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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Putin and other authoritarians’ corruption is a weapon — and a weakness
David Petraeus and Sheldon Whitehouse – The Washington Post: 8 March 2019

Authoritarian rulers use corruption as an instrument of foreign policy. Conversely, they remain dependent on such graft to maintain their domestic authority.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/03/08/putin-other-authoritarians-corruption-is-weap-
on-weakness/

How a bombshell bribery scandal illuminates the ‘corruption’ of college admissions
PBS News Hour: 12 March 2019

As part of the “Operation Varsity Blues” case that U.S. prosecutors announced March 12, dozens of people — including Hollywood actresses and wealthy businessmen — stand accused of having bought their children’s way into elite colleges and universities.

https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-a-bombshell-bribery-scandal-illuminates-the-corruption-of-col-
lege-admissions

For more on this theme:

Vietnam and the fight against corruption

FBI adds an anti-bribery squad focusing on South America
https://www.apnews.com/9eaa9b8a1205450f96147dfda9a41af6

Record corruption scandal puts spotlight on Iranians in Iran, US
https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/03/iran-corruption-case-petrochemical-hamzelou-sheik-
holeslami.html

Modi Government’s Decisive, Multi-pronged Action Against Corruption
https://www.narendramodi.in/modi-government-s-decisive-multi-pronged-action-against-corruption-14-
march-2019-544027

Spain’s Watergate: inside the corruption scandal that changed a nation – podcast
changed-a-nation-podcast

It’s Corruption, Not Socialism, That Brought Down Venezuela

Special effects: How a movie could reduce corruption

‘The Panama Papers’ Alex Winter On One Of History’s Largest Global Corruption Scandals
https://nowthisnews.com/videos/politics/the-panama-papers-alex-winter-on-one-corruption

Technology alone can’t root out corruption
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug laws must be amended to ‘combat racial discrimination’, UN experts say
UN News: 14 March 2019

United Nations’ human rights experts argued that people of African descent around the globe are discriminated against at every stage of the criminal justice system when it comes to drug-related crimes.


Record Cocaine Busts Signal West Africa Is Transit Hub Again
Alonso Soto – Bloomberg: 13 March 2019

Recent record-breaking seizures in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde highlight the use of West Africa as a transit route. These findings also coincide with a global output surge.


For more on this theme:
The Opioid Dilemma: Saving Lives in the Long Run Can Take Lives in the Short Run

UK jails install facial recognition technology to stem flood of drugs into prisons

Venezuela's Government Is So Corrupt It Basically Has Its Own Cartel

Drug War Spotlighted In Lead-Up To Philippine Midterms
https://www.npr.org/2019/03/08/701409804/drug-war-spotlighted-in-lead-up-to-philippine-midterm-elections

Battles Between Former FARC Groups Displace Hundreds in Colombia

Drug addiction on the rise — are Pakistanis dying slowly?
https://dailymail.co.uk/364990/drug-addiction-on-the-rise-are-pakistanis-dying-slowly/

Booming maritime trade provides opportunities for drug and car smugglers

Some 100 new types of legal highs emerged in East and Southeast Asia in 2018: UN report
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Wildlife traffickers thrive on Guatemala’s murky border with Belize
Rodrigo Soberanes – Mongabay: 8 March 2019

A poorly defined and lawless border region between Belize and Guatemala is proving to be fertile ground for eco-traffickers to further their criminal interests, underscoring how a lack of government control in such areas helps facilitate these crimes.


Report: Asian Wildlife Trafficking is Skyrocketing
Kevin Enochs – Voice of America: 10 March 2019

Hong Kong is a small territory with fewer than 7.5 million residents. Yet this bustling urban center in southeastern China is at the very center of the global wildlife trafficking trade. Millions of live animals, plants and their derivatives are illegally trafficked through Hong Kong by transnational companies and organized crime syndicates, contributing to a global extinction crisis, according to a report by the Hong Kong Wildlife Trade Working Group.


For more on this theme:

Until poor rural people can eat, wildlife will decline
https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/campaigns/GiantsClub/until-people-can-eat-wildlife-will-decline-a8805946.html

On World Wildlife Day, remembering Africa’s wildlife protectors
https://africatimes.com/2019/03/03/on-world-wildlife-day-remembering-africas-wildlife-protectors/

ASEAN’s illegal wildlife trade goes online
https://theaseanpost.com/article/aseans-illegal-wildlife-trade-goes-online

How China’s WeChat became a grim heart of illegal animal trading
https://www.wired.co.uk/article/illegal-animal-sales-trade-laos-wechat

The rhino challenge – a continental perspective

Wildlife innovation bill signed into law
https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/12000-wildlife-innovation-bill-signed-into-law

Crazier than Fiction: the Elephant Rangers of Laos
http://geographical.co.uk/nature/wildlife/item/3120-laos-elephants

Asean activism: Wildlife law enforcement
https://www.manilatimes.net/asean-activism-wildlife-law-enforcement/522822/

Nowhere to hide
http://science.sciencemag.org/content/363/6432/1142.full

Integrating wildlife into rural economy is key to its survival
https://mg.co.za/article/2019-03-13-00-botswanas-lifting-of-hunting-ban-will-protect-wildlife
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Has Europe won the war on migration?
Salah Nasrawi – Ahram Online: 8 March 2019

As the number of migrants seemingly declines, Europe may want to celebrate. But such celebrations may be premature.

http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/44/327835/Analysis/Has-Europe-won-the-war-on-migration.aspx

Venezuelan child migrants, women fall prey to human traffickers in Peru
Anastasia Moloney – Reuters: 12 March 2019

Venezuelan children and women who flee their home country are being snatched up by human traffickers making false promises of well-paying jobs.

http://news.trust.org/item/20190312233911-qnluh

For more on this theme:

After crackdown, what do people employed in migration market do?

European Agenda on Migration sees “significant progress”
https://www.governmenteuropa.eu/european-agenda-on-migration/92475/

WATCH: Senate Judiciary Committee holds hearing on human trafficking at U.S. southern border

To fight human trafficking, kill the market for paid sex I Randy Schultz

Freedom through speech: comic calls for public's help to fight human trafficking

European governments failing to protect Vietnamese child trafficking victims as they are smuggled to UK

Half of Irregular Migrants Expose Abuse During Their Way to EU

Safe Third Country Agreement ‘no longer working as intended,’ memo reveals

Algeria’s protests and migration: the fearmongers have it wrong
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/algerias-protests-and-migration-the-fearmongers-have-it-wrong
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Ten Principles for a New Approach to Regulating the Internet
Kevin Townsend – TechBizWeb: 12 March 2019

In the United Kingdom, regulating social media and tech giants is difficult at best. “The digital world does not merely require more regulation but a different approach to regulation,” says a new report by the U.K. House of Lords Select Committee on Communications. The premise is founded on 10 principles by which the internet should be regulated.

https://techbizweb.com/ten-principles-for-a-new-approach-to-regulating-the-internet/

For more on this theme:

(Global) It’s Time for a Cyber Geneva Convention

(Global) Governing The Fourth Industrial Revolution
https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielaraya/2019/03/12/governing-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/#22c0f9424b33

(Global) There are now four competing visions of the internet. How should they be governed?
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/there-are-now-four-competing-visions-of-the-internet/

INTERNET FREEDOM

Russia: No, we don’t want to curb online freedoms - we want to protect internet
David Meyer – ZDNet: 11 March 2019

The Russian government is snapping back at critics who claim its Runet plan is a bid to curtail online freedoms. Russia says it is separating its national internet from the global internet to protect its citizens.


For more on this theme:

(Thailand) Does the New Thailand Cybersecurity Law Go Too Far?

(China) China’s great firewall and the war to control the internet
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Web 3.0: the decentralised web promises to make the internet free again
Edina Harbinja and Vasileios Karagiannopoulos – The Conversation: 11 March 2019

Two experts in law and cyber crime discuss how a third generation of web technology, known as the DWeb or Web 3.0, could wrest control of the internet from big tech companies and return it to the users.

https://theconversation.com/web-3-0-the-decentralised-web-promises-to-make-the-internet-free-again-113139

For more on this theme:

(Global) Addressing real cyber security risk requires a collaborative, global approach
https://www.rcrwireless.com/20190314/5g/addressing-real-cyber-security-risk-requires-a-collaborative-global-approach

(Russia, Indonesia) Russians eye Indonesia for information security expansion

(U.S.) US takes tentative steps toward opening up government data
https://www.salon.com/2019/03/11/us-takes-tentative-steps-toward-opening-up-government-data_part-
ner/

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

Govt draft roadmap to develop and support digital economy in Myanmar
Thiha Ko – Myanmar Times: 14 March 2019

Burma, also known as Myanmar, released its official strategy for developing its digital economy over the next six years.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Cybersecurity between Enemies and Allies
https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/03/07/cybersecurity-between-enemies-and-allies/

(Global) Cyber Warfare: Competing National Perspectives

(Azerbaijan) New cybersecurity strategy to be adopted in Azerbaijan
https://www.azernews.az/business/147051.html
Public/Private Partnership

The FBI: At the Heart of Combating Cyberthreats (See Video Interview)
Tammy Waitt – American Security Today: 13 March 2019

U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray says that the FBI is using all levels of expertise, technology and partnerships to fight cyber crime.
https://americansecuritytoday.com/the-fbi-at-the-heart-of-combating-cyberthreats-see-video-interview/

For more on this theme:
(Global) Connecting the World Through Mobile Broadband Networks

(U.S.) Bridging our digital divides

Protection of Intellectual Property

Chinese Hackers are Stealing U.S. Defense Secrets: Here is How to Stop Them

The United States government is in a constant state of alert as Chinese hackers attempt to steal intellectual property and state secrets. The authors argue that the U.S. can do more to counter intellectual property theft.
https://www.cfr.org/blog/chinese-hackers-are-stealing-us-defense-secrets-here-how-stop-them

For more on this theme:
(U.S., China) Is there Common Ground in U.S.-China Cyber Rivalry?
https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/is-there-common-ground-in-u-s-china-cyber-rivalry

(Germany, China) Germany’s Self-Delusion About a ‘No-Spying’ Pact with China
**CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Could Germany’s digital education initiative threaten states’ rights?**  
Peter Hille – Deutsche Welle: 15 March 2019

Schools are finally set to move into the digital era, but it requires a change to Germany’s Constitution. Critics say federal support for schools will erode states’ rights, but a majority of Germans support the move.


For more on this theme:

(India) **Digital Revolution in India Offers Hope for Eliminating Poverty**  

(Global) **The Internet Of Things Is Creating The Smart Cities Of Tomorrow**  
https://www.forbes.com/sites/traceywelsonrossman/2019/03/08/the-internet-of-things-is-creating-the-smart-cities-of-tomorrow/#b0e4b2e2ad7a

(Global) **Digital colonialism is threatening the Global South**  

**COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME**

**Cyber Criminals Have Turned Social Media Cyber Crime Into a $3 Billion Business**  
Nicole Lindsey – CPO Magazine: 12 March 2019

Social media platforms provide cyber criminals with exactly what they seek, turning such crime into a $3 billion business, according to a report by cyber security firm Bromium.


For more on this theme:

(Global) **Counter Measures to Overcome Cyber Attacks on Small Business**  
https://www.influencive.com/counter-measures-to-overcome-cyber-attacks-on-small-business/

(U.K.) **Cybercrime in the UK: how safe is your data?**  
https://www.governmenteuropa.eu/cybercrime-in-the-uk/92545/

(U.S., Russia) **The U.S.-Russia Relationship on Cybercrime Is About to Get Even More Strained**  
INFORMATION SHARING

Georgia, Lithuania to exchange information on cyber threats

The Baltic Times: 8 March 2019

To combat cyber threats, Lithuania and Georgia have bilaterally declared they will share best practices and information about cyber threats.

https://www.baltictimes.com/georgia__lithuania_to_exchange_information_on_cyber_threats/

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Why Is The NIST Framework Important?
https://www.cshub.com/security-strategy/articles/why-is-the-nist-framework-important

(U.S.) NSA, DHS Call for Info Sharing Across Public and Private Sectors

(U.S.) Information sharing and analysis centers launch partnership to improve grid security

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

CISA Cyber Chief Warns Political Candidates ‘Everybody’s a Potential Target’

Jack Corrigan – NextGov: 12 March 2019

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned all 2020 political candidates that they may be subject to hacking because it is unclear which races the hackers may want to sway.


For more on this theme:

(India) Cyber warfare ahead of India’s biggest election battle
https://www.newslaundry.com/2019/03/14/cyber-warfare-ahead-of-indias-biggest-election-battle

(Australia) Cybersecurity 202: After parliament hack, Australia learns from U.S. missteps

(U.S.) Pentagon to utilities: Uncle Sam wants you
https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060127201
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS

The West Needs to Take the Politics of Women in ISIS Seriously
Kanisha D. Bond, Kate Cronin-Furman, Meredith Loken, Milli Lake, Sarah E. Parkinson and Anna Zelenz – Foreign Policy: 4 March 2019

Victimizing the women of ISIS undermines the roles they played in the terrorist group. Calling them “ISIS brides” falsely casts them in a certain light. And sensationalizing their stories influences the government’s response.

How ISIS Is Rising in the Philippines as It Dwindles in the Middle East

In the dense wilderness of the southern Philippines, ISIS is gathering steam as it loses ground in the Middle East.

For more on this theme:

Has Islamic State returned to Iraq?

Libya’s political instability makes room for ISIS to regroup
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/libyas-political-instability-makes-room-for-isis-to-regroup

ISIS Supporters Around the World Rally for Steep Escalation in Online Jihad

Timeline: The rise and fall of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

Reports of the Islamic State’s Demise Are Premature
https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/reports-of-the-islamic-states-demise-are-premature

‘The ISIS threat will remain,’ John Bolton says
https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/the-isis-threat-will-remain-john-bolton-says/2019/03/10/8e28290c-4340-11e9-8aab-95b8d80a1e4f_story.html

Yazidis Tell Their Stories About Life Under ISIS
https://www.npr.org/2019/03/14/703287508/yazidis-tell-their-stories-about-life-under-isis

Final Assault On Last ISIS Stronghold Doesn’t Mean It Will Disappear Immediately
https://www.npr.org/2019/03/11/702355583/final-assault-on-last-isis-stronghold-doesnt-mean-it-will-disappear-immediately

The Caliphate is Over, But ISIS Isn’t
https://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/273097/caliphate-over-isis-isnt-robert-spencer
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Youth join al Shabaab to take revenge
Delannie Luchina – The Star: 13 March 2019

A new survey indicates that youths are joining radical gangs, including al-Shabaab, to take revenge on police for their brutality in certain communities.


How Terrorist Groups Learn: Implications for al-Qaeda
Colin P. Clarke – Foreign Policy Research Institute: 13 March 2019

What has al-Qaida learned over the past five years, and how will it incorporate those lessons into the organization? The answers to those questions will shape the future of alQaida as a global terrorist group.

https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/03/how-terrorist-groups-learn-implications-for-al-qaeda/

For more on this theme:

Africa can end insurgency if she wants
https://qwenu.com/2019/03/08/africa-can-end-insurgency-if-she-wants/

Saudi Arabia welcomes British decision to outlaw Hezbollah
https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/saudi-arabia-welcomes-british-decision-to-outlaw-hezbollah-1.833832

Hezbollah is a symptom, the Iranian regime is the disease
http://www.arabnews.com/node/1460706

Why Hezbollah is spearheading an ‘anti-corruption’ campaign

Al Qaeda-linked group in Syria praises Taliban, Shabaab operations

AQIM official calls for sharia governance in Algeria

U.S., Taliban talks end for now with no Afghan peace deal

Hamas cracks down on Gaza protests over cost of living
https://www.foxnews.com/world/hamas-cracks-down-on-gaza-protests-over-cost-of-living

Did Iran ever stop funding Hamas?
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

The Hunt: ISIS trying to reposition its messaging
J.J. Green – WTOP: 13 March 2019

What’s ISIS’ message now that it has lost all the territory it once held in Syria and Iraq?

For more on this theme:
Eschatological Beliefs And ISIS – OpEd
‘They fooled us’: the men who left Isis in the Philippines
Islamic State extremism on show at ‘miserable’ Syria camp
Rehabilitating ISIS terrorists is a big lie
https://thearabweekly.com/rehabilitating-isis-terrorists-big-lie
American Media Should Stop Soft-Pedalling and Call a Terrorist a Terrorist
https://www.cfr.org/article/american-media-should-stop-soft-pedalling-and-call-terrorist-terrorist

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

The Changing U.S. Strategy For Defeating ISIS
National Public Radio (NPR): 8 March 2019

NPR’s Ari Shapiro talks with Brett McGurk, a former U.S. envoy to the coalition fighting ISIS, about the changing U.S. policy and strategy for defeating ISIS.
https://www.npr.org/2019/03/08/701671579/the-changing-u-s-strategy-for-defeating-isis

For more on this theme:
Iraq: Key Courts Improve ISIS Trial Procedures
https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/03/13/iraq-key-courts-improve-isis-trial-procedures
We need a war crimes tribunal into the atrocities of Islamic State
15 Years After Madrid Train Bombings, What Have We Learned?
https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/15-years-after-madrid-train-bombings-what-have-we-learned
A zero-tolerance approach to terrorism (Comment)
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The West Doesn’t Want ISIS Members to Return. Why Should the Syrians Put Up With Them?

Though some leaders in the West have made it clear that they are reluctant, if not recusant, to take back their country’s foreign fighters, the author argues that they should take responsibility for their citizens.

https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/14/opinion/isis-syria-foreign-fighters.html

New System Needed to Process ISIS Children, Experts Say
Amy Melki – The Globe Post: 12 March 2019

Counterterrorism expert Mathew Levitt opines that a new structural framework is needed to deal with ISIS children on a case-by-case basis.

https://theglobepost.com/2019/03/12/foreign-isis-children-return/

For more on this theme:

U.S. Renews Pressure on Europe Over ISIS Fighters Held in Syria

ISIS orphans returning to France
https://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2019/03/05/isis-orphans-returning-to-france-bell-pkg-vpx.cnn

Transfer of ISIS Suspects, Including Foreigners, to Iraq Raises Torture Concerns

Germany to strip ISIS fighters of their citizenship
https://taskandpurpose.com/germany-isis-fighters

What is Europe’s approach to repatriating ISIS members? Euronews answers
https://www.euronews.com/2019/03/07/what-is-europe-s-approach-to-repatriating-isis-members-euronews-answers

‘We aren’t dangerous’: Why Chechnya has welcomed women who joined Isis
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/02/we-arent-dangerous-why-chechnya-has-welcomed-women-who-joined-isis

What should the West do about the ‘jihadi brides’ fleeing Islamic State?

Up to 3,000 Isis children living in ‘extremely dire conditions’

Australia will not risk bringing ISIS families back from Syria, Scott Morrison says