

Mexico state congress asks ban of video game

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(AP) -- A shoot-em-up video game set in the border town of Ciudad Juarez has angered local officials who are busy fighting all-too-real violence.

Chihuahua state legislators said Sunday they have asked federal authorities to ban a the game, "Call of Juarez: The Cartel," which is based on drug cartel shootouts in Ciudad Juarez.

About 6,000 people died in drug-related violence in Ciudad Juarez in 2009 and 2010, making the city, located across from El Paso, Texas, one of the deadliest in the world.

The web site of game developer Ubisoft Entertainment SA says the title is due for release this summer. Screen shots from the game show three characters armed with a pistol, an assault rifle and a shotgun ready to open fire on a city street.

The game's promotional slogan urges players, "Take justice into your own hands and experience the lawlessness of the modern Wild West." No one answered a message left at the company's San Francisco office.

Ricardo Boone Salmon, a congressman for Chihuahua state, where Ciudad Juarez is located, said the state legislature unanimously approved a request this week asking the federal Interior Department to ban the game.

"It is true there is a serious crime situation, which we are not trying to

hide," Boone Salmon said. "But we also should not expose children to this kind of scenarios so that they are going to grow up with this kind of image and lack of values."

State congress leader Enrique Serrano said the main concern was the potential effect on children in Ciudad Juarez, some of whom have already been taught to "duck and cover" if firefights erupt outside their schools.

"Children wind up being easily involved in criminal acts over time, because among other things, during their childhood not enough care has been taken about what they see on television and playing video games," Serrano said. "They believe so much blood and death is normal."

It is not the first time city officials have been angered by references to Juarez's problems.

In 2010, the New York-based MAC cosmetics company abandoned Mexican sales of a makeup collection that raised hackles because it featured pallid, ghostly hues said to be inspired by deaths of women in the city. The collection of lipstick, blushes and other cosmetics uses names like "Juarez," "Bordertown," "Ghost Town" and "Factory."

More than 100 women were abused and murdered before their bodies were dumped in Ciudad Juarez's desert between 1993 and 2003. Many of the victims were factory workers.

In 2004, the city's then-mayor called for a boycott of the song "The Women of Juarez," by Los Tigres del Norte, one of Mexico's top-selling bands. It blasted Mexican authorities for failing to solve the killings of women.

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