

Russia Labels War Monitor Conflict Intelligence Team 'Undesirable'

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Conflict Intelligence Team logo. **Russian Defense Ministry; CIT**

Russian authorities on Thursday [designated](#) the independent investigative organization Conflict Intelligence Team (CIT), which conducts open-source investigations of the Russian military, an “undesirable organization.”

The Russian Prosecutor General’s Office accused CIT of publishing the personal details of Russian soldiers “which were later used to discredit” the Russian military.

Discrediting the Russian Armed Forces’ actions abroad has been criminalized since Russia invaded Ukraine in early 2022, with heavy fines and prison sentences for those found guilty of violating new wartime censorship laws.

CIT’s “undesirable” designation bans its work in Russia, puts staff members at risk of jail time and criminalizes engagement with the organization, including sharing its content online.

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Russian prosecutors claimed that CIT was created by Ruslan Karpuk — a Russian citizen — along with members of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's anti-corruption organization, which has been declared "extremist."

Karpuk, better known as Ruslan Leviev, is a software engineer from the Urals city of Surgut who established CIT in 2014 and has studied conflicts in eastern Ukraine, Syria and Libya.

Leviev is wanted in Russia on two charges of spreading "fake news" about Russian strikes on a Mariupol children's hospital and creating a "database of evidence" of alleged Russian war crimes.

Leviev and his team fled Russia after the February 2022 invasion. The analyst has suggested in recent YouTube live streams that he has settled around Washington, D.C. in the United States.

Russia has used its law on "undesirable" organizations to target independent news outlets, human rights groups, environmental organizations and educational institutions.

The "undesirable" list was introduced in 2015 to crack down on foreign NGOs and ban Russians from working with or donating to them.

Russian prosecutors drew attention to CIT's original title "War in Ukraine," which also falls under Russia's wartime censorship laws, as the Kremlin formally refers to the conflict as a "special military operation."

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