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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Defence Sector Corruption, an Underestimated Foe in Times of Crisis
Ara Marcen Naval and Karolina MacLachlan – Royal United Services Institute: 6 April 2020

As countries turn toward their militaries to help combat the coronavirus pandemic, they could be empowering forces weakened by corruption and poor governance, which may cause additional problems.


To Defeat the Coronavirus, Stop Corruption
Tammy Kupperman Thorp – Foreign Policy: 6 April 2020

Past cases of humanitarian disasters have a lot to teach us about graft and disaster relief. Even with the best of intentions, donors must be hypervigilant to ensure aid isn’t misused and misdirected.


For more on this theme:

Uganda detains top officials for alleged coronavirus aid fraud

How does corruption fuel so-called ‘natural’ disasters?

Albanian President Returns Anti-Corruption Law to Parliament

Corruption intensifies the damages of coronavirus

Belarusian Journalist Satsuk Detained For Alleged Bribe Taking

Coronavirus crisis exposes another pandemic in Honduras: Analysts

How Transparency Can Save Lives in the Coronavirus Crisis
https://www.americasquarterly.org/content/how-transparency-can-save-lives-coronavirus-crisis

OPINION: Denmark’s world-beating trust is helping fight coronavirus
https://www.thelocal.dk/20200401/opinion-denmarks-world-beating-trust-is-helping-fight-coronavirus

How feasible is the recovery of stolen Lebanese assets?
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Now a Destination for Illicit Drugs, African States Need a New Approach  
Alvin Young – Council on Foreign Relations: 9 April 2020

Once just a transit hub for drugs, many countries in Africa are now becoming homes for the addicted. Between rising numbers for addiction and population growth, Africa must take proactive steps now to deal with a looming crisis.  
https://www.cfr.org/blog/now-destination-illicit-drugs-african-states-need-new-approach

From Face Masks to Avocados, the Boundless Creativity of Drug Traffickers  
Maria Alejandra Navarrete – InSight Crime: 3 April 2020

Drug traffickers are nothing if not innovative. And faced with increasingly sophisticated techniques for detecting drugs, they have been forced to be increasingly ingenious to successfully transport their merchandise. With the sudden demand for medical gear like face masks, smugglers are taking advantage. Some drug traffickers have also relied on legitimate shipping to hide their illicit cargo.  

For more on this theme:

North Korea chaos: Secret meth labs BOOM as coronavirus sparks economic collapse  

Mexican drug cartels struggle during coronavirus, hike prices as lab supplies from China dry up  
https://www.foxnews.com/world/mexican-drug-cartels-struggle-lab-supplies-china-coronavirus

What Happens If the Trump Administration Designates Drug Cartels as Terrorist Organizations?  
https://www.lawfareblog.com/what-happens-if-trump-administration-designates-drug-cartels-terrorist-organizations

Drug crime is thriving in Mexico, and many fear coronavirus will make it worse  

Mexican Cartels – Venezuela’s Uninvited Guests Here to Stay  

‘Pategrillo’ – The New Boon for Colombia’s Cocaine Labs  

Chinese Drug Traffickers Have a Brand-New Product: Knockoff N95 Masks for Coronavirus  

Interpol keeps eye on smuggling trends amid drug supply disruption  
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

After-coronavirus, SE Asia strongly favours crackdown on wildlife trade, says WWF
Reuters: 6 April 2020
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its close link with animal-to-human transmission, over 90% of respondents surveyed in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong support a government-led closure of illegal and unregulated wildlife markets, according to new research commissioned by the World Wide Fund.

Machetes in hand, women join forces to fight logging in Solomon Islands
John Beck – Reuters: 8 April 2020
The Solomon Islands is one of the poorest countries in the Pacific and logging makes up a major portion of its national income. But loose regulation leads to overharvesting in areas where logging shouldn’t even be occurring. Which is why a group of local women took up the mantle of becoming “forest rangers” to stop encroachment on their village.

For more on this theme:
Ending illegal deforestation is good for our health (commentary)
https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/ending-illegal-deforestation-is-good-for-our-health-commentary/

The plight of Thailand elephants deteriorates due to pandemic

Technological solutions to detect illegal logging, poaching in rainforests

Albatrosses could police the oceans for illegal fishing
http://geographical.co.uk/nature/wildlife/item/3638-albatrosses-could-police-the-oceans-for-illegal-fishing

ADF completes first mission against illegal fishing for 2020

A third of Peru’s La Pampa forest cleared for illegal mining ponds, study finds

Heavily Trafficked Songbirds a Victim of Venezuelan Collapse

Coronavirus: why a blanket ban on wildlife trade would not be the right response
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

This is the impact of COVID-19 on modern slavery
Angharad Smith and James Cockayne – World Economic Forum: 7 April 2020

The COVID-19 epidemic will likely worsen the situation for those caught in the depths of modern slavery.
https://delta87.org/2020/03/impact-covid-19-modern-slavery/?mc_cid=86b5480022&mc_cid=43e62b03bf

Lost in Crisis: The Vulnerable Forgotten Victims of COVID-19
PR Newswire: 31 March 2020

The nonprofit victims’ advocacy group More Too Life unveiled a vigorous action plan to help human trafficking and abuse victims during the worldwide health crisis.

For more on this theme:
Building Trust in Communications: In Conversation with Safe House Project

Obligation to combat the Exploitation of Vulnerable People becomes most acute
http://www.sarajevo-times.com/o/obligation-to-combat-the-exploitation-of-vulnerable-people-becomes-most-acute/

Modern Day Slavery Reaches a Far Corner of the World
https://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/modern-day-slavery-reaches-far-corner-world/

Agony of human trafficking victims trapped in countries over coronavirus

Warnings of Child Recruitment Taking Place Close to Bogotá, Colombia

Romania Isolates Human Trafficking Hotspot to Limit Outbreak

Nightclubs in Mexico allegedly offering ‘home delivery’ sex services during coronavirus pandemic

Island Pacific Assists Human Trafficking Survivors Through the Pilipino Workers Center

OPINION: What can new survivor statistics tell us about modern slavery in the UK?
https://news.trust.org/item/20200408093233-8ao4k
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

**AI, society and governance: An introduction**  
*Peter Engelke – Atlantic Council: 27 March 2020*

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to reshape the world. But to control AI, the world needs a global compact or set of norms to operate under — and policy is lagging behind technology in this case.


Full report:

**AI, Society, and Governance: An Introduction**


For more on this theme:

**Global** The most significant laws that will shape the future of the internet  
[https://invisioncommunity.co.uk/the-most-significant-laws-that-will-shape-the-future-of-the-internet/](https://invisioncommunity.co.uk/the-most-significant-laws-that-will-shape-the-future-of-the-internet/)

**Global** Note to Nations: Stop Hacking Hospitals  

INTERNET FREEDOM

**Blocked websites, internet shutdown, and media arrests undermine free speech in Myanmar**  
*Thanh Sin – Global Voices: 6 April 2020*

The government of Myanmar — also known as Burma — has recently issued orders to block over 200 websites in the name of combating disinformation and COVID-19.


For more on this theme:

**China** China proposes a new internet protocol that gives government ultimate control  
[https://reclaimthenet.org/china-proposes-a-new-internet-protocol/](https://reclaimthenet.org/china-proposes-a-new-internet-protocol/)

**China** Chinese Netizens Use Ethereum To Avoid China’s COVID-19 Censorship  

**Global** End Internet Shutdowns to Manage COVID-19  

**Iran** Iran censors internet on the eve of new protests  
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Privacy Cannot Be a Casualty of the Coronavirus
The New York Times: 7 April 2020

With lockdown orders across the United States, many Americans are now working from home. To do this, they must rely on digital tools to stay connected. They shouldn’t have to sacrifice their privacy to use them.


For more on this theme:
(U.S.) The Cybersecurity of Health
https://www.cfr.org/blog/cybersecurity-health

(Europe) Make Europe capital of data sovereignty

(Global) Facebook must face renewed privacy lawsuit over user tracking

(Global) Pandemic Data-Sharing Puts New Pressure on Privacy Protections

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

German Military Cyber Operations are in a Legal Gray Zone
Matthias Schulze – Lawfare: 8 April 2020

In 2016, Germany created its military cyber command, the Cyber and Information Domain Service, tasked with cyber defense, limited offensive cyber operations, and defending against hybrid threats such as influence operations or disinformation. Due to constitutional constraints, the service has little room to maneuver to contribute to cyber security, having to navigate legal gray zones.

https://www.lawfareblog.com/german-military-cyber-operations-are-legal-gray-zone

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) New Cyber Brief: Accelerating the Defense Department’s AI Adoption

(Europe, U.S.) The EU as a digital regulatory superpower: Implications for the United States
https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_the_eu_as_a_digital_regulatory_superpower_implications_for_the_u

(Taiwan, Global) The web’s a threat to democracy? Think again, Taiwan says.
https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2020/0408/The-web-s-a-threat-to-democracy-Think-again-Taiwan-says
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

**India to become a $5 trillion economy by 2025? Not without eliminating digital poverty**

*Renita D’souza – Observer Research Foundation: 9 April 2020*

The digital divide in India is holding the country back from realizing its economic dreams of becoming a $5 trillion economy in the next five years.


*For more on this theme:*

(U.S., Africa) **Leveraging Africa’s Technology Boom to Protect U.S. Interests**

[https://www.lawfareblog.com/leveraging-africas-technology-boom-protect-us-interests](https://www.lawfareblog.com/leveraging-africas-technology-boom-protect-us-interests)

(Pakistan) **Minister offers support for enhancing broadband, internet provision**


(India) **Internet use surges across rural India**


(Greece) **COVID-19 Crisis Pushes Greece to Go Digital Faster**


CYBER CRIME AND TERRORISM

**Australian government says it is hacking criminals who are exploiting the pandemic**

*Sean Lyngaas – CyberScoop: 7 April 2020*

The Australian Signals Directorate “has mobilized its offensive cyber capabilities to disrupt foreign cyber criminals responsible for a spate of malicious activities during COVID-19,” the Australian Defense Ministry said recently.


*For more on this theme:*

(Global) **Global Tech Companies Counter Online Terrorist Content**


(Latin America) **Latin America Under Threat of Cyber Crime Amid Coronavirus**


(India) **Concerned about global spurt in cybercrimes, PMO’s cyber chief issues cyber-advisory for online users**


(Global) **Cyberattacks continue to mount during COVID-19 pandemic**

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Why critical infrastructure is vulnerable to cyberattacks
Dan Patterson – TechRepublic: 6 April 2020

Robert Lee, founder and CEO of Dragos, discusses the dangers cyber attacks pose to critical industrial infrastructures.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Grid crisis plan gets pandemic test
https://www.eenews.net/stories/1062754975

(U.S.) States need billions to ensure safe elections

(Global) New Ransomware Targets Critical Infrastructure in 2020
https://gritdaily.com/new-ransomware-targets-critical-infrastructure/

(U.S., Global) These are the countries trying to hack US critical infrastructure
https://www.techrepublic.com/article/these-are-the-countries-trying-to-hack-us-critical-infrastructure/

NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

SC Podcast: Resilience, trust and the cyber moonshot with Unisys’ Tom Patterson
Teri Robinson – SC Media: 3 April 2020

Resilience is more than a buzzword; so is trust. Both are essential to developing a strong security posture, says Unisys Chief Trust Officer Tom Patterson, who also serves on the Cybersecurity Moonshot subcommittee.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Into Security Podcast: Episode 13
https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/podcasts/into-security-podcast-episode-13/

(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast: Ep 1059
https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/daily-podcast/1059/notes

(Global) Cyber criminals using coronavirus to their advantage

(Global) Even famous people get scammed.
https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/hacking-humans/93/notes
MASS SURVEILLANCE AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

Digital surveillance can help bring the coronavirus pandemic under control – but also threatens privacy
Jennifer Daskal – The Conversation: 9 April 2020

The intersection of the COVID-19 pandemic and mass surveillance has populations wondering how far they are willing to let the government invade their privacy in the name of better health and a revitalized economy.


For more on this theme:
(Kazakhstan) Kazakhstan Experiments With Surveillance Technology to Battle Coronavirus Pandemic

(U.S.) Disease Surveillance and the Fourth Amendment
https://www.lawfareblog.com/disease-surveillance-and-fourth-amendment

(India) Surveillance beefed up to contain coronavirus spread as death toll crosses 200, positive cases above 6,600
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Leader of ISIS in Afghanistan arrested
Jared Keller – Task & Purpose: 8 April 2020

Abdullah Orakzai, leader of the Islamic State’s Afghanistan affiliate, and 19 other militants were arrested by Afghan security forces. Orakzai, also known as Aslam Farooqi, the militants, and two other high-ranking officials were arrested in a “targeted and sophisticated operation,” according to Afghanistan’s National Directorate of Security.


For more on this theme:

ISIS losing grip in Afghanistan

Pakistan Demands Afghanistan Hand Over Detained IS Leader

ISIS Magazine Calls for Attacks on ‘Easy Target’ Military, Police During Coronavirus Chaos
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/isis-magazine-calls-for-attacks-on-easy-target-military-police-during-coronavirus-chaos/

ISIS attack on Kabul Gurdwara: Why India should be concerned
https://www.orfonline.org/research/isis-attack-on-kabul-gurdwara-why-india-should-be-concerned-63826/

ISIS Almost Had an Air Force
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/isis-almost-had-air-force-139972

New breeding grounds for terrorists forming

Contending with ISIS in the Time of Coronavirus

Kurdish Officials, Rights Groups Concerned Coronavirus Will Spread Among IS Prisoners in Syria

The Islamic State’s Increasing Focus on India
https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/the-islamic-states-increasing-focus-on-india/

Why The Insurgency in Northern Mozambique Has Got Worse

Kimberly Pullman: A Canadian Woman Lured Over the Internet to the ISIS Caliphate
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Extremist groups could use the coronavirus pandemic to launch more attacks
Sarah Al-Arshani – Business Insider: 3 April 2020

Terrorist groups, including ISIS and al-Qaeda, view the coronavirus crisis as an opportunity to attack targets.


Yesterday’s Terrorists Are Today’s Public Health Providers
Colin P. Clarke – Foreign Policy: 8 April 2020

Around the world, extremists and criminal organizations are taking advantage of the COVID-19 epidemic not only to attack during a vulnerable time, but also to win new converts by providing vital services during a trying time.


For more on this theme:

Lebanon’s collapse is Hezbollah’s slow unraveling
https://atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/lebanons-collapse-is-hezbollahs-slow-unraveling/

Precision Airstrike Eliminates al-Shabaab Senior Leader, Says AFRICOM

How Jihadi Groups in Africa Will Exploit COVID-19
https://www.cfr.org/blog/how-jihadi-groups-africa-will-exploit-covid-19

Increased terror attacks in Africa amid coronavirus pandemic

The UK Joins an Unwinnable Fight in the Sahel
https://rusi.org/commentary/uk-joins-unwinnable-fight-sahel

Terrorism Monitor Volume: 18 Issue: 7
https://jamestown.org/program/briefs-325/

The Leadership and Future of Kata’ib Hezbollah
https://jamestown.org/program/the-leadership-and-future-of-kataib-hezbollah/

Boko Haram and Its Current Situation in Nigeria

Khartoum should tackle its terrorist problem before it spins out of control

Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses (CTTA) – Volume 12 Issue 02
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Who Goes Alt-Right in a Lockdown?
Mass anxiety, political instability and isolation are a pretty good combination for warping peoples’ worldviews.

Prison radicalisation and deradicalisation in Australia
Adrian Cherney – Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s The Strategist: 4 April 2020
This article focuses on counterradicalization efforts implemented by prison authorities in Australia and overseas and outlines some of the challenges in tackling inmate radicalization.

For more on this theme:
Resilience, radicalisation and democracy in the COVID-19 Pandemic
Radicalisation threatens Syria’s children of war
https://thearabweekly.com/radicalisation-threatens-syrias-children-war
Operation Safe Corridor: The world of repentant Boko Haram members
Proposed agency for repentant Boko Haram fighters sparks outrage
https://sunnnewsonline.com/proposed-agency-for-repentant-boko-haram-fighters-sparks-outrage/
Counties have a role to play in the fight against violent extremism
https://www.kbc.co.ke/counties-should-with-national-govt-in-countering-violent-extremism/
Women and Countering Violent Extremisms Act
Experts to develop new ways of monitoring and tackling extreme right-wing online forums
Fault Lines: Combating Extremism with Farah Pandith
https://www.lawfareblog.com/fault-lines-combating-extremism-farah-pandith
WHITE NATIONALIST TERRORISM

State Department’s Terrorist Designation of Russian Imperial Movement Is Important Step in Keeping America Safe

Lora Ries – The Daily Signal: 9 April 2020

The U.S. State Department has designated the Russian Imperial Movement and members of its leadership as Specially Designated Global Terrorists, the first time in history the Department has designated a white supremacist terrorist group.


For more on this theme:

White Supremacy’s Gateway to the American Mind

White Supremacist Groups Are Recruiting With Help From Coronavirus – and a Popular Messaging App
https://time.com/5817665/coronavirus-conspiracy-theories-white-supremacist-groups/

The Trump Administration Escalates the War on White Supremacist Terrorism

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES

China Consolidates Asia-Pacific Amidst Coronavirus

Rufaro Manyepa – The Trumpet: 9 April 2020

China continues strategic maritime incursions under cover of the disease.


For more on this theme:

The PMU Is Getting More Aggressive in Iraq
https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/07/pmu-iraq-suleimani-iran/

Pompeo Says Iran Will Have Less Money To Spend On Proxies
https://en.radiofarda.com/a/pompeo-says-iran-will-have-less-money-to-spend-on-proxies/30542054.html

Iranian proxy in Iraq threatens US-led coalition air base

Iran’s New Qods Force Commander Is No Soleimani

Rusal’s Bauxite Mine and Potential Russian Meddling in Guyana’s Election
IRREGULAR WARFARE: SOFT POWER

Russian Motives Behind Helping Italy's Coronavirus Response: A Multifaceted Approach
Dario Cristiani – The Jamestown Foundation: 8 April 2020

Russia has reached out to Italy after it was hard-hit by the coronavirus. Russia’s motivations, however, are less than altruistic.


China's Medical Diplomacy: How to Turn a Black Swan White
Frederick Kliem – S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies: 3 April 2020

China is taking advantage of the COVID-19 outbreak to exercise its global health diplomacy to improve its image and gain more soft power.


For more on this theme:
China and Australia target Pacific with coronavirus aid

The Chinese Charm Offensive Towards Italy as the Coronavirus Crisis Deepens

Amidst China's “mask diplomacy” in Europe, Beijing's global diplomatic offensive and local dynamics

How China Is Remaking the UN In Its Own Image

Turkey joins soft power race during COVID-19 crisis

Importance of soft power is increasing globally: ICCR chief Vinay Sahasrabuddhe
https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/importance-of-soft-power-is-increasing-globally-iccr-chief-vinay-sahasrabuddhe/article31292723.ece

Asian Soft Power Grows in the Coronavirus Era
https://besacenter.org/perspectives-papers/coronavirus-asia-soft-power/

China's soft power makes hard gains
https://www.gulftoday.ae/opinion/2020/04/07/chinas-soft-power-makes-hard-gains
CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

CORONAVIRUS AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Coronavirus and the Future of Surveillance
Nicholas Wright – Foreign Affairs: 6 April 2020

Countries around the world are using surveillance to track and try to control the spread of the coronavirus. East Asian countries have demonstrated that a robust regime of surveillance is essential to fighting a pandemic. Western democracies must rise to meet the need for “democratic surveillance” to protect their own populations. But what models can the West demonstrate that take advantage of the great benefits of artificial intelligence-enabled surveillance without sacrificing liberal values?


For more on this theme:

Military Response to COVID-19: Advantages and Constraints

COVID-19 and maritime operations

How COVID-19 is changing law enforcement practices by police and by criminal groups

Mafia plots post-coronavirus pounce

Diversion, Diagnoses and Delays: Why Russia Seeks to Control the Coronavirus Narrative

COVID-19: The global food supply chain is holding up, for now
https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/04/06/covid-19-the-global-food-supply-chain-is-holding-up-for-now/

COVID-19: UN Security Council should urgently take a Lead
https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/04/05/covid-19-un-security-council-should-urgently-take-a-lead/

The United Nations Security Council and securitization of COVID-19

Russia’s Confusing COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 and the Iranian Shadows of War
https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/covid-19-and-iranian-shadows-war
Dictators are using the coronavirus to strengthen their grip on power

From the Philippines to Hungary, autocratic leaders in many nations are using the virus to enhance their own powers — to put in place new rules that will be hard to overturn even if the coronavirus is defeated. Many of the new powers have no clear end date; the pandemic will have entrenched these strongmen indefinitely.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/dictators-are-using-the-coronavirus-to-strengthen-their-grip-on-power/2020/04/02/c36582f8-748c-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d_story.html

For more on this theme:

UN Chief: Pandemic a Threat to Global Peace, Security

COVID-19 and Global Health Diplomacy: Can Asia Rise to the Challenge?

How to Pandemic-Proof Globalization

What the Coronavirus Means for Climate Change

The Middle East Response to the Coronavirus
https://www.cfr.org/conference-calls/middle-east-response-coronavirus

Covid-19 and European solidarity: The fight for who we are

COVID-19: Health Pandemic to Food Crisis?

Increased Domestic Violence after Covid-19 Lockdown

IMF Chief Warns of Worst Depression Since 1930s

Half billion more people face poverty due to virus – report
https://apnews.com/b219627e31d87779e5253f9a072be4dc

Covid-19: Impact on Africa

Africa Needs Debt Relief to Fight COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS AND NATIONAL SECURITY - CONTINUED

For more on this theme:

How to Make China Pay
https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/04/how-to-make-china-pay/

Corona: The case for taking China to ICJ

Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia: Government Response and Politics

Food security and the Corona Virus

The Coronavirus in the Middle East, With Steven A. Cook
https://www.cfr.org/podcasts/coronavirus-middle-east-steven-cook

Under coronavirus lockdown, Delhi slum residents struggle to get water

Europe and the Coronavirus Pandemic in the Middle East
https://rusi.org/commentary/europe-and-coronavirus-pandemic-middle-east

Russian response to Covid-19: The challenges ahead

The COVID-19 Default Time Bomb

Violence imperils coronavirus response in conflict zones around

The COVID-19 Pandemic Starts to Have Its Toll on the North Caucasus

Attempts for Middle East cease-fires amid the coronavirus crisis have not stopped the fighting

Coronavirus and Continued Conflict Push Syria Into Greater Chaos

Covid-19 crisis and a probable role for the Indian Military