



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

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02/20/2020

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INFORMATION MEMO [or NOTE] FOR: UNDER SECRETARY HALE (P)

FROM: Kristin Abkemeier, Ph.D.

SUBJECT: The United States Condemns Russian Cyber Attack Against the Country of Georgia

BLUF: On October 28, 2019, the Russian General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) Main Center for Special Technologies (GTsST, also known as Unit 74455 and Sandworm) carried out a widespread disruptive cyber attack against the country of Georgia. The incident, which directly affected the Georgian population, disrupted operations of several thousand Georgian government and privately-run websites and interrupted the broadcast of at least two major television stations. This action contradicts Russia's attempts to claim it is a responsible actor in cyberspace and demonstrates a continuing pattern of reckless Russian GRU cyber operations against a number of countries. These operations aim to sow division, create insecurity, and undermine democratic institutions.

The United States calls on Russia to cease this behavior in Georgia and elsewhere. The stability of cyberspace depends on the responsible behavior of nations. We, together with the international community, will continue our efforts to uphold an international framework of responsible state behavior in cyberspace.

We also pledge our support to Georgia and its people in enhancing their cybersecurity and countering malicious cyber actors. We will offer additional capacity building and technical assistance to help strengthen Georgia's public institutions and improve its ability to protect itself from these kinds of activities.

Attachment(s):

2019, 2020, Cyber Issues, General Staff, GEO, Information Memos, information technology, KCYB, PINR, RUS

All Audiences, U.S. Department of State

Kristin Abkemeier, Ph.D.

02/20/2020

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Classified by Kristin Abkemeier, Ph.D.

E.O. 13526, Reason(s): 1.4 (justification section), (justification section), and (justification section)

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