



The trial of Israel's former foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, on charges of fraud and breach of trust has begun in Jerusalem.

The charges relate to his alleged involvement in the promotion of Israel's former ambassador to Belarus. Mr Lieberman, who stepped down after the charges were filed in January, pleaded not guilty on all counts.

He heads the Yisrael Beiteinu party, which ran on a list with Likud to win last month's elections narrowly.

However, the list only won 31 seats in the 120-strong Knesset, and Likud's leader, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is currently trying to forge a workable coalition.

The BBC's Yolande Knell says this trial could determine Mr Lieberman's future in politics. Prosecutors allege the politician intervened to promote Zeev Ben Aryeh, the former ambassador to Belarus, to a post in Latvia.

They say it was a reward for a tip-off about a separate criminal investigation he was facing.

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