

U.K. Expels Russian Defense Attaché Accused of Being 'Undeclared' Intelligence Officer

By [AFP](#)

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London. [Andy Rain / EPA / TASS](#)

The British government announced Wednesday that it plans to expel a Russian Defense attaché over suspicions that he is "an undeclared military intelligence officer."

Home Secretary James Cleverly told parliament the U.K. would also remove the diplomatic status of several Russian-owned properties, including one in Sussex, southern England, and another in London, which he says the government believes have been used "for intelligence purposes."

Cleverly also announced new restrictions on Russian diplomatic visas, such as a cap on the length of time Russian diplomats can spend in the United Kingdom.

The move comes amid concerns over an increase in "malign" Russian activity inside Britain,

including an arson attack on a Ukrainian-linked business that was allegedly orchestrated by the Kremlin.

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Cleverly said Wednesday that the new package of measures was intended "to make clear to Russia that we will not tolerate such apparent escalations" on British soil.

At the same time, he warned that Moscow would make accusations of Russophobia and spread conspiracy theories in response to the announcement.

"This is not new and the British people and the British Government will not fall for it, and will not be taken for fools by [President Vladimir] Putin's bots, trolls, and lackeys," Cleverly said.

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