Jin Moon (1975), who for several years worked as an actor in popular TV series under the name of Nathaniel Moon, and did not take until recently a special interest in the Unification movement, and by Young Jin Moon (Philip, 1978-1999). He was also not a player in the succession struggle and in 1999 died by either committing suicide or accidentally falling from the seventeenth floor of a Las Vegas hotel. Pastor Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon was born in 1979 and was the last male child of Reverend Moon.

Reverend Moon became inaccessible to his son Hyun Jin and other leaders after he moved at age eighty-

six in 2006 from Seoul to the Holy Ground of Chung Pyung, the theater of the mediumistic phenomena of Hyo Nam Kim. Chung Pyung is a location not easily accessible and was remote from the business of running the movement. The medium channeled the spirit of Hak Ja Han's deceased mother, Soon-Ae Hong (1914-1989). Hyo Nam Kim believed Mrs. Moon's family and lineage to have a spiritual significance in their own right, independently of Reverend Moon. Kim's revelations announced Han's later public proclamations of her ultimate authority and providential significance.

Even before 2006, Hyun Jin Moon repeatedly warned of the possibility of the medium's failure. Eventually, the medium and Mrs. Moon parted company in 2015, following Ms. Kim's claim to be channeling Reverend Moon, and around the medium yet another splinter group was born, which would eventually gather some followers among the Japanese branch of the Unification movement.

With Hak Ja Han's public endorsement as heir apparent to Reverend Moon, immediately following his assumption of leadership of FFWPU in 2008, Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon began deconstructing the family centered structure of FFWPU and reconstituting the movement as the Unification Church (or "Unificationism" as a religion), presenting again the Unification Movement in the religious hierarchical and sectarian terms that his brother Hyun Jin opposed. Hyun Jin claimed that, with the end of the era of the Unification Church in 1994, it should have become clear to all, including his brothers, that Reverend Moon did not want to establish a new denomination but rather a larger universal movement of families.

Between 2006 and 2013, based on Hak Ja Han's influence, Kook Jin Moon was put in charge of the finances of the movement. An elder sister, In Jin Moon (Tatiana, born in 1965), was dispatched to the U.S. to further marginalize the role of Hyun Jin Moon, who resided there. Campaigns criticizing Hyun Jin and lawsuits for the control of U.S. and other assets of the Unification Movement followed, and still have not been resolved. In 2012, however, Tatiana had to resign from her positions in the Unification movement after disputes with her mother, Mrs. Moon, made worse by the public disclosure that, despite being married with Jin Sung Pak, she had a relationship with Family Federation musician Ben Lorentzen and he was the father of her sixth son, Erik. Later, Tatiana divorced her husband and married Lorentzen, who had in turn divorced his wife Patricia, in 2013, in a non-church ceremony. Later, she somewhat reconciled with her mother.

Although having been instrumental in the promotion of her two younger sons, Pastor Hyung Jin and Kook Jin, Mrs. Moon removed both from various positions in 2012 and 2013, and these two brothers then created their own independent group called the World Peace and Unification Sanctuary Church. These two younger sons continue to denounce her claims to ultimate authority as blasphemy.

In 2009, Hyun Jin Moon decided to launch in Manila the Global Peace Foundation (GPF) as an alternative to the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), the most broadly inclusive and nonsectarian organization founded by Reverend Moon. Hyun Jin claimed that the latter was no longer maintaining the original nonsectarian intention as evidenced by his younger brother Hyung Jin's inaugural address as President of UPF. Starting in 2010-2011, Hyun Jin Moon moved to the Seattle area and his followers started forming "not a denomination but an association" in the shape of the Blessed Family Community, later Blessed Family Association. In 2016, the Family Peace Association (FPA) was inaugurated as Hyun Jin's attempt to replace the original organization founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon (Family Federation for World Peace and Unification – FFWPU). Hyun Jin believed that the latter had abandoned its universal, non-sectarian mission of realizing God-centered, ethical societies, having been diverted from its original intended purpose by his mother, his brother Hyung Jin, and the clerics. Some major figures in the Unification movement's history, such as Chung Hwan Kwak and former president of the Japanese Unification movement Takeru Kamiyama (1942-2016), as well as other major leaders, sided with Hyun Jin.



The leaders controlling FFWPU have been publicly endorsing, after Reverend Moon's death, the doctrine that Mrs. Moon is the "only begotten Daughter of God" and that she holds ultimate authority. By contrast the Family Peace Association believes that ultimate spiritual authority in the Unification movement belongs to the elder True Son, i.e. Hyun Jin Moon, as declared by his father in Hyun Jin's 1998 vice-presidential inauguration. On the other hand, the Sanctuary Church recognizes Hyung Jin Moon as Reverend Moon's successor and "the new king of Cheon Il Guk" (Korean for "Kingdom of God"), with his wife as the new Queen, based on his participation in the coronation ceremonies of 2009 organized by his parents. [Image at left] Hyun Jin sees these coronations as having political significance, evidenced by his *Constitution of the United States of Cheon Il Guk*, which in its Article 1 states that "the King of Cheon Il Guk (CIG) is the head of state of the United States of CIG. The Kingship is bequeathed from the Lord of the Second Advent Moon

Sun Myung [the first King] to his son Moon Hyung Jin as second King, and then to Moon Shin Joon [Hyung Jin's son, born on March 22, 2004] as third King" (World Peace and Unification Sanctuary Church 2015:6). FPA, on the other hand, insists that sovereignty in the Kingdom of God is God's alone and that no human mediator is required.

DOCTRINES/BELIEFS

There are five fundamental doctrinal differences among FPA, FFWPU, and the Sanctuary Church. FPA emphasizes that doctrinal differences, rather than mere issues of leadership and authority, are the root causes of the schism in the Unification Movement. The Sanctuary Church supports a variation of FFWPU theology, replacing only the ultimate source of authority in the movement and rejecting Mrs. Moon's claims to a special role as the "only begotten Daughter of God."

First, both FPA and Sanctuary Church maintain that the canon of Holy Scriptures, as fixed by Reverend Moon, is immutable. They strongly criticize Mrs. Moon and FFWPU for replacing all eight volumes with three new ones, including a new edition of the *Cheon Seong Gyeong* (the central anthology of Reverend Moon's teachings), in which they claim seventy to eighty percent of the original content is missing. In addition, FFWPU has been condemned by FPA for withdrawing volume 594 onwards of the 615 volumes collecting Reverend Moon's speeches and for reissuing them, after having deleted passages critical of Mrs. Moon or testifying in a positive way to Hyun Jin Moon's role. Ultimately, the difference concerns again the role of Mrs. Moon and her authority to change the canon and the Scriptures, which both FPA and the Sanctuary Church see as not only unscrupulous, but running counter to Reverend Moon's statements that he left "eight textbooks and teaching material for humankind to use for all eternity" without the slightest change. FPA, however, maintains that Reverend Moon did permit additional collections of his words to be published, but that they should not replace the originals.

Second, unlike FFWPU and Sanctuary Church, FPA sees as the institutional platform for spiritual growth and development the family unit, and not a church, hierarchy or priesthood. FPA emphasizes the different roles of each member in a family, as well as of the male and female genders, as being core to the teachings of Sun Myung Moon and the fundamental principles of creation. FPA maintains that, currently, FFWPU under the leadership of Mrs. Moon is confusing this core principle. Mrs. Moon, as "True Mother" is supposed to be the centre of unity in the "True Family," but, FPA claims, that family is currently in disarray due to her neglect of her prime responsibility as mother and her new theology claiming that she is the "only begotten Daughter of God." Meanwhile, Sanctuary Church insists on the absolute authority of Hyung Jin Moon as the "Second King of Cheon Il Guk" and the sole instrument on Earth of God and his deified father.

Third, FPA interprets Reverend Moon's teachings in the sense that, although he and Mrs. Moon were the first True Parents, eventually all the Blessed Couples might become true parents too, with a direct relation to God. FPA accuses both Mrs. Moon and Hyung Jin Moon of having created a religious mythology where blessed families cannot relate directly to God but only through the mediation of "deified" Reverend and Mrs. Moon. The Sanctuary Church insists on the divine status of Reverend Moon as "the same spirit" as Jesus Christ, and Hyung Jin Moon is believed by this faction to be now the earthly "vessel" of God and the deified Reverend Moon after the latter "returned back to the Godhead" (World Peace and Unification Sanctuary Church 2017).

Fourth, who should lead the Unification Movement is also a contentious issue, as detailed below in the Organization /Leadership section of this profile.

Fifth, as mentioned earlier, FPA does not aspire to be a church but a movement of ideal families, not all with the same religious beliefs and practices. On the other hand, FPA's core membership, as well as members of the Sanctuary Church, share certain ideas on the messianic role of Reverend Moon and his lineage, and regard as important the maintenance of many of the original ceremonies instituted by Reverend Moon.



The fact that crucial beliefs about Reverend Sun Myung Moon are (partly but not wholly) shared by all three branches (FFWPU, FPA and Sanctuary Church) might in principle allow for a reconciliation between them. Hyun Jin is more restrained than his brother, Hyung Jin, who has publicly directed a vitriolic attack against Mrs. Moon. Hyun Jin has repeatedly written to his mother (Moon 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013) and had meetings with her, without excluding a reconciliation. However, the new theological ideas about Mrs. Moon as the "only begotten Daughter of God" and Mrs.

Moon's support of the lawsuits being conducted against her own son Hyun Jin are making reconciliation extremely difficult.

For assessing the future, yet another True Child should be considered: Sun Jin (Salina) Moon, born in 1976, the fourth daughter of Reverend and Mrs. Moon. [Image above on the left] She was inaugurated by Mrs. Moon in 2015 as international president of FFWPU and also serves as chairperson of FFWPU's Supreme Council. How she will relate to FFWPU leaders outside the True Family and to her dissident brothers remains to be seen.

RITUALS/PRACTICES

Both FFWPU and FPA maintain the traditional rituals and sacraments advocated by Reverend Moon. FPA maintains a "traditionalist" orientation and rejects all changes introduced by Mrs. Moon after her husband's death as spurious. These changes emphasize Mrs. Moon's own messianic role as the "only begotten Daughter of God."

The Sanctuary Church also maintains the core traditional rituals and sacrament of the early Unification Movement, minus the changes introduced by Mrs. Moon. Its services, however, moved closer to the Protestant Evangelical and Pentecostal tradition, with an initial sermon followed by songs often derived from the musical patrimony of American Evangelicalism, although some come from the early days of Reverend Moon. The latter, and his divine role, are, however, celebrated again in the final prayer.

ORGANIZATION/LEADERSHIP

As happened in larger religious groups (the Sunni-Shia division immediately comes to mind), the conflict between the various branches is also between lineage and hierarchy. FPA maintains that authority in the Unification movement is transmitted through male lineage, i.e. from Reverend Moon to his elder son. It also stresses the pivotal role of the "central lineage" that springs from the "True Family" of Reverend and Mrs. Moon. This central family is considered to have succeeded in establishing God's family, where the family of Adam and Eve fell short. Further, FPA maintains that ultimate legitimacy rests upon merit; should a key providential figure fail, authority is passed onto another, in accordance with God's appointment and humanity's acceptance, and upon the fulfilment of human responsibility. FFWPU, on the other hand, introduced (in 2014), after the founder's death, a *Cheon Il Guk Constitution* vesting all power in a Church Supreme Council. FPA accuses FFWPU of relegating the role of lineage to insignificance and of trampling the principles of human responsibility, liberty and self-determination through its self-serving constitution. The clerics are now positioned by the *Constitution* to hold ultimate authority, superior to the authority of the True Children, in case of seventy-three year-old Hak Ja Han's incapacity or death.

Meanwhile, based on teachings of Reverend Moon in some scripture study sessions during his later years, the Sanctuary Church emphasized the authority of Hyung Jin Moon, gained through appointment by his parents. The Sanctuary Church insists that the elder son Hyun Jin was rejected by his parents and that the younger son Hyung Jin was appointed in his place. From its side, FPA sees Reverend Moon's contradictory statements on the issue of succession as evidence that he was strongly manipulated by his family members and church leaders in his last years to reject his elder son and favour the younger.



In Ms. Hyo Nam Kim's branch, [Image at left] the authority is vested in the medium herself, who is believed to channel Reverend Moon and transmit his messages from the spirit world.

It is difficult to evaluate the membership of the different branches. FFWPU claims some 50,000 members worldwide. The Sanctuary Church mentions the figure of 10,000, which however includes those following its activities through its Web sites, a number certainly much higher than its core members. FPA has some 2,000 core members throughout the world. Ms. Hyo Nam Kim's followers may be estimated in the hundreds. Several other minor schisms also exist.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES

It is difficult to predict how the situation of the Unification Movement would evolve, particularly after the death of Mrs. Moon. In addition to the schismatic groups considered here, there are also a number of minor schisms that do not recognize any of the three main branches as legitimate.

Anti-cultists continue to reject the Unification Movement in general as a "cult," while in South Korea both the FFWPU and the FPA have gained a certain legitimacy through their cultural, educational, and social activities. Hyung Jin Moon and the Sanctuary Church have generated new controversies with their decision to position themselves as part of the American religious right. Their *Constitution of the United States of Cheon Il Guk* is a political document. Quite apart from its claim that Hyung Jin should be recognized as the king of a future messianic state, the document is a sort of revised American Constitution, emphasizing the priority of the individual over the state and of the states over the federal government. In his sermons, Hyung Jin advocates the right of pastors and churches to discuss political

issues openly, criticizes what he sees as the socialist inclination of the American left and of most mainline churches, and hails Donald Trump and European right-wing politicians such as Marine Le Pen as instruments of God for defeating an international "liberalism" that the Sanctuary Church increasingly regards as a political manifestation of Satan.

IMAGES

Image #1: Engagement of Hyun Jin (Preston) Moon and Jun Sook Kwak, Christmas 1986.

Image #2: Hyun Jin Moon and Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon.

Image #3: Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon and his wife.

Image #4: Hyo Nam Kim.

Image #5: Sun Jin (Salina) Moon.

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