

## FFWPU USA: Believers' Rights Denied

Demian Dunkley  
April 22, 2026



FAMILY FEDERATION

## The Newsletter

April 22, 2026

---

**Hello family. Quick Connect update. Family Fed staff to lose jobs. Bitter Winter article. Prayer from American Appeal rally. Japan rally donation.**

---

### *News*

## Quick Connect: Believers' Rights Denied



Church employees in Japan to be dismissed in May, a human rights lawyer says believers rights are being denied, and a prayer for knocking down the walls of injustice, today on Quick Connect.

[watch here](#)

---

## Dissolution on Paper, Destitution in Practice: Family Federation Staff Face Severance Gap



An internal notice circulated to staff of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification sets a May 20 dismissal date and limits severance to base pay only. Between the welfare backstop the court cited and the support workers can actually reach, there is a gap that cannot be closed.

[read more](#)

---

## Unification Church: Japan's Dissolution Order and International Law. 1. Violating the Believers' Rights

A detailed analysis by a leading French lawyer in preparation for the review of the case by Japan's Supreme Court.

[read full article](#)

---

## Prayer to "Knock Down the Walls of Injustice"



"We want to knock down the walls of Jericho, which are the walls of injustice, misunderstanding, and build that wall back with the wall of love."

A delegation from America will rally in Japan later this month in another Appeal. You can support the cause below.

[watch here](#)

---

Help Us Bring Another Appeal to Japan



# HELP US HELP JAPAN



## DONATE TODAY

SPONSOR YOUTH  
MISSIONARIES, CLERGY, AND  
FAMILY FEDERATION LEADERS  
TO RALLY IN JAPAN

GOAL

**\$100,000**

BY APRIL 28



[HSA.GIVINGFUEL.COM/RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM](https://HSA.GIVINGFUEL.COM/RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM)

[donate here](#)



## *Speak up on social media*

Share this injustice and your personal testimony on social media. Facts and articles to share about her detention can be found in the News section of [MotherOfPeace.com](#) and by following Rev. Dunkley on X.

[get informed](#)



## *Support religious freedom*

Your generosity is helping us fight this injustice. Help us promote religious freedom in South Korea by making a donation below.

[support here](#)



## *Wear the message*

Show your support for True Mother with a [#ReleaseTheMotherOfPeace](#) and FAITH FREEDOM PEACE t-shirt or hoodie.

[buy here](#)

Follow Us



Did a friend forward this to you? [Subscribe](#) to The Newsletter.

You are here: [Home](#) » [From the World](#) » [Testimonies Global](#)

# Unification Church: Japan’s Dissolution Order and International Law. 1. Violating the Believers’ Rights

by Patricia Duval | Apr 21, 2026 | Testimonies Global

## A detailed analysis by a leading French lawyer in preparation for the review of the case by Japan’s Supreme Court.

by Patricia Duval

Article 1 of 7.



Unification Church believers are prevented from accessing their places of worship. AI-generated.

On March 4, 2026, the Tokyo High Court issued a ruling regarding the dissolution of the religious organization “Family Federation for World Peace and Unification” (formerly known as the Unification Church, hereinafter referred to by that name).

This opinion analyses this decision and denounces a violation of Article 98, para. 2, of the Japanese Constitution, which provides that “The treaties concluded by

The fact that the High Court devoted only two pages, at the end of its ruling, to arguments concerning violations of international law demonstrates the scant importance the Court of Appeals attaches to compliance with that law.

The Supreme Court’s review of its application is all the more important to ensure consistency between Japanese law and the treaties to which Japan has acceded.

Article 98, para.2, of the Constitution implies, in particular, that the right to freedom of religion or belief (also protected by Article 20 of the Constitution) must be guaranteed under the conditions outlined in Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR or the Covenant), to which Japan has acceded and which it has ratified.

This right encompasses not only the right to believe, but also the right to express one’s beliefs in community with others through religious rites, practices, and teachings, as well as the right to establish and maintain religious, charitable, or humanitarian institutions.

Any State interference with this right must meet the strict criteria outlined in Article 18.3 of the Covenant, which provides: “Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.”

Article 98, para.2, of the Constitution also implies that the other rights outlined in the Covenant must be guaranteed, in particular the right to freedom of association (Article 22) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 19); both of these rights are also likely to be infringed upon by the decision to dissolve the religious association.

Articles 19 and 22 provide the same conditions as Article 18, paragraph 3, regarding possible restrictions on the rights set forth therein under the Covenant.

Consequently, the following developments should be regarded as applying to potential violations of Article 18, read in conjunction with Articles 19 and 22 of the

### NEWSLETTER

Email address:

Sign up

### SUPPORT BITTER WINTER



### MOST READ

- China: Fears of a Further Crackdown on Netizens Illegally Accessing Foreign Sites
- China Uses “Buddhist Friendship” in Seoul to Advance Its Religious Policy Agenda
- The Unhealthy China-Kazakh Rapprochement: Mass Imprisonment of Anti-China Protesters
- Quebec’s Bill 9: When Secularism Treats Religion as a Problem
- Unification Church: Japan’s Dissolution Order and International Law. 1. Violating the Believers’ Rights
- Unification Church: Japan’s International Law: Prescribed by Law?

### LEGAL

Privacy Policy

potential violations of Article 18, read in conjunction with Articles 12 and 22 of the ICCPR.

The first question that arises then is whether the dissolution order issued by the Tokyo High Court constitutes an interference with the right of members of the Unification Church in Japan to manifest their beliefs, or a limitation of this right. This, in turn, would raise the question of its compliance with Article 18.3 of the Covenant.

The High Court provided a mixed answer.



*The Tokyo High Court.*

### **Does the dissolution order constitute an interference with the believers' rights?**

The High Court asserted: "a dissolution order merely deprives a religious association of its legal personality and carries no legal effect whatsoever prohibiting or restricting the religious activities of believers" (VI, 1).

And further explained (V, 2, (1), A): "The Law on Religious Associations provides that its purpose is to grant legal capacity to religious groups so that they may own and maintain places of worship and other property, among other things (Article 1, paragraph (1)), and it permits religious groups to be granted juridical personality (Article 4). In other words, the regulation of religious groups under that Act is directed exclusively at their secular aspects, not their spiritual or religious aspects. It is not intended to interfere with freedom of religion, such as the performance by believers of religious acts."

The Court then mitigated this finding by stating: "However, when a dissolution order concerning a religious association becomes final and binding, liquidation proceedings are carried out (...), and as a result, property belonging to the religious association that had been used for places of worship and other religious acts will also come to be disposed of (...). Accordingly, some impediment may arise to the continuation of the religious acts that believers had been carrying out using such property. Thus, even if legal regulation of a religious association does not itself have the legal effect of restricting the religious acts of believers, if it may nonetheless cause some impediment thereto, then, mindful of the importance of freedom of religion as one of the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, it is necessary to carefully examine whether the Constitution permits such regulation."

This finding is self-contradictory. If the dissolution of religious associations causes some impediment to religious acts of believers, then it necessarily has the legal effect of restricting them.

The deprivation of legal personality, governed by the Law on Religious Associations, cannot be regarded as a mere administrative decision affecting only the secular aspects of a religious legal entity.

Indeed, the dissolution of a religious association is considered one of the most severe restrictions on the right to manifest one's beliefs by international human rights standards.

The Human Rights Committee, established under Article 28 of the ICCPR to ensure the faithful and uniform implementation of the Covenant, has developed a substantial body of case law on this matter.

In a recent case, "Vladimir Yurlov and others v. the Russian Federation," the Committee ruled on 24 October 2023 that the dissolution of the Jehovah's Witnesses' local association in Elista violated the believers' right to freedom to manifest their religion.

The applicant, Mr. Yurlov, claimed that "since the Elista local religious organization was dissolved, he has been denied by the State party an entire range of rights enjoyed by members of registered religious organizations."

The Russian State argued that Mr. Yurlov could still be part of a religious group, defined as a voluntary association of fellow believers without legal status. However, the Committee noted that this would deprive him of an entire range of rights, such as the right to own and rent property, to maintain bank accounts, to ensure judicial protection of the community, to establish places of worship, to hold religious services in places accessible to the public, and to produce, obtain, and distribute religious literature.

The Committee concluded that the dissolution of Mr. Yurlov's religious organization deprived him of several rights essential for the free manifestation of his religion.

The European Court of Human Rights, too, has developed extensive case law on the subject.

As laid out in the Guide on Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, on freedom of thought, conscience and religion, compiled by the Court Registry and published by the Council of Europe (§156-157): "One of the most radical forms of interference with the collective aspect of freedom of religion is the dissolution of an existing religious organization. Such a drastic measure requires very serious reasons by way of justification in order to be recognized as 'necessary in a democratic society' (Biblical Centre of the Chuvash Republic v. Russia, §54)."

#### Japan, Religious Liberty, Unification Church



#### Patricia Duval

**Patricia Duval** is an attorney and a member of the Paris Bar. She has a Master in Public Law from La Sorbonne University, and specializes in international human rights law. She has defended the rights of minorities of religion or belief in domestic and international fora, and before international institutions such as the European Court of Human Rights, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the European Union, and the United Nations. She has also published numerous scholarly articles on freedom of religion or belief.



### READ MORE



Unification Church: Japan's Dissolution Order and International Law. 2. "Prescribed by Law"?

Apr 22, 2026



Catholic Bishops Denounce Atrocities in Eastern DR Congo: What Exactly Is Happening and Why?

Apr 13, 2026



A Judicial Suicide: The Tokyo Decision Against the Unification Church. 3. Subjective Interpretation and "Social Norms."

Apr 11, 2026

#### NEWSLETTER

Email address:

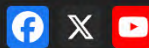
Your email address

Sign up

#### CESNUR

Via Confindenza 19  
10121 - Torino  
Italy  
info@bitterwinter.org

#### FOLLOW



#### SUPPORT BITTER WINTER

Donate



Copyright CESNUR 2025



Notice at collection

Your Privacy Choices





Home

Explore

Notifications

Follow

Chat

Grok

Bookmarks

Creator Studio

Premium

Profile

More

Post



Article



The Monarch Report @monarchreport25



## Dissolution on Paper, Destitution in Practice: Family Federation Staff Face Severance Gap



11

10

2.2K



An internal notice circulated to staff of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification sets a May 20 dismissal date and limits severance to base pay only. Between the welfare backstop the court cited and the support workers can actually reach, there is a gap that cannot be closed.

### What the Notice Says

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) will dismiss nearly all of its staff on 20 May 2026, retaining only those needed to carry out liquidation work.

**Enhanced severance will not be paid, and no successor organization has guaranteed re-employment.**

Two current employees who obtained the notice described its contents in a video published this month.



Speaker introduces the core document: a notice about employment contract termination accompanying the dissolution order.

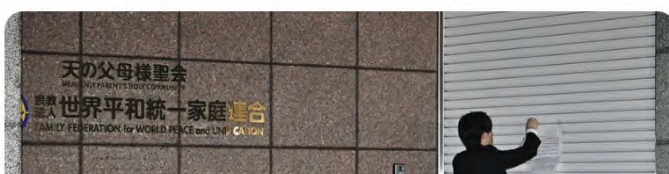
### How the Dissolution Came About

On 25 March 2025, the Tokyo District Court ordered the dissolution of the Family Federation, formerly the Unification Church.

The ruling followed decades of disputes between the church and former members, which drew renewed public attention after the 2022 assassination of former prime minister Abe Shinzo.

On 4 March 2026, the Tokyo High Court dismissed the church's appeal and upheld the dissolution, stripping the organization of its legal personhood with immediate effect.

A dissolved corporation may continue to exist only within the scope of its liquidation purposes. Religious activity falls outside that scope, so the staff who performed it have lost the legal basis for their employment.



Search

### Relevant people



The Monarch Report @monarchreport25

Follow

Korea's Real Story in English. Protecting God-given rights through investigative truth sharing.

### What's happening

Trending in United States  
**Speed Racer**

Trending in United States  
**pickens**

Trending in United States  
**SUNCRAFT**

Technology · Trending  
**JOONGDUNK X OPPO FINDX9**

Show more

Terms of Service | Privacy Policy | Cookie Policy | Accessibility | Ads Info | More... © 2026 X Corp.



Gary Fleisher @gary\_fleisher





## Who Is Dismissed, and When

The notice states that all staff except those needed for liquidation work will be formally dismissed on 20 May 2026.

- **Retained:** accounting staff and others handling final salary and severance disbursements
- **Dismissed:** staff whose roles are defined by religious activity, including pastoral and congregation-facing work

The Court's Assumption: "The Successor Organization Will Hire Them"

In approving the dissolution, the court advanced two assumptions about the staff's future.

First, they would likely be absorbed by a successor organization.

Second, if that did not happen, they could access social welfare, including Japan's public assistance program.

The employees summarize the court's logic that way, drawn from their reading of the ruling.

**But the ruling treated the staff's circumstances only briefly.**

Weighed against the necessity of dissolution, the loss of staff employment was positioned as something social welfare could absorb — no more than that.

The Family Federation reportedly employs about 2,000 staff, and roughly 4,000 when their families are included. The livelihoods of that many people were disposed of in a few lines of a court document.

The shape of that successor organization is also not yet visible.

Reports have surfaced about plans and possible leadership, but when and in what form it will launch remains unsettled.

Neither of the two employees who reviewed the termination notice said they had been told anything about the successor body's structure, capacity to hire, or timeline.

## The Flaw in "They'll Have Welfare"



The court's second assumption — public assistance — deserves a closer look.

Japan's public assistance program (生活保護, *seikatsu hogo*) is the country's last-resort safety net, a means-tested system of cash support administered by local governments.

Eligibility conditions are strict. Applicants must, in principle, liquidate

assets such as savings and vehicles, work if they are able, and turn first to any relatives legally obligated to support them.

Only when none of that is sufficient does the municipal welfare office begin review, and recipients must submit regular reports on their assets and employment status while receiving benefits.

For young, healthy workers who have held steady jobs, public assistance is not a realistic "next step." The paperwork is heavy, and **Japanese society attaches deep stigma to receiving it.**

One employee put it this way:

"Public assistance too — it feels strange, out of place. The idea that we would go on public assistance."

The ruling positioned this program as a safety net for dismissed staff.

For the people who would actually have to approach it, however, the distance between a line in a court document and the reality of the system is not something a single sentence can close.

## The One Clear Step: Unemployment Benefits

*Speaker admits the stark reality: the only thing workers were told was to file for unemployment benefits — no severance, no clarity on next steps.*

"The only concrete thing I know to do is go to Hello Work and file for unemployment benefit."

Hello Work is Japan's network of government-run employment offices.

With the organization itself in liquidation, clear guidance is hard to come by, and unemployment insurance is one of the few fixed points workers can identify.

Japanese unemployment insurance typically pays out for about six months, setting a narrow window for staff in their twenties and early thirties to find new work or wait to see whether the successor body will hire them.

**Staff with less than five years of service face a harsher edge.** The notice limits basic severance to those with five or more years of continuous service, leaving shorter-tenured workers with none at all.



## The "Enhanced" Severance Is Gone

The notice divides severance into two tiers.

- **Basic severance:** paid as stipulated in the employment contract
- **Enhanced severance:** withheld as "under review," on the grounds that the provision was written after the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology petitioned for dissolution

One employee said that even with the enhanced portion included, total severance for long-tenured staff would have sat at or below the average for comparable roles at ordinary Japanese companies.

He reached that figure by checking typical severance amounts online.

"Even if you paid the enhanced portion, it would only come out to

around the level of a normal severance."

Withholding the enhanced tier therefore pushes final payments clearly below the standard range.

## Two Categories Left "Under Review"

The notice also flags two additional groups whose payments are deferred for review.

- **Early retirees (late 2024 – March 2026):** staff who left voluntarily as part of a generational-transition program the organization itself had promoted. Their enhanced retirement payments are also "under review" and will not be paid at this time.
- **Korean-national staff:** a group facing additional barriers in the Japanese job market, for whom a supplemental payment equivalent to three months of salary had been provided for in part of the regulations. This too is "under review" and will not be disbursed.

## Twenty, Twenty-Five Years of Service



"The fact that people put in twenty or twenty-five years — that's just a fact. And to look at that and say, why go this far, that's how I felt."

The point touches on something that Japan's dissolution-related commentary has largely left alone: the burden borne by staff who committed long careers to the organization, now carried as a side effect of dissolution.

## To the Supreme Court, and an Open-Ended Liquidation



A special appeal has been filed with the Supreme Court, though under Japanese law such appeals are admissible only on narrow grounds, such as alleged constitutional violations. Unless the ruling is overturned, liquidation continues.

Staff who received the termination notice are left in an unusual position:

- dismissed by an entity that is itself legally dissolving
- dependent on a successor body with no settled launch date
- pointed toward a welfare system that feels remote to young, healthy adults

South Korea's Unification Church is also under government investigation, and its situation may worsen in the wake of Japan's

investigation, and its situation may worsen in the wake of Japan's dissolution order.


**About 2,000 staff, and roughly 4,000 lives including their families, now hang on the outcome of this liquidation.**

The court disposed of that many livelihoods with two assumptions — "the successor organization will hire them" and "if not, there's welfare."

The carelessness of those two lines will only weigh more heavily as liquidation proceeds.

## Sources

- [The Unification Church dissolution and Japan's evolving religious governance | East Asia Forum](#)
- [Dissolution Ordered, Yet Nothing Truly 'Dissolved' — The Structural Incompleteness of Japan's Unification Church Case](#)
- [Tokyo High Court orders Unification Church to dissolve - The Japan Times](#)
- [Controversial Unification Church Reorganizes in Japan Under New Name](#)
- [Japan district court orders disbandment of controversial Unification Church - JURIST - News](#)
- [Unification Church Appeals Dissolution Order to Top Court | Nippon.com](#)
- [Japanese court dissolves Unification Church. Will Korea be next? - UPI.com](#)
- Full Video : <https://youtu.be/70FxFWU1BBiM?si=Kle9Xsop6axDN5b9>

 Want to publish your own Article?

[Upgrade to Premium](#)

6:30 AM · Apr 22, 2026 · **2,262** Views



 11

 10

 1



Post your reply

Reply



**Kathy**  @Kathy3k4 · 6h



The dissolution was orchestrated and now the court is going against their words of severance pay! It is time to put an end to this abuse of this court's power!



 10





## 500 people appealed in Washington, DC. Help us bring the message to Japan.

From April 28–30, a critical rally in Japan will bring together 100 youth missionaries, 15 Family Federation representatives, and 5 key ACLC clergy.

This united front is rising up to stand for faith, freedom, and peace as one voice in the heart of Japan.

But they cannot stand alone.

Your gift will:

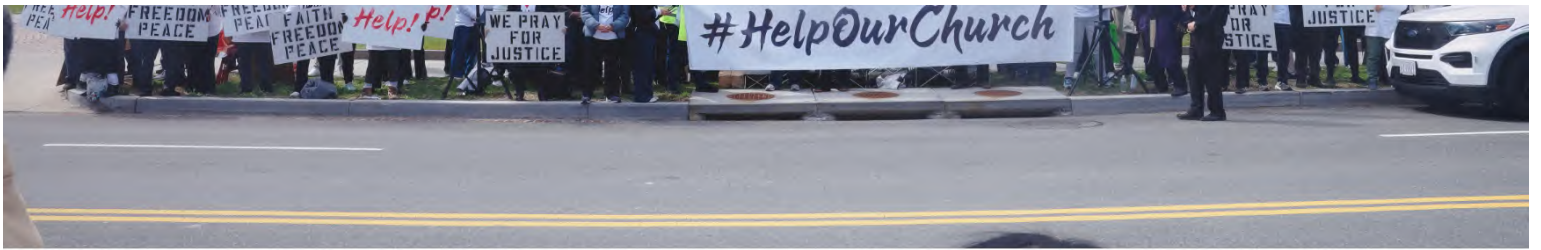
- Sponsor travel and participation for youth missionaries
- Support clergy leadership and interfaith solidarity
- Amplify a global voice for religious freedom and peace

This is not about privilege—it is about fairness, understanding, and protecting the freedom to believe.

**Give today and help carry this movement forward.**

#HelpOurChurch





Country \*

- USA  
 Non-USA

Payment Method \*

- ACH (no transaction fee)  
 Credit Card (3% transaction fee applies)

Amount \*

- 

- Make My Donation Monthly Recurring  
 Add 3% to my donation to cover credit card fees. [?](#)

Total

\$0.00

## Billing Information

Email \*

Email Address

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Credit Card \*

Card Number



Month

Year

CVV

Mailing Address \*

United States of America

Street Address

City

State

ZIP Code

Phone Number \*



 **GivingFuel**  
Fundraising Software by GivingFuel

