

In Jin Moon Briefs Capitol Hill on Japanese Kidnappings

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"The things that are taking place in Japan are an egregious violation of human rights that needs to be stopped - one cannot put rape, physical abuse, mental torture, and emotional manipulation as simply a family matter," said Rev. In Jin Moon.

The issue of violent abductions of Unificationists in Japan finally got exposure to lawmakers and congressional staff at a briefing in the U.S. Capitol, Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2012.

Rev. In Jin Moon, president and CEO of the Unification Church USA, U.S. Congressman Danny Davis of Chicago, and a distinguished panel of human rights experts called for the U.S. State Department to commence talks with the government of Japan on the issue of religious persecution of minority religions in Japan.

"The things that are taking place in Japan are an egregious violation of human rights that needs to be stopped -- one cannot put rape, physical abuse, mental torture, and emotional manipulation as simply a family matter," Rev. Moon told the 70 persons gathered in a room in the House Visitors' Center. This is not just a family matter [as claimed by Japanese authorities]."

Rev. Moon went on to say: "This is not just a family matter. Until just recently, the wife-beating that took place, the abuse of women in a marital relationship in Japan was construed as a family matter. And it took the pressure of the international community to come together and say, 'What is being done to these women, being raped by their husbands, day-in and day-out, is not a family matter. It is an egregious violation of human rights that needs to be addressed by the international community.' And guess what? The international community came together, created an alliance and said, 'Enough is enough. We are not going to stand still while our sisters are abused in marital relationships.' Incredible steps have been made in that regard. If a husband feels so inclined to rape his wife, he's going to have to answer to the law. Likewise, what is taking place with our Unificationists in Japan is not a family matter. Rape and abuse is not a family matter."

The Capitol Hill Lunch briefing, titled "America's Response to Religious Persecution in Allied Nations," was organized by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF).

The three religious-freedom activists at the briefing included Dr. Aaron Rhodes, former director of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights and founder and principle investigator of the

Freedom Rights Project, Tina Ramirez, veteran Capitol Hill specialist in religious freedom, and Kathryn Cameron Porter, president and founder of the Leadership Council for Human Rights and a catalyst for the creation of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. Their speeches have been transcribed below.



Ms. Kiyomi Miyama, a faith-breaking survivor of the Unification Church, stood together with Kathryn Porter as she offered brief remarks of gratitude.

Unificationist attendees included Dan Fefferman, president of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom, representatives from the *Washington Times*, faith-breaking survivor Kiyomi Miyama, who was invited to the United States from Japan to report her two ordeals at the hands of abductors, Ichiko Sudo, a radio talk-show host and representative of Survivors Against Forced Exit (SAFE) who translated for Miyama, Luke Higuchi, president of SAFE, college student Hanayo Ito, who is visiting the States to talk about her experience with persecution on campus and Victoria Roomet, president of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP).

Jim Gavin, president of UPF USA, offered welcoming remarks and introduced Kathryn Porter as the mediator of the 90-minute program. Congressman Daniel K. Davis, who had recently traveled to Japan with Kathryn Porter to speak out against religious intolerance there, stopped by the briefing room to offer remarks on the topic of human rights as well. “We are in a world that so often loves but so often practices hate. I think that my rights end where the next person’s rights begin. If I can’t exercise what I believe, then I’m kidding myself.”



Dr. Aaron Rhodes said, "The freedom of religion is a universal, spiritual, physical, and social necessity."

Aaron Rhodes’ Remarks

I've been involved in Human rights for about 20 years now, and I do believe, based on past experiences, that it is right for the United States government to place the emphasis that it has upon the freedom of religion as one of the most important of human rights. It's politically incorrect to state that any human right is more important than any other human right, but I personally feel that the freedom rights are the most important ones.

Now, why is it that the United States government is so concerned about religious freedom? Why is it that people are so concerned with religious freedom? I have lived abroad for the past 20 years and have heard criticizing comments around that question in an international forum.

Is it something to be explained by politics? Is it some sort of sentimental attachment to past persecutions? Is it something about the feelings or beliefs about the particular groups, well I say 'no' to all these explanations. The freedom of religion is a universal, spiritual, physical, and social necessity. It is just as important to every person on earth as it is to Americans. In this sense, this is no American exception- which I believe is a very misleading term, by the way, it's kind of like the term 'the chosen people,' which is also a very misleading term. Instead, there is a unique American appreciation of the universal aspiration to religious freedom, and the universal obligation to respect this freedom.

The picture regarding religious freedom today is not all that good, and human rights in the world isn't improving. We have to keep struggling all the time to maintain the freedoms that we have and to prevent backsliding. The struggle to protect the freedom of religious is perpetual. We are not moving towards an era of freedom and openness. This is shown by developed democracies infringing on the freedom of human rights and the freedom of expression.

Rev. In Jin Moon's Remarks

Thank you very much for the introduction. I feel so honored to be here at this congressional briefing, with such an illustrious gathering of panelists. They have truly been the pioneers and warriors in the fight for human rights. I feel as if I'm just a neophyte, following in their footsteps. But as a member of the Unification Church, and as a woman in this modern-day era, when I heard the atrocities and the persecution, the unspeakable abuses that are taking place in Japan, I could not sleep. And I resolved myself to commit to this faith-breaking issue at hand, and try my best to raise the awareness of what is taking place in Japan to our brothers and sisters.

As you have heard from Ms. Miyama, she is just one of 4,300 brothers and sisters of our faith who have been subjected to this kind of abuse for the last 3 decades in Japan. In the United States, we really have the good fortune, of really having the due process of law.

The '70's and '80's, during which I was called a 'Moonie' and 'Chink' and told to go back home, and all of these wonderful things, which I know helped me become a better person, was a very painful time for the members of our faith. And I think the overriding fear of what the Unification Church is all about, what is this man, from the very strange and poor country of Korea, proclaiming himself as the messiah, and instead of really trying to investigate, to open up our mind, to see what the man had to say, I think there was a lot of fear of his 'power' that he exercised over the brothers and sisters in the American faith.

A lot of unspeakable crimes have been committed [in the United States] in the name of ignorance. But we had a constitution, and we had the support of wonderful Christian ministers who were able to participate, to utilize the due process of law that finally gave us the opportunity to exercise our faith as citizens of the great country of America. But in Japan, our brothers and sisters are still suffering from these unspeakable crimes.

I was asked to meet with one sister in private. And I had to meet her in this very quiet section of Seoul, Korea because she did not want to be seen. She said to me, 'Rev. Moon, I want to talk to you about something that I could not even speak to about with my husband for the past 15 years. She began to tell me her story about being abducted.

Some of her family members who were misled by deprogrammers were working in conjunction with the Christian ministers representing different faiths in Japan. She told me about the physical abuse she went through, not just the emotional and mental abuse, but also the sexual abuse she had to endure during the time that she was held. She mentioned that it was a Christian minister himself who committed the atrocities, who raped her repeatedly, wanting to help 'liberate' her from her 'zombie-like state' as a Unification Church member. She said, 'This experience has been so traumatic that I could not bring myself to come clean to my husband. And I don't know when I will find the strength to speak of it with my husband. But I know that I represent only one of 4,300 men and women who have been voiceless, who have been silent. Who felt like they had no faith for the last three decades in Japan. And as others have mentioned, Japan is one of the superpowers in the world. It is a constitutionally-based democracy.

The constitution was implemented by Douglas MacArthur after World War II. It guarantees religious freedom to its citizens. And we have to understand that in this modern-day era, the people who are being abducted are not minors. These people are legitimate citizens in Japan, they are over the age of 21.

Just recently, a 62 year-old woman was abducted by deprogrammers. Because there is such a fear about the teachings of Rev. Moon, or about the teachings of the Unification Church, instead of being an educated, intelligent citizen of Japan wanting to hear what we have to say, immediately, there is this desperate fear that plagues our brothers and sisters. And as a result, their families are driven to incarcerate their own child, their own family member, in this extreme situation, like the way Mr. Toru Goto was imprisoned for twelve years and five months. I don't know if you've met Mr. Goto, but he was a student going for his architect degree and a proud Unificationist. He was a man with ambition, with incredible promise, a six-foot, handsome Japanese man weighing 160 lbs. But by the time he found himself thrown out because the faith-breakers finally decided they could not break his faith, he was half his body weight, 80 lbs, crawling for safety and for help.

So, the sheer debasement of the simple human dignity that every citizen of this country should have was denied to this gentleman. And it has taken him a long time to find himself, for him to reclaim the last 12 years and five months of his life. But the story of Mr. Goto is an example of what our brothers and sisters have to endure: physical abuse, constant hitting, mental abuse, telling him that he is stupid, that he is not human because he believes in the Unification Church for over twelve years. Can you imagine what that would do to you and me if we were in that situation?

So, there is desperation of sorts in my heart. These are not just my brothers and sisters, if we really think of ourselves as a world of unity – they are our brothers and sisters. When I visited the congressional offices here at Capitol Hill, the congressmen and women asked me, 'Why are you talking to us about what is taking place in Japan? Why is this a U.S. problem?' It is a U.S. problem because a lot of our brothers and sisters are married to a Japanese spouse. We have a situation in the Unification Church where internationally married couples cannot go to Japan to visit their relatives over holiday for fear of being abducted and abused. That has caused incredible strain. And for the Japanese ambassador and the Japanese government to say that this is 'merely a family matter,' and that all the rights in the due process of law should be ignored is really quite alarming.

And therefore, the incredible panelists that are seated before you today are really an inspiration for me. My father just recently spoke about the importance of alliances, about working together, and about freedom. We need to understand that we are entering an era of alliance. Realizing that we affect each

other, regardless of where we are in the world. And instead of thinking about own individual freedom, we need to start thinking about our freedom as a whole. Our power and liberty as those eternal sons and daughters of God that we all are. The things that are taking place in Japan are an egregious violation of human rights that needs to be stopped. One cannot put rape, physical abuse, mental torture, and emotional manipulation as simply a family matter. This is not just a family matter. Until just recently, the wife-beating that took place, the abuse of women in a marital relationship in Japan was construed as a family matter. And it took the pressure of the international community to come together and say, 'What is being done to these women, being raped by their husbands, day-in and day-out, is not a family matter. It is an egregious violation of human rights that needs to be addressed by the international community.' And guess what? The international community came together, created an alliance and said, 'Enough is enough. We are not going to stand still while our sisters are abused in marital relationships.' Incredible steps have been made in that regard. If a husband feels so inclined to rape his wife, he's going to have to answer to the law.

Likewise, what is taking place with our Unificationists in Japan, is not a family matter. Rape and abuse is not a family matter. It is an egregious violation of human rights, and these perpetrators need to face the law, they need to experience the due process of the law that is guaranteed by the constitution in Japan. So I urge all of you to really take this matter to heart.

Because we cannot think that this is something that is taking place elsewhere, that will not affect us. If we do not stand together and work together to fight against these God-given rights, and fight for the very principles that really make us who we are, sons and daughters of God, then we might as well just say goodbye to our hopes of creating that incredible world of peace.

But if we truly believe in the dignity of every human being, if we believe that a violation of human rights cannot take place in modern-day society and will not stand still, sit still, be silent, then I feel that the world of peace and love and harmony that my father so affectionately speaks about each day of his life – and he's well into his 93 years of age – can be within our grasp.

So thank you so much, ladies and gentlemen, for being here. Your presence really gives me great inspiration that America cares. And just the fact that Capitol Hill is listening, just the fact that they are holding this congressional briefing, when I take this news back to our brothers and sisters in Japan, I know that they will be moved to tears, that they will be inspired and they will feel more committed to go on in their fight for religious freedom. Thank you.



Tina Ramirez said that "religious belief and expression gets at the core of what human beings do as individuals. It is the basis for dignity. It is the basis for freedom."

Tina Ramirez's Remarks

On Monday, the day that the state department released its Religious Freedom Report, everybody wanted to know who's been named as country of particular concern in terms of violators of religious freedom. Today we will hopefully not disappoint you. We're not talking about the countries of particular concern – we're talking about democratic allies. Japan and many countries in Europe have spoken up.



Congressman Daniel K. Davis commented, "I think that my rights end where the next person's rights begin. If I can't exercise what I believe, then I'm kidding myself."

As many of you know, in the U.S. is a great debate around religious freedom and think in line with Rev. Moon's comments. Earlier Rep. Davis said, 'If I can't express myself, I'm lying to myself.' The fact is religious belief and expression gets at the core of what human beings do as individuals. It is the basis for dignity. It is the basis for freedom. Individual expression of their beliefs about life and death and life after death, in some cases, through their religion. This is then seen throughout their culture. It's absolutely impossible for it to be separate from their culture. However in a number of countries around the world, governments and individuals within societies, even in democratic ones, try to break people of their beliefs. Right now we see it in the U.S. Catholic conference of bishops trying to be broken of their belief that life begins at the conception, that they have conscientious objection based on their religious belief and they cannot provide abortion drugs to the people they give health care plans to. They're trying to be broken, and this is a violation of religious freedom. I think it's important for people to understand that there's a spectrum when it comes to religious freedom – a spectrum that occurs in Japan and in different count in Europe. Where people can't wear religious symbols or garb, where Sikh or Muslim students actually choose to not attend school because the government has passed a law where they can't wear religious clothing or attire in those schools. So school children are denied their religious freedom rights."