

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japan's Poorly Compiled Evidence Against Unification Church Includes Many Falsehoods

Knut Holdhus
February 10, 2025



Seishiro Sugihara, born in 1941 in Hiroshima Prefecture. Completed a master's degree in education at the University of Tokyo Graduate School in 1967. Served as a professor at Josai University and Musashino Women's University (now Musashino University)



Notable publications include The Ideal Separation of Religion and State and Constitutional Revision (Jiyusha, 2015). Co-authored The Disease Called Shigeru Yoshida (Jiyusha, 2021). Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

Experienced legal expert claims evidence containing falsehoods, and hearings behind closed doors infringe on rights of religious minority and are unconstitutional

Tokyo, 3rd February 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

[Series] Request for Dissolution Order of the Family Federation - Suspicions of Fabricated Statements by the Ministry of Education

Interview with an expert: "Victim" Reports Directly Used as Evidence

Seishiro Sugihara, professor of the former Musashino Women's University

Dissolution Request to Become a Major Issue

by the Religious Freedom Investigative Team of the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)

Part 1 of the article



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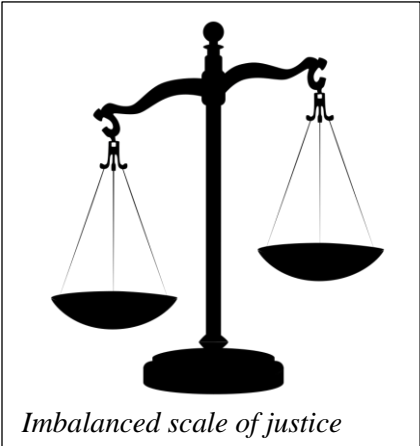
Symbol of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan

This paper [reported about fabrications](#) in the statements submitted as evidence by the Ministry of

Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to the Tokyo District Court in its request for a dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)). We spoke regarding the issue with professor Seishiro Sugihara (杉原誠四郎) of the former Musashino Women's University.

Question: As [reported by this paper on 21st January](#), there are multiple pieces of information suggesting that the statements submitted as evidence by MEXT in its dissolution request were not actually written by the individuals identified as "victims", and that they contain falsehoods contrary to fact. What do you think about this?

This was entirely predictable from the beginning.

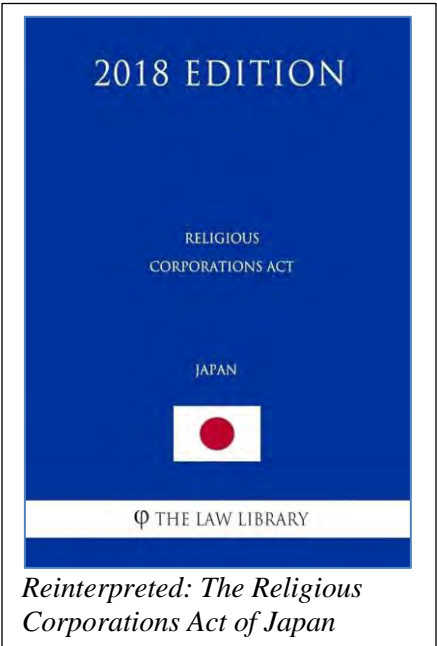


Imbalanced scale of justice

Originally, when MEXT submitted the dissolution request to the Tokyo District Court, it announced the number of "victims" and the total "financial damage". However, this total was merely the sum of the amounts claimed by individuals who identified themselves as "victims".

To understand this, one can compare it to an ordinary criminal case. In criminal cases, prosecutors collect evidence to prove a crime, but not everything collected is immediately treated as evidence. Prosecutors assess the evidentiary value and credibility before determining which materials can serve as valid evidence.

However, in this dissolution request by MEXT, the evidence submitted to the court was merely a collection of "victim" reports, without any means of verifying their evidentiary validity. MEXT simply compiled the claimed damages and submitted them as they were.



Reinterpreted: The Religious Corporations Act of Japan

Given this, it is entirely foreseeable that statements could exist where the supposed "victims" themselves did not write them, or where falsehoods contradicting the facts were included. This is not surprising at all.

Using such materials as grounds for dissolution and requesting a dissolution order is clearly an overreach as an administrative act. If a dissolution request can be made based on such unfairly collected evidence, then any "harm" reported by former believers who left their faith or by associates of believers could serve as grounds for dissolution.

If that is the case, how many existing religious corporations could be subjected to dissolution requests? In short, the procedure used by MEXT to collect evidence for the dissolution request of the [Family Federation](#) is something that the Religious Corporations Act never originally intended.

Question: Senator Satoshi Hamada (浜田聡) [submitted a written inquiry](#) to MEXT requesting fact-checking regarding this newspaper's report, but MEXT did not respond. What do you think about the fact that the proceedings are being conducted in a closed, non-public manner?



Senator Satoshi Hamada, House of Councillors, NHK Party) speaking on 26th January 2025, in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan

The Tokyo District Court is handling MEXT's dissolution request as a "non-contentious case" proceeding. Since this is not a trial in the usual sense, it is understandable that the process is not public. The secrecy of the proceedings is stipulated under the "Non-Contentious Case Procedures Act".

However, if a religious organization is dissolved through such a non-public process, it means that its right to a public trial under Article 32 of the Constitution is not guaranteed, making this clearly unconstitutional.

Regarding [Senator Hamada's inquiry](#), while MEXT did not respond, it is generally permissible for the deliberations of MEXT's Religious Affairs Council to be non-public due to the sensitive nature of the issues discussed. However, if the evidence

that formed the basis of their conclusion includes falsehoods, this will inevitably become a major issue in the future.

What is particularly concerning is the Religious Affairs Council itself. Despite having multiple religious representatives as members, it approved the dissolution request based on such poorly compiled materials - this is a serious problem.

To be continued. Part 2 coming soon.

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Attack On Minority Faith Part Of Leftist Scheme

February 9, 2025 • Knut Holdhus



Senior US politician points to large leftist scheme behind vicious campaign not solely targeting Family Federation, but governing conservative party LDP

A special pre-recorded video message presented 5th February at the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025 in Washington DC, by senior American politician Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the US House of Representatives.



Logo of the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025

First of all, I want to extend my greetings to



IRF Summit co-chair: **Sam Brownback**, US ambassador-at-large for

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Ambassador Sam Brownback and Dr. Katarina Lantos Swett, who are the co-chairs of the *International Religious Freedom Summit*.

international religious freedom 2018–2021. Here, at the IRF Summit in Washington DC 5th Feb. 2025. Photo: FOREF

This is a very important time to have this summit. The fact is that the assassination of former Prime Minister Abe by somebody who was clearly mentally ill, and who was not a member of the church, led to a **deliberate effort – I think largely driven by the Communist Party – in an effort to destroy the political party which had been such a strong bulwark of American and freedom relations.** The *Liberal Democratic Party* had done so much to help Japan, but now, beaten down, attacked, battered.

I wrote back in **November 2022 in the *Washington Times***, that it's clear that **the attack on the Family Federation is actually an attack on the Liberal Democratic Party.** That's exactly what happened. And it was an effort, frankly, by the communists to create an environment where there could be a closer relationship with China and a more distant relationship with the United States.

The government now is in a mess, and the election results were very damaging.

What's happened is that **the government has been trying to destroy the Unification Church. It's gone so far beyond the Japanese constitution. It's found no crimes, and it has no basis for what it's doing.**



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2023 Report on International Religious Freedom: Japan

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And in fact, the U.S. State Department, in its **2023 report** in the Biden administration, noted that Japan had deviated from the norm when it **decided to dissolve the Family Federation without**

any proof of any activity that was criminal that had been committed by the church. They just stepped in for political reasons.

Now you don't have to believe America. In 2024, the *United Nations Rapporteur on Religious freedom* **issued a mandate** that the Japanese actions are in violation of the human rights declaration that Japan has signed on to.

Your host today, IRF co-chair Dr. Katarina Lantos Swett and Suzan Johnson Cook, former State Department Ambassador for religious freedom, in 2023, wrote,



Katriona Lantos Swett
Featured image above: Left: USCIRF Chair Dr. **Katriona Lantos Swett** in Oslo 8th Nov. 2014. Photo: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom / Wikimedia Commons. **Public domain** image. Cropped. Right: **Suzan Johnson Cook** in July 2023. Photo: **FOREF**

"In a move that is much more reminiscent of current practices in China and Russia, Japan's government is now threatening to dissolve a legally constituted religious group for seemingly political purposes." (RealClear Politics 26th September 2023)

Let me be clear: The **Biden administration has already condemned this activity.** The **United Nations has already condemned this activity.**

And now with President Trump, we have somebody who is deeply, passionately committed to religious liberty. This is going to have grave consequence for the United States' relationship with Japan and our view of what's happening with Japanese politics.

It's very important that Japan remain pro-freedom. It's very important that Japan follow its own constitution. It's very important that Japan remains with America and not allows itself to be gradually overwhelmed by Communist China.

This is an important meeting, and I'm honored to have been given a chance to chat with you.

Featured image above: Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the US House of Representatives, delivering a special pre-recorded video message 5th February 2025 at the International Religious Freedom (IRF)

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Summit 2025 in Washington DC. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission

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