

# Trump's team pushes back against Russia hacking reports

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In this Sept. 28, 2015 file photo, President Barack Obama shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin before a bilateral meeting at United Nations headquarters. Obama has ordered intelligence officials to conduct a broad review on the election-season hacking that rattled the presidential campaign and raised new concerns about foreign meddling in U.S. elections, a White House official said Friday. White House counterterrorism and Homeland Security adviser Lisa Monaco said Obama ordered officials to report on the hacking of Democratic officials' email accounts and Russia's involvement. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik, File)

Donald Trump's presidential transition team pushed back Saturday against reports that Russia was caught trying to tip the November election to the Republican and challenged the veracity of U.S. intelligence agencies investigating the campaign-season cyberattacks.

President Barack Obama's order for a full-scale review of campaign-season cyberattacks to be completed before he leaves office next month met with a chilly reception at Trump Tower, as did published reports saying that the CIA believes Russia acted specifically to harm Hillary Clinton's chances in the election.

"I believe there are people within these agencies who are upset with the outcome of the election," Sean Spicer, spokesman for the Trump transition, said on CNN.

Spicer also denied a report in The New York Times that Republican National Committee systems had been breached during the election. He said the RNC has worked with intelligence agencies that have told it "with certainty that we haven't been hacked." Both The Times and The Washington Post reported on a secret CIA assessment that Russia intervened to help Trump win, not just to cause aimless mischief in a U.S. election.

Spicer questioned why the CIA wasn't making its assessment public as the intelligence community did after the hacking of the Democratic National Committee.

An earlier statement by the Trump transition team also reflected the deep divisions that emerged between his campaign and [intelligence agencies](#) over Russian meddling. "These are the same people that said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction," the statement said.

"The election ended a long time ago in one of the biggest Electoral College victories in history. It's now time to move on and 'Make America Great Again.'"

But Democratic Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said he would press for a congressional investigation in the new year. "That any country could be meddling in our elections should shake both political parties to their core," he said. "It's imperative that our [intelligence community](#) turns over any relevant information so that Congress can conduct a full investigation."

There was no immediate official response from Moscow. But Oleg Morozov, a member of the foreign relations committee in the upper house of the Russian parliament, dismissed the claim of Russian interference as "silliness and paranoia," according to the RIA Novosti news agency. Morozov described the allegations as an attempt to force the next administration to stick to Obama's anti-Russian course.

The investigation ordered by Obama will be a "deep dive" into a possible pattern of increased "malicious cyber activity" timed to the campaign season, White House spokesman Eric Schultz said Friday, including the email hacks that rattled the presidential campaign. It will look at the tactics, targets, key actors and the U.S. government's response to the recent email hacks, as well as incidents reported in past elections, he said.

The president ordered up the report earlier in the week asked that it be completed before he leaves office next month, Schultz said.



In this Feb. 13, 2015 file photo, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco speaks at the White House Summit on Cybersecurity and Consumer Protection in Stanford, Calif. Monaco says President Obama has ordered a review of the email hacking that rattled the presidential campaign and says intelligence and national security officials will report their findings to the president before leaves office on Jan. 20. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, File)

"The president wanted this done under his watch because he takes it very seriously," he said. "We are committed to ensuring the integrity of our elections."

The Kremlin has rejected the hacking accusations.

In the months leading up to the election, email accounts of Democratic Party officials and a top Hillary Clinton campaign aide were breached,

emails leaked and embarrassing and private emails posted online. Many Democrats believe the hackings benefited Trump's bid.

Schultz said the president sought the probe as a way of improving U.S. defense against cyberattacks and was not intending to question the legitimacy of Trump's victory.

"This is not an effort to challenge the outcome of the election," Schultz said.

Obama's move comes as Democratic lawmakers have been pushing Obama to declassify more information about Russia's role, fearing that Trump, who has promised a warmer relationship with Moscow, may not prioritize the issue.

Given Trump's statements, "there is an added urgency to the need for a thorough review before President Obama leaves office next month," said Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., senior Democrat on the House intelligence committee. If the administration doesn't respond "forcefully" to such actions, "we can expect to see a lot more of this in the near future," he said.

The White House said it would make portions of the report public and would brief lawmakers and relevant state officials on the findings.

It emphasized the report would not focus solely on Russian operations or hacks involving Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta and Democratic National Committee accounts. Schultz stressed officials would be reviewing incidents going back to the 2008 presidential campaign, when the campaigns of Sen. John McCain and Obama were breached by hackers.

Intelligence officials have said Obama and Republican presidential

nominee Mitt Romney were targets of Chinese cyberattacks four years later.

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