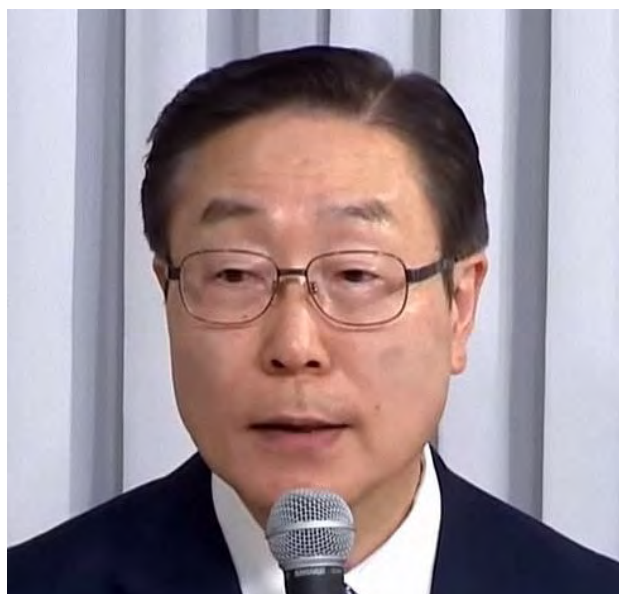


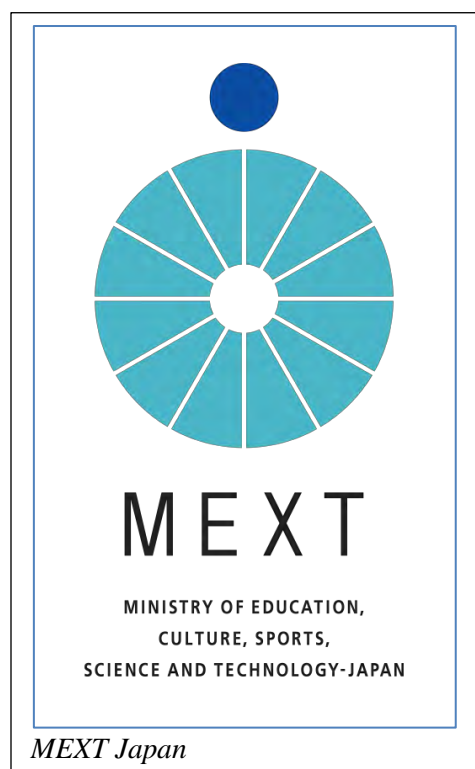
## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japan's Kishida administration's allegations against FFWPU debunked

Knut Holdhus  
March 12, 2024



*Tomihiro Tanaka, President of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan at press conference 7th November 2023 in Tokyo*

### Kishida administration's allegations debunked on first day of court hearings



English version of statement by President Tomihiro Tanaka, President of the [Family Federation](#) (FFWPU) of Japan, at the Tokyo District Court on 22nd February 2024. Published with permission.

In response to MEXT's [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology] recent request for a dissolution order, we have already addressed the legal issues in writing. Therefore, I would like to express my opinion from the perspective of a religious person.

To begin with, MEXT's claim that our [church](#) is not a religious group but rather an entity with a fundraising purpose is clearly erroneous.

The founders, Rev. [Sun Myung Moon](#) and Mrs. [Hak Ja Han Moon](#), established the former [Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity](#), now known as the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), with the aim of the salvation of all humanity. The Japanese [church](#) was founded in 1959 and obtained religious corporation status in 1964. It was established as a part of the providence of world salvation by the founder couple, and its purpose is strictly religious.

Donations from our followers support domestic evangelism, international missionary activities, and the [church](#)'s maintenance and development. Receiving donations is also an integral part of religious activities. The [organization](#) is by no means formed with the sole purpose of fundraising.

The acceptance of donations is a right recognized for religious corporations, and the claim that receiving donations implies non-religious purposes goes against international law established by the "Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief", adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981, which stipulates the "freedom to solicit and receive contributions."

While acknowledging that our [church](#) utilizes donations for religious activities, MEXT [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology] erroneously concludes that [FFWPU](#)'s involvement in evangelism while keeping the [church](#) name undisclosed was solely for fundraising purposes. However, our [church](#) has consistently conducted evangelism openly, without concealing its identity.

The Nagoya District Court judgment of April 22, 2014, found the fact that in 1972, our [church](#) openly engaged in evangelism as a form of religious solicitation and rejected the claims of the plaintiff in that case. The case in the Tokyo District Court judgment dated February 28, 2020, involved two plaintiffs who sued for activities of [FFWPU](#) after 2013, but when they began to learn the doctrine, they were aware that it was the doctrine of [FFWPU](#).



*Receiving donations is integral part of religious activities. Here: Japanese banknotes*

Engaging in evangelism without explicitly indicating the name of the [church](#) was done by a nationwide believers' organization in the 1980's and, after its dissolution, by local believers' groups that continued its evangelism methods. While our [church](#) did not interfere with believers' voluntary activities, in 2009, when we issued a compliance declaration, we instructed that even in activities carried out by believers, the name of our [church](#) must be identified when they teach our doctrines. As a result, there have been no activities condemned as "hidden evangelism". Therefore, the claim that our [church](#) engages in "hidden evangelism" and, therefore, has non-religious purposes does not apply to our [church](#).

The Tokyo High Court judgment dated December 26, 2017, submitted by MEXT [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology] as evidence, admitted that the activities conducted by our [church](#) or its followers are religious in nature. It explicitly states that there are no activities being conducted solely for the purpose of asset confiscation or the exploitation of labor. Therefore, there is no dispute regarding the fact that the activities of our [church](#) or its followers are conducted for religious purposes.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon.

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# Disinformation Dispelled At Press Conference

November 11, 2023 • Knut Holdhus

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*Disinformation dispelled as new proposal is made and positive contributions emphasized*

Tomihiro Tanaka, the President of the [Family Federation of Japan](#), spoke at a press conference 7th Nov. 2023 at the [federation's](#) national headquarters in Shibuya, Tokyo. Representatives of most of the Japanese media world were present and heard his comments on the situation since the [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology \(MEXT\)](#) submitted a request for a dissolution order against the

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Family Federation at Tokyo District Court.

Tanaka pointed out,

“As an organization, we cannot accept the recent measures taken by the *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* to request the dissolution of our **organization** from the perspective of freedom of religion and the rule of law. Therefore, we will continue to firmly assert our legal position. At the same time, we will proudly promote reform of our **religious organisation** based on the 2009 Compliance Declaration.”

### Positive contributions

President Tanaka emphasized the positive contributions of the **Family Federation** to the Japanese society,

“We are a religious corporation that celebrates its 64th anniversary this year. There are about 100,000 active believers throughout Japan. They are ordinary Japanese citizens who pray sincerely in the morning and evening, go to church on Sundays to worship, study the Bible and the **Unification Principles**, our doctrine, work as members of society on weekdays, and socialize with their neighbors.



The family is important for the **Family Federation**.  
Photo: Nathan Dumlao / Unsplash.

Through their studies at the **Family Federation**, many believers understand the importance of valuing 'living for others' while helping each other towards creating 'happy families' and a 'peaceful society', and they live their lives to the fullest while understanding the fact that they are working hard together.

We will continue to engage in activities that contribute to Japan's public and national interests while striving to comply with laws and regulations as Japanese citizens, so as not to cause any misunderstandings among the people. We would like to ask for your warm consideration and understanding regarding the 'freedom of religion' of our **Family Federation** members and believers.”

### Complaints against members

Tanaka touched on the issue of complaints against members,

“It is possible that some of our believers in the past may have taken actions that went too far from social norms. However, we believe that they did not act out of self-interest, but rather out of a desire to help others in their own way.

We promise to do our best to thoroughly implement the Compliance Declaration and guidance based on church reform, comply with laws such as the new law enacted this year, and ensure that we will never again receive evaluations such as 'deviating from social appropriateness'.

Although it is unfortunate that we have received requests for refunds and consultations regarding donations up to now, we have resolved each case

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donations up to now, we have resolved each case sincerely. We will continue to respond carefully to various such consultation contents in the future.

Furthermore, we will thoroughly guide our members that donations should respect the autonomy and initiative of each individual and family, so as not to burden the families of our believers."

### **Effect of media disinformation**

Tanaka also commented on the effect of a wave of media disinformation where the **Family Federation** is somewhat held responsible for the assassination of Shinzo Abe in July 2022,



*From the press conference in Tokyo 7th Nov. 2023.  
Photo: Screenshot from live transmission by the **Family Federation of Japan**.*

"Since the incident involving former Prime Minister Abe last year, there have been many inquiries from former believers and some current believers who are anxious because of the media, asking if they can get their past donations back. We have responded to each and every one of these people with sincerity at our organization or each believers' group. [...]

Since the incident, we have responded to a total of 664 refund requests in the past year and four months, with a total refund amount of approximately 4.4 billion yen. The months of September and October immediately following the incident had the highest number of refund requests.

When we make a refund, we discuss it while considering individual circumstances and refund based on mutual agreement. We respond while taking into account the situation at the time of the donation, how it compared to the economic situation at the time, and the current family situation.

We will continue to respond carefully and appropriately to any future refund requests. However, donations are a very precious thing that was offered to **God** by our believers as a sign of gratitude and cooperation with **God's** will. We also have a responsibility to manage these precious donations appropriately, so we cannot simply return anything that has been requested for return. We hope you understand this."

### **Specific case brought by hostile lawyers**

In his speech, President Tanaka also mentioned a specific case brought against the **Unification Church**, now called the **Family Federation**, by a hostile team of lawyers,



*Masaki Kito, one of the hostile lawyers of Nationwide Unification*

"I would like to talk a little about the request for a refund of approximately 3.9 billion yen made by 124 people in the form of 'group negotiations' by the Nationwide Unification Church Victims' Countermeasures Legal Team (全国統一教会被害対策弁護団). At press

*Church Victims' Countermeasures Legal Team (全国統一教会被害対策弁護団). Photo: Screenshot / Bitter Winter*

conferences and other events, they have claimed that our organization's response has been dishonest.

But we have already responded five times since May this year to the 99 persons for whom we have already completed an investigation into this matter. We continue to check the remaining individuals.

The total amount of money claimed by the 99 people we have responded to, is approximately 2.3 billion yen. Of that, about 800 million yen is legally valid and has been confirmed as received by our organization. Many of the other claims include some that have passed the exclusion period, some that cannot be confirmed by records, some that have already been settled, and some that have been claimed by someone else than the person himself.

Negotiations are currently stalled because they continue to insist on group negotiations for all of these claims and ignore our organization's responses. As we explained earlier, we have already responded to 664 requests. For each case, whether done personally or through a lawyer as an agent, we will continue to cooperate as organization or local congregation to respond to each and every one of them."

### **Freezing assets**

Tanaka went on to comment the recent attempt by elements within the Japanese government to pass legislation that would immediately freeze the assets of the [Family Federation of Japan](#) and appoint a trustee to manage them. He said,

"Next, I will talk about overseas remittances. In discussions on the establishment of the law for the preservation of the assets of our organization, the overseas transfer of our organization's assets is often mentioned as one of the concerns.

Regarding this, at a press conference held by Hideyuki Teshigawara and our legal adviser in September of last year, we stated that we, as part of church reform, would significantly reduce support for overseas remittances. We have also stopped overseas support and missionary support. We do not plan to transfer our organization's funds overseas before the court ruling on the dissolution order is finalized.



*Hideyuki Teshigawara. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission by the [Family Federation of Japan](#).*

In fact, we have been instructed that overseas remittances are not possible except for those with reliable documents such as invoices from the transaction bank. Therefore, there is no need to worry about transferring our organization's assets overseas before the trial of the dissolution order begins."

### **New proposal**

President Tanaka also made a new proposal to the government of Japan,

"As I have stated above, we are not worried about responding to requests for the return of donations or the overseas transfer, and we do not believe that the Property Preservation Measures Act which is being discussed in the current Diet is necessary at all.

discussed in the current Diet is necessary at all.

However, for those who are still concerned, we would like to propose a 'special deposit' from our organization. We are confident that our legal claims will be recognized in court, which has already begun proceedings on the dissolution order request. However, until a conclusion is reached in court, we have decided to prepare a deposit and deposit it with the government. The amount is expected to be between 6 billion and a maximum of 10 billion yen. After taking into account the annual budget adjustment, we were able to come up with a plan.

In the current situation where neither the victims nor the amount of harm has been identified, there is no system for depositing money under the current law. However, we are willing to prepare a deposit if the government can provide a system as a limited special measure.

Recently, the *Nationwide Unification Church Victims' Countermeasures Legal Team* pointed out that the potential amount of 'harm' is estimated to be around 120 billion yen. According to the results of a survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the cumulative amount of 'harm' over the past 43 years is one-sixth of that amount. Moreover, most of it has already been resolved by settlement or agreement, and there is no basis for the 120 billion yen. Therefore, we believe that our organization can respond sufficiently on its own in the future."

### **Wild allegations**

Towards the end of his speech, President Tomihiro Tanaka dispelled certain wild allegations,

## 愛天.愛人.愛國

*Love Heaven, love people, love country in Chinese characters. Photo: hpwords.com*

"I would like to make one more comment in response to the criticism that the [Family Federation](#) is anti-Japanese. Since last year, we have received criticism that 'the [Family Federation](#) has an anti-Japanese ideology.' However, I would like to reiterate that this is not true at all. The core of the [Unification Church's](#) teachings is to love heaven, love people, and love the country. With the family as the basic unit, it aims to realize a peaceful world through love for Japan.

In fact, as one of its activities, we have been fighting on the front lines to protect Japan from the threat of international communism that denies the dignity of [God](#) and human beings. We have cooperated with the International Federation for Victory over Communism (IFVOC), a friendly organization, and have been actively engaged in volunteer activities in various regions with the desire to love the region.

The criticism of being 'anti-Japanese' that has been directed at the [Family Federation](#) by taking out of context our close ties with Korea and some of the founder's statements is nothing more than a groundless misunderstanding, and many of our followers are most puzzled by it."

President Tanaka ended his speech by mentioning several reforms that the [Family Federation](#) has implemented since 2009.

*Featured image above: Tomihiro Tanaka at press conference in Tokyo 7th Nov. 2023. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission by the [Family Federation](#) of Japan.*

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