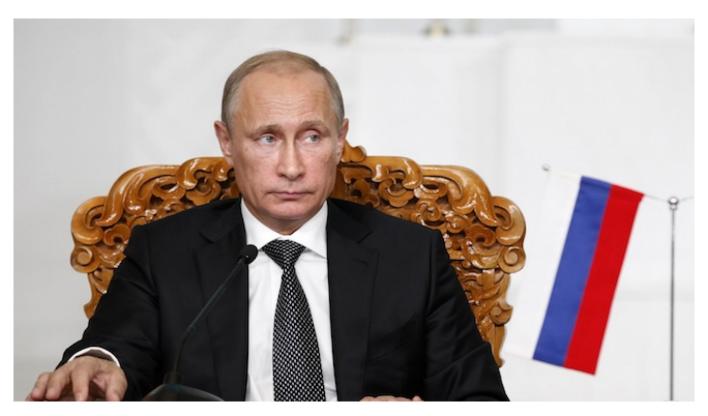# U.S. Hackers Blamed After 'European Apology to Putin' Website Crashes

September 05, 2014

Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a signing ceremony with his Mongolian counterpart Tsakhia Elbegdorj (not pictured) at the national parliament building in Ulan Bator, Mongolia.

A website that published an open letter apologizing to Russian President Vladimir Putin on behalf of Western governments has been blocked, leading to some pro-Russian social media users to speculate it was taken down by U.S. hackers.

"Please accept our apologies for the behavior of our governments and media. Western nations, led by the United States, seem determined to start a war with Russia," the letter published on the website Dearputin.com said.

Russian media reported Friday morning that the petition had garnered 3,500 "European" signatures in 24 hours, drawing support from users in France, Germany, the U.S. and Britain, state-run news channel RT said.

But as of midday Friday, anyone attempting to access the Dearputin.com web site was greeted with a message that it was "currently unavailable," although a cached version of the page was

still accessible.

A Facebook page of the same name was also taken offline.

"It didn't take long for anti-Putin agents to take down #dearputin.com site, that was gaining a lot of support. Can't stop the truth, though," one user wrote on Twitter.

"#Dearputin.com down again due to gov[ernment] U.S., Mossad, NATO hackers," wrote another user.

However, some Twitter users were less sympathetic and took the opportunity to criticize Putin using the same hashtag.

"#Dearputin i know you are not worried about your image in Russia but in the rest of the world you just became dumber than [former U.S. President George] Bush jr," someone said.

Since Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in March and perceived support of separatists in the east of that country, the West has levied several rounds of sanctions against businesses and individuals believed to have close ties to the Kremlin.

At a NATO summit held Thursday in Wales, leaders reaffirmed their commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty while threatening Moscow with further economic costs.

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