



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

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Mr Paul Price

By email: request-380635-73ed66ab@whatdotheyknow.com

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Dear Mr Price

Thank you for your emails of 8 and 11 January 2017 in which you made a Freedom of Information (FOI) request following reports in the press of an incident involving a member of staff at the Israeli Embassy in London. I apologise for the delay in getting back to you. The questions that you ask do not fall into the scope of a FOI request, but I have answered them in this letter.

A number of your questions relate to the actions of the FCO and Israel as a result of the incident. As the Foreign Secretary remarked in Parliament on 10 January 2017, the Israeli Ambassador has apologised and made clear that the remarks made do not reflect the views of the Embassy or Government of Israel. We therefore consider the matter closed.

In regards to your other questions, I will address each in turn:

Does the Foreign Office have the power to expel him (Masot) or ask him to leave?

We are unable to comment on the status of an individual as this would contravene data protection principles. However, you should be aware that our ability to expel diplomatic staff is governed by article nine of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR):

"The receiving State may at any time and without having to explain its decision, notify the sending State that the head of the mission or any member of the diplomatic staff of the mission is persona non grata or that any other member of the staff of the mission is not acceptable. In any such case, the sending State shall, as appropriate, either recall the person concerned or terminate his functions with the mission. A person may be declared non grata or not acceptable before arriving in the territory of the receiving State."

When did Masot come to Britain to fulfil a role here for the Israeli Embassy?

We are unable to disclose personal data about individuals as this would contravene data protection principles.

How many people does Britain allow the Israelis to employ at the embassy?

We have no specific agreement with Israel on the size of its mission in London.

Regulations regarding the number of staff at a diplomatic mission are outlined in the VCDR, under article 11:

“In the absence of specific agreement as to the size of the mission, the receiving State may require that the size of a mission be kept within limits considered by it to be reasonable and normal, having regard to circumstances and conditions in the receiving State and to the needs of the particular mission.”

Has anyone from the Foreign Office met with Masot? if so when and who?

We are aware that Mr Masot accompanied the Israeli Ambassador to meetings at the FCO but we do not hold records of whom these meetings were with or when they took place. Mr Masot did not hold any bilateral meetings with FCO staff.

What efforts have the FCO made to ensure that British Democracy cannot be subverted in this way by foreign powers in future?

You might like to read the [FCO's departmental plan](#) which sets out what we do to protect our people, project our global influence and promote our prosperity.

Who is the supervising body of an individual like Strizzolo in her position as was, so that a complaint may be made?

As you will know from media reporting, Ms Strizzolo has resigned from her position as senior advisor to Robert Halfon, Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills. Further correspondence regarding Ms Strizzolo can be directed to [the Department for Education](#).

I hope that this sufficiently answers your questions.

Yours Sincerely

Near East Department