

Virtual Private Network (VPN) Lab

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Abstract

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is used for creating a private scope of computer communications or providing a secure extension of a private network into an insecure network such as internet. VPN is a widely used security technology. VPN can be built upon IPsec or Secure Socket Layer (SSL). These are two fundamentally different approaches for building VPN. This report provides details about implementation of SSL-based VPNs often referred to as SSL VPNs. Aim is to implement a simple SSL VPN for Ubuntu.

1. Introduction

An SSL VPN (Secure Sockets Layer Virtual Private Network) is a form of VPN that can be used with a standard web browser. In contrast to the traditional internet Protocol Security (IPsec) VPN, an SSL VPN does not require the installation of specialized client software on the end user's computer. SSL VPN is used to give remote users access to web applications, client/server applications and internal network connections. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) provides a secure communications mechanism for data and other information transmitted between two endpoints. An SSL VPN consists of one or more VPN devices to which users connect by using his web browser. The traffic between the web browser and SSL VPN device is encrypted with the SSL protocol.

2. Methodology

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is used for creating a private scope of computer communications or providing a secure extension of a private network into an insecure network such as internet. VPN is a widely used security technology. VPN can be built upon IPsec or Secure Socket Layer (SSL). These are two fundamentally different approaches for building VPN. This report provides details about implementation of SSL-based VPNs often referred to as SSL VPNs. Aim is to implement a simple SSL VPN for Ubuntu. An SSL VPN (Secure Sockets Layer Virtual Private Network) is a form of VPN that can be used with a standard web browser. In contrast to the traditional internet Protocol Security (IPsec) VPN, an SSL VPN does not require the installation of specialized client software on the end user's computer. SSL VPN is used to give remote users access to web applications, client/server applications and internal network connections. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) provides a secure communications mechanism for data and other information transmitted between two endpoints. An SSL VPN consists of one or more VPN devices to which users connect by using his web browser

The traffic between the web browser and SSL VPN device is encrypted with the SSL protocol.

2.1. Objectives and Technical Challenges

The learning objective is to master the network and security technologies underlying SSL VPNs.

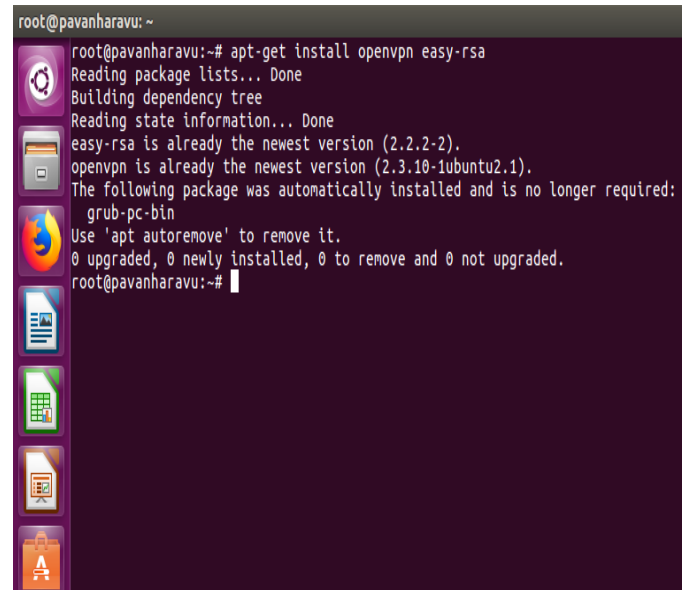
Other objectives are listed below:

1. Understanding the concepts and theory of Virtual Private Network
2. Create a Host-to-Host Tunnel using TUN/TAP
3. Create a Host-to-gateway Tunnel
4. Create a Gateway-to-Gateway Tunnel
5. Create a Virtual Private Network (VPN)
6. Authenticating VPN client with VPN server
7. Generate a Client Certificate

Establishing secure tun0 interface was a challenge. Also understanding Linux commands and working completely on terminal was a challenge.

3. Lab Environment

OpenSSL package is used. The package includes the header files, libraries and commands. OpenVPN is installed onto the server. OpenVPN is available in Ubuntu's default repositories. Also easy-rsa package is installed, which helps in setting up internal CA (certificate authority) that can be used with the VPN.

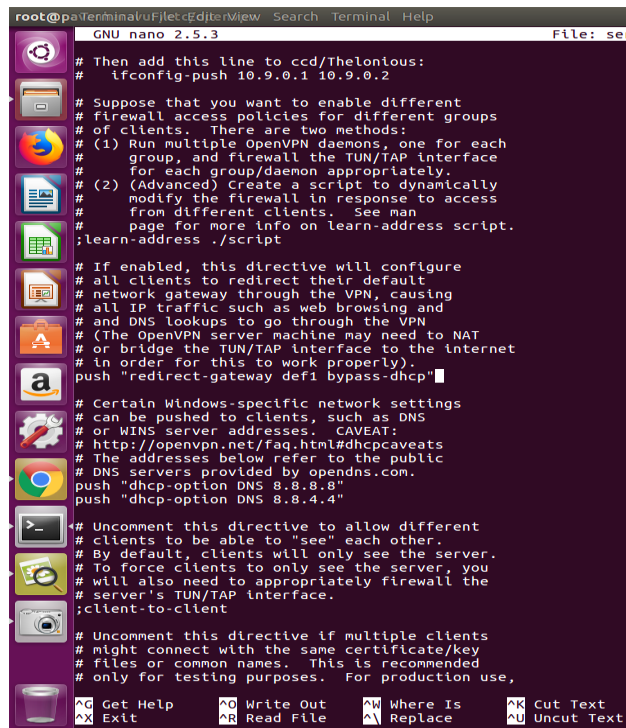


```
root@pavanharavu:~  
root@pavanharavu:~# apt-get install openvpn easy-rsa  
Reading package lists... Done  
Building dependency tree  
Reading state information... Done  
easy-rsa is already the newest version (2.2.2-2).  
openvpn is already the newest version (2.3.10-1ubuntu2.1).  
The following package was automatically installed and is no longer required:  
  grub-pc-bin  
Use 'apt autoremove' to remove it.  
0 upgraded, 0 newly installed, 0 to remove and 0 not upgraded.  
root@pavanharavu:~#
```

Figure 1. openvpn and easy-rsa package installation

3.1. Push DNS Changes through VPN

To force connections to use tunnel and to use VPN to route all traffic through the VPN, push DNS settings to the client computers.



```
root@pavanharavu:FileEditorView Search Terminal Help
GNU nano 2.5.3 File: ser
# Then add this line to ccd/Thelonious:
# ifconfig-push 10.9.0.1 10.9.0.2

# Suppose that you want to enable different
# firewall access policies for different groups
# of clients. There are two methods:
# (1) Run multiple OpenVPN daemons, one for each
# group, and firewall the TUN/TAP interface
# for each group/daemon appropriately.
# (2) (Advanced) Create a script to dynamically
# modify the firewall in response to access
# from different clients. See man
# page for more info on learn-address script.
;learn-address ./script

# If enabled, this directive will configure
# all clients to redirect their default
# network gateway through the VPN, causing
# all IP traffic such as web browsing and
# and DNS lookups to go through the VPN
# (The OpenVPN server machine may need to NAT
# or bridge the TUN/TAP interface to the internet
# in order for this to work properly).
push "redirect-gateway def1 bypass-dhcp"

# Certain Windows-specific network settings
# can be pushed to clients, such as DNS
# or WINS server addresses. CAVEAT:
# http://openvpn.net/faq.html#dhcpcaveats
# The addresses below refer to the public
# DNS servers provided by opendns.com.
push "dhcp-option DNS 8.8.8.8"
push "dhcp-option DNS 8.8.4.4"

# Uncomment this directive to allow different
# clients to be able to "see" each other.
# By default, clients will only see the server.
# To force clients to only see the server, you
# will also need to appropriately firewall the
# server's TUN/TAP interface.
;client-to-client

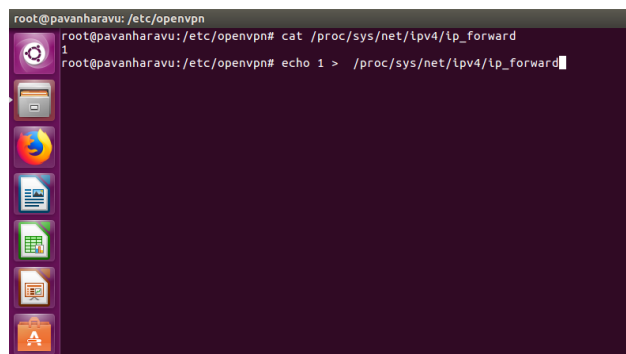
# Uncomment this directive if multiple clients
# might connect with the same certificate/key
# files or common names. This is recommended
# only for testing purposes. For production use,
;

Get Help Write Out Where Is Cut Text
Exit Read File Replace Uncut Text
```

Figure 2. DNS changes to redirect all traffic through VPN

3.2. Setup Firewall

Basic firewall is built by enabling IP forwarding and echoing 1 into the ip_forward.

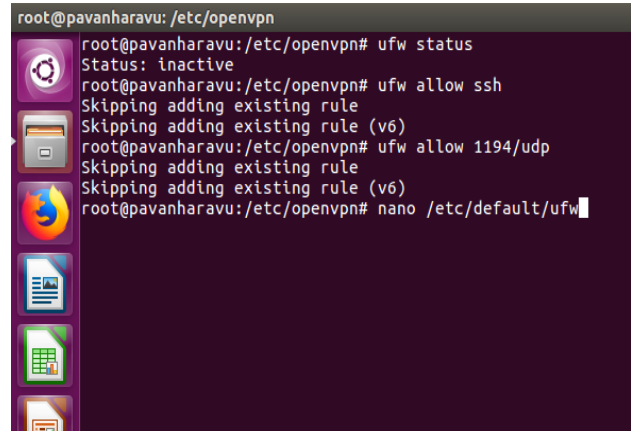


```
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# cat /proc/sys/net/ipv4/ip_forward
1
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# echo 1 > /proc/sys/net/ipv4/ip_forward
```

Figure 3. Firewall setup

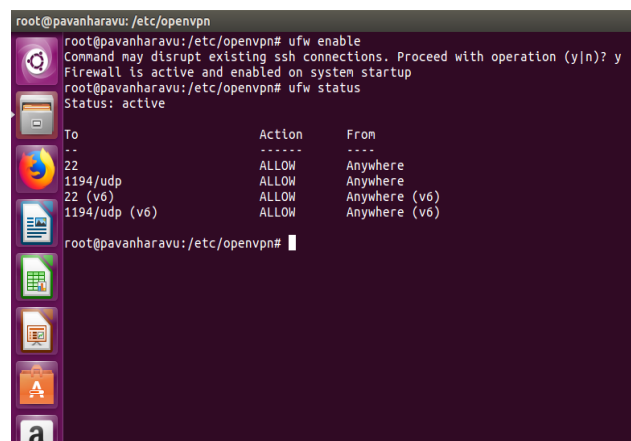
3.3. Configuration of firewall

Different applications can register their profiles with UFW upon installation. These profiles allow UFW to manage these applications by name. OpenSSH, the service will connect to server and has a profile registered with UFW. To make sure that the firewall allows SSH connections to log back in next time, allow OpenSSH, enable ufw and select UDP as the underlying protocol and choose port 1194 (can be any port).



```
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# ufw status
Status: inactive
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# ufw allow ssh
Skipping adding existing rule
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# ufw allow 1194/udp
Skipping adding existing rule
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# nano /etc/default/ufw
```

Figure 4. Setting up port to 1194



```
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# ufw enable
Command may disrupt existing ssh connections. Proceed with operation (y/n)? y
Firewall is active and enabled on system startup
root@pavanharavu:/etc/openvpn# ufw status
Status: active

To Action From
--
22 ALLOW Anywhere
1194/udp ALLOW Anywhere
22 (v6) ALLOW Anywhere (v6)
1194/udp (v6) ALLOW Anywhere (v6)
```

Figure 5. ufw status

3.4. Enable NAT and IP masquerading for clients

IP Masquerade feature allows other internal computers connected to server to also reach internet. MASQS allows a set of machines to invisibly access the internet. To other machines on the internet, the outgoing traffic will appear to be from the IP MASQ Linux server itself. In addition to the added functionality, IP Masquerade provides the foundation to create a heavily secured networking environment.

Some NAT rules are added as shown below:

```
*nat
:POSTROUTING ACCEPT [0.0]
-A POSTROUTING -s 10.8.0.0/8 -o -j MASQUERADE
COMMIT
```

The rules uses the NAT packet and specifies the built in POSTROUTING chain for NAT (-A POSTROUTING) on the firewall's external networking device. The -j MASQUERADE target is specified to mask the private IP address of a node with the external IP address of the firewall/gateway. The incoming HTTP requests are forwarded to the listed destination IP address of 10.8.0.0/8 (tun0 interface). Once VPN service is up and running tun0 is created with the IP address of 10.8.0.0

3.9. Creating Certificates

Client certificate is created.

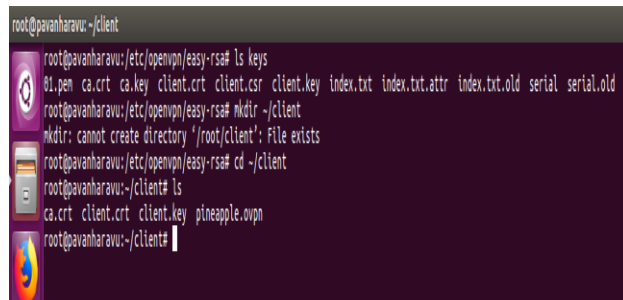


Figure 11. client certificate

4.0. Unified file pineapple.ovpn

Move all certificates and keys to pineapple.ovpn file. Client only needs pineapple.ovpn to connect to server and start using VPN service.

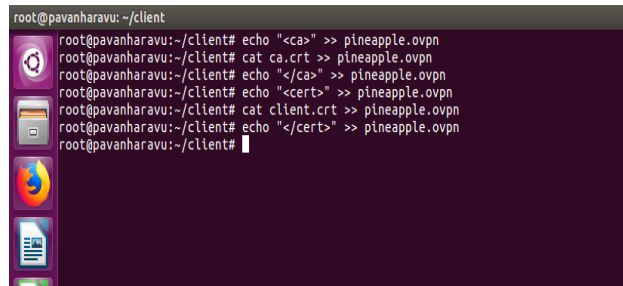


Figure 12. certificates and keys moved to pineapple.ovpn

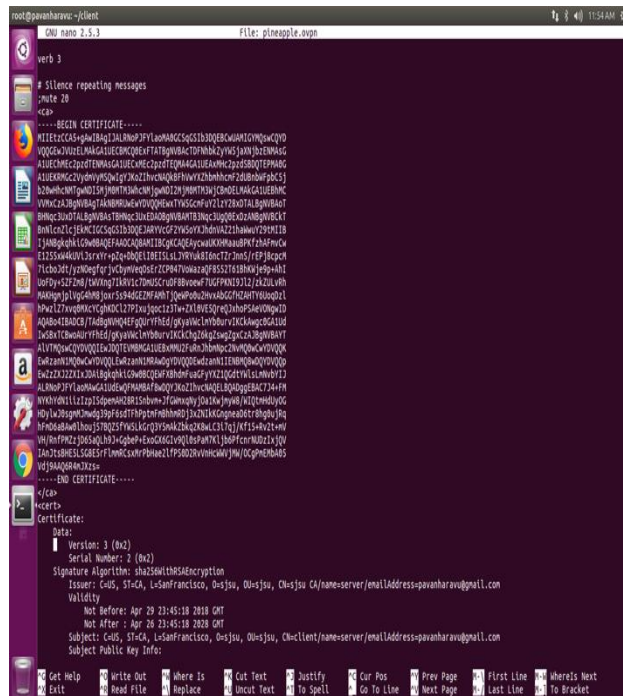


Figure 13. Pineapple.ovpn file

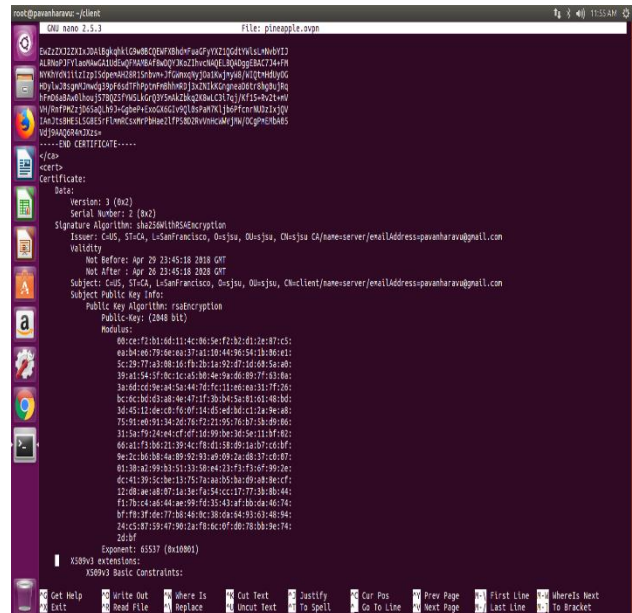


Figure 14. DSA SHA256 with RSA encryption

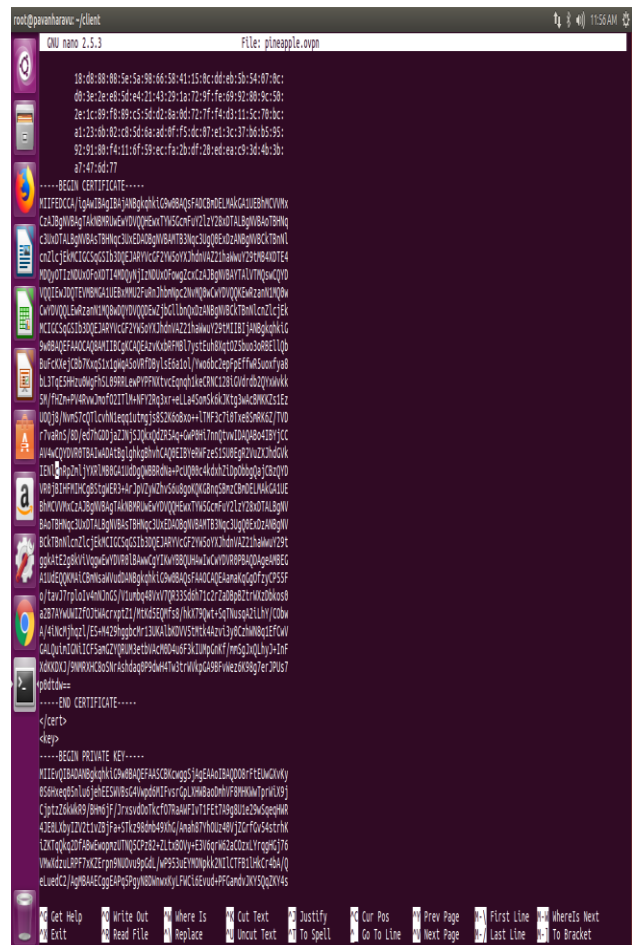


Figure 15. client certificate



Figure 16. Private Key

4. Results



Figure 17. Securely copying file to client computer

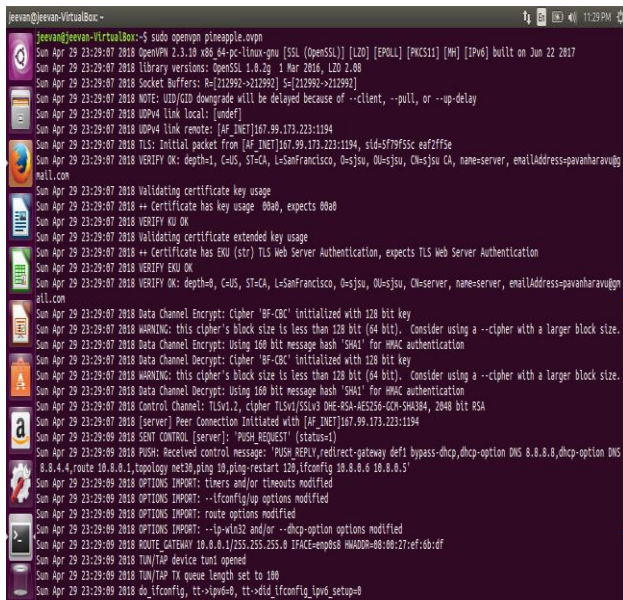


Figure 18. server and client authentication

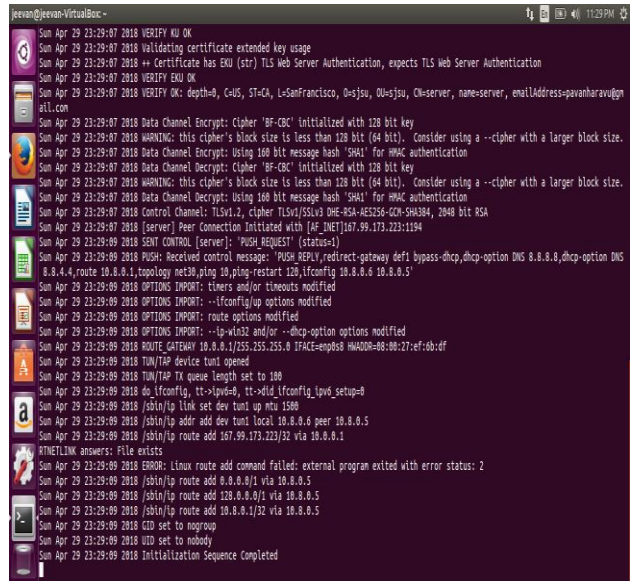


Figure 19. server and client authentication completed

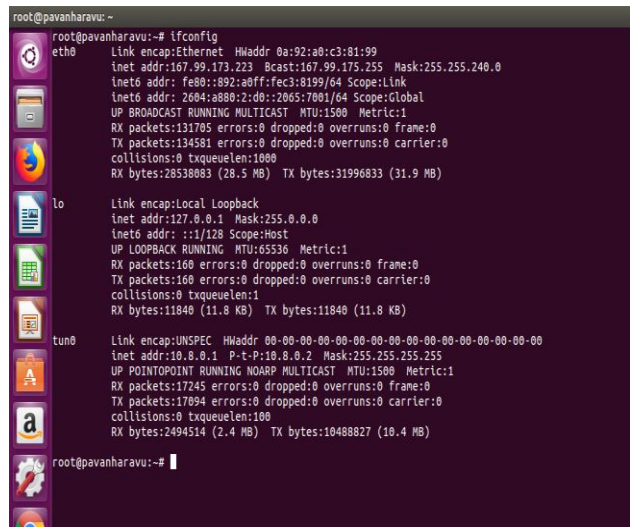


Figure 20. server IP and tun0 interface

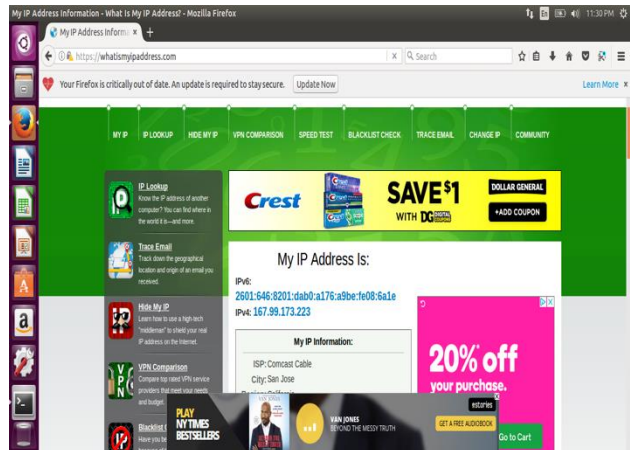


Figure 21. Client IP same as server IP

5. Conclusion

SSL VPN is successfully build and verified in client computer by checking its IP address.

6. Acknowledgment

We would like to thank Juzi Zhao for providing technical knowledge and guidance for implementing the lab.

7. References

[1] Syracuse seed labs

http://www.cis.syr.edu/~wedu/seed/Labs_12.04/Networking/VPN/

[2] Openvpn community

<https://openvpn.net/>

