30 Years of Trends in Terrorist and Extremist Games

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This report presents an analysis of the history of terrorists and extremist games nexus using a unique dataset, the Extremist and Terrorist Games Database (ETGD), developed by the authors. It contains 155 reviewed entries of standalone games, modifications for existing games (mods) and browser-based games dating from 1982 to 2024.

While most of the titles in the ETGD are available for free, several that have been sold appear to have generated revenue for groups ranging from Hezbollah to the National Alliance, an American neo-Nazi group. Through new analysis of Steam data, the report shows that a small number of extremist and targeted hate titles have generated a significant amount in revenue for small publishers on the platform.

Far from being a comprehensive analysis of the ETGD, this report forms a basis for future research of the dataset and a framework for continued contributions to the ETGD from Extremism and Gaming Research Network (EGRN) members.

Some of the report's recommendations to tech companies are as followings:

1. **Prohibit and prevent violent extremist exploitation:** Gaming platforms should explicitly prohibit violent extremist and terrorist behaviours and content.
2. **Improve reporting mechanisms:** Platforms must improve reporting mechanisms to make it easier for players to report violative content of both games and in-game conduct.
3. **Understand and take down distributed repositories:** Larger repositories of extremist gaming content readily available on the surface web accelerate user exposure.
4. **Collaborate across sectors:** Addressing the spread of extremist games requires a collaborative effort between tech companies, government agencies and civil society organisations.