

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: New Evidence - Unjust Japanese Court Inference

Knut Holdhus
April 24, 2025



Demonstration against unjust and xenophobic [verdict](#) against the [Family Federation](#) in Japan. Here members in Karatsu City on the southern island of Kyushu protesting March 30, 2025



Press release on reasons for appeal gives overview of alleged misjudgment, inflated figures, unjust court inference, and evidence fabrication in dissolution ruling

Submission of Statement of Reasons for Appeal in Dissolution Order Case to Tokyo High Court

Press release issued by the [Family Federation](#) of Japan 22nd April concerning the [appeal](#) to the Tokyo High Court of the [dissolution order](#) case lost in Tokyo District Court. See [original article](#) in Japanese.

On 21st April, we submitted a "Statement of Reasons for Appeal" (over 200 pages) and supporting evidence to the Tokyo High Court regarding the [dissolution order](#) case.



Sign outside Tokyo District Court

The main contents of the statement include:

A detailed rebuttal to the Tokyo District Court's [ruling](#) (dated 25th March this year), which inferred that [our organization](#)'s unlawful activities have continued "uninterrupted until recently" since the issuance of the Compliance Declaration (in 2009) [See editor's note below].

A detailed rebuttal to the court's assessment that the Compliance Declaration was merely a stopgap measure (we have submitted additional evidence demonstrating the thorough implementation and effectiveness of the declaration).

The Tokyo District Court significantly inflated the estimated amount of damages by inferring unlawful conduct by our organization from post-2010 settlement cases, both in and out of court. Therefore, in rebuttal 1, we examined each post-Compliance Declaration [See editor's note below] settlement case in detail, explaining the factual circumstances and the reasons for the settlement with evidence, in order to demonstrate the errors in the court's inference.

For example, among the eight cases involving nine individuals that were settled in court after the Compliance Declaration [See editor's note below](i.e., cases that went to trial but were settled between the two parties during the proceedings), which the [initial court ruling](#) cited as one of the grounds for the above inference, there were:

- (A) Cases where [our organization](#) won completely in the first trial and the plaintiff's side - represented by lawyers from the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales - was found to have [fabricated evidence](#),

(B) Cases where contradictions in the plaintiff's statements were exposed during trial, resulting in settlements for only about 2.29% of the original claim amount, and

(C) Cases in which the complaints did not allege any unlawful conduct at all.



Norishige Kondo - left - Deputy Director of the Legal Affairs Bureau of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), responds to questions from the media after handing in appeal documents to Tokyo High Court on the morning of April 7, 2025 in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo

These examples illustrate how unreasonable and unjust it is to infer unlawful activity based solely on complaints and settlement records submitted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Similarly, for out-of-court settlements (those resolved privately without trial), we provided detailed explanations and evidence, demonstrating the unreasonable and unjust nature of the court's inferences.

Regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the Compliance Declaration [See editor's note below], we pointed out the ministry's improper exclusion of many submitted materials - especially visually compelling documents demonstrating effectiveness - on the grounds that they were unfavorable to their case. We have now re-submitted these materials with detailed explanations.

In addition to the above, we have included numerous other claims such as [violations of international law](#), as detailed in the attached file. We intend to continue presenting specific rebuttals to the initial court ruling from now on.

[Editor's note: The 2009 compliance declaration of the [Unification Church](#) of Japan (now the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#)) was a formal commitment by the [organization](#) to reform its practices in response to longstanding public criticism and legal challenges.

The [Unification Church](#) in Japan had faced numerous allegations related to recruitment tactics and donation solicitation, termed "spiritual sales" (靈感商法) by a hostile network of activist lawyers who had declared the [religious organization](#) an enemy. These issues led to multiple lawsuits orchestrated by the activist lawyers and significant media backlash. This prompted the [organization](#) to take measures to restore its reputation and demonstrate compliance with legal and ethical standards.

The [religious organization](#) pledged to stop possibly unethical donation practices, including what the hostile network of lawyers claimed amounted to "pressuring members into making large financial contributions under spiritual pretexts."

This was in response to accusations from the same activist lawyers that followers "were being manipulated into giving away substantial amounts of money or property."

The [Unification Church](#) stated it would enhance internal oversight to ensure compliance with ethical and legal standards. Measures included better training for leaders and stricter guidelines for evangelization and solicitation of donations.

After this compliance declaration, there was a significant decrease in the number of lawsuits against the [Unification Church](#) - since 2015 called the [Family Federation](#). The [religious organization](#) has used this as evidence that it has improved its practices and should not be subject to [dissolution](#).]

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Hamada: Political Forces Behind Dissolution Push

- April 23, 2025
- Knut Holdhus

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"We spoke with House of Councilors member Satoshi Hamada, a member of a minority political party, *NHK Kara Kokumin o Mamoru To* (Protect the People from NHK Party). To our knowledge, Hamada is the only national politician to speak out against the LDP's attempts to shut down a religious group for a crime that appears to amount to causing embarrassment for the LDP."
(Asia Times 21st April 2025)

In interview with Asia Times, Japanese lawmaker Satoshi Hamada spells out the political forces pushing for the dissolution order against the Family Federation



Logo of the Sekai Nippo

Tokyo, 23rd April 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

Japanese Lawmaker Hamada Expresses Concern Over Coercive De-Conversions and Human Rights Violations

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Asia Times (Hong Kong)

by the editorial department of *Sekai Nippo*

On 21st April, the Hong Kong-based online publication *Asia Times* published an [interview](#) conducted by *Reitaku University* [in Kashiwa, Chiba, Japan]

Associate Professor of International Studies Jason Morgan with Japanese House of Councillors (Upper House) member Satoshi Hamada (浜田 聡 参). The discussion focused on the government's request to dissolve the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)). In the interview, Hamada condemned the [abduction and confinement](#) used to [forcibly de-convert](#) believers of the [Family Federation](#) and expressed concern about the widespread biased media coverage surrounding the [organization](#).

Hamada described the [forced de-conversion](#) of [Family Federation](#) followers as a "grave problem" and stated that "the people of Japan ought to be informed about these things," emphasizing the background of his efforts to raise the issue in the National Diet (Japan's legislature).



Professional faith-breaker
Takashi Miyamura (宮村 峻), responsible for hundreds of deprogrammings based on abduction and forcible detention. He is said to have been advisor to the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP).
Photo: FFWPU

He also mentioned the existence of individuals known as *dakkaiya* ("exit counselors" or "faith-breakers") who are involved in these [abduction](#) cases. He singled out Takashi Miyamura (宮村 峻), stating that

he had [contacts with a group of lawyers affiliated with the Constitutional Democratic Party](#) (CDP). Hamada argued that it was problematic for a national political party to be in cooperation with groups that engage in [violence and confinement](#) based on religious beliefs.

On the matter of religious freedom, Hamada noted that only a handful of "intellectuals and political commentators are speaking out about it," and expressed concern that "the mainstream media in Japan are still attacking free-speech advocates in a very aggressive way." He pointed to continued attacks on intellectuals who question the one-sided reporting related to the [Family Federation](#).

He further remarked that many television networks align with the *Constitutional Democratic Party* (CDP) and that "International Federation for Victory Over Communism" (IFVOC), an organization affiliated with the [Family Federation](#), is "greatly disliked by the *Japanese Communist Party*."

Hamada, who has attended [Family Federation](#) events and given speeches, voiced frustration that the media refuses to report on these events despite his outreach. He criticized the media as "very far from fair", especially for ignoring key facts such as the drastic decrease in refund lawsuits since the [Family Federation's](#) 2009 "Compliance Declaration" [See editor's note 1 below] following issues related to [large donations](#).



Morgan also raised concerns about the *Komeito Party*, which is in coalition with the ruling *Liberal Democratic Party* and has ties to the religious organization Soka Gakkai [See editor's note 2 below]. Hamada pointed out that, similar to the [Family](#)

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The head office of Soka Gakkai (創価学会), at Shinanomachi, Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japan. Photo (2006): Lombroso / Wikimedia Commons. *Public domain image*

Similar to the **Family Federation**, it has been reported that Soka Gakkai received large donations, suggesting that "Soka Gakkai could meet the same fate as" the **Family Federation**. He implied that if the **dissolution order** against the **Family Federation** is carried out, similar measures might be applied to other religious organizations.

Morgan interpreted the *Liberal Democratic Party's* stance against the **Family Federation** as a "political calculation" aimed at distancing itself from a **religious group** that originated in Korea, by labeling it as dangerous. He also emphasized that some lawyers and activists have "made a name for themselves by ginning up hatred against the **church** and its members."



The **Family Federation** came to Japan from South Korea. Map: Lovewhatyoudo / Wikimedia Commons. License: *CC ASA 4.0 Int. Cropped*

Finally, Hamada expressed his concern about the current state of religious discourse in Japan, saying he was "struck by how little concern media and political leaders have shown" to fundamental principles such as freedom of religion and freedom of association, even amid reports of **human rights violations** against members of the **Family Federation**.

[Editor's note 1: The **2009 compliance declaration** of the Unification Church of Japan (now the **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification**) was a formal commitment by the organization to reform its practices in response to longstanding public criticism and legal challenges.

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The Soka Gakkai International flag. Photo: QueerMichael / Wikimedia Commons. License: *CC*

[Editor's note 2: Soka Gakkai, a global lay Buddhist organization originating in Japan, aims to create an "ideal world" based on the principles of Nichiren Buddhism, which emphasizes individual empowerment, inner transformation, and societal harmony. Their vision is often framed as *kosen-rufu*, meaning the widespread propagation of

the widespread propagation of Buddhist values to establish peace and happiness for all.

Soka Gakkai promotes peace, culture, and education through initiatives that focus on **personal transformation (human revolution)** – the belief that changing oneself positively impacts society; **peace activism** – anti-nuclear campaigns, human rights advocacy, and interfaith dialogue; **education** – institutions like Soka University emphasize value creation and global citizenship; **community engagement** – social welfare programs, disaster relief, and environmental sustainability efforts.

To actualize these ideals in governance, Soka Gakkai founded the **Komeito** party in 1964 (now known as **New Komeito** or simply **Komeito**).



Logo of the Komeito Party. Author: WeaponizingArchitecture. *Public domain* image simply **Komeito**).

The party's purpose was to translate Buddhist-based humanistic values into public policy. While legally separate from Soka Gakkai, Komeito has long been backed by members of Soka Gakkai and focuses on **peace-oriented diplomacy** (e.g., supporting Japan's pacifist constitution); **social welfare policies** (benefiting education, healthcare, and the elderly); **grassroots democracy** (reflecting the voice of ordinary citizens)

Since 1999, Komeito has been a coalition partner with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), influencing policies while maintaining a centrist stance.

Despite its contributions, Soka Gakkai's political role has been controversial, with critics accusing it of blurring the lines between religion and politics. Some also argue that Komeito's alliance with the conservative LDP compromises its original pacifist ideals.

Soka Gakkai envisions an ideal world through personal empowerment, education, and political engagement. While its approach is rooted in Buddhist ethics, its political involvement remains a complex and debated issue.]

Featured image above: Quote from [article](#) in *Asia Times* 21st April 2025, along with picture by [Sekai Nippo](#) of Satoshi Hamada in March 2025.

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