

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Dissolve Movement That Protected Japan?

Knut Holdhus
August 5, 2025



From a Victory over Communism (IFVOC) campaign in Japan in 1969. Photo: IFVOC



September 2025 issue of Monthly Hanada

Leftwingers Viewed Abe Assassination as a "Once-in-a-Lifetime" Chance to Eliminate Anti-Communism Movement

Large Conservative Monthly Magazine Exposes Political Vendetta Behind Dissolution Case Against Movement That Helped Safeguard Japan During Critical Cold War Period

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In their thought-provoking dialogue featured in the September 2025 issue of Hanada, Attorney Nobuya Fukumoto (福本 修也) and Professor Emeritus Seishiro Sugihara (杉原 誠四郎) offer a compelling defense of the International Federation for Victory Over Communism (IFVOC, or 勝共連合 (Shōkyō Rengō) in Japanese). Their insights are part of a larger article headlined, "The Former [Unification Church](#) - the Irregularities of the

[Dissolution Order](#)".



Seishiro Sugihara pointing out that IFVOC provided "the intellectual and organizational" counterbalance to communism

This conversation unfolds against the backdrop of renewed national debates concerning the role of the [Unification Church](#) (now the [Family Federation](#)) in Japanese political life and the current legal proceedings concerning its dissolution. With clarity, historical context, and strong conviction, the two men argue that IFVOC made a significant and underappreciated contribution to postwar Japanese society - particularly in its effort to resist the tide of global communism and to safeguard Japan's democratic structure.

The conversation on this topic begins with Sugihara, a legal scholar, recalling the Vietnam War era, when Japan, though not a direct combatant, was deeply affected by the ideological struggle raging between capitalism and communism. He paints a vivid picture of members of the anti-communism federation engaging in grassroots activism, standing on street corners with blackboards to explain the dangers of communism. This anecdote not only humanizes the movement but also underscores its educational and civic-minded aspirations.

Sugihara emphasizes that during this era, communism was not an abstract ideological threat - it was a

force sweeping through the developing world and influencing Japan's own leftist student and labor movements. The IFVOC, he argues, stepped in to provide the intellectual and organizational counterbalance that Japan's liberal democratic mainstream had been lacking.



Attorney Nobuya Fukumoto, here at press conference on September 8, 2023

Fukumoto builds on this by situating IFVOC within the broader geopolitical context of the Cold War. He reminds readers that the organization was founded in 1968 by [Sun Myung Moon](#), the founder of the [Unification Church](#), at a time when communism was spreading rapidly through Asia. Japan, though allied with the United States, was under constant ideological pressure.

In this environment, IFVOC provided an infrastructure through which conservative and center-right forces - including politicians, business leaders, public safety officials, and retired Self-Defense Forces officers - could coordinate their efforts to challenge the progressive (and at times pro-communist) opposition. The Federation, they argue, was not merely reactive but proactive, helping to influence local governance, public policy, and national security measures.

One of the most powerful elements of the article is its exploration of the Levchenko Incident, in which a former Soviet KGB agent

defected to the United States and exposed a network of alleged Soviet collaborators in Japan, including members of the Japan Socialist Party. Sugihara and Fukumoto point out that the fallout from this scandal shook Japan's political establishment and validated many of the anti-communist concerns that IFVOC had raised for years.



Stanislav Alexandrovich Levchenko (1941-), former Russian KGB major, who defected to the USA in 1979. Received American citizenship in 1989. In 1975, Moscow sent him undercover abroad, as a journalist. He worked for the Russian magazine New Times (Novoye Vremya) in Tokyo, Japan. From October 1979 he gave detailed information about KGB's Japanese spy network to the American authorities, including in a Congressional testimony at the beginning of the 1980s. He revealed the names of around 200 Japanese agents, including former labour minister Hirohide Ishida of the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Socialist Party's leader Seiichi Katsumata. Takuji Yamane from the newspaper Sankei Shimbun was also mentioned. (Wikipedia)

However, instead of fostering national unity against foreign subversion, the left responded by accusing IFVOC - and by extension, the [Unification Church](#) - of conspiring with the CIA to fabricate the entire incident. This, they argue, set the stage for decades of hostility toward the Federation and its religious affiliates.

The legal and political ramifications of this animosity are traced in detail. IFVOC successfully sued the Socialist Party for defamation, resulting in a settlement in 1994. However, as Fukumoto and Sugihara explain, the legal counsel for the Socialist Party, Hiroshi Yamaguchi (山口広), had by then formed the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (Zenkoku Benren).

According to them, this organization's founding purpose was not merely to protect consumers from predatory religious practices - but to systematically dismantle the [Unification Church](#) and IFVOC itself, both of which were seen as ideological enemies of the left. Fukumoto asserts that the root cause of the ongoing dissolution case against the [Family Federation](#) lies not in allegations of misconduct alone, but in this long-standing political vendetta.

The interview concludes with a sobering reflection on the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三) by Tetsuya Yamagami (山上徹也), whose family's alleged exploitation by the [Unification Church](#) triggered renewed scrutiny of the [religious organization](#).

Sugihara and Fukumoto argue that Zenkoku Benren and its allies in the media seized on this moment as a political opportunity - an event they viewed as a "once-in-a-lifetime" chance to accomplish what decades of litigation and campaigning had not: the formal dissolution of the [Family Federation](#). In their view, the general public has been kept unaware of these historical and political undercurrents, which, if more broadly understood, might shift the tone of public discourse and the trajectory of legal action.

In sum, this conversation offers a robust and unapologetic defense of the International Federation for Victory Over Communism. It seeks to reframe the narrative around the [Family Federation](#) by focusing on its historical contributions to anti-communism, national defense, and democratic preservation. While

critics may question the ideological bias of the IFVOC or its religious roots, Fukumoto and Sugihara remind readers that history is rarely black and white - and that institutions like IFVOC played an indispensable role in shaping modern Japan.



Shinzo Abe in March 2022, few months before he was assassinated. Leftwing activists have seized on his cold-blooded murder as a political opportunity

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New York Conference Slams Tokyo Court Ruling

- August 4, 2025
- Knut Holdhus

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Tokyo 2025 dissolution order against Family Federation criticized at international conference in New York on freedom of religion globally

Tokyo, 4th August 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

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Dissolution Order Against the Family Federation

by Yosuke Yamazaki (山崎洋介)

On 2nd August, the second day of an international conference on religious freedom hosted by the *HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership* (formerly the *Unification Theological Seminary*), scholars, human rights advocates, and journalists gathered at a hotel in New York City to exchange views. The conference also addressed the *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification* (formerly the *Unification Church*), which was **ordered to disband** by the *Tokyo District Court* in March.

The theme of the conference was “Addressing the Root Causes of Temporary Threats to Religious Freedom”. In the session focusing on the *Family Federation*, Shunsuke Uotani (魚谷俊輔), Secretary-General of UPF Japan – a group affiliated with the *Federation* – remarked that since the *Aum Shinrikyo* incident in the 1990s, scholars who previously gave favorable evaluations of the *Federation* came under fire, leading to a lack of academic research on the *Family Federation* from a neutral standpoint. He emphasized:

“The trauma caused by the Aum incident on the study of new religions in Japan is extremely severe and, one could say, has not yet healed.”



Shunsuke Uotani addressing the conference in The New Yorker Hotel 2nd Aug. 2025. Photo: Yosuke Yamazaki (山崎洋介)



Dr. Hirohisa Koide, here speaking 16th June 2025 in Geneve. Screenshot

Hirohisa Koide (小出浩久), a physician and *Family Federation* believer, testified about being confined by his parents and relatives, and pressured to renounce his faith by deprogrammers and Christian pastors. He described how he feigned renunciation to escape but said:

“That was the beginning of deep suffering.”

He claimed he was then coerced for about a year into speaking against the *religious organization* in the media and

was forced to sign legal documents suing the *Family Federation*.

Participating online, international human rights lawyer Patricia Duval criticized the *Tokyo District Court's ruling*, which deemed the *religious organization's* recruitment and fundraising practices harmful to “public welfare” based on vague concepts like “social appropriateness.” She also raised concerns about the closed nature of the proceedings, suggesting that it could lead to fabricated testimony and a lack of procedural transparency.

In another session examining the historical and social background of threats to religious freedom, Massimo Introvigne, an Italian sociologist of religion, argued that there are five models of anti-cult movements: the “U.S. model,” “China model,” “Russia model,” “France model,” and “Japan–Korea model.” Regarding Japan and Korea, he pointed out:

“Strangely, leftists such as socialists and communists are cooperating with Protestants, who are supposed to be theoretically anti-communist.”



Dr. Massimo Introvigne addressing the conference in The New Yorker Hotel 2nd Aug. 2025. Photo: [Bitter Winter](#)

The conference will continue until 3rd August. Discussions will include the role of governments and international organizations, with participants such as Jan Figel, former Slovak Deputy Prime Minister and the EU's first *Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief*, and Richard Swett, former U.S. Ambassador to Denmark.

Featured image above: Shunsuke Uotani (魚谷俊輔), Secretary-General of UPF Japan (second from left), speaks at an international conference on religious freedom, held at a hotel in New York City on 2nd August 2025. Photo: Yosuke Yamazaki (山崎洋介)

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