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Edward Snowden Receives Russian Passport – Lawyer

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Former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden addresses an educational summit via video link. **Artyom Geodakyan / TASS**

American whistleblower Edward Snowden has received a Russian passport, the state-run TASS news agency reported Friday, citing Snowden's lawyer.

Snowden, who in 2013 exposed mass surveillance by his former employer the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA), has lived in Russia since that year to avoid prosecution by U.S. authorities. President Vladimir Putin granted him citizenship in September, two years after he applied for a Russian passport.

Related article: Putin Grants Edward Snowden Russian Citizenship – Decree

Snowden's lawyer Anatoly Kucherena told TASS that the whistleblower also took the oath of citizenship on Friday.

Moscow several years ago relaxed its strict citizenship laws to allow individuals to obtain Russian passports without renouncing their original citizenship.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov had earlier said that Snowden was granted Russian citizenship as a result of his own request.

AFP contributed reporting.

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