Russian ambassador says 'there is no sense' in claims of vaccine hacking

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Andrei Kelin, Russia's ambassador to the UK, dismissed allegations Kremlin intelligence is seeking to steal research on potential coronavirus vaccines.

"I don't believe in this story at all, there is no sense in it," Kelin told the BBC's Andrew Marr.

The U.S., Canada and UK alleged last week that Russian security services are operating an ongoing attempt to steal intellectual property relating to vaccine research.

"Russian cyber actors are targeting organisations involved in coronavirus vaccine development, UK security officials have revealed," the United Kingdom's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) said in a statement last Thursday.

"The National Security Agency (NSA), along with our partners, remains

steadfast in its commitment to protecting national security by collectively issuing this critical cybersecurity advisory as foreign actors continue to take advantage of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," NSA Cybersecurity Director Anne Neuberger said in a statement.

Meanwhile, UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has also accused Russia of attempting to interfere in the country's 2019 general election through stolen documents, which Kelin also dismissed.

"I do not see any point in using this subject as a matter of interference," he added. "We do not interfere at all. We do not see any point in interference because for us, whether it will be [the] Conservative Party or Labour's party at the head of this country, we will try to settle relations and to establish better relations than now."

Marr also questioned Kelin on whether the hacker collective accused of trying to steal the coronavirus data, Cozy Bear, was associated with Russian intelligence.

"I learned about their existence from British media," he responded. "In this world, to attribute any kind of computer hackers to any country, it is impossible."

Kelin also dismissed the idea that Russia would glean any advantage from stealing IP relating to Russia, saying Russian drugmaker R-Pharm was already partnering with AstraZeneca.