



[U.S. and Key Allies Accuse the Chinese Government of Engaging in Widespread Cyberattack Campaigns](#)

The United States and key allies have accused the Chinese government of engaging in widespread cyberattack campaigns, including a recent one on Microsoft. The European Union, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Australia joined the Biden administration in condemning China's behavior in an attempt to set boundaries for what is permitted in cyber space. The U.S. Department of Justice also made charges against three Chinese officials public after alleging that they took part in cyberattacks on various government agencies, businesses, and universities in the United States and other regions. The United States emphasized that even if the attacks were not directly committed by Chinese government entities, they were protected and supported by the regime there. In the past, various nations have criticized the actions coming from China as a failure to police the criminals within the state, instead of implicating government forces for backing the hackers. Among the ones that China has been called out for, the recent cyberattack on Microsoft critically damaged security in businesses throughout the world, but especially in the United States and the United Kingdom.

In contrast with Russian cyberattacks, the attack on Microsoft was crude and simply exploited a weakness in the security system. Once the Chinese hacking groups had done so, they were able to steal a large portion of the information stored on those private servers and install various malware to continue the theft process and surveil the corporations. President Biden's decision not to impose sanctions is significant because it shows that the U.S. is cautious of possible retaliation from China. Taking that type of action could lead to China imposing its own sanctions, and starting a vicious cycle that would be extremely difficult to end. However, the strong condemnation from NATO towards China as well moves things one step closer to a cyber space conflict between China, Russia, and the West.

The United States has made significant progress in convincing its allies to join in on direct criticism and singling out of the Chinese government. Europe has extensive economic ties with China which makes both sides considerable wealth. Thus, imposing sanctions would likely not have gathered support from Europe, but by at least showing a united front, the U.S. has moved further towards its goal of limiting China's power. The intentions behind countering Russian and Chinese cyberattacks are to set strict guidelines for what will and will not be tolerated within cyber space. Preventing a cyber conflict however would be almost impossible because it is easy for nations to develop and hide the means necessary to commit these attacks.

China responded to the accusations by claiming that they were completely fabricated, and stated that it fell into the same category of "groundless attacks" against them. The Chinese government also alleged that it opposed all forms of cybercrime, and tried to deflect blame by turning the tables on the U.S. for its cyber behavior. To do so, they cited evidence made public by Edward Snowden back in 2013 and implied that the U.S. had been engaged in cyber warfare for far longer than other nations. The Chinese regime also referenced a specific case where it accuses the U.S. of stealing from a firm affiliated with tech company Huawei.