



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on August 2, 2013

Report of Snowden Seeking Ties to KGB Vets False, Lawyer Says

A report that NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden has sought membership in an organization of former KGB agents is false, a Russian lawyer assisting the U.S. refugee told [The Moscow News](#).

A report published in the [Washington Free Beacon](#) earlier this week said Snowden had applied for membership in "Veterans of the Siloviki," an organization of former members of the Soviet secret police. But Anatoly Kucherena, a prominent Russian lawyer, said the message was a fraud, sent by someone who claimed to be Snowden.



"I express my desire to join the union association. I need protection," read the July 3 e-mail allegedly from Snowden, the former intelligence analyst who in early June turned over classified documents on a secret National Security Agency surveillance program to British publication *The Guardian* and to the *Washington Post*. News of the program, involving the collection and storage of billions of phone call records, private e-mails, and other electronic communications, has created headlines worldwide and ongoing controversy over the nation's security measures and their impact on civil liberties.

Snowden, who fled the country, is wanted on charges of espionage and theft of government property. After going first from his Hawaiian home to Hong Kong, he flew to Moscow on June 23 and remained at an airport there until yesterday, when he was granted a one-year asylum by the Russian government, despite protests and warnings from Washington. U.S. officials had been pressuring Russia for Snowden's return to face prosecution since his arrival in Moscow more than six weeks ago. White House spokesman Jay Carney said the Obama administration is "[extremely disappointed](#)" and that President Obama is reconsidering a planned summit meeting next month with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The KGB veterans apparently believed the message they'd received came from Snowden and were willing to accept his request for membership.

"Snowden is one of us, from our officers' brotherhood. Moreover, he is not a criminal," one of the union's leaders, Alexei Lobarev was quoted as saying. Snowden's lawyer confirmed that he received a letter from a law enforcement association offering to help the American fugitive, but he denied Snowden had ever requested such help.

"Snowden did not address any letter to any association," Kucherena told *The Moscow News*. "Where it came from, whose fabrication it was, it's difficult for me to say." The attorney expressed surprise that a group claiming to be made up of former intelligence and law enforcement veterans were fooled by it.

"It's surprising the leaders believed it," he said.

Photo of Edward Snowden: AP Images



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