

Israeli Foreign Minister Predicts Russification of Parliament

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Israel's foreign minister has said that the halls of Israel's Knesset, or parliament, could be abuzz with Russian rather than Hebrew in the future.

Speaking at a synagogue in Brooklyn during a visit to the U.S. on Sunday, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who migrated to Israel from his native Moldova at the age of 20, lauded his adoptive country for his rapid climb up the political ladder.

"Only in Israel can a young Russian immigrant arrive and in 20 years become foreign minister," he said, Israeli news website Haaretz reported.

"One day we will have a Russian-speaking minister of defense, a Russian-speaking president, and soon we may have a Russian-speaking prime minister," he said.

Lieberman, who heads the right-wing Yisrael Beiteinu party and enjoys great popularity among the country's 1 million Soviet emigres, has reportedly set his sights on the post of prime minister, which will be up for grabs in Israel's 2017 election.

When asked about Ukraine at the meeting, during which Lieberman addressed attendants in fluent Russian, the foreign minister proved himself quite the diplomat.

"Israel has excellent relations with Russia, Ukraine and the United States, and the main concern is the security of the Jewish community there. We are doing important and quiet work in keeping the Jewish community safely out of this fight," he said.

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