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Russia Expels British Diplomat Accused of Espionage

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The British Embassy in Moscow. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Authorities in Moscow have ordered a British diplomat accused of espionage to leave the country, the Federal Security Service (FSB) said Tuesday.

The diplomat, identified as Edward Pryor Wilkes, was allegedly sent to Moscow to replace one of six British diplomats accused of spying in August, according to the FSB.

The law enforcement agency claimed Wilkes "deliberately provided false information when obtaining a permit to enter our country, thus violating Russian law." It also alleged that his activities showed "signs of intelligence and subversive work" threatening national security.

Russia's Foreign Ministry revoked the diplomat's accreditation and ordered him to leave the country within two weeks. State media reported that Britain's ambassador to Moscow was summoned over the allegations.

In a statement sent to The Moscow Times, a British Foreign Office spokesperson

said Tuesday's expulsion order was "not the first time that Russia has made malicious and baseless accusations against our staff. We will respond in due course."

The FSB identified Wilkes as the second secretary in the British Embassy's political department and said he was assigned to Moscow through the U.K. Foreign Office's Eastern Europe and Central Asia directorate.

The agency accused the directorate of being transformed into "an intelligence service tasked with inflicting strategic defeat on Russia" following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

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