
'Grant Snowden French asylum' petition gets 150,000 signatures

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Over 150,000 French people have supported a petition urging President Francois Hollande to grant NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden asylum in France after his refugee status expires in Russia in July.

News magazine L'Express published a [manifesto](#) and petition on June 3, saying that "France, country of human rights and freedom of the press, has a particular obligation towards [him]."

"The Constitution states that any person persecuted for their actions in favor of freedom has the right of asylum on the republic's territory," the petition points out.

"We, intellectuals, philosophers, researchers, journalists, but before all active citizens, demand Francois Hollande, president of the republic, Manuel Valls, prime minister, Laurent Fabius, foreign minister, welcome [Snowden] as a political refugee without delay in France," the petition states.

The petition has already been signed by dozens of celebrities, including ex-premier Michel Rocard, and urges Hollande and Valls to welcome Snowden *"without delay, as a political refugee."*

However, Valls told BFM television on Friday that he does not favor the idea.

On Wednesday, in Berlin, the new campaign was launched to provide protection to whistleblowers like Edward Snowden who face persecution from governments, the Courage organization.

Snowden, who appeared at the launch via video link, said it was now up to the people to protect the world's truth-tellers.

Edward Snowden, an IT specialist who leaked thousands of classified documents relating to American surveillance operations, currently granted temporary asylum in Russia. However, with his visa nearing an end, he has been seeking asylum in the EU and has also made a formal request to Brazil.

Snowden is charged by the USA with spying and stealing state documents.
