

Chinese minister insists Google obey the law

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Li Yizhong, Chinese Minister of Industry and Information Technology, gestures during a press conference in Beijing Friday, March 12, 2010. Li, China's top Internet regulator, insisted Friday that Google must obey its laws or "pay the consequences," giving no sign of a possible compromise in their dispute over censorship and hacking. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

(AP) -- China's top Internet regulator insisted Friday that Google must obey its laws or "pay the consequences," giving no sign of a possible compromise in their dispute over censorship and hacking.

"If you want to do something that disobeys Chinese law and regulations, you are unfriendly, you are irresponsible and you will have to pay the consequences," Li Yizhong, the minister of Industry and Information Technology, said on the sidelines of China's annual legislature.

He gave no details of Beijing's talks with [Google](#) Inc. over the search engine's January announcement that it planned to stop complying with

Chinese [Internet censorship](#) rules and might close its China-based site.

"Whether they leave or not is up to them," Li said. "But if they leave, China's Internet market is still going to develop."

Li insisted that Beijing needs to censor Internet content to protect the rights of the country and its people.

"If there is information that harms stability or the people, of course we will have to block it," he said

Responding to Google's complaints of China-based hacking against its e-mail service and several dozen major companies, Li said the government opposes hacking.

Google CEO [Eric Schmidt](#) said Wednesday at a media conference in the United Arab Emirates that the Internet search company is in active negotiations with the [Chinese government](#) and expects some resolution in its dispute with [Beijing](#) soon.

Schmidt declined to provide specifics or predict how long the discussions would last, saying Google has decided not to publicize details of the talks.

The Chinese government has rejected suggestions by Western security experts that the Chinese military or government agencies might have been involved in the hacking.

"You cannot find evidence about who organizes such attacks. The Chinese government has repeatedly opposed and deterred hacking attacks," Li said.

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