

# Cyber-Warfare: NATO Considers Russia as a “Potential Aggressor”, Threat to the West

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NATO considers Russia one of the key potential cyber-aggressors for the North Atlantic alliance, the Kommersant business daily quoted its sources in NATO’s headquarters as saying. NATO plans to hold its Cyber Coalition 2012 war game on November 13-16. In line with the exercises scenario, NATO members Hungary and Estonia come under large-scale cyber attacks from an aggressor, which is described as “an African country that engaged in a conflict with NATO.”

Hackers from the African country use a computer virus to disable the avionics of a NATO military transport aircraft, causing it to crash in Hungary killing NATO servicemen and civilians. They also disable Estonia’s key infrastructure facilities. The alliance faces the task of identifying the aggressor and using cyber and conventional warfare for retaliation.

Although the scenario speaks of unknown African country, NATO representatives have admitted in private conversations that they consider Russia, China and Iran the key potential cyber aggressors, Kommersant said.

US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said last week that the United States is facing a possible “cyber Pearl Harbor” carried out by computer hackers that could result in infrastructure damage and loss of life.

Calling the Internet a battlefield of the future where America’s enemies “can seek to do harm to our country, to our economy, and to our citizens”, Panetta said in a speech last Thursday that the US Congress must pass cyber security legislation in order to protect the nation.

Panetta singled out Russia and China as nations with “advanced cyber capabilities” said Iran is also undertaking efforts to use cyber space to its advantage.

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