
Edward Snowden requests a three-year extension of Russian residency

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Moscow, April 18 (RHC)-- Former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden has filed a request to extend his residency permit in Russia for three more years, his lawyer has said, according to state-run news agency TASS.

"Yes, a couple of days ago we have filed documents to extend his permit for three more years and we hope it will be satisfied," Anatoly Kucherena said, adding that there "was no discussion" about Snowden obtaining Russian citizenship, TASS reported.

Previously, Kucherena said that Snowden's permit was due to expire in April 2020. Snowden is accused of espionage and theft of government property in the United States for leaking troves of information on American intelligence and mass surveillance program to the media.

He has been living in exile in Moscow after initially traveling to Hong Kong following his 2013 public disclosure of the classified information. The Russian government granted Snowden asylum and extended his residency permit in 2017 until 2020.

In 2016, U.S. Congress released a report saying Snowden had been in contact with Russian intelligence officials since his arrival to Russia, a claim Snowden denied. In his most recent interview in September last year, Snowden said he would be willing to return to the United States if he is guaranteed a fair trial -- something that he admits is not likely.