

Snowden Lauds Russia During Brazilian Interview

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Former U.S. intelligence contractor Edward Snowden said he is grateful to Russia for giving him the opportunity to live as a free man and take part in the debate on important global issues while in exile.

In his email correspondence with Brazilian television channel Globo, Snowden said he spent much of his time reading and closely followed world affairs.

During his six-month stay in Russia, Snowden also managed to pick up some of the language and speaks it well enough to say "Merry Christmas!" in Russian, he told the channel's weekly Fantastico program.

Snowden wrote a lengthy "open letter to the people of Brazil" last week, in which he commended the country for taking a stand against the U.S. and said he would be willing to move to Brazil to help it defend itself against U.S. spying practices should the country grant

him asylum.

Brazilian authorities have since denied reports of a pending asylum request.

On Sunday President Barack Obama's national security adviser Susan Rice repeated the U.S. stance against granting Snowden amnesty and called for his extradition so that he can be tried on espionage charges.

"We believe he should come back, he should be sent back, and he should have his day in court," she said on CBS News. "The position of the United States is that he ought to come back and face justice."

Snowden has been living at an undisclosed location in Russia since he was granted temporary asylum in August. His lawyer Anatoly Kucherena said last month the leaker had landed a job at a major Russian website but did not specify which one.

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