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Half of Russian Spies in Europe Expelled Since Ukraine War – British Spy Chief

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Chief of Britain's MI6 Richard Moore. **Matt Dunham / AP / TASS**

Half of all Russian spies operating under diplomatic cover around Europe have been expelled since the start of the Kremlin's war in Ukraine, the head of British foreign intelligence said Thusday.

"So across Europe, roughly half — at last count something north of 400 Russian intelligence officers operating under diplomatic cover — have been expelled," the Guardian quoted Richard Moore, the head of MI6, as saying at the Aspen Security Forum in the U.S.

"That's probably reduced their ability to do their business to spy for Russia in Europe by half," he added.

The spies were kicked out from countries in continental Europe, including France and Germany, according to Moore.

A number of European countries have expelled dozens of Russian diplomats as part of a joint

response to Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Berlin in April declared 40 Russian diplomats persona non grata in protest of the war, while Paris expelled 41 Russians, including six suspected of working as spies under diplomatic cover.

Last month The Netherlands said it had stopped a Russian spy posing as a Brazilian intern from infiltrating the International Criminal Court, which is currently investigating suspected war crimes in Ukraine.

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