

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Lone-Wolf Theory Disputed in Japanese Prime Minister Abe's Assassination

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Shinzo Abe in 2017



Japanese paper urges judiciary to look closely at the unanswered questions of Abe assassination and not rely completely on lone-wolf narrative

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[Editorial]

Abe Assassination Trial Date Set

A Trial That Avoids the Truth Is a Deception

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



Tetsuya Yamagami, the man who killed Shinzo Abe, the former prime minister of Japan

The first public hearing in the trial of Tetsuya Yamagami (山上徹也), who is charged with murder and violation of firearms and sword laws in connection with the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三), has been scheduled for 28th October. The court appears to be preparing to try the case as a lone-wolf crime committed solely by Yamagami. But abandoning efforts to uncover the full truth is nothing short of deceptive.

Doubts about the lone-wolf theory

Yamagami was arrested and indicted after he attacked and killed Abe with a homemade gun during a campaign speech on 8th July 2022.

Ahead of the citizen jury trial, there have been seven rounds of pre-trial proceedings involving the court, prosecutors, and defense lawyers to narrow down the evidence and issues.

According to reports, there is no dispute between the prosecution and defense over the basic facts of the case. The focus of contention is expected to be on the severity of the sentence, considering the defendant's background and circumstances. While this may have been anticipated, we are deeply concerned about the judiciary's stance that refuses to seek the deeper truth behind the incident. Such an approach seriously

undermines public trust in the courts as guardians of law and justice.

Yamagami reportedly did not hold a personal grudge against Abe. However, by taking the life of a former prime minister - a figure of significant public importance - he aimed to sway public opinion. What's more, the attack occurred during an election campaign, a cornerstone of democratic society. The negative impact on society has been immense.

Regarding the firearms violation, one of the legal issues is whether the homemade gun qualifies as a "firearm" under the law, and whether he can be charged with the crime of discharge [firing, causing a weapon to go off] - an offense that carries a potential life sentence. Yet, the very act of building a gun based on online instructions and using it to carry out an attack posed a clear threat to society.



Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan 2021-2024. Here, April 16, 2023

In April 2023, a copycat incident occurred in which an explosive device was thrown at then-Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (岸田文雄). The gravity of such acts should be the central issue when determining the sentence.

Lone-wolf narrative advanced too early

Soon after the incident, Nara Prefectural Police leaked information that Yamagami targeted Abe due to a grudge against the [Unification Church](#) (now called the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#)), to which his mother belonged, and which had alleged ties to Abe. As a result, the media focused less on the act as a threat of terror to democracy, and more on Yamagami's personal circumstances and the [religious organization's](#) ties to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Meanwhile, Nara police proceeded quickly with the theory that Yamagami acted alone and built the case accordingly.

However, numerous doubts have been raised about the lone-wolf theory. First, there is a major discrepancy between the account of Dr. Hidetada Fukushima (福島英賢), who treated Abe at Nara Medical University Hospital, and the findings of the subsequent forensic autopsy conducted by Nara police. Dr. Fukushima reported serious heart damage, while the police concluded that Abe died of blood loss from damage to both subclavian arteries.

A committee to uncover the full truth is needed



Shigeharu Aoyama, Japanese politician from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), member of the House of Councillors since 2016. Photo 2025

Furthermore, according to lawmaker Shigeharu Aoyama (青山繁晴), a senior official from the National Police Agency admitted that the fatal bullet was never found. Many other suspicious aspects of the case have surfaced, casting further doubt on the lone-offender narrative. Yet the media tends to dismiss such questions as mere "conspiracy theories" and refrains from deeper investigation.

This in itself is an abnormal situation. After the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy, his successor President Johnson established the Warren Commission - led by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court - to investigate the case thoroughly. Similarly, a committee should be formed - within the LDP or, better yet, by the Diet itself - to pursue the full truth behind Abe's assassination, even at this late stage.

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Norishige Kondo (left) and the panel of speakers at the side event to the 59th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland on 16th June 2025. From left: Kondo, Attorney Patricia Duval, Heiner Handschin, Dr. Massimo Introvigne, Dr. Hirohisa Koide. Photo: Screenshot from video recording by UPF.

A speech by **Norishige Kondo** (近藤 徳茂), Deputy Director of the Legal Affairs Office of the **Family Federation** in Japan, at a side event organized by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) at the 59th session of the Human Rights Council, in hall 25 of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland 16th June 2025.

See also [“Religiocide” – Japan’s “Murder” of a Religion](#)

The title of my presentation is “Problems of the Tokyo District Court Decision on the Dissolution of the **Family Federation**”.

As was explained, our official name is **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification**, but I believe that you are familiar with our former name **Unification Church**. So in my presentation, I use the abbreviation **UC** to indicate our church.

After the former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was assassinated on 8th July 2022, the **lawyers’ network** against the **UC** created the false impression that serious and widespread harm caused by the **UC** occurred across the country. It is because the suspect quoted his grudge against the **Unification Church** as motive of the murder.



Hiroshi Yamaguchi (山口 弘), activist leftwing lawyer and founder and leading member of National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (NNLASS). Photo: Screenshot / [Bitter Winter](#)

However, later we have found that the major lawyer [Hiroshi Yamaguchi] of the **network** stated in the July 2022 issue of a periodical [Consumer Law News] that the number of complaints [to the *Consumer Affairs Agency*] related to the **UC** has declined. [See [Dangerous Precedent to Crush Religions](#)]

It was the same month as the Abe incident, and therefore the claims by the **network** appear to be merely propaganda.

However, in those days, the media pressured the government. As a result, an unnecessary **new law** to control donations was enacted. The government even **changed the legal interpretation** for dissolving the **UC**. And finally it filed a lawsuit seeking the dissolution of the **UC**.

The government tried to dissolve the **UC** based on the *Religious Corporations Act*, article 81, paragraph 3, item 1, [which says that] the requirements [for dissolution] are “violation of law” and “**harming public welfare** seriously and clearly”.

Prime Minister Kishida **changed the legal interpretation overnight** and included civil torts [**civil wrongs causing alleged harm**] in the concept of “violation of law” to dissolve the **UC**.

However, civil torts are too vague a concept to be grounds for dissolution, and such an interpretation violates ICCPR [**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**] article 18, paragraph 3.

As for “**public welfare**”, the UN *Human Rights Committee* recommended Japan three times not to restrict religious freedom by [concerns for] **public welfare**.

The government ignored them. Surprisingly enough, the court accepted the **change of legal interpretation** and ignored the recommendation by the [UN Human Rights] Committee as well.

However, recently there were only a few tort [**civil wrong causing alleged harm**] cases related to the **UC**.

As a result, the government submitted **fabricated written statements** under the names of alleged “victims”. Yet the **UC** exposed the



From header of the [webpage](#) of the Human Rights Committee, a subpage on the site of the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner

Send us a message

First Name *

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Submit

fabrications in the court.



Finally,
the
court
found

Sign outside Tokyo District Court. Photo: Screenshot from FFWPU video.

grounds for dissolution based on speculations saying there must be unknown cases of victims, and it issued a decision to dissolve the UC.

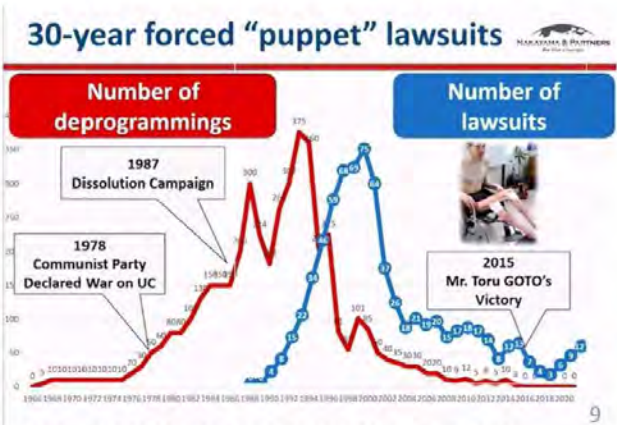
Regarding the civil cases, the UC instructed its members not to accept large amount of donations in 2009, and the number of the cases declined.

The Tokyo District Court found tortuous acts [civil wrongs causing alleged harm] based not only on civil judgments but also settlements. Even so, the total amount declined to 5% after 2009.

For dissolving a religious cooperation, there must be a presently existing motive. So the court found torts [civil wrongs causing alleged harm] based on speculation, violating the principle of judgment based on evidence.

Regarding the past tort cases, the majority of the plaintiffs were victims of deprogramming [See editor's note 1 below].

The court relied only on deprogrammed apostates [See editor's note 2 below] for facts dating back from 20 to 40 years before. In violation of international law, the court found what they according to social norms considered to be "illegalities".



In this
graph,
the red
line
shows
the

Strong proof of intentionally created court cases:
correlation between number of deprogrammings and
number of lawsuits. Illustration: Tatsuki Nakayama, lawyer

number of believers who suffered deprogramming [See editor's note 1 below], and the blue line shows the believers who sued the UC. These two lines show similarity. It means that even the past cases were intentionally created cases.

From every perspective, the decision to dissolve the UC can be deemed unjust.

We sincerely request the international community's attention and monitoring regarding this issue.

Thank you for your attention.

Slightly edited for publication.

See also "Religiocide" – Japan's "Murder" of a Religion

Featured image above: **Norishige Kondo** (近藤徳茂), Deputy Director of the Legal Affairs Office of the Family Federation in Japan, speaking at a side event organized by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) at the 59th session of the Human Rights Council, in hall 25 of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland 16th June 2025. Photo: Screenshot from video recording by UPF.

[Editor's note 1: Coercive faith-breaking ("deprogramming") in Japan refers to the practice of coercively attempting to separate individuals from their religious affiliations or beliefs, typically through intervention by family members, professional faith-breakers (deprogrammers) or organizations hostile to new religious movements (NRMs). This phenomenon often targets members of such movements, e.g. relatively large faiths like the Family Federation or Jehovah's Witnesses, but also smaller groups like Happy Science (Kōfuku no Kagaku) and other newer religious movements.



Also subject to faith-breaking attempts: *Members of Soka Gakkai. Here students belonging to the faith in 2001. Photo: Wikimedia Commons. License: CC ASA 3.0 Unp. Cropped*

However, also Soka Gakkai, a Buddhist-based lay organization with more than 8 million Japanese members, and affiliated with Nichiren Buddhism, has occasionally been subject to faith-breaking attempts.

The practice gained attention in the latter half of the 20th century, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. Parents or concerned family members often hired faith-breakers who taught them how to abduct and forcibly detain believers. Almost all such cases involved confining the individual believer and cutting him or her off from the religious community. During the confinement, the believer was subjected to intense questioning or indoctrination designed to break his or her faith. The aim was to "rescue" the person from what the family often had been tricked by faith-breakers or lawyers to regard as harmful influence from the religious organization.

Critics of forced de-conversion argue that it violates fundamental human rights, including freedom of thought, religion, and association. Reports of psychological trauma and accusations of unlawful detention have sparked debates over its ethical and legal implications. In response, some religious groups, particularly NRMs, have lobbied for greater protections against such practices.

Japanese courts have been inconsistent in addressing cases of coercive faith-breaking. While some verdicts have condemned the practice as illegal detention, others have been more lenient, citing family concerns about "mental health" or alleged "exploitation" as mitigating factors.]

[Editor's note 2: Apostates here refer not just to someone who have left the religion, but who are now being used to **undermine** the group. The apostates in the text above are being used by hostile and cynical lawyers for malicious reasons to cause harm to the faith they were forced out of, when they had their faith broken coercively by so-called faith-breakers (deprogrammers), working in league with activist lawyers.]

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