

# US, Russia in dispute over computer attacks: report

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Citing an unnamed senior State Department official, the newspaper said that both nations agree that cyberspace is an emerging battleground, and the two sides are expected to address the subject when Obama visits Russia next month and at the General Assembly of the United Nations in November.

Russia favors an international treaty along the lines of those negotiated for chemical weapons and has pushed for that approach at a series of meetings this year, the report said.

Meanwhile, the United States argues that a treaty is unnecessary and instead advocates improved cooperation among international law enforcement groups, the paper noted.

"We really believe it's defense, defense, defense," The Times quotes as saying the State Department official, who asked not to be identified. "They want to constrain offense. We needed to be able to criminalize these horrible 50,000 attacks we were getting a day."

According to the paper, any agreement on cyberspace presents special difficulties because the matter touches on issues like [censorship](#) of the [Internet](#), sovereignty and rogue actors who might not be subject to a treaty.

US officials say the disagreement over approach has hindered international law enforcement cooperation, particularly given that a significant proportion of the attacks against US government targets are coming from China and Russia, the report said.

Recognizing the need to deal with the growing threat of cyberwar, many countries, including the [United States](#), are developing weapons for it, like "logic bombs" that can be hidden in computers to halt them at crucial times or damage circuitry, "botnets" that can disable or spy on websites and networks, or [microwave radiation](#) devices that can burn out computer circuits miles away, the paper said.

Obama is due to visit Russia on July 6-8 in a bid to improve relations with [Russia](#) that were badly strained under the administration of his predecessor, George W. Bush.

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