

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
PRESS RELEASE**

AI Index: PRE 01/347/2013
12 July 2013

Amnesty International meets US whistleblower Edward Snowden

Amnesty International met with US whistleblower Edward Snowden at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport on Friday. Sergei Nikitin, Head of Amnesty International's Moscow office, who was at the meeting said:

“Amnesty International was pleased to reiterate our support for Edward Snowden in person. We will continue to pressure governments to ensure his rights are respected - this includes the unassailable right to claim asylum wherever he may choose.

“What he has disclosed is patently in the public interest and as a whistleblower his actions were justified. He has exposed unlawful sweeping surveillance programmes that unquestionably interfere with an individual’s right to privacy.

“States that attempt to stop a person from revealing such unlawful behaviour are flouting international law. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right.

“Instead of addressing or even owning up to these blatant breaches, the US government is more intent on persecuting him. Attempts to pressure governments to block his efforts to seek asylum are deplorable.”

ENDS