

Cyber-defence slow due to generation gap: US official

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Analysts work at the National Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Center (NCCIC) in Arlington, Virginia, in 2010. Sluggish moves to counter the rising threat of cyber-attacks can be blamed on a generation of policymakers out of touch with rapid technological change, a senior US official said Monday.

Sluggish moves to counter the rising threat of cyber-attacks can be blamed on a generation of policymakers out of touch with rapid technological change, a senior US official said Monday.

"The truth is there are a lot of senior officials in many countries who barely even know how to use an email," Rose Gottemoeller, US acting under-secretary for arms control and international security, said during a visit to Estonia.

"The change will come with the new generation," she told the audience at a lecture delivered at the Estonian IT College, in the Baltic state's capital Tallinn.

Estonia is one of the world's most wired nations, and its high-tech savvy has earned it the nickname "E-Stonia".

Home to NATO's cyber-defence centre, founded in 2008, the nation of 1.3 million has been at the forefront of efforts to preempt cyber-attacks.

Estonia has bitter experience in the field.

A politically charged dispute with its Soviet-era master Moscow in 2007 was marked by a blistering [cyber-attack](#) blamed on [Russian hackers](#) -- though the Kremlin denied any involvement.

Gottemoeller also said governments should consider incorporating open-source IT and [social networking](#) into arms control verification and monitoring.

"In order to pursue the goal of a world free from [nuclear weapons](#), we are going to have to think bigger and bolder," she explained.

"New concepts are not invented overnight, and we don't understand the full range of possibilities inherent in the [information age](#), but we would be remiss if we did not start thinking about whether new technologies can augment over half a century of arms control negotiating expertise," she added.

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