

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Politics Overtake Law in FFWPU Dissolution Case

Knut Holdhus
May 30, 2025



Tomihiko Tanaka, President of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, at a press conference following the dissolution verdict March 25, 2025

"The alarming dissolution case based on retroactive justice was driven by politics, not law," claims Family Federation president in interview with large monthly magazine



The June 2025 issue of the Japanese monthly magazine Seiron

Part 1 of an interview (extensive excerpts) with Tomihiko Tanaka, President of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, published by the well-known monthly opinion magazine Seiron (正論) in its June 2025 issue. Translated from Japanese. Republished in English with permission. Seiron is a publication by the Sankei Shimbun, one of Japan's five national daily newspapers. Previously republished as two articles in [Bitter Winter](#) on [27th](#) and [28th May](#).

Calling for an Apology from Former Prime Minister Kishida

Interviewer: Fumihiro Kato, author

On 25th March 2025, the Tokyo District Court issued a ruling [ordering the dissolution](#) of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) under the Religious Corporations Act. I asked Tomihiko Tanaka, President of the [organization](#), for his thoughts on the [court's ruling](#), the current state of the [organization](#), and his views on the public distrust surrounding it.

- What are your thoughts on the court's ruling, President Tanaka?

Tanaka: I was truly shocked by the [dissolution order](#). I must say that none of our claims were considered at all. Prior to the [district court's ruling](#), we were fined for not responding to government inquiries, and we lost the "administrative fine" (non-penal fine) case even [at the Supreme Court](#). However, that case was about fines, whereas this one is about dissolving our legal entity, which I see as an entirely different matter.

When I read the [decision](#) document, I was appalled. Rather than pointing out what exactly was wrong with our [organization](#) to justify its dissolution, the [decision](#) was based on an assumption: that since the [organization](#) hasn't changed, it will likely commit the same wrongdoings again. This was the basis for the [ruling](#).



To impose a "death sentence" on our legal status based on such reasoning suggests a fervent desire to "destroy the [organization](#)". This is nothing short of a "politically motivated trial." I also believe that the [verdict](#) was [influenced by the Supreme Court's hostile stance](#) shown during the "administrative fine" (non-penal fine) case.

There was no consideration of non-retroactivity either. In other words, and I will elaborate on this later, they are applying rules retroactively to past events and using those new rules to judge us. It feels as though people who had already finished their judicial proceedings and returned to normal life were suddenly told, "Your previous judgment was too lenient," and given the death penalty all over again.

An organization pointed out as "socially problematic"

- The dissolution procedure was initiated by then-Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Tanaka: The problem with Kishida started on 31st August 2022, when he announced the "severing of ties" with [our organization](#). On that day, he held a press conference at the Prime Minister's Office, speaking as the president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), urging its members to avoid associations with "organizations that are pointed out as problematic by society."



There's a difference between "organizations pointed out as problematic by society" and "organizations that are actually problematic." Despite calling for severing ties, Kishida never explained what exactly was problematic about us or why we could be labeled a socially problematic organization; he didn't say a single word about it in his statement.

He essentially said,

"Because someone is saying it's a problem, cut ties with them."

Then, on 14th October 2022, the Cabinet approved a written government response stating clearly that, since there had been no criminal penalties imposed on our executives, [our organization](#) did not meet the requirements for dissolution under the Religious Corporations Act. Therefore, no dissolution order had been requested. Based on the existing legal interpretation, it was obvious that dissolving us was not possible - and the government officially acknowledged that fact.

However, after that, legal interpretations began to veer off course and were distorted. On 17th October Kishida suddenly announced his intent to exercise the "right to ask questions" - a measure only used when there is already a reason to consider dissolution. Since the Cabinet had just acknowledged on 14th October that there was no basis for dissolution, exercising the right to question made no sense. Kishida's statement clearly contradicted the Cabinet's decision.

Most likely, Kishida did not understand the law and made a hasty statement. It also seemed he didn't fully grasp that the right to question is not for fishing around to uncover crimes. This became evident in his later remarks. The right to question is to be used only when there is already a confirmed illegal act that could justify dissolution - and only to further investigate those facts. You can't assert there's no reason for dissolution on one hand and then exercise the questioning right on the other.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon.

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Today's Relevance Emphasized At 71st Anniversary

- May 28, 2025
- Knut Holdhus

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Korean media outlets emphasizing huge relevance in today's troubled world of Family Federation values – marriage, family, peace, interfaith harmony – in reports on commemoration of 71st anniversary


by Knut Holdhus, editor

A ceremony was held on 27th May in Seoul to commemorate the 71st anniversary of the *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification*. Many media outlets reported about the event, held in the *Cheonseung Church* in Cheonwon Temple in Yongsan, a central district of the South Korean capital. 700 pastors from across the country took part together with especially invited guests.

The Namdo Ilbo [reports](#) on the same day,


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The **Family Federation** was founded on 1st May 1954, at the 'House with 3 Doors' in Bukhak-dong, Seongdong-gu, Seoul (now Sindang-dong, Jung-gu), and has since carried out multifaceted activities to realize the ideal of 'One Family under God' under the teachings of its founders, **Sun Myung Moon** and **Hak Ja Han**."

In an **article 27th May**, the Segye Ilbo writes,

"Since sending missionaries to Japan and the United States in the late 1950s, the **Family Federation** now operates in over 200 mission countries."



The logo of the Joongdo Ilbo

The Joongdo Ilbo comments **27th May**,

"To commemorate the 71st anniversary, a variety of awards were

presented in different categories: long service awards (including 33-year and 15-year service), recognition of churches with outstanding evangelism and blessing performance, awards for exemplary families, and a booklet competition. A 'new start resolution ceremony' was also held, symbolizing support and succession across generations between elder and youth pastors."



Regarded as possible solution to declining birthrates: Here, the exchange of **Marriage Blessing** rings 12th April 2025. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission by Peace TV.

The Namdo Ilbo pointed out,

"As Korea recorded its lowest ever total fertility rate of 0.75 last year – now considered a national crisis – the international mass **Blessing** ceremonies, which emphasize **family values**, are being reevaluated as a possible solution to declining birthrates and challenge such as anti-marriage trends and the DINK (dual income, no kids) lifestyle."

The Joongdo Ilbo commented,

"The **Family Federation** is also regarded as the origin of K-Religion [See editor's note below], having started in Korea and expanded worldwide. Believers from all over the world continue to visit Korea – considered the homeland of their faith – on pilgrimages, with visitors this year coming from Europe, the Americas, Asia, and Africa. A growing number of foreign believers are also settling in Korea."

The Namdo Ilbo also mentioned the congratulatory remarks by Pastor Gil-chun Choi of Changsine Church (Presbyterian Church of Korea). According to the paper, he said,

"I thank the **Family Federation** for its devoted efforts in the religious peace movement over the past 71 years. The Korea Christian Clergy Association also shares the same heart and will move together toward our common goal of realizing **God's Kingdom**, beyond the vision of a unified Korea."

The Segye Ilbo quoted Guk Hwangbo, the president of the Korean branch of the **Family Federation**. In his commemorative speech, he said,

"This is a meaningful occasion when we for the first time since the great victorious foundation of the **entrance ceremony** for the Cheonil Sanctum in the Cheonwon Temple was laid, can dedicate the **founding** of the **federation** to Heaven and



Rev. Guk Hwangbo.

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of the [regeneration](#) to heaven), and the opening of an era with a sphere here on earth of living in the [Kingdom of Heaven](#)." He also added, "Today will be a historical turning point that reveals the status and power of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) to the world, and it will be a [providential](#) moment that testifies that our Heavenly Parent is alive and working."

Photo: [FFWPU](#)

According to the media reports, the commemorative program also included congratulatory messages from Sun-jo Hwang, Policy Chair of the *Central Administration of Cheonmu-won* (the new international headquarters), and Kyung-deuk Yoo, Chair of the [Family Federation](#) Foundation.



Yeon-ah Moon, 15th Jan. 2025. Photo: Screenshot from PeaceTV.

There were also encouraging remarks by Yeon-ah Moon, Chairperson of the *Sunhak Institute*, representing [Holy Mother Han](#), and a special performance by youth pastors and congratulatory songs.

What was then called the *Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity* was [founded](#) on 1st May 1954. The name became the [Family Federation](#) in 1996. The founding date 1st May was according to our solar calendar, but recent anniversaries have been commemorated on the first day of the

fifth month according to the oriental lunar calendar. It is common in South Korea to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries following this calendar.

Text: Knut Holdhus

Featured image above: From the commemorative ceremony held on 27th May 2025 at Cheonseung Church in Cheonwon Temple, Yongsan district, Seoul, to mark the 71st anniversary of the founding of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#). Photo: [FFWPU](#)

[Editor's note: The term **K-Religion** (short for Korean Religion) is a relatively recent concept modeled after more familiar cultural exports like K-Pop, K-Drama, and K-Beauty, which have gained massive global followings as part of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*). In this context, K-Religion refers to religious movements, spiritual traditions, or faith-based cultural phenomena that originated in Korea and are now gaining international influence.

K-Religion is about Korea becoming not only a cultural influencer but also a spiritual hub, where religious movements born in Korea are shaping global religious discourse. While not all such groups are mainstream or without controversy, their growing global presence is undeniable, and the label "K-Religion" seeks to frame that presence within Korea's broader international cultural identity.

Groups like the [Family Federation](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) have placed a strong emphasis on international missions, establishing a presence in most countries of the world. This outward-facing dynamic aligns with the global brand associated with other K-Culture phenomena.

K-Religion can function as a form of soft power, promoting Korea's global image not just through entertainment or products but also through values like peace, family unity, and interfaith cooperation.]

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