



**Government of
United States of America**

Distr.: General
Date of Submission: 27.4.2018
Original: English

**House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
Bhavan Vidyalaya, Chandigarh, India.**

Agenda: Russian Interference in US Elections 2016

| The present document intends to make you aware of the background of the problem. Its content does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the BVC Model United Nations 2018. |



All Copyrights Reserved by

| The BVC Model United Nations 2018 |

Report Prepared by:

The Executive Board

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

FROM FAITH COMES STRENGTH
2018

Best Practices For Research BEFORE AN MUN.

- READ THE AGENDA GUIDE, LEAST 7 DAYS PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE AND MAKE A NOTE OF EVERYTHING THAT NEEDS TO BE UNDERSTOOD. DO READ THE BACKGROUND GUIDE.
- IN CASE OF A CRISIS SITUATION ALWAYS READ AND LOOK FOR THE ANALYSIS AND PLAUSIBLE RATIONALE ON THE UPDATES THAT MAY BE ISSUED A WEEK BEFORE THE MUN.
- GOOGLE/SEARCH EVERYTHING AND FIND RELATING DOCUMENTS (UN, NEWS ARTICLES, SCHOLARLY ARTICLES) FOR WHATEVER WAS NOT REALLY UNDERSTOOD.
- AFTER WHOLLY UNDERSTANDING (SUBJECT TO HOW IN DEPTH YOU WISH TO GO FOR THE RESEARCH), TRY UNDERSTANDING YOUR ALLOTTED POLITICAL PARTIES' PERSPECTIVE ON THE AGENDA.
- MAKE THE STANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNTRY'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE AGENDA WHICH SHALL ALSO DEFINE YOUR FOREIGN POLICY (HISTORY, PAST ACTIONS ETC.)
- UNDERSTAND THE CUES AND HINTS THAT ARE GIVEN MINUTELY IN THE BACKGROUND GUIDE THAT MAY COME HANDY WHILE PRESENTATION OF CONTENTIONS IN COMMITTEE.
- TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE MANDATE OF COUNCIL AS TO WHAT YOU CAN DISCUSS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO IN THIS COUNCIL. THIS POINT IS PLACED HERE, JUST BECAUSE YOUR KNOWLEDGE BASE SHOULDN'T BE LIMITED TO THE MANDATE OF THE COUNCIL. KNOW EVERYTHING; SPEAK WHATEVER THE MANDATE ALLOWS.
- PREDICT THE KIND OF DISCUSSIONS AND ON WHAT SUBTOPICS CAN THEY TAKE PLACE, THEREBY ANALYZING THE SUBTOPIC RESEARCH YOU HAVE DONE AND PREPARE YOURSELF.
- ACCORDINGLY MAKE A WORD/PAGES DOCUMENT AND PUT YOUR ARGUMENTS THERE FOR BETTER PRESENTATION IN COUNCIL AND BRING A HARD COPY OF IT TO THE COMMITTEE.
- ASK THE EXECUTIVE BOARD YOUR DOUBTS, IF YOU HAVE ANY, LEAST 10 DAYS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE BY MEANS OF THE GIVEN EMAIL ID AND MAKE SURE TO NOT DISCLOSE YOUR ALLOTTED PORTOFOLIO, UNTIL YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND THE POLICY OF YOUR COUNTRY.
- ASK QUESTIONS REGARDING PROCEDURE TO SPEAK SOMETHING ETC., IF YOU HAVE ANY, ON THE DAY OF THE CONFERENCE.

NATURE OF PROOF AND EVIDENCE

Documents from the following sources will be considered as credible proof for any allegations made in committee or statements that require verification:

- Reuters: Appropriate Documents and articles from the Reuters News agency will be used to corroborate or refute controversial statements made in committee.
- UN Document: Documents by all UN agencies will be considered as sufficient proof. Reports from all UN bodies including treaty-based bodies will also be accepted.
- Government Reports: Government Reports of a given country used to corroborate an allegation on the same aforementioned country will be accepted as proof.

Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc. be accepted as credible proof; but may be used for better understanding of any issue and even be brought up in debate, if the information given in such sources is in line with the beliefs of a political party and their political agenda.

FROM FAITH COMES STRENGTH
2018

MEETING DE-BRIEF

THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 2016

The 2016 Presidential elections of the United States of America has been associated with a number of controversies. Where the e-mail leaks, electoral violence played an important role in influencing electorates of their respective states; there have been a number of evidences that point towards the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, having a direct role in influencing votes in the 2016 elections.

The Russian Federation has for years, viewed the free liberal democratic order as a major threat to its oligarchy and the regime of Vladimir Putin in Russia, but Moscow's 2016 election activity has shown a significant escalation as compared to their previous operations. In September 2015, a few months prior to Hillary Clinton being declared as the winner of the Iowa Caucus, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) notified a Cyber Security Contractor working for the Democratic National Committee (DNC) that they had illegally been infiltrated by a Russian cyber-espionage group.¹

RUSSIAN ATTEMPTS TOWARDS CYBER ATTACKS

It was 20 years prior to this event when Kremlin was also accused for the Moonlight Maze attacks over the United States cyberspace. Apart from the US, the Moonlight Maze attacks also affected nations such as Canada, The United Kingdom, Brazil and Germany. The major threat that the United States faced then was mostly from the cyber attacks that were inflicted by The People's Republic of China.

It was later, towards the end of George W. Bush's second term as President, that Russia started using hacking for political purposes; the first concrete mark that we see of the Russian cyberattacks was when Moscow retaliated against Estonia's decision of joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Where they launched a series of DoS or Denial of Service attacks followed

¹ https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/27/us/politics/spy-agency-consensus-grows-that-russia-hackeddnc.html?_r=1

by ping floods to Botnets which spammed Estonian Governmental organisations, national banks, ministries, newspapers etc. Although, one of the most aggressive strikes that the Russian Federation carried out was in 2008 against Georgia, which was the first instance in history where a cyber attack strategically paved the way for a military invasion.

Under President Obama's administration, the Secretary of Defence, Mr. Leon Panetta, also made a public statement on 12 October 2012 that any serious cyber attack against the United States would be considered as an act of war.

“Attackers could also seek to disable or degrade critical military systems and communication networks. The collective result of these kinds of attacks could be a cyber Pearl Harbor.”

Leon Panetta

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE HACK

In 2014 and 2015, as the United States placed sanctions on the Russian Federations for its illegitimate invasion of Ukraine, there were systematic cyber attacks on the Department of State, the White House and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This was countered by the state's actions of repetitively shutting down their systems in order to keep the intruders away from sensitive information. President Obama made the decision to not retaliate in an equally aggressive manner in order to avoid an all-out cyber war or possibly even a real war. This resulted in Russia getting emboldened and was followed by even more aggressive advances like stealing and doctoring documents and making them publicly available in order to put organizations like the George Soros' Open Society Foundation in a negative light. In

23 December 2015, the first successful cyber attack was ordered by the Kremlin against Ukraine's power grids, resulting in a shutdown in electricity supply of approximately 230,000 Ukrainians.²

This was succeeded by the DNC hack, which, despite FBI's notifications, was not efficiently followed through because of several administrative issues and also the fact that the DNC was supposed to be a non-profit organization which resulted in a low cyber-security investment.³ The

² <https://www.wired.com/2016/03/inside-cunning-unprecedented-hack-ukraines-power-grid/>

³ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-cyber-democrats-reconstruct-idUSKCN10E09H>

DNC quickly hired the a leading cyber security firm in order to control the damage, but the damage had already been done and the firm was only able to identify and confirm that the attacks originated from Russia. It was speculated that the attacks were a joint effort by the Russian Federal Security Service a (FSB) and the GRU, which is the Military Intelligence agency of Russia.

They then set up a number of aliases and fake websites in order to undermine any evidence that connected them to the hack. On July 6, 2016, Guccifer 2.0 released the DNC's counter strategy. This was considered a goldmine for all Republican administrative because the leak was dropped 12 days before the Republican National Convention. This was followed by the July 20th release of approximately 44,000 e-mails of the DNC on WikiLeaks, which was on the day of the Democratic National Convention, resulting in the abrupt resignation of the party Chairwoman, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz.

In the weeks leading to the elections several democratic candidates were targeted by leaked documents which were hacked from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. The most conspicuous of all these events was that none of the leaks were Republican Party e-mails and nor were they harmful to the Republican campaign. This collusion was solidified by President Donald Trump's statement where he categorically called out The Russian Federation and appreciated them, instead of condemning the foreign interference in the democratic system of the nation.

“Russia if you're listening, I hope you are able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing. I think you will probably be rewarded mightily by our press.”

-President, Donald J. Trump

FROM FAITH COMES STRENGTH
2018

THE AMERICAN RETALIATION

On July 2016, Director of the CIA, John Brennan, formed a working group of officials from the National Security Agency (NSA), FBI and CIA. The following month, Brennan also warned the Head of the Russian Federal Security Service, Alexander Bortnikov, against meddling with the elections.⁴ The FBI on August 18, 2016, issued a nation-wide flash alert, warning state election officials against foreign infiltrations. The alert included detailed technical evidence placing liability over Russia and urged states to boost up their cyber defence capabilities.

The Department of Homeland Security determined that, although over 39 states had their elections systems compromised; none of the compromised systems were involved in vote tallying⁵. The Russian attacks were based on fairly basic methods of hacking, namely phishing and spear-phishing. One of the most vital persons to fall prey to these Russian attacks was Hillary Clinton's Campaign Chairman, John Podesta. October 7, 2016 onwards, merely a month before the elections, WikiLeaks began publishing a daily stream Podesta's email. The leaks themselves were highly suspicious, since the first e-mail leaks were published only half an hour after the Washington Post made public the audio recorded tape of President Trump.

This paved the way for Russia's second phase of its cyberattack operations wherein they posted a barrage of fake news stories and reports that were posted on blogs and social media that were shared and re-posted by Russian run bots over the internet. In the testimony of Mr. Clint Watts, an FBI agent, in front of the Senate Intelligence Committee, he mentioned that these manipulations and attacks were majorly targeting only swing voters. This led to the empowering of Russia's state-led propaganda machines like RT and Sputnik, which frequently published articles that talked about how Donald J. Trump has often been unfairly targeted by American media establishments that portray Trump in a negative light.

This coupled with the fact that RT's articles on Hillary Clinton were consistently negative and often focused on her e-mail leaks.

Soon after the release of the Podesta e-mails, the Obama Administration issued a direct warning that any further meddling would be retaliated by an armed conflict. Despite the numerous attempts

⁴ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/brennan-warned-russian-counterpart-about-election-meddling>

⁵ <https://nypost.com/2017/06/13/russian-hackers-infiltrated-voter-databases-in-dozens-of-states/>

by the White House, FBI, State Department etc., the independent news agencies were attracted to the views the e-mail leaks and the false news generated and consistently wrote articles on the same.

By the end of the election results, despite a close margin, Donald J. Trump stood elected as the 45th President of the United States of America. The controversy has ever since revolved around President Trump, despite the results of the elections being in the Republican Party's favour.

Apparent as it is, despite no concrete report by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI), it is safe to conclude that the Kremlin had an important role behind the curtains in the 2016 United States Elections. The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI), successor to the Church committee that dissolved in the 1975, functions to look over the United States Intelligence Community, comprising of the CIA, FBI, etc. The SSCI from the beginning of 2017, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Richard Burr, has been tasked with the investigation of the Russian involvement in the 2016 US elections.⁶

In conclusion, the US House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, as of 30th April 2018, has been tasked with investigating whether there has been an active collusion between President Trump and Russia in the US elections of 2016.

FROM FAITH COMES STRENGTH
2018

⁶ https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf