

WikiLeaks to file complaint against Visa, Mastercard: lawyer

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Whistleblower website WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange speaks at the Troxy Club in London on July 2. WikiLeaks will lodge a complaint with the European Commission against credit card giants Visa and MasterCard if the two companies refuse to lift their ban on donations to the site, their lawyer said.

WikiLeaks will lodge a complaint with the European Commission against credit card giants Visa and MasterCard if the two companies refuse to lift their ban on donations to the site, their lawyer said Monday.

The controversial site that has infuriated the US by leaking thousands of diplomatic cables will file the [complaint](#) on Thursday if the ban is not lifted first, the site's Iceland-based lawyer Svein Andri Sveinsson told AFP.

[WikiLeaks](#) will also file separate complaints in both Denmark and

Reykjavik, likely in September, hoping to recover the tens of millions of euros it says it has lost through the seven-month donation freeze, Sveinsson said.

"There are three battlefields in this case. One in Brussels, one in Denmark and one in Iceland," the lawyer explained.

At the commission in Brussels, WikiLeaks will charge that Visa and MasterCard have abused their dominant market position and violated European competition rules.

"Visa and Mastercard are not small companies down the street. Visa and Mastercard have a total dominant position on this market," Sveinsson said, noting the two companies control 96 percent of the European credit card market.

"They cannot behave as they want to. They have to have reasonable and logical motives, and they haven't," he complained.

The Brussels complaint will be filed through an Icelandic company affiliated with Wikileaks called Sunshine Press Productions and another Icelandic firm, DataCell, that handles WikiLeaks' donation collection.

In December, [Visa](#) and MasterCard imposed a ban on all payments made to WikiLeaks.

DataCell wants the freeze lifted, but also wants to be compensated for all funds it thinks it has lost over the past seven months.

"That's 130.000 euros per day," Sveinsson claimed. "If you count that over the period, that's an eight figure number. In euros."

The [lawyer](#) also insisted the site's work has been misrepresented by its

enemies.

"Many people think WikiLeaks are [hackers](#). But they're not, they're just another press organisation," he said.

"They get confidential information that is leaked to them ... They're not hackers, and they're not leaking the information themselves."

WikiLeaks' Australian founder Julian Assange became an international celebrity last year after his site leaked classified information about the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as private cables written by US diplomats, many of which contained embarrassing descriptions of foreign officials.

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