THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational Weekly



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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Cocaine, cartels, and corruption: The crisis in Ecuador, explained

CD Goette-Luciak - Vox: 11 January 2024

Ecuador was known for peace, but it has become one of the most violent countries in South America.

https://www.vox.com/world-politics/2024/1/11/24034891/ecuador-drugs-cocaine-cartels-violence-murder-daniel-naboa-columbia-crime

It's Time to Confront the Taliban's Corruption

David J. Kramer, Natalie Gonnella-Platts and Jessica Ludwig - The Diplomat: 17 January 2024

Fundamental to the militant group's vicious pursuit of power is strategic kleptocracy.

https://thediplomat.com/2024/01/its-time-to-confront-the-talibans-corruption/

For more on this theme:

Guatemala's Arevalo Takes Office, Vows to Fight Corruption

https://www.voanews.com/a/guatemala-s-arevalo-takes-office-vows-to-fight-corruption-/7440227.html

Navigating Crises amid Latin America's Anti-Corruption Overhaul

https://latinlawyer.com/guide/the-guide-corporate-crisis-management/fifth-edition/article/navigating-crises-amid-latin-americas-anti-corruption-overhaul

Euroviews. Kleptocrats in democracy's clothing: Beijing and Moscow talk anti-corruption at the UN

https://www.euronews.com/2024/01/09/kleptocrats-in-democracys-clothing-beijing-and-moscow-talk-anti-corruption-at-the-un

What Happened in Panama? How Transparency Measures Can Fight Corruption in Mining

https://www.triplepundit.com/story/2024/panama-mining-transparency/792221

Why Cambodia's Government Cannot Win Its Fight Against Corruption

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China amends criminal law related to bribery and corruption

https://fcpablog.com/2024/01/16/china-amends-criminal-law-related-to-bribery-and-corruption/

Rome in push to decriminalise abuse of office despite corruption fears

https://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/rome-in-push-to-decriminalise-abuse-of-office-despite-corruption-fears/

Albania to create anti-corruption ministry in quest for EU accession

https://www.intellinews.com/albania-to-create-anti-corruption-ministry-in-quest-for-eu-accession-307391/?-source=albania

Kenya wins bid to host Africa's anti-corruption centre

https://www.citizen.digital/news/kenya-wins-bid-to-host-africas-anti-corruption-centre-n 334596

DRUG TRAFFICKING

In Ecuador, the global reach of Mexico's warring drug cartels fuels a national crisis Mark Stevenson – The Associated Press: 13 January 2024

Mexico's two main cartels have long taken their deadly rivalry with them as they expand, but never with such intense street-gang violence and a presidential declaration of a state of "internal armed conflict."

https://apnews.com/article/ecuador-crisis-killings-mexican-cartels-2b82e62999b2696e70bd0f-6ce933026f

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'Absolute flood': Opioids become more lethal — and more common — on Calgary streets

https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/opioids-more-lethal-common-on-calgary-streets

How China's Inaction Is Feeding America's Fentanyl Crisis

https://www.newsweek.com/china-inaction-feeding-america-fentanyl-crisis-mexico-sinaloa-cartel-1856113

How Much Opium Did Afghans Harvest in 2023 After the Taliban Ban?

https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/how-much-opium-did-afghans-harvest-in-2023-after-the-taliban-ban

Drug Quandaries In The Middle East And Transcontinental Transits Via Europe

https://www.eurasiareview.com/08012024-drug-quandaries-in-the-middle-east-and-transcontinental transits-via-europe-analysis/

Locals fight their own war on drugs in Syria's Daraa Province

https://www.mei.edu/publications/locals-fight-their-own-war-drugs-syrias-daraa-province

Ecuador: From Darwin To Drug Trafficking

https://www.barrons.com/news/ecuador-from-darwin-to-drug-trafficking-fdaa5579

"Golden Triangle" Drug Trade Booms After 2021 Coup In Myanmar

https://theowp.org/golden-triangle-drug-trade-booms-after-2021-coup-in-myanmar/

Arresting Malaysian drug lord could solve 70% of Thailand's trafficking cases: Thai police

https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/arresting-malaysian-drug-lord-could-solve-70-of-thailand-s-trafficking-cases-thai-police

Chaos In Ecuador: Drug Gangs Wreak Havoc Across The Country

https://www.forbes.com/sites/eliasferrerbreda/2024/01/09/chaos-in-ecuador-drug-gangs-wreak-havoc-across-the-country/?sh=a01f6a419fc7

'Children of War': How Violence and Addiction Rob the Youth of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

https://insightcrime.org/news/children-war-violence-addiction-youth-ciudad-juarez-mexico/

GameChangers 2023: The Cocaine Flash-to-Bang in 2024

https://insightcrime.org/news/gamechangers-2023-cocaine-flash-to-bang-2024/

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Illegal Mining Regains Strength, and Malnutrition Becomes Part of the Routine for Yanomamis

Vinicius Sassine and Lalo de Almeida – UOL: 15 January 2024T

The reactivation of illegal mining fuels the humanitarian crisis among the Yanomamis, impacting access to food and leading to successive malaria outbreaks in the territory.

https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/internacional/en/brazil/2024/01/illegal-mining-regains-strength-and-mal-nutrition-becomes-part-of-the-routine-for-yanomamis.shtml

From forest-listening to advanced remote sensing, can Al turn the tide on deforestation?

Mark Hillsdon - Reuters: 16 January 2024

Breakthroughs in artificial intelligence mean it's possible to predict areas most at risk, allowing the authorities to take preventative action.

https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/land-use-biodiversity/forest-listening-advanced-remote-sensing-can-ai-turn-tide-deforestation-2024-01-16/

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Do carbon credits really help communities that keep forests standing?

https://news.mongabay.com/2024/01/do-carbon-credits-really-help-communities-that-keep-forests-standing/

Illegal gold mining threatens Indus River water and biodiversity in Pakistan

https://news.mongabay.com/2024/01/illegal-gold-mining-threatens-indus-river-water-and-biodiversity-commentary/

Lula vows to win 'war' against illegal miners invading Indigenous lands

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/09/lula-brazil-indigenous-illegal-miners-yanomami

Extent of illegal sand mining in the Mekong Delta

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These Satellite Maps Reveal Rampant Fishing by Untracked 'Dark Vessels' in the World's Oceans

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/satellite-maps-reveal-rampant-fishing-untracked-dark-ves-sels-oceans-180983539/

To Improve Fisheries Management Globally, U.N. Creates a New Forum

https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/01/08/to-improve-fisheries-management-globally-un-creates-a-new-forum

The EU fisheries control system gets a major revamp

https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-fisheries-control-system-gets-major-revamp-2024-01-09 en

India's Escalating Wildlife Trafficking: A Threat to Biodiversity

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ORGANIZED CRIME

Corruption, Crypto Test LatAm Money Laundering Laws

Gavin Voss and Vera Sistermans - InSight Crime: 18 January 2024

Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean face obstacles in fighting money laundering, even though the region ranks above the world average in its adoption of legal frameworks, according to a report.

https://insightcrime.org/news/corruption-crypto-test-latam-money-laundering-laws/

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North Korean hackers, criminals share money laundering networks in Southeast Asia – IIN

https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/north-korean-hackers-criminals-share-money-laundering-net-works-southeast-asia-un-2024-01-15/

Costa Rica Strengthens Fight Against Organized Crime

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Assessing the Early Days of Ecuador's War on Gangs

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Tether Cryptocurrency Becoming 'Preferred Choice' Among Money Launderers And Scammers, UN Warns

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Bahamas to Crack Down on Organized Crime

 $https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bahamas-to-Crack-Down-on-Organized-Crime-20240117-0010. \\ html$

Organized crime puts a price on Mexican agriculture

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Mexico's 2024 Election Could Spark Violent Criminal Realignments

https://insightcrime.org/news/mexico-2024-election-violent-criminal-realignments/

Self-defence groups as a response to crime and conflict in West Africa

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https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/op-ed-the-state-of-global-organized-crime-you-wont-like-it/article

Casinos and Crypto Major Drivers of Money Laundering in East and Southeast Asia

https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/18377-casinos-and-crypto-major-drivers-of-money-laundering-in-east-and-southeast-asia

In Declaring Serbia Free of Organised Crime, Govt Ignores the Obvious

https://balkaninsight.com/2024/01/18/in-declaring-serbia-free-of-organised-crime-govt-ignores-the-obvious/

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET FREEDOM

2023 has been a challenging year for internet freedoms, here's why

Chiara Castro - TechRadar: 10 January 2024

Internet shutdowns, social media blocks, online censorship and alleged misuse of data were the digital issues.

https://www.techradar.com/computing/cyber-security/2023-has-been-a-challenging-year-for-internet-free-doms-heres-why

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(Turkey) Turkey's top court annuls article enabling internet censorship

https://www.turkishminute.com/2024/01/10/turkey-top-court-annul-article-enable-internet-censorship/

(Iran) Iran's internet price rises, and so does the fear of greater censorship

https://www.techradar.com/computing/cyber-security/irans-internet-price-rises-and-so-does-the-fear-of-greater-censorship

(China) The end of anonymity online in China

https://www.technologyreview.com/2024/01/10/1086366/china-social-media-anonymity-end/

(Global) No, The BRICS+ Will Not Have A Separate Internet

https://nationalinterest.org/blog/techland/no-brics-will-not-have-separate-internet-208456

CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

The implications of the AI boom for nonstate armed actors

Valerie Wirtschafter - Brookings: 16 January 2024

How might artificial intelligence be exploited by criminal organizations, terrorist groups and others in 2024?

https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-implications-of-the-ai-boom-for-nonstate-armed-actors/

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(India) Cyber-security management landscape of the Indian automation industry: Overview, challenges, action points

https://www.forbesindia.com/article/iim-calcutta/cybersecurity-management-landscape-of-the-indian-auto-mation-industry-overview-challenges-action-points/90769/1

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(China) China's State-affiliated Hacking: A Rising Threat to Global Cybersecurity

https://bnnbreaking.com/tech/cybersecurity/chinas-state-affiliated-hacking-a-rising-threat-to-global-cybersecurity/

CYBERATTACKS

Switzerland hit by cyberattack after Ukraine president's visit

Swissinfo.co: 17 January 2024

Government websites were the victims. The Russian-linked hacker group NoName claimed responsibility, citing Volodymyr Zelensky's attendance at the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos.

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/switzerland-hit-by-cyberattack-after-ukraine-president-s-visit/49136116

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(Switzerland) Cyberattack exposes Swiss Air Force documents on the darknet

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/cyberattack-exposes-swiss-air-force-documents-on-the-dark-net/49100914

(India) India's Shopping Giant Infiniti Mall Hit by Cyberattack: 280,000 Records Potentially Exposed

https://thecyberexpress.com/cyberattack-on-infiniti-mall-records-exposed/

(Lebanon) Beirut airport cyberattack targets Hezbollah

https://urgentcomm.com/2024/01/11/beirut-airport-cyberattack-targets-hezbollah/

CYBERCRIME

Scams Against Americans are Skyrocketing. The US Tech Sector and Government can Turn the Tide

Ken Westbrook - OODA Loop: 16 January 2024

A recent Gallup poll and a Federal Trade Commission estimate of fraud losses show that criminals are stealing billions of dollars from Americans each year. The perpetrators are mainly foreign organized-crime gangs.

https://www.oodaloop.com/archive/2024/01/16/scams-against-americans-are-skyrocketing-the-us-tech-sector-and-government-can-turn-the-tide/

For more on this theme:

(Global) Al advances risk facilitating cyber crime, top U.S. officials say

https://www.reuters.com/technology/cybersecurity/ai-advances-risk-facilitating-cyber-crime-top-us-officials-say-2024-01-09/

(U.S., China) Al is helping U.S. spies catch stealthy Chinese hacking ops, NSA official says

https://cyberscoop.com/ai-china-hacking-operations/

PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Chinese-manufactured drones 'pose a significant risk to critical infrastructure and U.S. national security,' DHS and FBI warn

Luke Barr - ABC News: 17 January 2024

The Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are warning that such drones could steal data.

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(Global) Protecting those below the cyber-poverty line is critical to everyone

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(Global) The biggest cyber threats to public safety agencies

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(Global) Five steps to secure the Low Earth Orbit satellite environment

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PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Iran terror blast highlights success – and growing risk – of ISIS-K regional strategy

Amira Jadoon and Nakissa Jahanbani - The Conversation: 11 January 2024

Since the Taliban takeover in 2021, the Islamic State group's Afghanistan affiliate has sought to internationalize its operational and recruitment campaign.

https://the conversation.com/iran-terror-blast-highlights-success- and-growing-risk-of-isis-k-regional-strategy-220586

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Why Iran tried to kill ISIS commanders in Syria with ballistic missiles

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Why the Islamic State Bombing in Iran Should Have Western Leaders Worried

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The Cascading Risks of a Resurgent Islamic State in the Philippines

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The Islamic State's South Asian Branches are Spearheading an Anti-China Campaign

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Is the Islamic State still a threat to Europe?

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Vantage I Why Islamic State eyeing Pakistan isn't surprising yet worrisome

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Al Qaeda's Regional Affiliates Continue to Threaten Global Security

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Sub-Saharan Africa most conflict-affected region globally — IISS

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ATMIS to continue "degrading" al-Shabaab in 2024

https://www.defenceweb.co.za/featured/atmis-to-continue-degrading-al-shabaab-in-2024/

ISRAEL/HAMAS

Hamas fights with a patchwork of weapons built by Iran, China, Russia and North Korea

Michael Biesecker - The Associated Press: 15 January 2024

An Associated Press analysis of more than 150 videos and photos taken in the three months of combat since the attack on Israel found Iranian sniper rifles, AK-47 assault rifles from China and Russia, and North Korean- and Bulgarian-built rocket-propelled grenades.

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Hezbollah and the Axis of Resistance in 2024

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ISIS and Hamas have two very different ideologies. But are their tactics becoming more similar?

https://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2024/01/17/hamas-tactics-chance-dnt-lead-vpx.cnn

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Gaza's Underground: Hamas's Entire Politico-Military Strategy Rests on Its Tunnels

https://mwi.westpoint.edu/gazas-underground-hamass-entire-politico-military-strategy-rests-on-its-tunnels/

European Sting Operations Target Suspected Hamas Operatives

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Houthi Terrorism: Russia's hand in the Yemeni Crisis

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War against Hamas in Gaza is act of self-defence, Israel tells world court

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EU sanctions Hamas' Gaza leader over October 7 attacks on Israel

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India-Middle East Relations Unsettled by Israel-Hamas Conflict

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ISRAEL/HAMAS

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Future of Gaza: Will displaced Palestinians return home?

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Iran missile strikes in Pakistan show tension fueled by Israel-Hamas war spreading

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Many fear Israel-Hamas war could spread across Middle East

https://www.dw.com/en/many-fear-israel-hamas-war-could-spread-across-middle-east/video-68016816

Five questions and answers about South Africa's genocide case against Israel

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/five-questions-and-answers-about-south-africas-genocide-case-against-israel/

Hamas hostage-taking must not go unpunished. The ICC must make a case against the terrorist group.

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/hamas-hostage-taking-icc/

In 100 days, the Israel-Hamas war has transformed the region. The fighting shows no signs of ending

https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-100-days-palestinians-takeaways-05422978a87ab52d51df-152bc9248a7f

100 days on, what's the state of play in Israel-Hamas war?

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Are Hezbollah and Israel edging closer to war?

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Normalization Survives Despite the Gaza War

https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/normalization-survives-despite-the-gaza-war/

Israel's Actions in Lebanon offer a Warning for Tehran and Moscow

https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/israels-actions-in-lebanon-offer-a-warning-for-tehran-andmoscow

After Gaza: A Political and Economic Path Forward

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Who Governs the Palestinians?

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Red Sea: Time to treat the cause, not the symptom

https://www.politico.eu/article/red-sea-houthi-middle-east-gaza-israel-palestine-yemen-europe-us-uk/

Israel and Hezbollah Could Stumble Into a War Neither Wants

https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/01/11/israel-hezbollah-war-risk-gaza-lebanon/

Ukraine's Zelenskyy rules out a cease-fire with Russia, saying Moscow would

Harriet Morris and Illia Novikov - The Associated Press: 11 January 2024

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says the Kremlin's forces would use the pause to rearm and regroup in order to overwhelm Kyiv's troops.

https://apnews.com/article/ukraine-russia-estonia-baltic-nation-03022213674cc48c82cc7149fefc86a0

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War in Ukraine Drains Nearly Half of Accessible Russian Reserves

https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/war-in-ukraine-drains-nearly-half-of-accessible-russian-reserves-1.2023038

Russia's intense attacks on Ukraine has sharply increased civilian casualties in December, UN says

https://www.arabnews.com/node/2442981/world

More countries join talks on Ukraine leader's peace formula. But Russia is absent and war grinds on

https://apnews.com/article/zelenskyy-davos-yermak-ukraine-switzerland-afb8bb146cd22f6a7d79fcdf177d0786

EU, US urge sustained support for Ukraine in war against Russia

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/1/16/eu-us-urge-sustained-support-for-ukraine-in-war-against-russia

Russia's ally China needed to end Ukraine war, Swiss diplomat says

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/top-diplomats-meet-davos-ukraine-peace-formula-2024-01-14/

Arsenal of Autocracy: North Korea and Iran are arming Russia in Ukraine

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/arsenal-of-autocracy-north-korea-and-iran-are-arming-russia-in-ukraine/

It is time to use Russia's frozen assets to help Ukraine

https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2024/1/16/it-is-time-to-use-russias-frozen-assets-to-help-ukraine

With 'God's-eye view,' secretive surveillance flights keep close watch on Russia and Ukraine

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Russia doubles down on fast, cheap, unguided bombs to attack Ukraine

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/1/11/russia-doubles-down-on-fast-cheap-unguided-bombs-to-strikeukraine

Russia's history with Chechnya has lessons for Gaza

https://thehill.com/opinion/international/4411748-russias-history-with-chechnya-has-lessons-for-gaza/

For more on this theme:

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