

## Maltese EC official facing serious charges for anti-Semitic aggression in Brussels bar

Belgian police have forwarded investigation into alleged physical and verbal anti-Semitic aggression by Stefan Grech, 46, to the Brussels prosecutor



Matthew Vella 3 September 2015, 4:01pm

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Stefan Grech, 46, is facing serious charges of anti-Semitism

A Maltese civil servant at the European Commission could face criminal charges on grave accusations of anti-Semitic aggression – both verbal and physical – against an Italian colleague whom he assumed, mistakenly, was Jewish.

Stefan Grech, 46, was reported having been investigated by the police in Brussels, where he works at the EC's directorate-general for transport, over the aggression that took place at a restaurant.

The matter has been forwarded to the Brussels prosecutor for further action, according to a representative of the Belgian League Against Anti-Semitism (LBCA), Joel Rubinstein.

Grech – who is the brother of Nationalist MP Claudio Grech and also a blogger for inewsmalta.com – was alleged to have verbally attacked an Italian head of department at one of the EU institutions, 50 years of age, and then assaulted her physically at a café on Rue Arlon, just off Place du Luxembourg.

The harrowing incident took place on 16 July, at around 11:30pm, according to various news sources.

Grech was said to have been holding a metal-plated clipboard, with 'Mussolini' written on it, allegedly eulogising the WWII dictator.

The lady, who was sat at table with her friends, pointed out that "Mussolini was always a dictator", to which Grech was said to have replied: "Dirty Jew... Hitler should have exterminated all the Jews, just as they today are exterminating the Palestinians."

According to the woman's police complaint, the confrontation soon deteriorated into a physical attack, when Grech hit her on the head with his clipboard and then even attempted to strangle her by placing his hands around her neck.

As patrons in the café stood up to repel the Maltese aggressor, Grech was said to have further shouted out: "All you Jews must be killed."

Grech was described as being a representative of the EU workers' trade union Generation 2004. He was recognised at the scene by witnesses who supplied his name to the police.

The victim in question, who was not Jewish, filed a police complaint as well as seeking the assistance of the LBCA's president Joël Rubinfeld, who filed the association's own complaint against Grech.

Haaretz also reported that the next morning, the victim felt pain and went to the Parc Leopold hospital, where doctors diagnosed a concussion and internal hemorrhaging. The woman is also seeing a psychologist, suffering from anxiety and taking tranquilizers.

"This grave incident illustrates yet again that one does not need to be Jewish to be a victim of anti-Semitism," Rubinfeld stated on Facebook and the LBCA's website. "I am sure the EU authorities will take the appropriate measures to sack him."

Grech released a comment to the The Jerusalem Post saying that he could not comment on the incident before he gets a lawyer. "I learned about this incident from the media yesterday, and it is being blown out of proportion," he told the Post. He stated categorically that he was not an anti-Semite. "I never even hurt a mouse. I have nothing against Jews or against any nationality. It happened at a bar. It was people joking around about politics and it got out of control."

In 2002, Grech - then an activist for the pro-EU accession movement 'Iva' - had pleaded guilty to the possession and distribution of child pornography after he was charged with the hoarding of pornographic material. The case was then heard behind closed doors.

He was given a six-month jail term, suspended for a year for the possession and distribution of child porn but acquitted of taking pictures and hoarding pornographic material. Psychiatrist David Cassar testified that Grech had been under psychiatric care long before the court case began. Magistrate Antonio Mizzi ruled that had it not been for this fact he would have applied the maximum jail term, but recommended that Grech should not lose his job since the treatment and his job were necessary for his future development.