

Digest of information for FOI request 1001-15

Diptel Washington to FCO London dated 25 June 2013. Subject: US: Snowden

To Russia

Snowden remains in transit at Moscow Airport

someone whose itinerary has taken them from China, to Russia, and potentially on to Ecuador via Cuba.

Diptel Washington to FCO London dated 17 June 2013. Subject: US

And for Edward Snowden

Who has fled to China...and is reportedly toying with political asylum in Russia,

Diptel La Paz to FCO London dated 3 July 2013. Subject: Bolivia Snowden

due to 'unfounded suspicions' that Edward Snowden was onboard the Presidential plane.

FCO email dated 14 June 2013. Subject: HONG KONG: Edward Snowden – update on local reactions

BACKGROUND

Edward Snowden...is said to have fled to Hong Kong.

Diptel Moscow to FCO London dated 26 June 2013. Subject: Russia: Snowden

Detail

Edward Snowden had not left Moscow for Havana on Monday

Snowden's initial arrival in Russia.

Diptel Moscow to FCO London dated 25 June 2013. Subject: Russia/Snowden: The Invisible Man

Summary

Former NSA employee Edward Snowden still reported to be in Moscow

Edward Snowden is widely reported to have arrived at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport on the evening of 23 June. Without a valid Russian visa he is reported to have remained airside at the airport

ITAR-TASS reported early evening that Snowden was still within the airport's transit zone.

Diptel Moscow to FCO London dated 4 July 2013. Subject: Russia: Snowden: Terminal Drift

Summary

12 days on. Snowden makes a claim for asylum in Russia, then withdraws it.

DETAIL

On 1 July, the Russian MFA duty consul confirmed to media that Edward Snowden had requested political asylum in Russia. Less than 24 hours later, Putin's press spokesman announced that Snowden had withdrawn that request. According to a wikileaks press release, Snowden's lawyer had also delivered requests for asylum for twenty further countries, asking the Russian consulate to pass to relevant embassies.

...the Bolivian President's plane was stopped in Vienna on its return from Moscow, apparently so officials could check if Snowden was on board.

On 2 July, Putin's press spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, made the unexpected announcement that Snowden no longer requested, nor intended, to stay in Russia.

Diptel Moscow to FCO London dated 16 July 2013. Subject: Russia: Snowden: Life and Fate

Summary

Edward Snowden puts in application for temporary asylum in Russia. Follows first public appearance at Sheremetyevo Airport on 12 July.

DETAIL

On 16 July former NSA employee Edward Snowden put in an application for temporary asylum in Russia. This follows his public appearance on 12 July, his first since arriving at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport from Hong Kong.

Snowden said that he had received offers of support and asylum from countries including Russia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, and he accepted all those offers. He asked for the assistance of the invited group in requesting guarantees of his safe passage to South America, and in seeking asylum from Russia until those guarantees can be obtained. Snowden ended his statement by saying that he would be submitting his asylum request to Russia that day – he eventually submitted the request on 16 July.

COMMENT

The fact that it is now being reported that Snowden has put in his request for temporary asylum is prompting speculation that a deal may have been struck.

Diptel Moscow to FCO London dated 26 July 2013. Subject: Russia: Snowden

Summary

At time of writing, Snowden has not been granted temporary admission into Russia. His lawyer delivers clothes and books, and says Snowden intends to stay in Russia.

Detail

Day 33. On 24 July, Russia's Federal Migration Service leaked to the media that Snowden had been granted temporary permission to leave Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport and enter Russia. However shortly thereafter, Snowden's lawyer arrived at the airport...to announce that Snowden had not been given temporary admission and the case was still being considered because "the situation is non-standard". He added that Snowden was looking to remain in Russia in the long-term: "as of today, the final country of destination for him is Russia".

Comment

Temporary admission would not of itself allow Snowden to travel outside Russia, but it would enable him to visit embassies of any of the countries that have offered him asylum. The rumour-mill still points firmly at Venezuela as his preferred final destination.

Diptel Dublin to FCO London dated 5 July 2013. Subject: Ireland

Summary

News that Ireland is among the group of countries to which Snowden has applied for asylum

DETAIL

Media coverage has been measured and factual, concentrating particularly on the question of Snowden's application for asylum in Ireland and the US arrest warrant.

Diptel Paris to FCO London dated 5 July 2013. Subject: France

Summary

France rejects asylum bid from Snowden.

Political Reaction

...the Snowden asylum request, which had been pointedly turned down by the Government,