

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: 2027 Verdict in Holy Mother Han's 2nd Trial

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Special prosecutors claim political alliance: Verdict expected in early 2027 as Seoul court schedules landmark trial in alleged Unificationism party enrollment case

South Korea's expanding legal proceedings surrounding former First Lady Kim Keon Hee (김건희) and senior figures in the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) - commonly known in Korea as [Unificationism](#) (통일교) - are entering another significant phase. According to a [report](#) by reporters Kweon Jin-yeong (권진영) and Han Soo-hyeon (한수현), published by the South Korean news agency News1 (뉴스1) on 3rd July 2026, the Seoul Central District Court has scheduled the substantive trial over allegations of coordinated mass enrollment (집단 입당) of [Unificationism](#) members into the conservative People Power Party (PPP) to begin in mid-August, with judges aiming to conclude hearings before the end of this year.

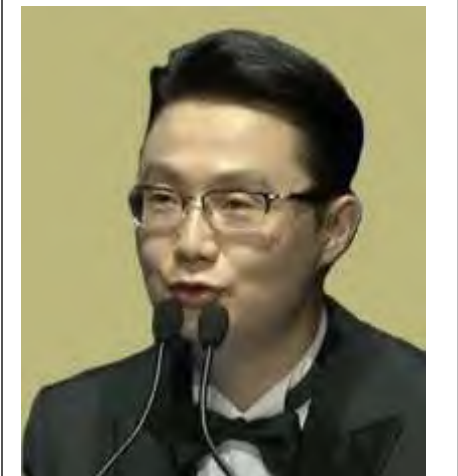
The case is one of several criminal proceedings involving former First Lady Kim, whose legal difficulties have expanded considerably since leaving office. Over the past year she has faced multiple indictments covering allegations ranging from influence-peddling and corruption to election-related offences. On 26th June 2026, she received a first-instance conviction in a separate case involving brokerage bribery, violations of South Korea's Improper Solicitation and Graft Act, and destruction of evidence. That judgment, however, is subject to appeal and therefore has not yet become final.

The newly scheduled proceedings concern allegations that Kim worked with Jeon Seong-bae (전성배), widely known by his religious title "Geonjin Beopsa" (건진법사), to influence the outcome of the People Power Party's internal leadership contest in late 2022. Prosecutors allege that they sought the organized

enrollment of thousands of [Unificationism](#) members into the party in order to strengthen support for then-lawmaker Kweon Seong-dong (권성동) in the party leadership race. According to the prosecution, approximately 3,100 members of the [religious organization](#) joined the PPP as part of the alleged operation.



Kweon Seong-dong (January 2025)



Yoon Yeong-ho (August 9, 2020)



Jeong Won-ju (January 19, 2025)

Kim's defense disputes both the legal characterization and practical significance of these actions. Her lawyers argue that the number of new party members was too small to have materially affected the outcome of the party convention and reject the prosecution's assertion that any unlawful political intervention occurred.

The [News1 article](#) claims that the prosecution further alleges that the political support sought from [Unificationism](#) was linked to promises of favorable treatment. According to the indictment, Kim and Jeon allegedly agreed to assist [Unificationism](#)'s policy objectives and discussed providing the religious organization with a proportional representation seat in the National Assembly in exchange for its cooperation.

Also standing trial are [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자), the spiritual leader of [Unificationism](#); its former official Yoon Yeong-ho (윤영호); former secretary's office chief Jeong Won-ju (정원주); and Jeon Seong-bae (전성배). Prosecutors contend that Han and other senior officials from the [religious organization](#) accepted the alleged arrangement and directed [Unificationism](#) members to join the governing party in an organized manner, thereby violating South Korea's Political Parties Act.

The Seoul Central District Court held a preparatory hearing on 3rd July to organize the presentation of evidence and clarify the positions of both the prosecution and defense. Such hearings are procedural rather than evidentiary, and defendants are not required to attend. Kim and the other accused therefore did not appear in court.

Following the hearing, the court designated 14th August as the opening day of the full trial. The judges indicated an intention to hold hearings every Friday thereafter, stating that the proceedings should conclude no later than 11th December, although an earlier conclusion at the end of November remains possible if the trial progresses efficiently. Under that timetable, a first-instance judgment would likely be delivered in early 2027.

Critical voices regard the case as political revenge. The current left-leaning Lee Jae-myung (이재명) administration and the special prosecutors empowered to investigate political and religious figures believed to have supported former conservative President Yoon Suk-yeol (윤석열) have also faced considerable criticism. Opponents argue that the investigations represent a politically motivated effort directed against ideological and political adversaries rather than a purely impartial exercise of

criminal justice.

The political-party enrollment case is unfolding alongside another major prosecution involving [Hak Ja Han](#). In separate proceedings, prosecutors have accused the longtime [Unificationism](#) leader of participating in an alleged bribery and influence-peddling scheme involving gifts, political access, and efforts to obtain favorable treatment from government officials during the administration of former President Yoon Suk-yeol (윤석열). That case has progressed independently of the Political Parties Act prosecution and has reached its final stage, with closing arguments and the final hearing scheduled for 10th July 2026. A first-instance verdict in that matter is expected after the conclusion of those proceedings.



Kept long-term in tiny cell under inhuman conditions: [Hak Ja Han](#), the [True Mother](#) (March 2026) after more than 6 months in detention cell

Taken together, the various criminal cases represent one of the most consequential legal reckonings involving South Korea's recent political leadership and one of the country's most influential religious organizations. They also reflect prosecutors' broader efforts to investigate allegations that political influence, religious networks, and private intermediaries became intertwined in attempts to shape both public policy and internal party politics. While the charges remain contested and all defendants continue to deny wrongdoing to varying degrees, the succession of trials scheduled throughout the second half of 2026 is expected to provide one of the clearest judicial examinations yet of the alleged relationships between Kim Keon Hee ([김건희](#)), senior figures within [Unificationism](#), and prominent political actors in South Korea.

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Family Federation and how the media created a villain



The headtable of speakers at the [press conference](#) at the Press Club in Brussels on 29th June 2026. Photo: [FOREF](#). Published with permission

Part 3 of a speech given by Japanese investigative journalist and prize-winning author Masumi Fukuda (福田ますみ) at a [press conference](#) on the theme “Japan: The Hidden Story Behind the Eradication of a Religion”, held at the Brussels Press Club in Brussels, Belgium on 29th June 2026, organized by [Human Rights Without Frontiers](#) (HRWF), an independent non-profit NGO. Translated from the transcription of the original Japanese, slightly edited.

Continued from part 1: [The Hidden Story Japan Doesn't Want You to Hear](#)

Continued from part 2: [Japanese Court Assumes the Role of Inquisitor](#)

In



A miniature pagoda similar to ones sold in Japan. Photo: Knut Holdhus

the 1980s, companies operated by members of the [Unification Church](#) [\[See editor's note below\]](#) imported products from South Korea – including multi-level pagodas and large stone urns – and sold them at prices far above their market value. These sales practices became the subject of widespread public criticism. They came to be known as “spiritual sales” (霊感商法 – *reikan shōhō*).

A group calling itself the *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales* was established, claiming that its purpose was to help “victims” of these practices. This organization, commonly known as the *National Network of Lawyers* (全国弁連 – *Zenkoku Benren*), consisted of more than 300 lawyers, many of whom were politically left-leaning, including members of the far left.

Founded in May 1987, the network worked closely with the media to portray “spiritual sales” as a massive fraudulent enterprise. Their campaign was so successful that the [Unification Church](#) [\[See editor's note below\]](#) itself came to be seen as the villain.



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However, the companies importing and selling these products were not operated by the church [See editor's note below] itself. They were businesses run by individual church members.

Moreover, both the number of alleged “victims” and the amount of financial “damage” were, in my opinion, greatly exaggerated by the *National Network of Lawyers*. Not a single one of these cases ever resulted in criminal fraud charges. In fact, I interviewed several believers who had purchased these products and who told me they had experienced what they regarded as genuine miracles afterward.

The media adopted a policy of completely ignoring such testimonies. As a result, the public was presented with a highly distorted picture of what had actually happened.

Meanwhile, the companies involved stopped importing and selling stone urns, pagodas, and similar products in March 1987. From that point onward, the number of complaints steadily declined.

By the time former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三) was assassinated, the type of sales activity referred to as “spiritual sales” had virtually disappeared.

Nevertheless, investigations continue to be conducted as though the Unification Church [See editor's note below] were still engaged in such practices.

However, I believe the true purpose behind the creation of the *National Network of Lawyers* lay elsewhere. Its real objective was to block the enactment of Japan’s proposed *Anti-Espionage Law* (スパイ防止法).

In 1987, organizations affiliated with the Unification Church [See editor's note below] were conducting a nationwide campaign supporting the passage of anti-espionage legislation. The *Japanese Communist Party*, left-wing media organizations, labor unions, and teachers’ unions strongly opposed the proposal.

Because many members of the *National Network of Lawyers* were themselves affiliated with the Communist movement, they likewise opposed the *Anti-Espionage Law*.



Hiroshi Yamaguchi
(山口 博), activist
leftwing lawyer and
founder and leading
member of *National
Network of Lawyers
Against Spiritual
Sales* (NNLASS).
Photo: Screenshot
/ *Bitter Winter*

One of the network’s leading figures at the time, attorney Hiroshi Yamaguchi (山口 博), stated quite openly that the real issue was not simply “spiritual sales”. He argued that the movement surrounding the Unification Church [See editor's note below] was closely tied to conservative political activities, and that those activities needed to be stopped.

In other words, from its very beginning, the campaign against the Unification Church [See editor's note below] was not solely about consumer protection. It was also deeply connected with political conflict in Japan.

For many years, however, the campaign made only limited progress.

To be continued. Part 4 coming soon.

Continued from part 1: [The Hidden Story Japan Doesn’t Want You to Hear](#)

Continued from part 2: [Japanese Court Assumes the Role of Inquisitor](#)

Featured image above: Masumi Fukuda speaking at the Japan Conference in Brussels on 20th June 2022

the [press conference](#) in Brussels on 29th June 2026.
Screenshot from live transmission by [HRWF](#)

[**Editor's note:** Although Masumi Fukuda 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*.]

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