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South Korean president compares IDF actions to the Holocaust, drawing Israel condemnation

The Israeli Foreign Ministry wrote that South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's comments were "unacceptable and warrant strong condemnation."



South Korean President Lee Jae Myung speaks during a joint press conference with Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk at the presidential Blue House in Seoul on April 13, 2026. (Chung Sung-Jun / POOL / AFP)

By [Grace Gilson](#) April 13, 2026

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung drew condemnation from Israel's Foreign Ministry after comparing Israeli military actions to the Holocaust in a social media post.

Lee's [X post](#) on Thursday reposted a video showing an Israeli soldier pushing the body of a Palestinian man off of a building in the West Bank in 2024. The leader wrote that he needed to "look into whether this is true, and if so, what measures were taken."

He then called the issue of "forced sexual servitude of 'comfort women,'" which South Korea resents the Japanese for practicing during World War II "no different from the Holocaust or wartime atrocities."

The video was posted by an account whose bio reads “Unapologetic Muslim Palestinian.” Lee later clarified that he had learned that the incident had taken place in September 2024 and that Israel had “conducted an investigation into the matter and taken appropriate measures.”

But the damage was done. The Israeli Foreign Ministry [condemned Lee’s post on X](#) on Friday, writing, “The remarks by the President of Korea, Lee Jae Myung, including the trivialization of the massacre of Jews on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel, are unacceptable and warrant strong condemnation.”

Charging that the account amplified by Lee was “notorious for spreading anti-Israeli disinformation,” the ministry questioned why he had not spoken up about attacks on Israelis.

“The event was thoroughly investigated and addressed two years ago,” the ministry wrote. “Yet we have not heard a single word from the President about the terrorists who were at the center of this event. Nor have we heard a word from the President regarding the recent Iranian and Hezbollah terror attacks against Israeli citizens. Mr. President, it’s always better to check before posting.”

South Korea maintains diplomatic relations with Israel, but a June 2025 survey by the Pew Research center found that [60% of South Korean adults view Israel unfavorably](#). Last year, a group of Christian Zionists in South Korea opened the country’s [first Holocaust museum](#), a project that was driven by “growing extremism” in the country during the Gaza war.

Both Lee and the the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded to the criticism by saying Lee did not mean to trivialize the Holocaust, with the ministry [saying](#) the Israelis had “misunderstood the intent” of his remarks.

“The Government of the Republic of Korea remains steadfast in its opposition to all forms of violence and anti-humanitarian acts, including the acts of terrorism pointed out by Israel. We have consistently maintained the position that international humanitarian law and human rights must be upheld without exception,” the post read, adding that they “continue to empathize deeply with the unspeakable suffering endured by Israel due to the Holocaust.”