
South Korea Unifies Official Term for China Japan Relations



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SEOUL, South Korea – November 16, 2025 – The South Korean government has officially standardized the term for the Northeast Asian trio as South Korea-China-Japan, according to Yonhap News Agency. An unnamed presidential office official said the move reflects the expression most commonly used by the public and seeks to eliminate confusion caused by

previous inconsistent usage.

Under the former administration, the official term alternated between South Korea-China-Japan and South Korea-Japan-China, sparking debates over perceived closeness with specific countries. The change aims to restore consistency and avoid unnecessary controversies regarding diplomatic relations.

The previous government had leaned toward South Korea-Japan-China following the ASEAN summit in September 2023, attended by former President Yoon Suk-yeol. The current administration under President Lee Jae-myung views the restoration of South Korea-China-Japan as a conciliatory gesture toward China and a pragmatic, firm stance toward Japan, aligning with its broader diplomatic principles.

A presidential office official emphasized that returning to the original term corrects the ideological biases of the previous administration and underscores South Korea's commitment to balanced diplomacy in Northeast Asia.