



The Sabra Report

Germany, Israel Condemn Palestinian President's Holocaust Remarks

Miranda Murray and James Mackenzie, Reuters, August 17th, 2022

Recap:

World leaders reprimanded Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for trivializing the Holocaust while visiting Germany.

The Context:

- ✧ Abbas was asked if he'd apologize for a massacre of 11 Israelis at the 1972 Munich Olympics staged by Palestinian militants linked to Abbas' Fatah party [1]. Refusing, Abbas went on to accuse Israel of "perpetrating 50 Holocausts against Palestinians in 50 years [2]".
- ✧ German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who stood next to Abbas while the comments were made, only addressed the remarks after the fact. Scholz did, however, reject Abbas' use of the word "apartheid" to describe relations between Israel and the Palestinians [3]. Palestinians routinely compare Israel to apartheid South Africa under which the majority black population were denied basic rights by the minority white ruling party.
- ✧ In response to an intense international outcry, Abbas issued a statement calling the Holocaust "the most heinous crime in modern human history" and that the intent of his comment was to highlight "the crimes committed against the Palestinian people at the hands of Israeli forces". Israeli Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman called on the government to "stop legitimizing, meeting and talking with [Abbas] [4]."
- ✧ All of Germany's postwar governments have supported the state of Israel. Denying the Holocaust is banned by law in Germany, as is the display of any Nazi symbol. At the same time, Germany is one of the largest donors to the Palestinian Authority and to Palestinian charities [5].

Conversation Points:

- ✧ Why is it important to stress the Holocaust's singularity?
- ✧ Would Scholz's reprimand have been more effective if it happened immediately? Why didn't he act more decisively?
- ✧ Does Abbas feel that Palestinian history is like the Holocaust or is he playing to his base?

Notes:

1. [Amid furor, Abbas walks back '50 holocausts' claim, says he meant Israeli 'crimes'](#), Times of Israel, August 17th, 2022
2. [PA leader in Germany: Israel perpetrated '50 Holocausts' against Palestinians](#), Tamir Morag and Shahar Klaiman, Israel Hayom, August 17th, 2022
3. [Germany's Scholz 'disgusted' at Abbas's '50 holocausts' comments](#), LAHAV HARKOV, Jerusalem Post, August 16th, 2022
4. Ibid
5. [Germany Condemns Palestinian Leader Over Holocaust Remarks](#), Bojan Pancevski, Wall Street Journal, August 17th, 2022

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