



**UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF
ICRF PRESIDENT DAN FEFFERMAN
Sept 11, 2012**



Rev. Moon at the U.S. Senate

Let me first express our feelings of deep gratitude for the life work of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, without whom the International Coalition for Religious Freedom would not exist. In addition to his work as the founder and spiritual leader of the Unification Church, Reverend Moon was a tireless campaigner for religious freedom and human rights. He has passed on to the next life now, but we at ICRF are strongly committed to carrying on his legacy.

Without religious freedom, God cannot fulfill His ideal... If you do not have religious freedom, you have no freedom at all.

–Testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution, June 26, 1984

New Victims

Unfortunately, we have had news of at least three new abductions since I last reported to you about the situation of victims of “deprogramming” in Japan.

- The most recent is a middle aged woman (Mrs. T.H. -- aged 46) who has been a UC member for 10 years and was apparently abducted in early August by her husband, who strongly objects to her membership.
- A younger woman (Ms. AT – aged 29) has been missing since August 1. She is blessed to a Taiwanese brother, and her family is known to be strongly opposed to the UC.
- Mr. S.K. (aged 28), who has been missing since March, recently sent a letter renouncing his faith. However, given the fact that several members were confined for literally years unless they wrote such letters, we do not consider his renunciation to be confirmed.

As always, we ask that you support missing members strongly in your prayers. Please also pray for Mr. Goto’s court case, which is still in progress

USCIRF Meeting

Dan Fefferman, Kiyomi Miyama, Ray Mas and Tomiko Duggan (translator) met with officials of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) on Tuesday, August 6. USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan US federal government commission. (See USCIRF.gov) We met with USCIRF policy director Knox Thames and deputy director Scott Flipse. Dan and Ray summarized the history and basic problem of abduction/confinement in Japan, and Ms. Miyama shared her personal testimony. Mr. Thames and Mr. Flipse were very responsive. They promised:



Kiyomi Miyama’s captors held her for more than two years and forced her to divorce her husband before allowing her to leave.

- they will communicate the Commission’s concern about the issue to the Japanese Embassy in Washington, DC
- they will inform the State Department of our meeting and their continued interest in the issue
- they will follow up on any current and future cases we send their way
- they will clearly inform any Congressional offices or other concerned parties that inquire about the issue
- if/when the Commission expands its coverage beyond the Countries of Particular Concern, they will consider publishing a report about our problem in Japan

Capitol Hill

We have been getting a great deal of positive feedback from our Capitol Hill briefing on August 1. Many Congressional offices said it was very informative and well organized.



Rev. In Jin Moon and other speakers at the briefing.

- Our final count is that 32 congressional offices were represented at the briefing.
- We have several Members of Congress who are very interested in coming to Japan. We are hoping to get confirmations soon. Here is a link to a complete audio version of the briefing: <http://tinyurl.com/97rywys>

Radio Show

Dr. Aaron Rhodes, Ms. Miyama, and American deprogramming survivor Dorothy Hill appeared on Ichiko Sudo's radio show on Wednesday, August 7. Luke Higuchi and the Manhattan Center camera crew were there as well.

Dorothy told her story first. Next Ms. Miyama shared her testimony with simultaneous translation by Ichiko. Dr. Rhodes responded. He declared the issue to be a very serious violation of human rights law by individual citizens, and also by the Japanese government for not having done anything to stop it. This show will be available soon on Ichiko's blog site: mymomentofcourage.wordpress.com.



Ichiko Sudo in her radio studio.

Freedom Society

ICRF and UPF-USA are cooperating to develop Kook Jin Moon's "Freedom Society" vision and present it to general audiences. Our first attempt was in Chicago on Saturday August 11. Jim Gavin gave the basic Freedom Society presentation and Dan spoke via Skype on how religious freedom fits into the vision. The situation in Japan was mentioned as an example of a government's failure in its responsibility to protect freedom. Other speakers included State Senator Patrick Hickey, Judge Mark Anderson, Henri Schauffler and Bill Gertz on topics of their particular expertise.

Religious freedom was also a major theme at the Freedom Society presentation in Clifton, New Jersey Saturday on August 18. Hosted by UPF organizer Lourdes Swarts and UC District Director Dr. Ann I., the program drew more than 70 participants, including the local mayor and a retired US Navy Admiral.



Freedom Society participants in New Jersey August 18.

Dan Fefferman addressed the topic of "Religious Freedom in the Context of the Freedom Society." He said: "The U.S. Declaration of Independence says the primary function of government is to uphold the people's rights. Religious freedom is the first freedom mentioned in the Bill of Rights." State Senator Mark Boitano of New Mexico related how Rev. Moon encouraged him and others to get involved in politics. Dr. Ann I. related her experience as a public educator in a presentation titled, "Transforming Education in America." Dr. Richard Panzer of the Unification Theological Seminary spoke on the crises of family values in America today, and Bill Gertz shared his views on the Second Amendment and national security.

Two sessions were also devoted to a 'World Café' discussion, led by Mr. Henri Schauffler. In each session, the audience divided into small groups to discuss a question related to each speaker's topic.



Dan Fefferman speaks on Religious Freedom



Dr. Ann Iparraguirre presents on the Freedom Society and education.

State Department

Dan also participated in a State Department meeting on the topic of Kazakhstan on August 24. Hosting the meeting for the State Department was Mr. Dan Nadel, Acting Deputy Director of the Office of International Religious Freedom. Civil society participants included: Raimundo Barreto, World Baptist Alliance; Stephen Baskerville, International Institute for Religious Freedom, Robert Brown and Greg



Elizaveta Drinicheva

Mitchell of The Mitchell Firm, Susan Corke and Nate Schenkkan of Freedom House, Ana Donevska of the United Macedonian Diaspora, Jayprakash Kansara of the Hindu American Foundation, Susan Taylor of the Church of Scientology and Terri Ellen Marsh of the Human Rights Law Foundation. Dan reported on the 2009 conviction and imprisonment of **Elizaveta Drinicheva** for allegedly spreading ethnic and racial hatred by teaching the Divine Principle. He also spoke of the chilling effect her conviction had on other communities' rights to teach their religious doctrines.

Heading for Morocco

Several members of our team will be traveling to Morocco later this month for the annual conference of the Center for Studies on New Religions. Dan is presenting on the "Theological Dimensions of the Schism in the Unification Church." Mr. Shunsuke Uotani of Japan will present on the persecution of UC members on Japanese University campuses. A Japanese CARP member will give her personal testimony about what she and other students have experienced in Japan. This ranges from professors of required courses warning students to stay away from the UC, to discrimination from being admitted to graduate studies, officials turning a blind eye to bullying of UC members by other students, pressure by professors and university bureaucrats to leave CARP and provide names of students who are UC members, and even collusion with deprogrammers to force students out of the church. Mr. Willy Fautre of Human Rights Without Frontiers will present the findings of his independent research on faith-breaking in Japan.

CONTACT:

3600 New York Avenue, NE, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20002

Website: www.religiousfreedom.com