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World Chess Suspends Russia Over Events in Occupied Ukraine

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

The International Chess Federation (FIDE) announced Wednesday that it has suspended Russia after the world sports court ruled that it had violated Ukraine's sovereignty by organizing events in annexed Crimea and occupied Ukrainian territories.

The suspension will last for three years or until the Chess Federation of Russia complies with an order issued by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), FIDE said in a statement.

In March, CAS gave Russia a 90-day deadline to halt all chess events in annexed Crimea, as well as in the occupied Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. Since the Chess Federation of Russia ignored the June 9 deadline, FIDE's council triggered an automatic suspension.

The suspension prevents Russia from competing in all FIDE team events. However, individual Russian players remain cleared to participate in international tournaments under a neutral flag.

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In 2023, the Ukrainian Chess Federation filed a complaint alleging that the Chess Federation of Russia held events and integrated regional chess bodies in occupied Ukrainian territories in violation of FIDE rules.

FIDE's ethics body initially handed down a two-year suspension, which its appeals chamber later downgraded to a fine of 45,000 euros ($51,800).

The CAS ruling in March ultimately overturned that lighter penalty, determining that a fine was insufficient for violating Ukraine's territorial integrity.

FIDE's president is former Russian Deputy Prime Minister Akrady Dvorkovich. In May, the CAS cleared Dvorkovich of allegations brought by the Ukrainian Chess Federation that he is professionally and personally connected to individuals sanctioned in the West.

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