

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 27, 2016

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The recent hack into the servers of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the subsequent release via WikiLeaks of a cache of 20,000 internal emails has demonstrated once again the vulnerability of our institutions to cyber intrusion and exploitation. In its timing, content and manner of release, the email dissemination was clearly intended to undermine the Democratic Party and the presidential campaign of Secretary Hillary Clinton, as well as disrupt the Democratic Party's convention in Philadelphia.

In June, the DNC publicly acknowledged that the party's network had been hacked and released a report prepared by cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike that found convincing evidence that the infiltration had been carried out by two separate teams working for the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and Russian military intelligence (GRU). According to CrowdStrike, the FSB group focused on exfiltrating DNC emails, while the GRU hackers went after opposition research on Republican nominee Donald Trump. If true, and if Russia made the material available to WikiLeaks for release, then the episode would represent an unprecedented attempt to meddle in American domestic politics—one that would demand a response by the United States.

Russia's cyber capabilities are well known. Its apparent willingness to use those capabilities to embarrass American officials and seek to influence our foreign policy is not new—as illustrated by the 2014 release, widely blamed on Russia, of an intercepted phone call at the height of the Ukraine crisis that included comments by Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland. Russian meddling also has long been a fact of European political life, going back decades to Soviet times and continuing at a robust level to this day. Hacking, financial backing and a burgeoning relationship between Russia and right-wing parties elsewhere in Europe are exacerbating political divisions across the continent—to Europe's detriment and Moscow's advantage.

Earlier this week, the FBI announced that it had launched an investigation into the DNC hack, a step that we support. Given the grave nature of this breach and the fact that it may ultimately be found to be a state-sponsored attempt to manipulate our presidential election, we believe a heightened measure of transparency is warranted.

Specifically, we ask that the administration consider declassifying and releasing, subject to redactions to protect sources and methods, any intelligence community assessments regarding the incident, including any that might illuminate potential Russian motivations for what would be an unprecedented interference in a U.S. presidential race, and why President Putin could potentially feel compelled to authorize such an operation, given the high likelihood of eventual attribution.

Sincerely,



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
Vice-Chair
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence



ADAM B. SCHIFF
Ranking Member
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence