

Press release: Hostile states to face rapid and unified international response

Hostile state activity will be met with a rapid and unified G7 response, including greater intelligence sharing, under an agreement secured by Prime Minister Theresa May.

The move will also see hostile states publicly 'called out' for their egregious behaviour – with coordinated international attribution of cyber and other attacks.

Speaking at the G7 Summit in Quebec, the Prime Minister has emphasised that recent events, including the reckless use of 'NotPetya' ransomware and the attempted murder of the Skripals in Salisbury, have demonstrated the importance of a unified international response to send a clear message that such hostile state activity will not be tolerated.

The Prime Minister has stated that calling out malicious activity helps to end hostile states' false sense of impunity, demonstrates our awareness of their activity, and underlines our willingness to defend ourselves.

At the G7 Foreign Ministers meeting last month, the UK proposed a new, more formalised approach to tackling foreign interference across the G7.

And today, G7 leaders have agreed to establish a new Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM).

The Prime Minister said the agreement sent a strong message that interference by Russia and other foreign states would not be tolerated.

This G7 initiative will support preventative and protective cooperation between G7 countries, as well as post-incident responses.

It includes:

- sharing of threat intelligence, including hostile activity, techniques and practices
- Improving understanding of partner countries' policies and thresholds for taking action
- support for independent international institutions
- work with industry to strengthen physical and digital infrastructure
- co-ordinated attribution of hostile activity
- joint work to assert a common narrative and response

Speaking at the G7 Summit, the Prime Minister said:

There is no doubt that foreign interference in our democratic

institutions and processes, and other forms of hostile activity, pose a strategic threat to our shared values and interests.

So I welcome today's agreement that the G7 will exchange information, co-ordinate action, and develop strategies to reinforce our democracies, strengthen our societies' resilience and uphold freedom of expression and a free and independent media in the face of this growing threat.

Today's announcement shows that the G7 will not tolerate foreign interference in any one of our democracies, that we are getting organised, and that we will take coordinated action against those who seek to violate the rules-based international system.

Calling out malicious activity helps to end hostile states' false sense of impunity, demonstrates our awareness of their activity, and underlines our unwavering willingness to defend ourselves.

The Prime Minister has also called for additional measures to curb Russia's ability to undermine the international rules-based system, including:

- doing more together as the G7 to better understand illicit money flows and then agree concrete actions to stop dirty money undermining our democracies
- sharing more information so that Russian intelligence agents expelled from one country do not simply enter another country

The UK has also lobbied for a robust, united international position to uphold and strengthen the global prohibition on the use of chemical weapons.

Today the G7 has discussed its collective commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and called on all countries to support the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) special Conference of States Parties, which is expected to take place later this month.

The Prime Minister has urged fellow leaders to capitalise on the important opportunity this meeting presents to empower the OPCW to attribute responsibility for chemical weapons attacks, strengthening the global norm against chemical weapons use.