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Iran's President Declares Holocaust a European Myth

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Dec. 14 (AP) - President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad stepped up his anti-Israeli comments on Wednesday, calling the Holocaust a myth used by Europeans to create a Jewish state in the heart of the Islamic world.

His remarks drew swift condemnations from the White House, [Israel](#), Germany, France and the European Commission. Germany said the remarks would affect coming negotiations over [Iran's](#) nuclear program, and the European Commission president, José Manuel Barroso, said that Iranians "do not have the president, or the regime, they deserve."

Last week Mr. Ahmadinejad questioned whether the Nazi killings of six million European Jews during World War II occurred and said Israel should be moved to Europe. He also provoked an international outcry in October when he called for Israel to be "wiped off the map."

But Wednesday was the first time he publicly denied the Holocaust. Touring southeastern Iran, Mr. Ahmadinejad said that if Europeans insisted that the Holocaust had happened, then they were responsible and should pay the price.

"Today they have created a myth in the name of Holocaust and consider it to be above God, religion and the prophets," he said, speaking to an audience of thousands of people in the southeastern city of Zahedan. "If you committed this big crime, then why should the oppressed Palestinian nation pay the price?"

"This is our proposal: If you committed the crime, then give a part of your own land in Europe, the United States, Canada or Alaska to them so that the Jews can establish their country," he said, developing the theme he raised in Saudi Arabia last week.

The White House denounced the comments. "All responsible leaders in the international community recognize how outrageous" the comments are, said Scott McClellan, the White House spokesman, adding that the comments "only underscore why it is so important that the international community continue to work together to keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons."

Germany's foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, called the remarks "shocking and unacceptable."

"I cannot hide the fact that this weighs on bilateral relations and on the chances for the negotiation process," he said, referring to European talks with Iran about its nuclear program.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mark Regev, said: "The repeated outrageous remarks of the Iranian president show clearly the mind-set of the ruling clique in Tehran and indicate clearly the extremist policy goals of the regime.

"The combination of fanatical ideology, a warped sense of reality and nuclear weapons is a combination that no one in the international community can accept."

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