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Russia Blacklists Ukrainian Maker of S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Video Game Series

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Artyom Geodakyan / TASS

State prosecutors on Tuesday designated GSC Game World, the Ukrainian studio behind the popular S.T.A.L.K.E.R. video game franchise, an "undesirable" organization over its alleged financing of the Ukrainian military.

Russia's Prosecutor General's Office accused upper management at the Kyiv-based company of transferring around $17 million to a Ukrainian military aid fund in 2022, saying the money was used to purchase drones, vehicles and other equipment for wartime needs. Prosecutors also said the company helped portray Russia as an "aggressor state."

In a statement, the office claimed that a GSC game released in 2024 promoted "Ukrainian narratives" and contained "aggressive Russophobic content."

Those accusations appear in reference to S.T.A.L.K.E.R. 2: Heart of Chornobyl, the fourth installment in GSC's popular survival-shooter franchise that was released last November.

Under Russian law, anyone who works with or participates in an organization labeled "undesirable" can face up to four years in prison, while its leaders can face up to six.

Russia introduced the "undesirable" organizations law in 2015 and has since used it to crack down on independent media outlets, opposition groups and foreign NGOs. Hundreds of organizations, including The Moscow Times, have been added to the list.

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