

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Japan's Government Questioned over Alleged Evidence Tampering

Knut Holdhus
March 14, 2025



Senator Satoshi Hamada



[Sekai Nippo](#)

State questioned in parliament as controversy grows over Japan's handling of Family Federation dissolution order case

Tokyo, 14th March 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

There Has Been No Denial of the Allegations of Falsifying Statements

Hamada Questions at the House of Councillors' General Affairs Committee Regarding the Request to Dissolve the Family Federation

by the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)

On 13th March 2025, Satoshi Hamada (浜田聡), a member of the House of Councillors from the NHK Party, inquired to the House of Councillors' General Affairs Committee about claims made on X (formerly Twitter) by Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一).



Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga

In the post, Tokunaga claimed that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology had "forged evidence used in the hearing on written statements" when requesting the Tokyo District Court to issue a court order to dissolve the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)).

Mariko Kobayashi (小林万里子), Deputy Director General of Agency for Cultural Affairs, acknowledged being aware of the content but explained that the agency had carefully gathered responses and information from the victims. However, the Ministry did not deny the allegation of the falsification of statements.

On 11th March, Tokunaga posted on X (formerly Twitter), stating,

"The national crime of the century: MEXT's falsification of statements to request the dissolution court order. Public servants from MEXT, as designated representatives, falsified evidence used in court hearings. At the same time, the Trump administration, which has made the defense of 'religious freedom'

a top priority and began moving on the issue of discriminatory oppression against the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, has started to take action. If the dissolution order against the [Family Federation](#) is accepted based on falsified evidence, Japan will be a disgrace to the world."



Hamada raised two points: (1) the strong stance the Trump administration has taken on religious oppression both domestically and abroad, and (2) whether the Kishida administration's policy of oppression against the [Family Federation](#) would continue under the leadership of Shigeru Ishiba (石破茂). Hamada stated,

"The Liberal Democratic Party should seriously consider this matter."

In relation to the suspicion of falsifying statements, a man who is a member of the [Family Federation](#) and resides in Chiba Prefecture [submitted a complaint](#) to the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office on 10th March, accusing MEXT employees and others of document falsification and the use of falsified documents.

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The logo of Bitter Winter

On 5th March 2025 [Bitter Winter](#) a leading online magazine

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Our Role: God

On 28 March 2023, [Bitter Winter](#), a leading online magazine focused on human rights and freedom of religion, published an article titled "[Deprogramming Unification Church Children in Japan. 2. Psychiatric Institutions May 'Cure' Religious Faith](#)".

The piece was the second part [see [comments on first part](#)] of a report by Patricia Duval, French attorney and expert on international human rights law. She had sent the report to four *United Nations Special Rapporteurs* in order to draw their attention to blatantly anti-religious measures in a Japanese government plan created with so-called "anti-cult" activists as advisors. According to Duval, the plan seems to be produced based on the notion that "religious belief may be considered a form of psychiatric disease." Patricia Duval has spent significant time in Japan studying the extreme measures implemented by authorities.



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



UN Special Rapporteur: Farida Shaheed. Photo (2016): Wotancito / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC ASA 4.0 Int. Cropped



MEXT

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
CULTURE, SPORTS,
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The French human rights expert writes that the *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology* (MEXT) has introduced several measures as part of its broader initiative to "provide 'remedy' to the problem" allegedly arising from children's exposure to their parents' [Family Federation](#) beliefs.

One key aspect of this plan is the establishment of a robust support system for children experiencing "worries and anxieties". As outlined in the fiscal year 2023 budget, a sum of 8.2 billion yen has been allocated to expand the presence of school counselors (SCs) and school social workers (SSWs). This budget ensures that SCs are assigned to all 27,500 public elementary and junior high schools, while SSWs are placed in all 10,000 junior high school districts. Additionally, funds have been designated to allow for targeted placements where further support is necessary.

According to the [Bitter Winter](#) article, a crucial component of the initiative includes the dissemination of guidelines regarding child abuse linked to religious beliefs. This has garnered attention from the *UN Special Rapporteurs*. These guidelines have been widely circulated among counselors and social workers to help them recognize specific forms of abuse they are advised to look out for.

Furthermore, MEXT issued a notice on 28th December 2022,



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titled "Response to Child Abuse Related to Religious Faith, etc. (Q&A)." It was distributed to all educational boards and relevant organizations. This directive underscores that officials should not take a passive stance merely because a case involves religious elements. Instead, it mandates that SCs, SSWs, and other personnel be trained in the Q&A content to ensure they are well-informed. To further raise awareness, MEXT promoted this material in administrative briefings held in January, June, and September of 2023.

Beyond these guidelines, the initiative includes specialized training sessions for counselors, featuring instruction from former **Family Federation** members turned vocal critics of their faith. The intent behind this training is to provide deeper insight into the emotions and circumstances of individuals who have left religious groups. As part of this program, former members and second-generation adherents of religious organizations are invited to serve as instructors, offering firsthand accounts of their experiences.

Duval points out,

"It can be concluded that the training delivered to counsellors consists in indoctrination on the alleged 'criminal activities' of the **Unification Church** and 'mental manipulation' it arguably exercises on its followers."

Armed with this training and the religious child abuse



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

guidelines, counselors and social workers are expected to make decisions regarding the "protection" of children from the influence of their parents' faith. These interventions align with the broader framework of the plan, which also calls for the establishment of "one-stop consultation services" under the *Japan Legal Support Center* (Houterasu). These consultation services involve legal experts, psychological professionals, welfare specialists, and other advisors, and are being rolled out nationwide in a phased manner.

Patricia Duval describes that a significant part of this legal support network is the involvement of the *National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales*, a group known for its fanatical opposition to the **Family Federation**. This network provides legal assistance through the *Japan Legal Support Center*, a government-funded entity established to aid individuals considered victims of the influence of the **Family Federation**. In accordance with the plan, the government facilitates free legal consultations and covers attorney fees in advance for individuals seeking legal recourse.

Another key legal provision under the initiative is the "Proactive Utilization of Civil Legal Aid", which is used to implement the recommendations in the child abuse guidelines. In instances where parents fail to provide adequate financial support to their children – such as by donating significant sums to the **Family Federation** – children are given legal recourse to challenge these donations.

According to



Extreme new anti-religious Japanese laws introduced that enable children to cancel their parents' donations. Here, woman offering a donation at a Sunday worship service. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 10th February 2025.

According to the Guidelines' response to Question 4.2, a child may invoke Article 8, Paragraph 1 of the Act on Prevention of Unjust Solicitation of Donations by Corporations to cancel their parents' donations. However, for this cancellation to take effect, the child

must first assert their right to financial support by making a formal claim against their guardian. Only after establishing this claim can they proceed to seek rescission of the financial contributions made by their parents.

To streamline this legal process, the **initiative recommends that a lawyer acts on behalf of the child.** When child consultation centers and other relevant institutions encounter such cases, they are instructed to collaborate with bar associations and related organizations. A special provision within the bar association allows children to appoint legal representatives without incurring financial burdens, provided that specific conditions are met.

Through this outrageous system, underage children are granted the legal authority to challenge their guardians' financial decisions, including the right to seek the cancellation of their parents' donations to the [Family Federation](#). These measures collectively form a framework designed to monitor and intervene in family situations where religious beliefs are deemed to have a potentially harmful impact on children. By leveraging psychological, legal, and social support mechanisms, the government aims to provide an extensive safety net for children perceived to be at risk due to their parents' religious affiliations.

To be continued

Text: Knut Holdhus

Featured image above: Patricia Duval – Member of the Paris Bar Association, specializing in international human rights law. Earned a degree in public law from Sorbonne University. Has defended the rights of religious and faith minorities both in France and internationally, including at the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the Council of Europe (CE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU), and the United Nations. Author of numerous academic papers on religion and freedom of belief. Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

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