

Snowden 'exhausted,' misses American girlfriend

Doug Stanglin, USA TODAY 10:25 a.m. EDT August 2, 2013

His lawyer says Snowden is in a 'safe place' and has no plans to leave the country.



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National Security Agency leaker Edward Snowden is "exhausted" and misses his American girlfriend, but has settled into a safe, undisclosed location with the help of newly acquired American friends after getting temporary asylum in Russia, according to his lawyer.

Snowden received immigration papers on Thursday from his lawyer, Anatoly Kucherena, and immediately jumped into a taxi with a pre-packed suitcase and headed into Moscow.

"Snowden is in a safe place. I didn't suggest it to him, it was his decision," Kucherena told Dozhd TV, [RIA Novosti reports](http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130802/182543890/US-Fugitive-Snowden-Finds-New-Home-in-Russia--Lawyer.html). (http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130802/182543890/US-Fugitive-Snowden-Finds-New-Home-in-Russia--Lawyer.html) "He will decide for himself how to live his life from now on. He has friends with him, including Americans with whom he made contact via his friends from the United States when he was still in the [airport] transit zone."

Snowden has also been assisted in Moscow by a WikiLeaks representative, Sarah Harrison.

Kucherena said the 30-year-old former defense contractor is "exhausted" and will need to go through a period of "rehabilitation" to get over the grueling experience since he arrived in Russia from Hong Kong on June 23.

"Snowden can live in a hotel or rent a flat in Russia," said Kucherena, [according to RT.com](http://rt.com/news/snowden-russia-kucherena-mills-914/) (http://rt.com/news/snowden-russia-kucherena-mills-914/). "But the personal safety issue is a very serious one for him."

The lawyer told Julia Ioffe of *The New Republic* (<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/114121/edward-snowden-leaves-moscow-airport-gets-job-offers#>) that Snowden, after receiving the asylum papers, at first didn't seem to fully understand internally how his life had changed.

"Because he had been waiting for it for so long, he had been so worried," the lawyer told the magazine. "He said, 'It can't be!' That he wouldn't believe it 'til he saw the documents. Then, of course, he was happy."

Kucherena said that Russia has no plans to prevent Snowden from leaving the country at any moment, but added that he "has no intention to travel abroad as of now."



Snowden has been offered asylum by three Latin American countries -- Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua -- but has been unable to travel since the U.S. revoked his passport and charged him under the Espionage Act for leaking information to reporters about the NSA's worldwide surveillance and data-gathering networks.

He has said he went public with the information in order to "correct this wrongdoing."



In his only public statement since getting asylum, Snowden said in a statement issued through WikiLeaks: "Over the past eight weeks we have seen the Obama administration show no respect for international or domestic law, but in the end the law is winning. I thank the Russian federation for granting me asylum in accordance with its laws and international obligations."

In Washington, White House spokesman Jay Carney said the administration is "extremely disappointed" with Russia's decision to grant him a one-year political asylum.

Carney also said that President Obama, who is scheduled to visit St. Petersburg, Russia, in early September for a G-20 summit, is undecided about a side trip to Moscow for private meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Russians have said that they will not extradite Snowden, but have been assured by him that he will not leak any additional information harmful to the United States while he is on Russian territory.

Kucherenka told *The New Republic* that Snowden has gotten "a lot of job offers" already in Russia.

Pavel Durov, founder of VKontakte, a Russian version of Facebook, said he would be pleased to have Snowden on board.

Otherwise, Snowden appears to be settling into life as an American ex-pat in Moscow, including getting his social life back on track.

"When I told him about the people who were calling him, including girls, such Russian girls, he told me 'Anatoly, I still miss my girlfriend.'"

Julia Mills, a self-described acrobatic police dancer who apparently had no advance warning that Snowden was leaving the country, has moved out of their home in Hawaii.

In a blog post purportedly written by Mills after Snowden's departure became public, she said, according to ABC News (<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2013/06/edward-snowdens-girlfriend-lost-at-sea/>), "My world has opened and closed all at once. Leaving me lost at sea without a compass."

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