

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: USA's Pompeo Calls Korean Probe of Hak Ja Han Lawfare

Knut Holdhus
September 6, 2025



Mike Pompeo addressing an international peace conference in Gyeongju, South Korea February 13, 2022



Mike Pompeo warns South Korea of religious freedom risks in current probe he calls "lawfare" against Dr. Hak Ja Han and the Family Federation

The South Korean daily [Segye Ilbo](#) published on 5th September an article which when translated into English carried the headline

"[Pompeo: Investigation into President Hak Ja Han Raises Concerns of Religious Freedom Violation](#)"

The report highlights a striking intersection between international diplomacy, South Korean legal processes, and questions of religious freedom. Former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressed on his X account (formerly Twitter) strong concerns regarding the South Korean special prosecutor's decision to summon Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#), co-founder and president of the [Family Federation](#), as part of an ongoing investigation.



Screenshot from Mike Pompeo's X account September 3, 2025

According to the [Segye Ilbo](#), Pompeo wrote,

"The lawfare being directed at religious leader Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#) in South Korea is deeply troubling."

"The intensifying assaults on religious liberty are a betrayal of the democratic principles that South Korea is meant to espouse."

Pompeo's intervention - framed around the universal principle of protecting religious liberty - underscores

the global dimension of the case and raises important questions about how democratic societies balance judicial integrity with the safeguarding of fundamental rights.



Hak Ja Han, Holy Mother Han, here in Gapyeong, South Korea July 20, 2025

The immediate issue is the special prosecutor's request for [Dr. Han](#) (82) to appear for questioning in connection with the so-called "Geonjin Monk-[Family Federation](#) lobbying scandal". Allegations center on the claim that gifts, including luxury items, were delivered to former First Lady Kim Kun-hee (김건희) by an intermediary connected to the [Family Federation](#). While prosecutors suggest possible institutional involvement, the [Federation](#) firmly denies any directive role, stressing that the incident represents an individual's misconduct rather than an organized scheme. In its 31st August statement, the [religious organization](#) asserted that it never sanctioned illegal lobbying or financial transactions. [Dr. Han](#) herself, recovering from a medical procedure, has yet to confirm whether she will comply with the summons.

In a briefing to members on 5th September, Kim Dong-yeon (김동연), Vice President of the [Family Federation](#) in South Korea, explained,

"Given [her](#) advanced age and the strain of her recent schedule, it is necessary for her to have rest and recovery following the procedure."

Kim also stated,

"The special prosecutor's briefing stated that the September 8 summons will proceed as scheduled. The priority is [True Mother](#)'s recovery, and her attendance may be adjusted based on medical advice and legal procedures. The prosecutor's office may also review medical records or consider enforcement measures.

Given these serious circumstances, there is concern that [True Mother](#) may not be guaranteed the absolute rest and care she needs. Our collective priority must remain her health and wellbeing.

We respectfully request that the special prosecutor's office postpone the summons until after [True Mother](#) has recovered from her cardiac procedure, and that the investigation be conducted via written responses or a voluntary visit, rather than through coercive measures."



Another religious organization being raided in South Korea: Yoido Full Gospel Church, here Dec. 4, 2016

Pompeo's remarks deserve particular attention. As America's top diplomat under Donald Trump, he was a

vocal advocate of religious freedom worldwide, often linking it to democratic resilience and human dignity. His concern that South Korea's treatment of [Dr. Han](#) may constitute an "attack on religious freedom" situates the case in a broader international conversation. It is not merely a domestic legal matter but one with potential implications for South Korea's reputation as a democratic state committed to universal rights.

Pompeo's history of engagement with the Universal Peace Federation (an affiliated body of the [Family Federation](#)) further contextualizes his stance: while critics may interpret his remarks as partisan or personal, supporters see them as consistent with his long-standing defense of religious liberties.

Supportive responses to Pompeo's statement, reflected in comments such as "Religious oppression must be stopped," suggest that this case resonates beyond Korea's borders. Many observers fear that conflating allegations of political corruption with a wholesale targeting of a religious leader risks undermining the credibility of South Korea's democratic system. If the legal process is perceived as selectively punitive toward a religious institution, it may erode both domestic trust and international confidence in the country's rule of law.

At the heart of this controversy lies a delicate balance. On one hand, democratic governance requires robust mechanisms to investigate corruption and hold all citizens, including religious leaders, accountable under the law. On the other, democracy is equally rooted in the protection of religious freedom, ensuring that faith communities are not unduly criminalized or stigmatized. Pompeo's intervention reminds policymakers and prosecutors alike that safeguarding democratic legitimacy depends on honoring both principles simultaneously.

Ultimately, the [Segye Ilbo](#) article captures a moment of tension where international voices, domestic politics, and deeply held values collide. [Dr. Han](#)'s case will not only shape the immediate future of the [Family Federation](#) but will also test South Korea's ability to demonstrate that its pursuit of justice can coexist with its commitment to religious freedom.

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

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6 Ministry Officials Sued Over Evidence Forgery

- September 5, 2025
- Knut Holdhus



Japan Education Ministry officials accused of faking testimony in Family Federation dissolution case as ex-members and members file criminal charges



Logo of the Sekai Nippo

Tokyo, 5th September 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

Former and Current Family Federation Members File Criminal Complaints Against Ministry of Education Officials

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by editorial staff of *Sekai Nippo*

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In connection with court proceedings over the request to dissolve the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification \(Family Federation, formerly the Unification Church\)](#), former and current members filed criminal complaints and accusations on 5th September against six officials of the *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* (MEXT), claiming that statements submitted by the ministry had been fabricated.



Symbol of the **Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology** of Japan. Photo: [文部科学省 \(MEXT Japan\) / Wikimedia Commons](#). License: [CC Attr 4.0 Int](#)

Those filing complaints included two former members of the [Family Federation](#). One of them, a woman living in the Chūbu region, cooperated with MEXT's interviews on the [Federation](#) but alleged that statements she never made were inserted into the written testimony. She has filed a complaint for the crime of falsification of a private document with a seal.

Those filing accusations included two current members, among them Hiroshi Ogasawara (小笠原裕). Speaking at a press briefing after filing the accusation, Ogasawara condemned the ministry staff's fabrication as “the greatest scandal since the war”, adding:

“If dissolution is carried out on the basis of this, it would be intolerable.”



Hiroshi Ogasawara.
Photo (June 2025): [Takahide Ishii \(石井孝秀\)](#)



Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一).
Screenshot from video by [Association of Second-Generation Members Protecting the Human Rights of Believers](#).

According to their attorney, Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一), the fabrications came to light during last year's court proceedings related to the dissolution request. Tokunaga sharply criticized the acts as “unprecedented,” declaring: “The reliability of all the submitted materials has been undermined,” and urged the High Court to hand down a strict judgment. [\[See editor's note below\]](#)

The issue of fabricated statements was [raised back in March this year](#) by then-Upper House lawmaker Satoshi Hamada (浜田聡) during a *House of Councillors General Affairs Committee* session. *Agency for Cultural Affairs* official Mariko Kobayashi (小林万里子) said she was “aware of the content” but did not deny the falsification of statements.

Since January this year, *The Sekai Nippo* has reported on multiple suspicions of fabricated statements, based on testimony from those involved.

See also [“Poorly Compiled Evidence Including Falsehoods”](#)

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Featured image above: Hiroshi Ogasawara (second from left), who accused officials of fabricating statements, and his attorney, lawyer Shinichi Tokunaga (third from left), among others – 5th September 2025, Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo.

[Editor's note: The complaints mention [有印私文書偽造罪](#) (forgery of a private document with a seal). However, since ministry officials are public servants preparing documents for court proceedings, prosecutors might pursue harsher charges such as:

- [公文書偽造罪](#) (forgery of official documents) under Japan's Penal Code, Articles 155–158.

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- If linked to a court case, it could also fall under 偽証罪 (perjury) or 証拠隠滅罪 (tampering with evidence) depending on circumstances.

Typical Sentences under the Penal Code:

- Forgery of official documents (Article 156): up to 10 years imprisonment.
- Forgery of private documents with a seal (Article 159): up to 5 years imprisonment or a fine.
- Use of forged documents: similar penalties apply.

In practice, though, Japanese courts often hand down suspended sentences for first-time offenders unless the case involves large-scale corruption or clear public harm. [If six ministry officials were involved in systematic fabrication affecting a high-profile court case, prosecutors might push for actual prison terms to set an example.]

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