

Ed Snowden's Lawyer Says Case Legal, Not Political



Moscow, July 30 (RHC)-- The U.S. authorities' reluctance to view Edward Snowden's case impartially makes it impossible for the former NSA contractor to return home, his lawyer says.

Snowden's Russian lawyer Anatoly Kucherena made the remarks in response to comments by U.S. Homeland Security Advisor Lisa Monaco over a petition signed by more than 167,000 to request for his pardon over revealing the existence of a massive spying program.

Kucherena censured Monaco's "spicy wordings," saying: "The remarks by a presidential administration official show that this country still considers the Snowden case not from a legal but from a political standpoint. Edward is being referred to as a criminal, although there is a certain procedure for holding someone criminally liable."

"All statements related to Edward that have been made lately by the American authorities show that they are unwilling to conduct a fair, just, and impartial investigation in the future."

In response to the petition, Monaco urged Snowden earlier in the day to turn himself in.

According to Snowden's lawyer: "The fact that this petition has been considered for more than two years speaks volumes. If this document has been considered for so long, what can we say about a future investigation?"

Kucherena called on U.S. authorities that are not involved in the justice system to stop commenting on the matter, noting: "Ms. Monaco resorted to incorrect statements made in a lecturing tone characteristic of some American figures."

"I would ask U.S. policymakers and officials not to forget before speaking regarding Edward that his matter is not in the political but in the legal framework."

Ed Snowden, who currently lives in Russia where he has been granted asylum, began leaking the U.S. National Security Agency's classified intelligence documents in June 2013, revealing the extent of spying activities going on in the United States and the rest of the world.

"Meanwhile, there is factual data that all U.S. special services have tapped and are continuing to tap not only their citizens but even leaders of foreign countries," Kucherena said.

Snowden has said that U.S. government surveillance methods far surpass those of an "Orwellian" state, referring to George Orwell's classic novel "1984," which describes a society where personal privacy is continuously invaded by spy agencies.

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