

Kaspersky freezes ties with Europol over calls for EU ban

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Kaspersky Lab faces accusations of working hand in hand with the Kremlin

Russian cybersecurity giant Kaspersky Lab said it has decided to put a halt to its work with several European anti-cybercrime initiatives, following a move in the European Parliament to ban its antivirus

software.

The move follows major accusations against the firm, including from the United States, of working hand in hand with the Kremlin.

"Kaspersky Lab has taken the difficult decision to temporarily halt our numerous collaborative European cybercrime-fighting initiatives, including those with Europol," the Moscow-based security firm said in a statement Wednesday.

The statement came as the European Parliament issued a report demanding a ban on "malicious" programmes and devices, and singling out Kaspersky Lab.

In its statement, Kaspersky responded: "Although this report has no legislative power it demonstrates a distinct lack of respect for the company which has been a firm friend of Europe in the fight against cybercrime."

It also said it was halting its NoMoreRansom project, which it described as having "helped many organisations and users to decrypt files on their devices, saving them from financial losses".

Kaspersky said the European Parliament's move "encourages cybercrime in Europe", adding that it hoped to resume its collaboration with European cybercrime-fighting initiatives soon.

The United States Department of Homeland Security in September last year ordered US agencies using Kaspersky products to remove and replace them with other approved software within 90 days.

In May, the Dutch government also said it would progressively halt its use of the Russian antivirus programme.

Kaspersky rejects accusations of working with the Kremlin, and in May announced a decision to move its core infrastructure and operations to Switzerland.

Some 400 million computers around the world are fitted with Kaspersky Lab's antivirus products.

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