US, Russia begin talks on cyberspace security: report

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File picture shows a cybersecurity conference in Singapore. The United States has begun talks with Russia and a UN arms control committee about strengthening Internet security and limiting military use of cyberspace, The New York Times reported

The United States has begun talks with Russia and a UN arms control committee about strengthening Internet security and limiting military use of cyberspace, The New York Times reported.

Citing officials familiar with the talks, the newspaper said US and Russian officials have different interpretations of the talks, but the mere fact that the Washington is participating represents a significant policy shift after years of rejecting Russia's overtures.

Officials argue the administration of President Barack Obama realized that more nations were developing cyberweapons and that a new

approach was needed to blunt an international arms race, the report said.

Viktor Sokolov, deputy director of the Institute of Information Security in Moscow, said the Russian view was that the US position on Internet security had shifted perceptibly in recent months, according to the paper.

Sokolov characterized this new round of discussions as the opening of negotiations between Russia and the United States on a possible disarmament treaty for cyberspace, something Russia has long sought but the United States has resisted, the report said.

"The talks took place in a good atmosphere," The Times quoted him as saying. "And they agreed to continue this process. There are positive movements."

However, a State Department official, who requested anonymity, disputed the Russian characterization of the US position, the paper noted.

While the Russians have continued to focus on treaties that may restrict weapons development, the United States is hoping to use the talks to increase international cooperation in opposing Internet crime.

The United States believes that strengthening defenses against Internet criminals would also strengthen defenses against any military-directed cyberattacks, according to The Times. An administration official said the United States was seeking common ground with the Russians.

The United Nations discussions are scheduled to resume in New York in January, and the two countries also plan to talk at an annual Russia-sponsored Internet security conference in Garmisch, Germany, ther paper said.

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