

Russia Criticizes Britain on Human Rights After Pressure on Guardian

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia accused Britain on Wednesday of failing to live up to its own declarations on human rights by forcing the Guardian newspaper to destroy materials leaked by fugitive former U.S. spy agency contractor Edward Snowden.

Russia has granted asylum to Snowden, in a move that has strained ties with the U.S., where the young American is wanted on espionage charges after leaking details of secret government surveillance programs.

Western countries including Britain and the U.S. have frequently criticized Russia's human rights record in the past. Moscow has used the Snowden affair to accuse London and Washington of double standards.

"The measures taken by the British authorities toward the Guardian newspaper are out of tune with the British side's statements on commitments to universal standards of human

rights," Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich said in a statement on the ministry website.

The Guardian said Tuesday that British authorities had forced it to destroy material obtained from Snowden.

Lukashevich said London was upsetting freedom of press and protection of privacy rules and had violated the rights of journalists.

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