

THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational weekly



A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Two journalists exposing Mexico's corruption and drug violence murdered within one week

Tom Phillips – The Guardian: 18 January 2022

Margarito Martínez Esquivel and José Luis Gamboa, anti-corruption reporters, are the latest casualties in the world's most dangerous country for reporters outside war zones.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/18/journalists-exposing-mexico-corruption-drug-violence-murdered>

Iran's regime sentences boxer to death for his peaceful protest vs. corruption

Benjamin Weinthal – The Jerusalem Post: 16 January 2022

Iranian boxing champion Mohammad Javad was sentenced to death for protesting economic corruption in Iran, a continuation of Iran's execution of athletes.

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-692632>

For more on this theme:

Files go missing as Congress alleges massive corruption in Kerala, India health department

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/south/files-go-missing-as-congress-alleges-massive-corruption-in-kerala-health-department-1069250.html>

Chinese anti-corruption blitz snares another senior official

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3163455/chinese-anti-corruption-blitz-snares-another-senior-official>

Bulgaria's anti-corruption chief resigns as government seeks reforms

<https://whbl.com/2022/01/17/bulgarias-anti-corruption-chief-resigns-as-government-seeks-reforms/>

Ousted Myanmar leader Suu Kyi faces 5 new corruption charges

<https://lasvegassun.com/news/2022/jan/14/ousted-myanmar-leader-suu-kyi-faces-5-new-corrupti/>

Biden highlights anti-money laundering as a tool to combat corruption

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/biden-highlights-anti-money-laundering-tool-combat-corruption-2022-01-19/>

Kyrgyz Customs Chief Detained On Suspicion Of Corruption

<https://www.rferl.org/a/krgyzstan-customs-chief-corruption/31658604.html>

Corruption laws needed now

<https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/editorial-corruption-laws-needed-now.927574>

Anti-Corruption Judge Becomes Next Target of Guatemala Prosecutors

<https://insightcrime.org/news/anti-corruption-judge-becomes-next-target-guatemala-prosecutors/>

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Conflict, corruption turning Lebanon, Syria into narco-states: Report

Arab News: 18 January 2022

The large-scale export of Captagon from Syria and Lebanon is the legacy of a decade of conflict combined with widespread corruption, and reliance on the drug revenues is turning both countries into narco-states, according to a report by Britain's Channel 4 News.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2006906/middle-east>

Ex-Mexican prosecutor so corrupt he betrayed drug cartel

The Associated Press: 14 January 2022

A former Mexican state prosecutor was so corrupt, even the crooks who bribed him couldn't trust him, according to a report released by the Mexican government's Interior Department.

<https://apnews.com/article/mexico-caribbean-drug-cartels-gangs-d87cbffcf3a0a004b0e-b303e89069075>

For more on this theme:

Commission proposes stronger mandate for EU Drugs Agency as illicit market proliferates

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_302

Bangladesh at the hub of three drug trafficking regions

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/crime-and-law/bangladesh-at-the-hub-of-three-drug-trafficking-regions>

Recently Published Report Provides Key Information Regarding Recidivism of Released Federal Drug Trafficking Offenders

<https://www.davisvanguard.org/2022/01/recently-published-report-provides-key-information-regarding-recidivism-of-released-federal-drug-trafficking-offenders/>

Snapchat Adds New Protection for Minors After Being Called Out for Fentanyl Overdoses

<https://www.newsweek.com/snapchat-adds-new-protection-minors-after-being-called-out-fentanyl-overdoses-1670395>

Colombia's 'King' of Drug Subs Goes Down But Vessels Proliferate

<https://insightcrime.org/news/arrest-king-narco-submarines-colombia/>

How Brazil's Port of Santos Became Cocaine's World Trade Center

<https://insightcrime.org/news/how-brazils-port-of-santos-became-cocaines-world-trade-center/>

Drug distributor executive accused of 'greed' in opioid trial

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/drug-distributor-executive-accused-greed-oid-trial-2022-01-18/>

Technology and Illegal Drugs: A Deadly Combination

<https://techreport.com/news/3475553/technology-illegal-drugs/>

Brazil Police Target Legacy of Infamous Drug Trafficker, Fernandinho Beira-Mar

<https://insightcrime.org/news/brazil-police-target-legacy-of-infamous-drug-trafficker-fernandinho-beira-mar/>

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Brazil's illegal gold rush is fueling corruption, violent crime and deforestation

Robert Muggah – Mongabay: 14 January 2022

Amazon was once the epicenter of the global gold trade, and now illegal mining is again surging across the region. Gold's extraction and trade are not only fueling corruption, money laundering and criminal violence – the mining is accelerating deforestation in the world's largest tropical forest, says Robert Muggah, co-founder of the Igarapé Institute.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2022/01/brazils-illegal-gold-rush-is-fueling-corruption-violent-crime-and-deforestation/>

U.S. Fishing for Defense Tech to Protect International Waters

Meredith Roaten – National Defense magazine: 20 January 2022

The U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy are exploring new technology and partnerships to protect fisheries from Chinese theft. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is a growing problem across the world, but particularly in the seas traversed by Chinese ships, according to officials.

<https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2022/1/20/us-fishing-for-defense-tech-to-protect-international-waters>

For more on this theme:

FinCEN threat analysis of illegal wildlife trafficking shows there's a lot more to be done

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=bb2f49f1-c189-4086-8b88-557d373dec16>

Forensic lab aids crack down on illegal wildlife trade in Viet Nam

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1109312>

NGO Urges Chinese Online Platforms to Help Fight Illegal Wildlife Trade

<https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/15738-ngo-urges-chinese-online-platforms-to-help-fight-illegal-wildlife-trade>

How the air transport industry was transformed to combat wildlife trafficking

<https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/the-routes-partnership-from-take-off-to-touch-down/>

Deforestation puts financial system at risk: report

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/589621-deforestation-puts-financial-system-at-risk-report?rl=1>

Ministry's Draft Changes To Act Undermine How India Protects Its Wildlife

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/wildlife-protection-act-environment-ministry-draft-amendment-vermin-animal-trade/>

Up to 30 Percent of Seafood in the U.S. Is Caught by 'Fish Pirates'

<https://www.newsweek.com/30-per-cent-us-seafood-caught-fish-pirates-1669549>

Tarnished Gold: Illegal mining stokes Indigenous divisions

<https://apnews.com/article/business-mountains-environment-and-nature-brazil-00196ff2ed46a82e4fd6a4a817829f24>

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

The Role Banks & Credit Unions Must Play to Prevent Human Trafficking

Garret Reich – The Financial Brand: January 2022

Human trafficking – a blight on mankind throughout recorded history – is still thriving. Human trafficking generates an estimated \$150 billion in illicit profits annually, according to Polaris, a nonprofit group. Because of its essential role in facilitating the movement of money, the banking industry has long been a key to preventing human trafficking transactions.

<https://thefinancialbrand.com/127820/banks-credit-unions-prevent-human-trafficking/>

For more on this theme:

Guinea Joins Liberia and Sierra Leone In Calling For Urgent Summit On Human Trafficking

<https://frontpageafricaonline.com/news/guinea-joins-liberia-and-sierra-leone-in-calling-for-urgent-summit-on-human-trafficking/>

EU border agency must boost transparency of its operations — EU ombudsman

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/eu-border-agency-must-boost-transparency-of-its-operations-eu-ombudsman/>

U.S. To Ban Goods From China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/us-to-ban-goods-china-s-xinjiang-uyghur-autonomous-region>

Biden administration turning attention to seafood's labor issues

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/biden-administration-turning-attention-to-seafood-s-labor-issues>

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET FREEDOM

This year, Russia's internet crackdown will be even worse

Justin Sherman – Atlantic Council: 13 January 2022

While Moscow made headlines after throttling Twitter and coercing Google and Apple into censoring opposition leader Alexei Navalny's election app last year, Western media coverage of internet repression and security threats still tends to focus on China. But Russian developments that impinge on both the internet and human rights in the country – and which constitute broader cyber threats – persist.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/this-year-russias-internet-crackdown-will-be-even-worse/>

For more on this theme:

(Nigeria) Nigeria Lifts Twitter Ban Seven Months After Shutting it Down

<https://investorsking.com/2022/01/12/nigeria-lifts-twitter-ban-seven-months-after-shutting-it-down/>

(Pakistan) Woman sentenced to death in Pakistan over 'blasphemous' WhatsApp activity

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/19/pakistan-woman-aneeqa-ateeq-sentenced-to-death-blasphemous-whatsapp-messages>

(China) Circumvention of censorship in China has increased during COVID-19 pandemic

<https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/censorship-china-covid-19-pandemic>

CYBERSECURITY

Protecting national security, cybersecurity, and privacy while ensuring competition

Stephanie K. Pell and Bill Baer – 19 January 2022

Experts at a Chatham House Rule roundtable were asked whether there are irreconcilable tensions between anti-trust enforcement and promoting competition on the one hand, and protecting our privacy, guarding against threats to our cybersecurity and defending our country against hostile foreign actors on the other.

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2022/01/19/protecting-national-security-cybersecurity-and-privacy-while-ensuring-competition/>

For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) Insurers Stake Out Their Ground for Covering State Cyber Attacks

<https://www.lawfareblog.com/insurers-stake-out-their-ground-covering-state-cyber-attacks>

(Global) What you need to know about cybersecurity in 2022

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/01/cyber-security-2022-global-outlook/>

(Global) Why You Need A 'Zero Trust' Cybersecurity Plan

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2022/01/13/why-you-need-a-zero-trust-cybersecurity-plan/?sh=4375970f129d>

CYBER STATECRAFT

UK Proposes New Laws to Strengthen National Cyber-Resiliency

James Coker – Info Security: 19 January 2022

The United Kingdom is planning new laws to strengthen the country's cyber resilience in response to surging critical infrastructure and supply chain attacks.

<https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/uk-laws-national-cyber-resiliency/>

For more on this theme:

(Australia, U.K.) Statement on the UK-Australia Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership

<https://www.foreignminister.gov.au/minister/marise-payne/media-release/statement-uk-australia-cyber-and-critical-technology-partnership>

(India, U.S.) India, US review cooperation in cyber security

<https://en.trend.az/world/other/3540682.html>

(Kuwait) Kuwait approves cyber security bill

<https://www.arabtimesonline.com/news/kuwait-approves-cyber-security-bill/>

(NATO, Ukraine) NATO, Ukraine sign deal to 'deepen' cyber cooperation

<https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/1642428833-nato-ukraine-sign-deal-to-deepen-cyber-cooperation>

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Military innovation and technological change: Preparing for the next generation of cyber threats

Michael E. O'Hanlon – Brookings: January 2022

Where are the greatest opportunities for the United States and its allies – as well as their authoritarian adversaries – in terms of military innovation in cyberspace between now and 2040? And where can we expect the greatest vulnerabilities to develop or emerge?

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/military-innovation-and-technological-change-preparing-for-the-next-generation-of-cyber-threats/>

For more on this theme:

(Brazil) Young People from Poor Neighborhoods Set Out to Conquer the Digital World

<https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/brazil-s-favela-tech-boom-young-people-from-poor-neighborhoods-set-out-to-conquer-digital-world-a-81a80497-0634-49e1-ad31-d1c8d5f83382>

(U.S.) Memorandum on Improving the Cybersecurity of National Security, Department of Defense, and Intelligence Community Systems

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/01/19/memorandum-on-improving-the-cybersecurity-of-national-security-department-of-defense-and-intelligence-community-systems/>

(UAE) UAE Cyber Security Council Beefs Up Defense Against Cyber Attacks

<https://www.transportandlogisticsme.com/smart-technology-innovation/uae-cyber-security-council-beefs-up-defense-against-cyber-attacks>

CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Sophisticated cyber-attack targets Red Cross Red Crescent data on 500,000 people

International Committee of the Red Cross: 19 January 2022

A sophisticated attack was detected against computer servers hosting information held by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/sophisticated-cyber-attack-targets-red-cross-red-crescent-data-500000-people>

For more on this theme:

(Global) Confronting Pervasive Cyber Threats For 2022 And Beyond

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2022/01/19/confronting-pervasive-cyber-threats-for-2022-and-beyond/?sh=5891f8cf792e>

(U.S.) Albuquerque Schools Cancel Classes After Cyber Attack

<https://www.govtech.com/education/k-12/albuquerque-schools-cancel-classes-after-cyber-attack>

(Ukraine) No leak of personal data after massive cyber attack on government websites – SBU

<https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-society/3384897-no-leak-of-personal-data-after-massive-cyber-attack-on-government-websites-sbu.html>

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Russia captures hacker likely responsible for Colonial Pipeline cyberattack

K. Bell – Engadget: 15 January 2022

The hacker behind the ransomware attack that took down the Colonial Pipeline last year has been apprehended by Russian authorities, according to U.S. officials. This is the first U.S. investigation Russia has cooperated on in eight years.

<https://www.engadget.com/russia-captures-hacker-likely-responsible-for-colonial-pipeline-012541371.html>

For more on this theme:

(Russia, U.S.) Tensions with Russia Prompt CISA Warning to Critical Infrastructure

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/tensions-russia-prompt-cisa-warning-to-critical-infrastructure>

(Ukraine, Russia) Ukraine: Recent Cyber Attacks Part of Wider Plot to Sabotage Critical Infrastructure

<https://thehackernews.com/2022/01/ukraine-recent-cyber-attacks-part-of.html>

(U.S., Global) CISA Warning: Log4j Poses Long-Term Risk to Critical Infrastructure

<https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/cisa-warning-log4j-poses-long-term-risk-to-critical-infrastructure/>

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

ISIS bot army adapts to survive online cyberslaughter – report

Yonah Jeremy Bob – The Jerusalem Post: 13 January 2022

ISIS' digital presence is under constant attack by the West, Iranian proxies and others, but its army of bots is learning to adapt even to aggressive attempts to shut it down, according to a report by the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at Reichman University.

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-692462>

Tajik IS Widows Say They're Paying For Their Husbands' Actions, But Courts Aren't Convinced

Farangis Najibullah – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 16 January 2022

Tajikistan has rarely arrested women repatriated from conflict zones such as Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, instead trying to reintegrate them into society. But in recent months, Tajik courts have sentenced at least five women – the spouses of suspected IS fighters – to 12 to 14 years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/tajikistan-widows-islamic-state-repatriation/31656532.html>

For more on this theme:

Defense officials fear ISIS-K and al Qaeda threats in Afghanistan growing as months go by

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/afghanistan-threat-terrorism-al-qaeda-isis>

SDF warn of ISIS financing operations in Rojava

<https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/150120221>

ISIS conducted 2,700-plus attacks worldwide in 2021

<https://www.jns.org/isis-conducted-2700-plus-attacks-worldwide-in-2021/>

Modern-Day Threats from Afghanistan: The Taliban and ISIS-K

<https://amuedge.com/modern-day-threats-from-afghanistan-the-taliban-and-isis-k/>

Over 200 ISIS-affiliated people leave al-Hol camp

<https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/170120221>

Spain Expels Moroccan Woman for Her Affiliation With ISIS

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2022/01/346579/spain-expels-moroccan-woman-for-her-affiliation-with-isis>

The long jihadist-extremist quest to free Aafia Siddiqui – analysis

<https://www.jpost.com/international/article-692650>

Iraqi Army seize weapons belonging to ISIS in Nineveh

https://en.abna24.com/news//iraqi-army-seize-weapons-belonging-to-isis-in-nineveh_1219716.html

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Terrorists who use the internet are less successful

Leiden University: 17 January 2022

There is too much focus on online radicalization, says Joe Whittaker, when this is just one of the factors that make someone become a terrorist. In fact, Whittaker's research shows that terrorists who use the internet are less successful in achieving their goals than those who stay offline.

<https://phys.org/news/2022-01-terrorists-internet-successful.html>

Afghanistan: Taliban plans for suicide brigade reveal changing nature of warfare in 21st century

Lily Hamourziadou – The Conversation: 13 January 2022

The Taliban recently announced it will establish a battalion of suicide attackers as part of the national army of Afghanistan. These “martyrdom brigades” will be “under the control of the ministry of defense and will be used for special operations,” according to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid.

<https://theconversation.com/afghanistan-taliban-plans-for-suicide-brigade-reveal-changing-nature-of-warfare-in-21st-century-174829>

For more on this theme:

New technology gives new tools “to those who want to do harm”, warns EU's counter-terrorism chief

<https://www.euronews.com/2022/01/14/new-technology-gives-new-tools-to-those-who-want-to-do-harm-warns-eu-s-counter-terrorism-c>

Terrorism hike in Central African Republic targets UN

<https://africa.cgtn.com/2022/01/13/terrorism-hike-in-central-african-republic-targets-un/>

The Little Country That Could Be a Big Help Fighting Terror and Extremism

<https://thedispatch.com/p/the-little-country-that-could-be>

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan make deals with Taliban, but watch border warily

<https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-uzbekistan-make-deals-with-taliban-but-watch-border-warily>

Hezbollah, Amal End Boycott of Lebanon's Cabinet Amid Economic Crisis

<https://www.voanews.com/a/hezbollah-amal-end-boycott-of-lebanon-s-cabinet-amid-economic-crisis/6398531.html>

Time to end Hezbollah's hold over Lebanon

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2007086>

UN: Taliban attempting to exclude women, girls from public life

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/17/un-taliban-attempting-to-exclude-women-girls-from-public-life>

Afghanistan: 500,000 jobs lost since Taliban takeover

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1110052>

RADICALIZATION

Radicalization: The strange psychology behind fusing yourself with one cause

Jonny Thomson – Big Think: 7 January 2022

For some people, there is only one thing to live for. They commit their entire being to that thing. They are dangerous.

<https://bigthink.com/neuropsych/fanaticism-the-dangers-of-fusing-your-identity-with-ideology/>

For more on this theme:

Online Radicalization in India

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2021/12/29/online-radicalization-in-india/>

North Macedonia Urged to Address Far-Right Threat

<https://balkaninsight.com/2021/12/22/north-macedonia-urged-to-address-far-right-threat/>

Evaluating Strategies to Address Online Radicalization in Singapore

<https://thediplomat.com/2022/01/evaluating-strategies-to-address-online-radicalization-in-singapore/>

Terrorists exploiting pandemic restrictions, recruiting via virtual platforms: UN Report

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/terrorists-exploiting-pandemic-restrictions-recruiting-via-virtual-platforms-un-report/articleshow/88893949.cms>

Nigeria's Boko Haram reintegration process: weaknesses and how they can be fixed

<https://theconversation.com/nigerias-boko-haram-reintegration-process-weaknesses-and-how-they-can-be-fixed-174728>

Al-Shabaab targets Kenyan fighters for recruitment

<https://www.garoweonline.com/en/world/africa/al-shabaab-targets-kenyan-fighters-for-recruitment>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: CYBER

Belarus: Cyber upstart, or Russian staging ground?

Gavin Wilde and Justin Sherman – CyberScoop: 13 January 2022

As the prospect of further Russian aggression in Ukraine looms, the U.S. administration is concerned about Russian cyber operations against the U.S. and its allies. Yet as the White House engages with Moscow and plans around these risks, it must watch an overlooked development: growing cyber integration between Belarus and the Kremlin.

<https://www.cyberscoop.com/belarus-cyber-upstart-or-russian-staging-ground/>

For more on this theme:

Ukraine Government Websites Weather Cyber Attack Campaign, Strongly Suspected to Come From Russia

<https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/ukraine-government-websites-weather-cyber-attack-campaign-strongly-suspected-to-come-from-russia/>

Australia, UK to 'fight back' against hostile states in cyber – minister

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australia-fight-back-against-hostile-states-cyber-minister-2022-01-20/>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

Danish Spy Agency Frets Over Arctic Operations by China and Russia

Morten Buttler – Bloomberg: 13 January 2022

The Danish intelligence service warns that China and Russia are looking to destabilize parts of Denmark, including Greenland, because these nations' geopolitical ambitions in the Arctic are growing.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/danish-spy-agency-frets-over-arctic-operations-by-china-russia>

MI5 accuses lawyer of trying to influence politicians on behalf of China

Dan Sabbagh – The Guardian: 13 January 2022

An unprecedented security warning from British intelligence was circulated to members of Parliament and peers, accusing a lawyer, Christine Lee, of seeking to improperly influence parliamentarians on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jan/13/chinese-national-trying-to-improperly-influence-politicians-says-mi5>

For more on this theme:

'Greater Eurasia': Belt & Road expands in Africa

<https://thediplomaticworld.com/greater-eurasia-belt-road-expands-in-africa/>

Belt & Road Phase 2 moves beyond infrastructure

<https://asiatimes.com/2021/12/belt-road-phase-2-moves-beyond-infrastructure/>

Belt & Road encircles Latin America and the Caribbean

<https://asiatimes.com/2022/01/belt-road-encircles-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/>

In Kazakhstan, Putin Again Seizes on Unrest to Try to Expand Influence

<https://news.yahoo.com/kazakhstan-putin-again-seizes-unrest-130915898.html>

In Kazakhstan, Russia follows a playbook it developed in Ukraine

<https://theconversation.com/in-kazakhstan-russia-follows-a-playbook-it-developed-in-ukraine-174505>

Around the halls: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the European security order

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/01/11/around-the-halls-russia-ukraine-kazakhstan-and-the-european-security-order/>

Russia is preparing a pretext for invading Ukraine: US official

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/14/russia-is-preparing-a-pretext-for-invading-ukraine-us-official>

Russia-Ukraine tensions: power posturing or trouble on the home front for Putin?

<https://theconversation.com/russia-ukraine-tensions-power-posturing-or-trouble-on-the-home-front-for-putin-175211>

Putin's Victory Against Revolt in Kazakhstan Poses Concern About Expanding Russian Influence

<https://theowp.org/putins-victory-against-revolt-in-kazakhstan-poses-concern-about-expanding-russian-influence/>