

Council of Europe Invites Snowden to Speak on Spying

By [The Moscow Times](#)

January 29, 2014

The  **Moscow Times**

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, or PACE, said Wednesday that it would invite National Security Agency intelligence leaker Edward Snowden to Strasbourg in April to debate "mass surveillance and whistleblowing" with U.S. officials at public hearings.

Snowden, who has been on the run from U.S. authorities since leaking reports of mass surveillance in June, would be welcomed to "sum up his disclosures to date and possibly make additional ones," according to a statement on the PACE website.

U.S. officials could "take position on whether he was telling the truth — and if so, how such surveillance could be justified," the statement says, citing Netherlands deputy Pieter Omtzigt, who is preparing reports on mass surveillance and whistleblowing for the assembly's legal affairs and human rights committee.

Snowden has been living in Russia since being granted temporary asylum in August.

"It will be ultimately up to Mr. Snowden, in agreement with his Russian hosts, to decide whether he feels confident to accept such an invitation," Omtzigt is quoted as saying.

The statement did not address whether Snowden would be liable for detention by French authorities were he to accept the invitation to go to Strasbourg, but it suggested that his address could be done by video conference.

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