

Argentina's right-wing president wraps up controversial Jerusalem visit



Milei paid a visit to Jerusalem on Tuesday, where he was met by crowds [Getty]

Jerusalem, February 8 (RHC)-- Argentina's President Javier Milei is wrapping up a controversial visit to Israel, where he pledged to move his country's embassy to Jerusalem and compared Hamas's 7 October attacks in southern Israel to the Holocaust.

Milei, a self-proclaimed Israel fan, a kibbutz that was targeted in the Hamas raids, alongside Israeli President Isaac Herzog, on Thursday and the divided city of Jerusalem earlier in the week. There he met a former Argentinian hostage of Hamas and voiced strong support for Israel's assault on Gaza, which has so far killed around 28,000 people and displaced almost the entire population of the enclave

"The free world can't remain indifferent in this case, as we see clear examples of terrorism and anti-Semitism and what I would describe as 21st-century Nazism," he said. "When we hear about the methods that were used this time, it reminds us of the atrocities of the Holocaust."

This comparison was rejected by Dani Dayan, the head of Yad Vashem memorial center, who described the attacks as "sadism and barbarism" but said any parallels to the Holocaust - when 6 million Jewish people were murdered - were "simplistic."

In Jerusalem on Tuesday, the Argentinian president also sparked outrage by saying he would move the embassy there, effectively recognizing Israel's illegal claims to the entire holy city. Only a few countries have made such a step -- prominently former U.S. President Donald Trump -- with the vast majority basing their embassies based in the coastal city of Tel Aviv with Palestinians earmarking East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state.

Although raised a Catholic, Milei has close ties to Judaism, studying the religion and regularly consulting a rabbi, according to reports. There were reports that Milei was in the process of formally converting to Judaism after his shock presidential election win in November.

The libertarian politician has also repeatedly voiced his support for Israel and has been seen waving the country's flag at rallies in Buenos Aires.

In Jerusalem, a small but enthusiastic crowd flocked to see Milei as he paid a visit to the Western Wall, some waving Argentinian and Israeli flags.

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