

EU leaders vow tough action on cyber attacks

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EU leaders on Thursday condemned the attempted hack on the global chemical weapons watchdog and vowed to step up the bloc's efforts to tackle cyber attacks.

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The decision at an EU summit in Brussels comes after eight countries led by Britain pushed for urgent moves to hit hackers, warning that a lack of action was giving the impression that cyber attacks would go unpunished.

"Work on the capacity to respond to and deter [cyber attacks](#) through EU restrictive measures should be taken forward," the 28 leaders said in their summit communique.

The statement condemned the bid, revealed this month, by Russia's GRU military intelligence agency to hack the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague.

"Such threats and [attacks](#) strengthen our common resolve to further enhance the EU's internal security and our ability and capabilities to detect, prevent, disrupt and respond to hostile activities of foreign intelligence networks," the summit statement said.

A proposal backed by Britain, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Denmark, Finland, Romania and the Netherlands earlier this week called for a sanctions regime to be set up to punish cyber attackers.

If approved, the EU sanctions regime would freeze assets held in the bloc by targeted individuals and ban them from travelling to the 28 member states.

But efforts to crack down on cyber attackers may face resistance from some EU members who want to improve relations with Russia, such as the new Italian government.

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