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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

**Mongolia Unveils Anti-Corruption Strategy**  
The Government of Mongolia – PR Newswire: 14 April 2023

The Mongolian Independent Authority Against Corruption unveiled a comprehensive 2030 national strategy to combat corruption across all facets of public life. The strategy will be considered by the Parliament.


**Empty forests: How politics, economics and corruption fuel live great ape trafficking**  
Daniel Stiles – Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime: 18 April 2023

The underreporting of great apes seized in illegal trade incidents is a serious problem. The true trafficking situation must be brought to the attention of governments, international organizations and the media.

https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/great-ape-trafficking/

For more on this theme:

**Uganda's junior finance minister charged with corruption offences**  

**High stakes for Ukraine as clampdown on corruption comes under scrutiny**  
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/18/high-stakes-for-ukraine-as-clampdown-on-corruption-comes-under-scrutiny

**National Bank of Slovakia’s chief found guilty of corruption**  

**Venezuela corruption probe snares another former top PDVSA executive**  

**South Africa ex-President Zuma’s graft trial postponed again**  
https://apnews.com/article/jacob-zuma-corruption-thales-south-africa-93d41889bb34a-3f6a22a971c3276fe05

**Coal smuggling trains the Mongolian public’s eye on systemic corruption**  

**How a corruption scandal has left dozens of Polish startups facing bankruptcy**  
https://sifted.eu/articles/corruption-scandal-polish-startups-bankruptcy-eu
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Spanish Mega Lab Raises Questions About Cocaine Production in Europe
Gavin Voss – InSight Crime: 19 April 2023

Despite discovery by Spanish police of Europe’s largest-ever cocaine-producing laboratory, production on the continent likely remains in its infancy.

For more on this theme:

Four of Chapo’s Sons Indicted for Large-Scale Drug Trafficking, Money Laundering and Violent Crimes as Alleged Leaders of Sinaloa Cartel

Biden administration announces broad effort targeting production and distribution of illicit fentanyl

Paraguay Shown as Key Link in Bolivia-Europe Cocaine Route
https://insightcrime.org/news/paraguay-shown-as-key-link-in-bolivia-europe-cocaine-route/

Paraguay Anti-Marijuana Operations Barely Dent Production in Amambay

Italian drugs cartels conceal payments via Chinese shadow banks

How drug trafficking triggered Ecuador’s crime wave

Container clampdown: How the shipping industry is going hi-tech to outsmart wily drug traffickers

Marseille drug lords lure young ‘jobbeurs’ to peddle despite risks
https://www.theeastfrican.co.ke/tea/magazine/teens-lured-to-marseille-become-slaves-of-its-drugs-war-4187292

Ecuador’s Crime Wave and Its Albanian Connection

Is Nigeria the Cocaine Capital of Africa?

Are U.S. Avocado Buyers Financing The Cartel Conflict In Mexico?
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

How giant rats could lead the charge in preventing wildlife trafficking and landmine detection

Evan Noorani – CBS19 :+8 April 2023

The African pouched rat can be trained with a “target scent” to find illegally trafficked wildlife, landmines and even help in human recovery.


Bolivia looks to curb fuel smuggling with help of armed forces

Reuters: 13 April 2023

The government has called on the military to tighten border controls to curb the smuggling of state-subsidized fuels, a move it thinks will save state coffers some U.S. $250 million per year.


For more on this theme:

Forest plundering threatens Aka pygmies of Central Africa


Biogas project offers lifelines to Kenyan community, forest, and rare species


Armed illegal miners thrive in Tampakan

https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1755140/armed-illegal-miners-thrive-in-tampakan

Why illegal fishing must be stamped out on environmental and humanitarian grounds


Senegal: Critically Endangered Dolphin Threatened by Illegal Fishing Nets


How world heritage site will curb wildlife crimes

https://dailytrust.com/how-world-heritage-site-will-curb-wildlife-crimes/

Illegal logging in Africa is a threat to security


Report links financial giants to deforestation of Paraguay’s Gran Chaco

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Why the EU Should Stop Talking About Digital Sovereignty
Simona Autolitano – Council on Foreign Relations: 10 April 2023

Digital sovereignty has become a popular slogan in the European Union. However, this approach creates several weaknesses, and should lead the group to adopt a new mantra.

https://www.cfr.org/blog/why-eu-should-stop-talking-about-digital-sovereignty

For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) Making Unilateral Norms for Military AI Multilateral
https://www.lawfareblog.com/making-unilateral-norms-military-ai-multilateral

(U.K.) Governance and Uses of AI: Using ChatGPT-4 in MVP Development

(GLOBAL) Internet access must become human right or we risk ever-widening inequality
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/04/230407094243.htm

INTERNET FREEDOM

Leaked Documents Show How Russia, China Collaborate on Censorship
Liam Scott – Voice of America: 19 April 2023

The documents confirm reports that Moscow and Beijing cooperate on censorship and internet control tactics.


For more on this theme:

(Burma) How internet shutdowns in Myanmar have been endangering lives and affecting humanitarian work since the coup

(China) China Jails Iconic Blogger Who Helped Others Evade Censorship

(China) China’s Great Firewall Comes for AI Chatbots, and Experts Are Worried
CYBER STRATEGY

Data sharing between public and private is the answer to cybersecurity
James Hughes – TechRadar: 12 April 2023

The United Kingdom’s National Cyber Security Centre warned that the cash-strapped third sector is increasingly at risk from malicious actors. With the talent gap in cybersecurity widening and cybercriminals becoming more sophisticated, public organizations are struggling to keep up.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Cyber Strategy Aims to Ensure Secure US Tech Design, Set International Example

(Jordan) Time for a robust cybersecurity strategy to safeguard Jordan’s economy

(Global) US, South Korea, Japan concerned over North Korea’s cyber activities

CYBERATTACKS

Casino chain shuts Ontario sites after cyber attack
Howard Solomon – IT World Canada: 18 April 2023

Gateway Casino and Entertainment operates 14 casinos across Ontario.


For more on this theme:

(Israel) Cyber attack shutters Galilee farm water controllers
https://www.jns.org/cyberattack-shutters-galilee-farm-water-controllers/

(Spain) Update: Hackers release more stolen data on dark web from Barcelona’s Hospital Clinic

(Germany) Rheinmetall suffers cyber attack, military business unaffected, spokesperson says
CYBERCRIME

Yogi Adityanath calls for use of district cells to fight cyber crimes
The New Indian: 13 April 2023

Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh state in India, reviewed cybercrime, vigilance establishment and special investigation teams of the police department at his residence.
https://newindian.in/effective-use-of-district-cyber-cells-key-to-fight-online-crimes-cm-yogi/

For more on this theme:
(Australia) Australia Is Scouring the Earth for Cybercriminals — the US Should Too
https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/australia-is-scouring-the-earth-for-cybercriminals-the-us-should-too

(Australia) Australia Aims to Make Industry More Resilient Against Cyberattacks
https://www.voanews.com/a/australia-aims-to-make-industry-more-resilient-against-cyberattacks/7045160.html

(Global) Styx Marketplace Provides Hub for Financial Cybercrime

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

The Dangerous Weak Link in the US Food Chain
Eric Geller – Wired: 6 April 2023

Without an information sharing and analysis center, the country’s food and agriculture sector is uniquely vulnerable to hackers.
https://www.wired.com/story/us-food-agriculture-isac-cybersecurity/

For more on this theme:
(India) Indian Cyber Security Solutions highlights challenges and opportunities in India’s cyber security infrastructure

(Global) Dutch intel agency paints grim picture of multiple threats
https://apnews.com/article/intelligence-netherlands-terrorism-threat-russia-china-dutch-cyber-attack-277fbd0c4203cbe6fbbc7ad8476b4184

(Russia, Global) Russian-aligned cyber groups are seeking to target Western infrastructure, U.K. says


PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

‘ISIS 2.0’: Four years after the terror group was defeated, what threat remains?
Jennifer Bell – Al Arabiya: 19 April 2023
Experts said the present threat posed by the Islamic State group has never been more diminished but voiced concern about the rise of “ISIS 2.0.”
https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2023/04/19/-ISIS-2-0-Four-years-ago-the-terror-group-was-declared-beaten-but-is-it-resurging-

Assad-ISIS Collusion Threatens US and Its Allies
Hannah Wallace – The Defense Post: 20 April 2023
Is the Assad regime recruiting Islamic State group fighters to take down its remaining foes?
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/04/20/assad-isis-collusion/

For more on this theme:
CENTCOM Confirms ISIS Senior Leader killed in a Helicopter Raid in Northern Syria

Bilal al-Sudani’s Death Weakens Islamic State Influence in Somalia

The Presence of ISKP in Afghanistan: Concerns and Contradictions

Women brought back to Canada from ISIS camps released on bail

Canada repatriating 14 citizens from detention camps in Syria

Iraq closes camp with hundreds of families believed to have ties to Islamic State; UN concerned

ISIS fighters and families under guard in Syria pose ‘problem from hell’ for US forces

‘Promised Financial Support’; ‘Approached on Social Media’: How ISIS is Radicalising Youth in South
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

A Study on the Status and Roles of Women in the Printed Jihadi Media
Nazha Mouhieddine – European Eye on Radicalization: 13 April 2023

The status and role of women in extremist organizations can be analyzed through those groups’ publications. This research uses Al-Shamkha magazine as a case study.


Sudan on the Brink: The Prospect of Terrorists Exploiting the Current Instability
European Eye on Radicalization: 19 April 2023

While terrorism has somewhat been curbed in recent years, the current situation could lead to a rekindling of terrorist efforts.


For more on this theme:

Terror Groups Prey on Vulnerable, Cost Continent Billions
https://adf-magazine.com/2023/03/terror-groups-prey-on-vulnerable-cost-continent-billions/

Inside Nigeria’s centres for jihadists and their captives
https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/inside-nigerias-centres-for-jihadists-and-their-captives/article

Unrecognized Taliban Aims To Boost Legitimacy By Wrestling Control Of Afghan Diplomatic Missions
https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-diplomatic-missions-legitimacy/32353807.html

What’s Next for the Taliban’s Leadership Amid Rising Dissent?

Taking a Terrible Toll: The Taliban’s Education Ban

Why some terror campaigns escalate to civil war and others don’t — study reveals surprising new answers

Globalized Crises: The War in Ukraine and COVID-19’s Impact on Al-Shabaab Recruitment

In Somalia’s War With Al-Shabab, Media Access an Issue

https://worldcrunch.com/world-affairs/boko-haram-interview
CRIME AND CONFLICT

Armed conflict and Organized Crime: The case of Afghanistan
Annette Idler, Frederik Florenz, Ajmal Burhanzoi, John Collins, Marcena Hunter and Antônio Sampaio – Global Initiative Against Organized Crime: 19 April 2023

Organized crime provides Afghan actors with significant political power, while powerful political actors are uniquely positioned to reap the profits of the country's criminal markets.
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/armed-conflict-organized-crime-afghanistan/

For more on this theme:

Listen: How Data and Justice Meet to Tackle War Crimes in Ukraine

Global conflicts intensify amid climate change, poor governance and extremism: a closer look at the Sahel, Haiti, and Myanmar

Cattle raiding by jihadis soars in Mali, fuels conflict

Working Together Toward Accountability: How the International Criminal Court and a Special Tribunal on Aggression Can Work Together on the Ukraine Conflict
https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2023/04/un-icc-ukraine-aggression/

Forced Marriage by Non-state Armed Groups: Frequency, Forms, and Impact

Illicit economies and the UN Security Council
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/illicit-economies-unsc/

Indigenous leader assassinated amid conflict over oil that divided community

DOJ bolsters support for Ukraine’s pursuit of Russian war criminals

Wagner keeps low profile in Sudan to preserve interests

Abducting Ukrainian children is a deliberate Kremlin strategy
https://euobserver.com/opinion/156934

Ukraine: Russian Torture Center in Kherson
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukraine says it is finding more Chinese components in Russian weapons
Matthias Williams and John O’Donnell – Reuters: 16 April 2023

A senior advisor in President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s office told Reuters that as sanctions squeeze Western supplies, Ukraine has found parts from China in drones and tanks.
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-says-it-is-finding-more-chinese-components-russian-weapons-2023-04-14/

For more on this theme:

How Russia’s War on Ukraine Has Converged Cybersecurity Across Homeland and National Security

Putin signs a tough new military draft law, banning conscripts from fleeing Russia
https://www.npr.org/2023/04/13/1169464889/russia-military-draft-ukraine-war

Russia Fines Wikipedia Owner Over ‘Fake Information’ About Ukraine Invasion
https://www.rferl.org/a/wikimedia-russia-ukraine-invasion-fines-/32362254.html

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine: Wagner Group and RIA FAN added to the EU's sanctions list

Battleground Towns: Inside Russia’s War in Ukraine

Russia’s UN council presidency is most contentious in memory
https://apnews.com/article/un-russia-security-council-ukraine-b83f71f62b5c0bbcd8bda0eabe6e99f

New analysis highlights strength of Ukraine's defence against “unprecedented” Russian offensive

China’s diplomatic offensive into the Ukraine-Russia War – analysis
https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-739295

China promises not to sell arms to any party in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine

Russian opposition leader sentenced to prison for denouncing Putin’s war in Ukraine
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/russian-opposition-leader-sentenced-to-prison-for-denouncing-putins-war-in-ukraine
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Steppe Change: How Russia's War On Ukraine Is Reshaping Kazakhstan – Analysis**
https://www.eurasiareview.com/14042023-steppe-change-how-russias-war-on-ukraine-is-reshaping-kazakhstan-analysis/

**Russia: New Conscription Law Raises Fresh Fears Of Mobilization At Home And Abroad**

**Ukraine And The Community-ization Of War Effort – Analysis**

**There can be no lasting peace with Russia until Ukraine liberates Crimea**

**Russia's invasion of Ukraine is also being fought in cyberspace**
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-invasion-of-ukraine-is-also-being-fought-in-cyberspace/

**Russia's Ukraine invasion is the latest stage in the unfinished Soviet collapse**

**Ukrainian victory “could help ensure Europe’s future energy security”**

**War As A Neighbor: Moldova And Challenges Of Facing Russian Aggression In Ukraine**

**The Price Putin Is Ready to Pay**
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/price-putin-ready-pay

**A Deal With Russia? It Can Only Bring Disaster**
https://cepa.org/article/a-deal-with-russia-it-can-only-bring-disaster/

**Putin Sends the Price of Opposition Skywards**
https://cepa.org/article/putin-sends-the-price-of-opposition-skywards/

**Moscow Faces Serious Obstacles in Making Karelia a ‘Second Kaliningrad’**

**ICC’s Arrest Warrant for Putin Divides Post-Soviet Space**
https://jamestown.org/program/iccs-arrest-warrant-for-putin-divides-post-soviet-space/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Moscow Engulfed by Anxiety About Impending Ukrainian Offensive

The Sivash: A Key Strategic Point in the Retaking of Crimea
https://jamestown.org/program/the-sivash-a-key-strategic-point-in-the-retaking-of-crimea/

How The Ukraine War Ends, And Implications For Africa – Analysis

Russia's Main Strategy: Demonize Ukraine and Hope for Weakening Western Support

Can Russia Protect India From Oil Volatility? – Analysis

Poland's Far-Right Advances on Anti-Ukraine Sentiment
https://cepa.org/article/polands-far-right-advances-on-anti-ukraine-sentiment/