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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

**Why Can't Central America Curb Corruption?**
*Paul J. Angelo – Council on Foreign Relations: 6 February 2020*

Corruption has long hindered economic and social development and fueled emigration from Central America’s poorest countries. The recent disbanding of several anti-graft commissions in the region lowers their potential for reform.


**Airbus bribery investigation highlights power of international cooperation in tackling corruption**
*Transparency International UK: 3 February 2020*

On January 31, 2020, courts in France, the United Kingdom, and the United States approved analogous versions of a deferred prosecution agreement between prosecutors and Airbus that included a combined fine of nearly $4 billion for the aircraft manufacturer.

https://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/airbus_bribery_investigation_highlights_power_of_international_cooperation

For more on this theme:

**Which countries are considered the most corrupt?**
https://www.foxnews.com/world/which-countries-are-considered-the-most-corrupt

**Corruption Set To Continue In Next Iranian Parliament**

**U.S. Blacklists Bulgarian Judge Over Involvement In 'Significant' Corruption**
https://www.rferl.org/a/u-s-blacklists-bulgarian-judge-over-involvement-in-significant-corruption/30418716.html

**How Moldova Is Slowly Freeing Itself From the Grip of Corrupt Oligarchs**
https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28520/in-moldova-corruption-is-finally-being-tackled-slowly-but-steadily

**Corruption Is Nigeria’s Biggest Problem — EFCC**
http://saharareporters.com/2020/02/04/corruption-nigeria%E2%80%99s-biggest-problem-%E2%80%93efcc

**Good governance is the way out of poverty and corruption**

**Lebanon: Protesters gather in Tripoli against poverty, corruption**

**Luanda Leaks and the politics of anti-corruption**
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/luanda-leaks-and-the-politics-of-anti-corruption
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Inside Mexico's war on drugs: Conversations with 'el narco
Karina G. Garcia Reyes – The Conversation: 3 February 2020

Mexico’s drug cartels are expanding operations, including forcing businesses to pay for protection. As the violence increases, hope of a government solution fades.
https://theconversation.com/inside-mexicos-war-on-drugs-conversations-with-el-narco-129865

Village Of Widows: The Afghan Drug Trade's Lethal Legacy

In a village in Afghanistan, as many as 50 women have lost their husbands to the drug trade, mainly along the Iranian border.

For more on this theme:

Dismantling Mexico's Narco State
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/opinion/international-world/mexico-crime-amlo.html

Safe injection sites enable drug users and endanger communities — Opinion
https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/commentary/safe-injection-sites-safehouse-philadelphia-20200203.html

Colombia’s FARC Rebels Laid Down Their Weapons, But A Growing Number Are Being Killed
https://www.npr.org/2020/02/06/802764177/colombias-farc-rebels-laid-down-their-weapons-but-a-growing-number-are-being-killed

The Wrong Way to Fight the Opioid Crisis
https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/02/10/the-wrong-way-to-fight-the-opioid-crisis

Go after drug lords, not drug addicts

Albanian Addiction
https://www.neweurope.eu/article/albanian-addiction/

Netflix’s The Pharmacist Depicts the True Story of Grieving Father’s Fight Against the Opioid Epidemic
https://time.com/5778759/the-pharmacist-netflix/

Tracking Mexico’s Cartels in 2020
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Scientists believe coronavirus originated in wild animal markets — and they want the Chinese government to shut them down
Sophie Lewis – CBS News: 5 February 2020
It’s worth billions of dollars to organized crime — after gun-running, drugs and human trafficking. But why is the illegal wildlife trade at the center of the coronavirus epidemic?

Seabirds With Radar-Detecting Trackers Help Stop Illegal Fishing
Ariella Simke – Forbes: 4 February 2020
Giant seabirds may soon patrol parts of the Southern and Indian oceans with technology that can detect illegal fishing. Conservationists have been working to curb illegal fishing, and a recently published study details the possibility of using albatrosses fitted with tracking devices to do so.

For more on this theme:
Law enforcement personnel trained on combating illegal wildlife trafficking
Pangolin scale smugglers: a few culprits caught, but masterminds behind illegal wildlife trade evade arrest
Traditional markets blamed for virus outbreak are lifeline for Asia’s poor
http://news.trust.org//item/20200207064544-ckpls/
Tech deployment sees rhino poaching decline in SA
https://www.itweb.co.za/content/j5alr7QloBavpYQk
Why more bite force is needed to fight wildlife cybercrimes
Coronavirus: China wildlife trade ban ‘should be permanent’
Benefits and challenges of automated processes for wildlife trade in poor countries
Sadness And Worry After 2 Men Connected To Butterfly Sanctuary Are Found Dead
https://www.npr.org/2020/02/03/802359415/sadness-and-worry-after-2-men-connected-to-butterfly-sanctuary-are-found-dead
Ghana and the rosewood curse
https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2020/02/06/ghana-and-the-rosewood-curse/
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Human Trafficking Helps Terrorists Earn Money and Strategic Advantage
Jamille Bigio – Foreign Policy: 31 January 2020

Despite pledges from around the world to eradicate human trafficking 20 years ago, experts estimate more than 40 million people worldwide are caught in modern slavery. The failure to curtail this heinous crime poses a global threat, especially as criminal organizations and terrorist groups become more entrenched in the trade.


Kenya’s reforms aren’t protecting its people from trafficking
Mohamed Daghar – Institute for Security Studies: 28 January 2020

Kenya is a source of trafficking victims for the Middle East, and to a lesser extent Europe. Gaps in the country’s laws and the lack of enforcement put Kenyans at serious risk.


For more on this theme:
IntelBrief: The Staggering Scale of the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis

Refugees as assets not burdens: The role of policy
https://www.brookings.edu/research/refugees-as-assets-not-burdens-the-role-of-policy/

How is IBM’s Watson fighting against human trafficking?

New App to Help Expose Human Trafficking Predators

Here’s how we’re winning the fight against human trafficking
https://thehill.com/opinion/international/481404-heres-how-were-winning-the-fight-against-human-trafficking

Cracking The $150 Billion Business Of Human Trafficking

U.S. Warns Bosnia Aid Could Be Cut Over Human Trafficking

Why Don’t More Consumers Care About Human Trafficking in the Supply Chain?
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Cyberspace Needs Global Norms — Here’s Where to Start
Sabina Frizell – Fair Observer: 4 February 2020
Global norms in cyberspace are needed to counter cyber attacks in the public and private sectors. The threats are transnational, so the rules and solutions must be, too. But so far, the global powers are at a standstill between multistakeholder governance and sovereignty.
https://www.fairobserver.com/more/international_security/cyberspace-global-norms-cybersecurity-technology-news-43240/

For more on this theme:
(Global) Internet Governance and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Part 3: Article 12-6

(Global) Sovereignty Strikes the Internet: When Two Don’t Become One
http://www.circleid.com/posts/20200205_sovereignty_strikes_the_internet_when_two_dont_become_one/

(Global) Top Nonprofits Protest Sale of ‘Dot-Org’ Registry

(U.K.) CDEI calls for overhaul of social media regulation

INTERNET FREEDOM

The Digital Dictators
Andrea Kendall-Taylor, Erica Frantz, and Joseph Wright – Foreign Affairs: 6 February 2020
New technologies have served the people well in many cases, but in others, they have been used to prop up dictatorships by allowing for surveillance and censorship, ultimately repressing the people the government is supposed to protect.
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-02-06/digital-dictators

For more on this theme:
(China) China’s leaders call for more censorship on coronavirus
https://www.axios.com/china-coronavirus-censorship-6b563ae2-8778-407d-860b-9c85cb4e33bc.html

(India, Kashmir) This is how Kashmiris are using Facebook, Twitter despite Modi govt ban on social media
https://theprint.in/india/this-is-how-kashmiris-are-using-facebook-twitter-despite-modi-govt-ban-on-social-media/357618/
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Vixie: The Unintended Consequences of Internet Privacy Efforts
Kelly Jackson Higgins – Dark Reading: 5 February 2020

Internet pioneer Paul Vixie says emerging encryption protocols for endpoints could “break” security in enterprise networks and even in home networks.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Why It’s So Hard for Users to Control Their Data
https://hbr.org/2020/01/why-companies-make-it-so-hard-for-users-to-control-their-data
(Turkey) Cybersecurity an uphill battle in era of AI, machine learning
(Saudi Arabia, India, Global) Riyadh announces global cybersecurity initiatives that could open collaboration with India
(Global) Is blockchain the solution to internet insecurity? These two projects say yes.

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

Feds faced with two visions for future of communications
Fenwick McKelvey – Policy Options: 6 February 2020

Canada is facing two different plans for the future of its communications, one from the broadcasting and telecom industry’s report and another from the government’s Digital Charter. One is centered on systems and the other on rights — will the clash be too much to implement both?

For more on this theme:
(Ireland) Data centre lessons from Ireland
https://www.itweb.co.za/content/4r1lyMRoeJ5qpmda
(Sri Lanka) Creating a ‘Cyber Resilient’ society
http://www.ft.lk/columns/Creating-a-Cyber-Resilient-society/4-695120
(U.K.) Research network for ethical AI launched in the UK
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Does 5G Have the Potential to Make the Digital Divide Worse?
Zack Quaintance – Government Technology: 31 January 2020

The rollout of 5G technology will likely serve to make the digital divide even worse than it already is. To combat that inevitable gap, one solution is public/private partnerships so all customers can benefit.

For more on this theme:

(Global) Partnerships can tackle challenges in communications regulation

(Kazakhstan) Kazakhstan’s mobile operators prepare for the launch of 5G services
http://www.virtual-strategy.com/2020/02/05/kazakhstans-mobile-operators-prepare-for-the-launch-of-5g-services/

(U.S.) FBI Reportedly Says DDoS Attack Targeted Voter Registration

(Global) Global initiative launched to keep top sports events safe from terrorism

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Zelensky’s team launches e-governance mobile app
Daryna Antoniuk – Kyiv Post: 6 February 2020

Ukraine has launched Diia, a mobile app for access to many government services. Allowing e-services will provide more transparent and better access to simple government offerings.

For more on this theme:

(India) e-Governance: The key to empower citizens
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/brandhub/e-governance-the-key-to-empower-citizens/article30735005.ece

(Global) Five Digital Transformation Trends That Will Shape 2020
https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2020/02/06/five-digital-transformation-trends-that-will-shape-2020/#5c8960882e2a

(U.S.) Neighborhood broadband data makes it clear: We need an agenda to fight digital poverty
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/02/05/neighborhood-broadband-data-makes-it-clear-we-need-an-agenda-to-fight-digital-poverty/

(South Asia) Digital transformation: how civil society organisations are improving social impact
https://yourstory.com/2020/02/digital-transformation-civil-society-ngo
NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

InSecurity Podcast: Kip Boyle – A Security Sherpa at Your Service
InSecurity Podcast: 4 February 2020

Cyber security CEO and author Kip Boyle, a prolific contributor to LinkedIn, discusses some of his more thought-provoking conversations.

https://securityboulevard.com/2020/02/insecurity-podcast-kip-boyle-a-security-sherpa-at-your-service/

For more on this theme:

(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast – Episode 1015

(Global) Cyber Security Today – Top vulnerabilities cyber crooks go after, Twitter and Google blunders and keep physical security in mind

(Global) I wouldn’t want my computer to be disappointed.
https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/cw-podcasts-hh-2020-02-06.html

(Global) Tracking one of China’s hidden hacking groups.
https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/cw-podcasts-rs-2020-02-01.html

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

US could learn how to improve election protection from other nations
Scott Shackelford – The Conversation: 4 February 2020

It is too soon to say anything about the 2020 Iowa caucuses except that hacking into voting machines remains far too easy. With presidential elections on the horizon, the government must work with private sectors to secure the 2020 elections and beyond.

https://theconversation.com/us-could-learn-how-to-improve-election-protection-from-other-nations-126157

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) States weigh in on cybersecurity

(U.S.) Three agencies team on cyber defense of energy infrastructure
https://fcw.com/articles/2020/02/05/energy-dod-dhs-infrastructure.aspx

(Global) Nation states won’t bother with backdoors — they’re more likely to walk through the front entrance

(U.S.) Food and Agriculture Are Critical Infrastructures but also Domains of Future War
https://www.foodsafetymagazine.com/enewsletter/food-and-agriculture-are-critical-infrastructures-but-also-domains-of-future-war/
ISIS

Jihadists in central Mali pledge allegiance to new Islamic State leader
Caleb Weiss – FDD’s Long War Journal: 31 January 2020

Extremists in Mali aired a video online in which they pledged their allegiance to Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, the new leader of ISIS. In the short clip, an Arabic-speaking figure introduces the group as "soldiers of the caliphate in Mali," before leading his men in a pledge of allegiance to Qurayshi.


ISIS Group Distributes Infamous al-Qaeda Bomb-Making Tutorial Translated into Spanish

Using al-Qaeda support materials, ISIS-supporting media has reissued a copy of the first Inspire magazine for what appears to be the first time in Spanish. The 10-year-old magazine focuses on bomb-making.


For more on this theme:

ISIS claims responsibility for London stabbing attack
https://nypost.com/2020/02/03/isis-claims-responsibility-for-london-stabbing-attack/

Islamic Terrorists Attack Gas Pipeline in the Sinai

Turkey deploys extremists to Libya, local militias say
https://apnews.com/91feba2d2b530e471721b2dc285e69bf

Canadian special forces troops back on the job in Iraq, says commander
https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/iraq-iran-special-forces-isis-islamic-state-1.5450655

ISIS Is No Reason to Stay in Iraq

ISIS Women: Victims or Perpetrators?
https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/15309/isis-women

Kurdistan Region PM warns about ‘great possibility’ of ISIS return

UN experts: Islamic State steps up attacks in Syria and Iraq
https://apnews.com/1596414356d10e553eeeee7565ca8ec8
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

‘Children of ISIS’ head back to Tunisia, reviving controversy
Nesrine Romdhani – The Arab Weekly: 2 February 2020

Human Rights Watch called on Tunisia to bring home nearly 200 children of suspected jihadists stranded or held in crowded camps and prisons in Libya, Iraq and Syria. Tunisia recently repatriated six orphaned children of alleged ISIS members from Libya.


Northeast Syria administration plans trials for ISIS suspects this spring
Joanne Stocker – The Defense Post: 6 February 2020

Syrian Kurds have said they will hold trials for ISIS fighters from more than 50 countries, including about 30 from Britain, after becoming exasperated by a failure to reach international agreements over what to do with them.

https://thedefensepost.com/2020/02/06/syria-sdf-isis-trials-abdulkarim-omar/

For more on this theme:
What do Asia’s returning Isis fighters do next? You’re about to find out

Indonesia debates repatriation of citizens who renounced citizenship to join ISIS

France Takes Back 17 ISIS Children

The Enduring Legacy of French and Belgian Islamic State Foreign Fighters
https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/02/enduring-legacy-french-belgian-isis-foreign-fighters/

Europe still reluctant to repatriate its foreign fighters and families

In A First, Dushanbe Seeks Extradition Of Tajik Fighters, Recruiters For Islamic State

An Unnerving Fate for the Families of Syria's Northeast
https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/80950

Understanding the Indian foreign fighter lacuna
https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/understanding-the-indian-foreign-fighter-lacuna-60921/

Syria’s Kurds hand over 35 Islamic State-linked orphans to Russia
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

More soldiers won't help Mali, talks with jihadists might: U.N.
Emma Farge – Reuters: 3 February 2020

Ute Kollies, the United Nations’ top humanitarian official in Mali, urged more engagement with armed groups, including jihadists, and more aid and development funding, saying that extra troops would not help to stabilize the country. “I do not believe that more military would help,” Kollies said. “What we need is more engagement on the political front.”


Warning signs from Tunisia’s localised terrorist insurgency
Matthew Herbert – Institute for Security Studies: 29 January 2020

Tunisia has made quite a bit of progress against terrorism over the last four years by tightening security everywhere and using better surveillance systems along the border with Libya. But the country still faces a low-level insurgency linked to both al-Qaida and ISIS.

https://issafrica.org/iss-today/warning-signs-from-tunisias-localised-terrorist-insurgency

For more on this theme:

France arrests Syrian Islamist on war crimes charges

Al Shabaab ‘fires two members of executive council’ after they pushed to stop attacks on civilians

Militias go on a rampage...this should raise concern
https://www.theeastafrikan.co.ke/oped/comment/Militias-go-on-a-rampage-this-should-raise-concern/434750-5440156-786gsI/index.html

Trump announces death of al-Qaeda leader in Yemen after US strike

For Lebanon’s Shiites, a Dilemma: Stay Loyal to Hezbollah or Keep Protesting?

Female Boko Haram members need tailor-made rehabilitation
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/female-boko-haram-members-need-tailor-made-rehabilitation
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Syrian Kurdish center sets out to defang ‘cubs of the caliphate’
Amberin Zaman – Al-Monitor: 31 January 2020

The alleged “cubs of the caliphate” are the child soldiers of ISIS. The Kurdish-led autonomous administration in northeast Syria is now trying to “rehabilitate” about 130 boys who fall under that category.


ISIS might be wounded, but it still has its most dangerous weapon, the Internet -- and it's radicalising India
Shiv Nalapat – Times Now: 4 February 2020

According to the United Nations, approximately 2,500 ISIS soldiers remain active in Afghanistan. The internet remains their main means of recruitment.


For more on this theme:

After Her Husband Joined ISIS, She Started Fighting Islamic Extremism
https://www.dailysignal.com/2020/02/06/after-her-husband-joined-isis-she-started-fighting-islamic-extremism/

Does Muslim-on-Muslim Violence Prove Jihad Is Politically Driven?

Mind games behind terror recruitment

Indonesia: IS returnees counter extremism through social media

The grassroots deradicalization efforts within Canada’s Muslim communities

Made in Britain: Understanding the Realities of Radicalization
https://www.fairobserver.com/region/europe/streatham-london-terror-attack-extremism-radicalization-uk-news-15541/

Debate rages in the UK on how to address radicalization

Streatham Attack in the UK Another Case of Terrorist Recidivism
WHITE NATIONALIST TERRORISM

If the Shoe Fits: Designating Foreign White Supremacy Extremist Groups
Amy Collins – War on the Rocks: 4 February 2020

The author suggests that white supremacy could be the greatest terrorist threat the U.S. faces. While white supremacists often act under domestic influence, U.S. efforts to combat and designate foreign white supremacy extremist groups could help on the domestic front as well due to the transnational nature of radicalization and sharing of tactics, techniques and procedures.

https://warontherocks.com/2020/02/if-the-shoe-fits-designating-foreign-white-supremacy-extremist-groups/

For more on this theme:
Kicked off Facebook, Canadian far-right groups resurface on the internet's fringes

The FBI Just Put White Nationalists and Neo-Nazis on the Same Threat Level as ISIS

Confronting Russia’s Role in Transnational White Supremacist Extremism
https://www.justsecurity.org/68420/confronting-russias-role-in-transnational-white-supremacist-extremism/

Neo-Nazi Terror Group The Base Linked to the War in Ukraine
https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/y3m3eg/neo-nazi-terror-group-the-base-linked-to-the-war-in-ukraine

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

Terrorists and Technological Innovation
Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Colin P. Clarke and Matt Shear – Lawfare: 2 February 2020

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Matt Shear of Valens Global, along with Colin Clarke of The Soufan Center, propose a new way of thinking about the threat of terrorism and technology. They detail the terrorist learning curve and how counterterrorism agencies respond and adapt.
https://www.lawfareblog.com/terrorists-and-technological-innovation

For more on this theme:
Opportunity to actualise counterterrorism cooperation between India and the US

Has counter-terrorism become a profitable business in Nigeria?
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/has-counter-terrorism-become-a-profitable-business-in-nigeria