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## The Czech no-shake zone



Pres. Petr Pavel's [private spokesman](#), Petr Kolář, told [Czech TV](#) on Mon. that until he has a straight discussion about it with the president, he doesn't want to say much about whether the CR should have an ambassador in Moscow. "From my perspective we shouldn't have an ambassador there now, but that doesn't mean I'll be the one who somehow decides. I would nevertheless like to clear this up with the president." A few hours later his son, MP Ondřej Kolář of TOP 09, told [ČT](#) that the CR shouldn't have an ambassador in Russia now. The issue is whether a successor should be chosen for [Vítězslav Pivoňka](#). Pavel would then have to send a letter to Putin, and the new ambassador would have to shake Putin's hand. The same issue will soon surface with regard to Syria. The CR acts there as a [protecting power for U.S. interests](#) and probably won't want to endanger this. Pavel might have to explain why it's okay for a Czech envoy to shake hands with Bashar al-Assad but not with Vladimir Putin.

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