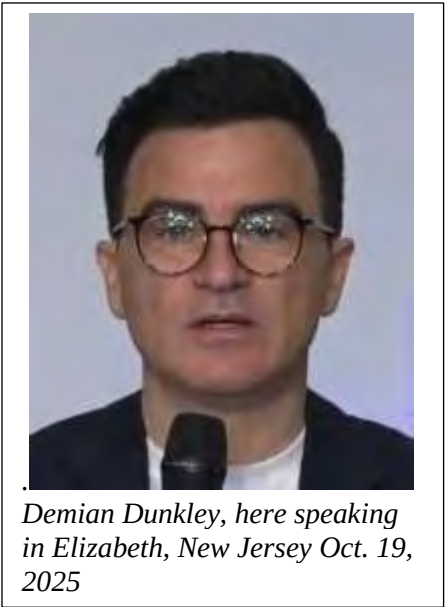


FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Demian Dunkley on Imprisoned in a Tiny S. Korean Solitary Cell Caused Irreversible Harm

Knut Holdhus
November 2, 2025



Artistic impression of [Mother Han](#) in detention cell. Illustration: Grok xAI



Demian Dunkley, here speaking in Elizabeth, New Jersey Oct. 19, 2025

Holy Mother Han's long-term detention in tiny solitary cell appears undeniably like the sustained assault on health of octogenarian heart patient in violation of basic protections for elderly detainees

The Damage Is Done?

How Dr. Hak Ja Han's Detention Can Cause Irreversible Harm

An article by Demian Dunkley, President of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) in North America, originally [posted on X](#) 1st November 2025.

This Is Not Just Detention. It's Physical Decline in Real Time.

Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#), the 82-year-old global peace leader known as the "Mother of Peace," has now been held in what amounts to solitary confinement for over 40 days in the Seoul Detention Center. But

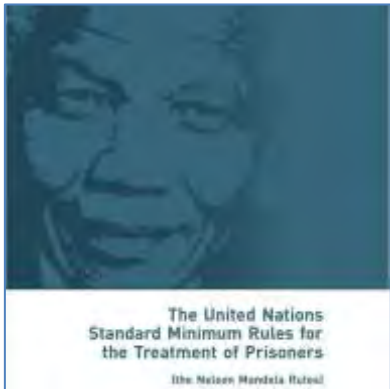
this is not just a legal case, and it is not just religious persecution; it is a humanitarian and medical emergency. Can any future verdict undo the physical damage already inflicted by her incarceration? What began as pre-trial detention has now taken the form of a sustained, avoidable assault on the health of an elderly heart patient.

The Cell as a Mechanism of Harm

The conditions in which [Dr. Han](#) is confined are not merely austere, they are physically destructive. Her solitary cell measures just 70 square feet, with no bed, no chair, and an inadequate ventilation system that fails to regulate humidity, airflow, or indoor air quality.

For the first month - and well into her second - before heating was finally introduced, she slept on folded blankets directly on a damp floor. Though the heat was turned on only recently, the extended exposure to cold and moisture had already taken its toll. The chill of the concrete seeped into her body, worsening arthritis and threatening hypothermia. The cell remained humid due to wet laundry and poor airflow, amplifying her hyperhidrosis and placing further strain on her already failing heart.

According to international correctional standards, these conditions violate basic protections for elderly detainees. According to Rule 13 of the [UN Mandela Rules](#), prison accommodations must meet "all requirements of health". That standard is not being met.



Front page of the UN document "[Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)", also called the Nelson Mandela Rules



Dr. Samia Burton (2021)



Shin-chul Moon, here speaking at a rally in Seoul October 2025

A Heart That Needed Rest Was Given Stress

On September 4, [Dr. Han](#) underwent a cardiac ablation to treat atrial fibrillation. Her Korean cardiologist recommended 30 days of rest. Instead, she was interrogated three times - on September 17, 24, and 29 - for a total of 25 hours. Just one day after her third interrogation, doctors confirmed a recurrence of heart failure and atrial fibrillation, likely triggered by stress and lack of rest.

She now requires stronger medication and ongoing observation. As Dr. Burton stated, "the standard of care requires immediate outside medical evaluation, with the possibility of hospital admission and telemetry," due to the compounding effects of cardiovascular strain, dehydration, and unsupervised medication use. A U.S. physician who reviewed her records, Dr. Samia Burton, warned that prolonged stress and confinement following such a procedure poses a life-threatening risk of stroke.

In her October 22 medical opinion, Dr. Burton outlined additional urgent risks - including hypertensive emergency, recurrent arrhythmia, infection due to poor ventilation and dampness, thyroid hormone misdosing, and malnutrition - all compounded by inadequate climate control, lack of mobility aids, and unsupervised medication delivery.

These facts are not disputed - they are documented. Yet no sufficient medical accommodation has been made.

Her grandson, Shin Chul Moon, echoed the concern in an interview with The Washington Times:

"Her eyesight is really almost nearly blind. Even just walking ... even eating for her is a little difficult without support. Currently at the detention center, she is not getting any of that support."

Is This Strategic Weakening by Design?

The deterioration of [Dr. Han](#)'s health has become so predictable, so preventable, and yet so persistent that it raises a sobering question: Is this suffering the result of neglect - or of strategy?

Legal scholars and rights observers have long documented how prosecutorial systems sometimes use conditions of confinement to exhaust and pressure detainees. In [Dr. Han](#)'s case, every element - sleep deprivation, cold, damp, physical isolation, denial of assistive devices - serves to weaken both body and spirit. Whether intended or not, the result is the same: a physically fragile elder, increasingly dependent, increasingly vulnerable, and increasingly at risk of collapse.

And that vulnerability benefits only one party: the prosecution led by Min Joong-ki.

As Shin Chul Moon put it,

"To have someone that has been living their whole life for that one value to be framed as a person who has lobbied for their own benefits... To a certain degree, it does seem like persecution to me."

The Irreversible Toll of Solitary on the Elderly

Medical research makes clear that confinement like this does not merely cause discomfort - it accelerates irreversible damage:

Muscle atrophy sets in rapidly when mobility is limited. Crawling around a small cell, as [Dr. Han](#) now does, leads to loss of strength, coordination, and stability.

Cognitive decline follows isolation, especially when paired with sensory deprivation and vision loss.

Heart strain and stroke risk increase under sustained stress, cold, and inadequate sleep - all present here.



A typical cell at Seoul Detention Center where [Mother Han](#) is being held, possibly for many months. The illustration is not exactly the same as Rev. Dunkley showed during his speech, but similar. Image: Chat GPT

Worsening vision and mobility impairments become permanent without proper devices or support.

These are not temporary setbacks. They are the building blocks of irreversible decline. The longer this continues, the less chance [Dr. Han](#) has of returning to full function - regardless of the case's outcome.

The Medical and Moral Standards Being Ignored



From a large demonstration rally near Seoul City Hall 2nd November 2025 organized by Incheon, Gyeonggi Northern Diocese of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#). The rally had the theme "One Heart, One Peace Rally for Religious Freedom and Peace". It was attended by about 2000 persons

The [UN Mandela Rules](#) explicitly forbid prolonged solitary confinement for individuals with physical or mental vulnerabilities. South Korea's own constitution guarantees freedom from arbitrary detention and affirms the right to dignity and health.

Yet in this case, an octogenarian spiritual leader with multiple chronic illnesses has been denied the very basics of ethical detention: medical rest, humane conditions, mobility assistance, and access to appropriate nutrition and care.

Even if her detention were justified, these conditions are not.

The Clock Will Not Turn Back

The reality is deeply concerning: the effects of confinement are already taking a physical toll. She faces a risk of weakening bones, destabilized heart rhythms, and potential cognitive decline. While not all outcomes can be predicted with certainty, some of the harm

may already be irreversible.

This is not just a legal injustice. It is a human one. The prosecution may call it due process. The system

may call it pre-trial detention. But any honest reading of the evidence shows what it truly is: the slow, systematic unraveling of an elderly woman's health under the watch of a state that refuses to change course.

A public apology may come later. But preventing further harm must come now.

Citations and References

[Faith Under Fire in Korea](#), opinion piece by Demian Dunkley in the Washington Times 23rd October 2025.

UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners ([Mandela Rules](#))

[ICCPR](#) Articles 9 and 18; Korean Constitution Articles 12 and 20

External medical review: Dr. Samia Burton, Internist, Riverview Health Hospital, Noblesville, Indiana, USA

Peer-reviewed medical studies on effects of solitary confinement on the elderly **【Detention Conditions vs. Scientific Evidence】**

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Japan: 2nd-Gen Believers Being Abused In Schools

• November 1, 2025

• Knut Holdhus



School ‘re-education’ of religious children raises human rights concerns – French legal expert Patricia Duval warns of dehumanizing treatment of children of Family Federation believers



Tokyo, 1st November 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

Concerns Over “Re-Education” Through Human Rights Classes

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PHOTO RELEASES | SPECIAL PROCEDURE

Japan: UN experts concerned by continued stigmatisation of religious minorities

01 October 2025

The headline of the press release issued by OHCHR on 1st October 2025.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has issued a [press release](#) publishing the views of UN Special Rapporteurs who expressed concern about the dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) and about religious education in Japanese public schools.

We spoke with French international human rights lawyer **Patricia Duval**, who prepared supplementary explanatory materials for the 23rd October release, about the [decision by the Tokyo District Court](#), the government's handling of second-generation [Family Federation](#) believers, and other issues.

Interview by Takafumi Honda (本田 隆文)

– On 1st October, a UN [press release](#) disclosed the opinions of Special



Rapporteurs concerning the [Tokyo District Court's March decision to order the dissolution of the former Unification Church](#).

There is a body called the [UN Human Rights Council](#), composed of 47 member states, and the Special Rapporteurs act as its eyes and ears.

Four Special Rapporteurs – on freedom of religion or belief, the right to education, minority issues, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association – [reported on the situation in Japan](#) and expressed concern over the state of religion and education.

In April 2024, these Rapporteurs [formally questioned](#) the Japanese government about its [guidelines concerning child abuse related to freedom of religion](#).

The guidelines specifically addressed child abuse said to arise from religion, which in itself poses a serious issue. In June, the Japanese government responded that there was no problem and that human rights were being properly protected.



UN Special Rapporteur: Irene Khan. Photo (2024): Juan Carlo Ruff for the Philippine Information Agency / Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain image](#). Cropped



UN Special Rapporteur: Clément Nyaletsossi Voule. Photo: [Bitter Winter](#)



Nazila Ghanea, UN Rapporteur on Religious Freedom since February 2023. Photo: Steinar Murud



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The [press release](#) was a follow-up, representing an *official warning and preventive statement* from the four Rapporteurs. In essence, it was issued to say, “Japan must not continue doing what it is doing now,” and it carries serious significance.

– **They are particularly concerned about what's happening in schools.**

In January 2024, a ministerial meeting decided to expand “support” for second-generation members of the former [Unification Church](#), including by assigning school counselors. There are already “human rights classes” for children, and the issue of the [Unification Church](#) [See [editor's note below](#)] is now to be addressed in those classes.



Family Federation families targeted by extreme Japanese laws to “protect children from their parents’ faith”. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 23rd October 2024.

These counselors are trained by *former believers hostile to the [Church](#)*. Teachers are instructed to identify which students are “second-generation” and to bring them to these counselors. There, the children are “re-educated” to adopt critical views toward the [Church](#).

We compiled all related materials into a report and submitted it to the UN Special Rapporteurs.

They also expressed concern over the **dissolution order itself**. The *Tokyo District Court* has [approved the government's petition](#) to dissolve the [organization](#), but the Rapporteurs’ statement clearly warns that the High Court must not repeat this decision. It thus holds great significance at this timing.

The issue is not only that dissolving a [religious organization](#) based on the vague notion of “public welfare” violates international law, but also that **past court rulings against the [Family Federation on grounds of “social unacceptability”](#)** themselves constitute violations of international law.

We have been urging the Japanese government to respond, but unless we continue to publicize the UN’s official statement, it will simply be ignored.

– **Young [Family Federation](#) believers have been giving speeches and holding rallies to protest what they call the unjust [dissolution order](#).**

The media completely ignores the voices of these young believers. I think it is wonderful that they are going out and speaking up. Those voices must be heard.

Religious Persecution for Political Reasons

– **It has been more than three years since the trial began over the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三).**

The defendant, Tetsuya Yamagami (山上徹也), is said to have held resentment toward the [Church](#) over donations, but in fact, a settlement was reached – he signed it himself – and half of the donations were returned.

Given that, it makes no sense that, twenty years later, he would commit murder out of resentment toward the [Church](#), and even stranger that his target was Abe, who had no direct connection to it.

I can only believe that **someone put him up to it**. I cannot specify who, but likely those opposing the [Unification Church](#) [See [editor's note below](#)]. **His weak mental state may have been influenced and exploited.**

There are lawyers who oppose the [Church](#) for political reasons. Along with Protestant pastors who abduct and confine believers to force them to convert, these lawyers have long engaged in anti-[Unification Church](#) activities.

– In South Korea, religious organizations including the [Family Federation](#) are currently being raided, and their leaders are being detained and indicted.

That is a completely different issue from Japan's case or from any "public welfare" matter. It is purely a political issue.

I believe these actions are retaliation by the current President Lee Jae-myung (이재명), who is seen as pro-China, against conservative religious groups that supported former President Yoon Suk-yeol (윤석열).

Countries like China, which deny religion, are closely watched by the UN. The [Unification Church](#) [See editor's note below] originally opposed communism, and now the world is becoming increasingly concerned about the political persecution of religions – particularly in Asia.

See also [Using Schools to Break Faith: Japan's Policy](#)

See also [Politics Fueled Japan's Attack on Federation](#)

Featured image above: Patricia Duval responding to an interview on afternoon of 29th October 2025, Toshima Ward, Tokyo. Photo: Naoko Tsujimoto (辻本奈緒子)



South Korea's current president Lee Jae-myung seen to retaliate against conservative religious groups that supported former President Yoon Suk-yeol. Here, day after winning the election on 3rd June 2025. Photo: Korea.net / Korean Culture and Information Service (Photographer name). License: CC ASA 2.0 Gen. Cropped

[**Editor's note:** Although Patricia Duval uses the name "Unification Church" and also the word "church", please be aware that the Unification Church in Japan in 2015 changed its name to [Family Federation for World peace and Unification](#).]

See also: [UN Expert: "Japan's Illegal Dissolution Request"](#)

See also: [Japan's Plan to Break the Faith of Children](#)

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