THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational Weekly



A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

EU seeks to harmonise anti-corruption rules

Eszter Zalan – EUObserver: 3 May 2023

The European Union Commission presented proposals to tighten anti-corruption rules in an effort to crack down on crossborder graft and mitigate its erosion of democracy.

https://euobserver.com/rule-of-law/156988

Africa's biggest power firm is losing \$55 million a month to corruption

Faustine Ngila - Quartz: 28 April 2023

The former CEO of the state-run South African company made the allegation, according to news reports.

https://gz.com/de-ruyter-says-corruption-in-south-africa-power-firm-1850385551

For more on this theme:

Venezuelan parliament passes law to seize assets linked to corruption cases

https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuelan-parliament-passes-law-seize-assets-linked-corruption-cases-2023-04-27/

US urges to elect a president in Lebanon 'free of corruption'

https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/05/us-urges-elect-president-lebanon-free-corruption

Former Moldovan Prime Minister Among Eight Charged By Anti-Corruption Prosecutor Over Airport Contract

https://www.rferl.org/a/former-moldovan-pm-charged-anticorruption-prosecutor-airport/32390472.html

Elections in Paraguay suggest little optimism in fighting corruption

https://lansinginstitute.org/2023/05/02/elections-in-paraguay-suggest-little-optimism-in-fighting-corruption/

Does the potential for corruption in the mining sector threaten a just energy transition?

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/04/corruption-in-the-mining-sector-threatens-a-just-energy-transition/

Corruption fuels lavish life of Russian minister's family

https://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2023/04/26/exp-clarissa-ward-corruption-in-russia-042510 as eg 2-cnniworld.cnn

Combating Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina

https://www.gmfus.org/news/combating-corruption-bosnia-and-herzegovina

Chinese police detain celebrity anti-corruption journalist for selling ointment

https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/journalist-04262023152404.html

Iraqi defense minister sacks military officials over corruption

https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/23042023

Study finds biases about bribery in certain countries facilitate corruption

https://phys.org/news/2023-04-biases-bribery-countries-corruption.html

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Colombia's Coca Market Crash Unlikely to Impact Cocaine Trade

Sean Doherty - InSight Crime: 28 April 2023

The plummeting price is unlikely to affect major drug trafficking operations despite forcing farmers out of growing the crop.

https://insightcrime.org/news/colombias-coca-market-crash-unlikely-to-impact-cocaine-trade/

Hezbollah's Global Networks and Latin American Cocaine Trade

Mahmut Cengiz and Camilo Pardo-Herrera - Small Wars Journal: 25 April 2023

Hezbollah's participation in cocaine networks has expanded since a decade long operation launched in 2007 that aimed to halt its traffic of drugs into the U.S. and Europe.

https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/hezbollahs-global-networks-and-latin-american-cocaine-trade

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Massive International Cyber Operation Against Drug Trafficking Nets Record Arrests And Seizures

https://www.forbes.com/sites/kellyphillipserb/2023/05/02/largest-international-operation-against-dark-net-drug-trafficking-nets-record-arrests-and-seizures/?sh=274427f743d4

Syria agrees to curb drug trade at Arab ministers meeting

https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/arab-ministers-discuss-how-normalise-ties-with-syria-2023-05-01/

Taliban leader, Punjab gangsters behind smuggling of drugs, arms via drones

https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/taliban-khalistani-isi-involved-in-drug-and-weapon-smuggling-into-india-via-drones-say-delhi-police-in-charge-sheet-filed-this-april-101681495118581.html and the same of the same

Defunding The Deadly Fentanyl Trade – Analysis

https://www.eurasiareview.com/15042023-defunding-the-deadly-fentanyl-trade-analysis/

Costa Rica Was the 'Happiest Country on Earth.' Now It's a Base for Drug Traffickers.

https://www.vice.com/en/article/jg58n3/costa-rica-increased-police-tougher-drug-weapons-laws-homicide-spike

U.S. says it 'infiltrated' the Sinaloa drug cartel in the fight against fentanyl

https://www.npr.org/2023/04/21/1170326191/fentanyl-mexico-drug-cartel-sinaloa-chapitos-el-chapo

Cocaine-smuggling submarine reveals Europe's drug crisis

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65337215

The Afghanistan Drug Trade and Public Health

https://www.borgenmagazine.com/afghanistan-drug-trade/

The Battle for Drug Routes in Costa Rica: Sinaloa, Jalisco and Colombian Traffickers Compete

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TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Central Africa's pangolins slaughtered for myths and meat

Oluwole Ojewale - Institute for Security Studies: 2 May 2023

Organized criminal networks that previously traded mostly with elephant ivory are turning to pangolins.

https://issafrica.org/iss-today/central-africas-pangolins-slaughtered-for-myths-and-meat

A frontline view of the fight against illegal mining in Yanomami territory

Rubens Valente - Mongabay: 2 May 2023

In the Brazilian Amazon, Indigenous people have been suffering a health crisis aggravated by the dismantling of support services and illegal mining.

https://news.mongabay.com/2023/05/a-frontline-view-of-the-fight-against-illegal-mining-in-yanomamiterritory/

For more on this theme:

Illegal gold mining influencers are tearing up the Amazon

https://restofworld.org/2023/illegal-gold-mining-influencers-brazil/

Explainer - Why are high gold prices bad for the Amazon rainforest?

https://www.reuters.com/article/brazil-amazon-gold/explainer-why-are-high-gold-prices-bad-for-the-amazon-rainforest-idUSL8N36N63F

As sand miners prosper in Uganda, a vital lake basin suffers

https://apnews.com/article/uganda-sand-mining-lake-victoria-basin-13ec983cdddcb3f0fc-48d9e908632a36

Illegal gold mining up ten-fold in Kachin state since Myanmar coup

https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/mining-04262023173338.html

EU advisory groups call for new IUU measures

https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2023/04/26/eu-advisory-groups-call-for-new-iuu-measures/

Lickable toads and magic mushrooms: wildlife traded on the dark web is the kind that gets you high

https://the conversation.com/lickable-toads-and-magic-mushrooms-wild life-traded-on-the-dark-web-is-the-kind-that-gets-you-high-201180

Cheetah diplomacy: Collaborators from clashing nations band together to protect endangered species

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[Video] Combatting wildlife crime with technology

https://india.mongabay.com/2023/05/video-combatting-wildlife-crime-with-technology/

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Transatlantic Unity on China Runs Through Al

Eva Maydell and Ylli Bajraktari - CEPA: 24 April 2023

Although the trans-Atlantic partnership displayed remarkable unity in the face of Russia's war in Ukraine, it must accelerate cooperation in emerging technology. The global fight for democracy is at stake.

https://cepa.org/article/transatlantic-unity-on-china-runs-through-ai/

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(U.S., Global) The Developing Law of Al Regulation: A Turn to Risk Regulation

https://www.lawfareblog.com/developing-law-ai-regulation-turn-risk-regulation

(Global) Another Internet Is Possible — If You Believe It Is

https://techpolicy.press/another-internet-is-possible-if-you-believe-it-is/

(Global) For ICANN to Have a Future, It Needs to Take Human Rights Considerations Seriously

https://circleid.com/posts/20230424-for-icann-to-have-a-future-it-needs-to-take-human-rights-considerations-seriously

INTERNET FREEDOM

How online searches for 'Ukraine' and 'Taiwan' are censored in China: study Sylvie Zhuang – South China Morning Post: 28 April 2023

"Ukraine" and "Taiwan" are among newly discovered keyword combinations censored by Chinese search engines and social-media platforms, according to a study by Canadian researchers.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3218789/how-online-searches-ukraine-and-taiwan-are-censored-china-study

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(China) China says chatbots must toe the party line

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/04/25/asia-pacific/china-communist-party-chatbot-ai/

(China) China's Search Engines Have More Than 66,000 Rules Controlling Content, Report Says

https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/26/business/china-censored-search-engine.html

(Brazil) Brazil pushes back on big tech firms' campaign against 'fake news law'

https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazil-lawmakers-vote-controversial-bill-clean-up-social-media-2023-05-02/

CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

The 2023 National Cybersecurity Strategy: How Does America Think About Cyberspace? Divyanshu Jindal, Mohammed Soliman – MEI: 2 May 2023

The Biden administration seeks to carry forward and evolve many of the efforts initiated by the 2008 Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative.

https://www.mei.edu/publications/2023-national-cybersecurity-strategy-how-does-america-think-about-cyberspace

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(U.S., Iran) The military says that a group of cyber soldiers stopped Iranian hackers from publishing unofficial US election results

https://fortune.com/2023/04/25/cyber-soldiers-stopped-iranian-hackers-military-says/

(U.S., Global) Are We Asking Too Much of Cyber?

https://warontherocks.com/2023/05/are-we-asking-too-much-of-cyber/

(Russia, Ukraine, Global) Cyber lessons from Ukraine: Prepare for prolonged conflict, not a knockout blow

https://breakingdefense.com/2023/05/cyber-lessons-from-ukraine-prepare-for-prolonged-conflict-not-a-knockout-blow

CYBERATTACKS

Global Cyberattacks Continue to Rise with Africa and APAC Suffering Most

Check Point Research: 27 April 2023

While the volume of attacks has risen marginally, there have been several sophisticated campaigns from cybercriminals who are weaponizing legitimate tools for malicious gains.

https://blog.checkpoint.com/research/global-cyberattacks-continue-to-rise/

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Ransomware attack hampering Dallas police operations

https://www.cbsnews.com/texas/news/possible-cyber-attack-hampering-dallas-police-operations/

(Sweden) Swedish parliament website hit by DDoS attack

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/swedens-parliament-hit-by-cyber-attack-2023-05-03/

(U.S.) Cyber Attacks Hit in Massachusetts and South Carolina

https://www.govtech.com/security/cyber-attacks-hit-in-massachusetts-and-south-carolina

(Europe, Russia) Russian Hackers Killnet Executed a Cyber Attack on European Air Traffic Control Agency Eurocontrol

https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/russian-hackers-killnet-executed-a-cyber-attack-on-europe-an-air-traffic-control-agency-eurocontrol/

CYBERCRIME

Cybercrime is world's third biggest 'economy'

The Sun: 28 April 2023

The scale puts it behind only those of the United States and China.

https://www.thesundaily.my/home/cybercrime-is-world-s-third-biggest-economy-HJ10913433

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(Global) The Most Dangerous Known Hacker Groups

https://boldtv.com/matthew-hirsch/2023/05/01/the-most-dangerous-known-hacker-groups/

(Global) Human Error Drives Most Cyber Incidents. Could Al Help?

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

#RSAC: Cyber-Attacks on Civilian Infrastructure Should Be War Crimes, says Ukraine Official

Beth Maundrill - InfoSecurity: 27 April 2023

A Ukrainian security official calls for cyberattacks against critical infrastructure to be classified as war crimes.

https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cyberattacks-civilian/

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(U.S.) 911? We Have an Emergency: Cyberattacks On Emergency Response Systems

https://www.lawfareblog.com/911-we-have-emergency-cyberattacks-emergency-response-systems

(India) Indian healthcare system needs robust cybersecurity infra. Here's what experts say

https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-healthcare-system-robust-cybersecurity-infrastructure-aiims-cyberattack-safdarjung-hospital-sun-pharma-cyberattack-11682223039473.html

(U.S.) CISA Launches New Ransomware Vulnerability Warning Pilot For Critical Infrastructure Entities

https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2023/05/01/cisa-launches-new-ransomware-vulnerability-warning-pilot-for-critical-infrastructure-entities/?sh=4b920e6d66f3

(U.S., Global) Why, And How, To Cyber Harden Industrial Operations

https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2023/05/02/why-and-how-to-cyber-harden-industrial-operations/?sh=59b1b8cb63f5

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The Azadi Briefing: Taliban Using War With Islamic State To Burnish Counterterrorism Credentials

Abubakar Siddigue – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 28 April 2023

The Taliban has intensified its war with the Islamic State group's Afghanistan affiliate, killing several senior leaders and commanders in recent months. The Taliban also appears to be trying to boost its legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

https://www.rferl.org/a/azadi-briefing-taliban-islamic-state-counterterrorism-partner/32383706.html

Islamic State Khorasan Province Is a Growing Threat in Afghanistan and Beyond Colin P. Clarke – The Diplomat: 29 April 2023

Within Afghanistan's borders, a witch's brew of terrorist and insurgent groups is metastasizing, and the situation is beginning to feel eerily similar to the pre-9/11 era.

https://the diplomat.com/2023/04/islamic-state-khorasan-province-is-a-growing-threat-in-afghanistan-and-beyond/

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US Not Backing Turkish Claims Islamic State Leader is Dead

https://www.voanews.com/a/us-not-backing-turkish-claims-islamic-state-leader-is-dead/7073730.html

Islamic State calls on rival armed groups in Mali to "repent" and lay down their arms

https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/world/islamic-state-calls-on-rival-armed-groups-in-mali-to-%C2%BBre-pent%C2%BB-and-lay-down-their-arms/ar-AA1apF6C

The Return of the Virtual 'Caliphate'? Mapping the Evolution of the Islamic State's Information Ecosystem

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ISKP Expands its Focus Toward Central Asia

https://jamestown.org/program/iskp-expands-its-focus-toward-central-asia/

ISIS attacks decreased by 68% in Iraq

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EU sanctions ISIS group in Mozambique

 $https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2023/04/25/belgium-EU-sanctions-ISIS-Mozam-bique/5271682398692/\\$

'ISIS drug' Tramadol smuggled to war-torn Sudan from Andhra Pradesh & Telangana

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/isis-drug-tramadol-smuggled-to-war-torn-sudan-from-andhra-pradesh-telangana/articleshow/99771255.cms? from=mdr

Al Qaeda and ISIS intensify focus on Bharat

https://hindupost.in/world/al-qaeda-and-isis-eyes-on-bharat/

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

The Evolving Threat From Terrorist Drones in Africa

Rueben Dass - Lawfare: 30 April 2023

Drones are changing conflicts around the world, and terrorist groups are among their eager users. Africa is no exception to this trend.

https://www.lawfareblog.com/evolving-threat-terrorist-drones-africa

Hamas armed wing announces suspension of bitcoin fundraising

Nidal Al-Mughrabi – Reuters: 28 April 2023

The armed wing of the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas said it would stop receiving fundraising via cryptocurrency, a method it has used for years, citing an increase in "hostile" activity against donors.

https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hamas-armed-wing-announces-suspension-bitcoin-fund-raising-2023-04-28/

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Profiling Ansar al-Islam: Kurdish Jihadists Threatening Russian Forces in Syria

https://jamestown.org/program/profiling-ansar-al-islam-kurdish-jihadists-threatening-russian-forces-in-svria/

Brief: Indonesia Arrests Uzbek Militants in Latest Central Asian Jihadist Sting

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Brief: Mystery Surrounds Killings of Chinese Nationals in Central African Republic

https://jamestown.org/program/brief-mystery-surrounds-killings-of-chinese-nationals-in-central-african-republic/

Amid the Taliban's Worsening Crackdown on Journalists, News in Afghanistan Is Forced to Adapt

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Somalia: Counter-Insurgency Operation Gains Regional Support in Phase Two as al-Shabaab Attacks and Political Differences Persist

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Al-Qaeda threatens revenge over Indian gangster-politician Atiq Ahmed's live TV murder

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The Wagner Group's Expanding Global Footprint

https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/04/the-wagner-groups-expanding-global-footprint/

CRIME AND CONFLICT

UN body deplores 'grave' rights abuses by Russia in Ukraine

Gabrielle Tétrault-Farber – Reuters: 28 April 2023

A United Nations committee said it was deeply concerned about human rights violations by Russian forces and private military companies in Ukraine, including enforced disappearances, torture, rape and extrajudicial executions.

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/un-body-deeply-concerned-grave-human-rights-abuses-by-russiaukraine-2023-04-28/

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Russia's War Exacting Toll on Ukrainian Children

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Behind the Lines: Russia Brainwashes Ukraine's Youngsters

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Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan: Apparent War Crimes in Border Conflict

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Analysis: Sudan risks long conflict as entrenched rivals struggle for control

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Shifting alliances in Sudan's Darfur as new civil war fears rise

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/27/shifting-alliances-in-sudans-darfur-as-new-civil-war-fearsrise

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Burkina Faso: Responsibility of the army indicated in Karma massacre

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Central America, Mexico, and Dominican Republic, Together Against Crime

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Beyond Victimhood: Women's Contributions to Criminal Violence

https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2023/05/01/beyond-victimhood-womens-contributions-to-criminal-violence/

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukraine could launch its offensive against Russia any moment. Here's what's waiting Tim Lister - CNN: 29 April 2023

Ukraine says its preparations for a spring counteroffensive are almost complete. When it's launched, it will mark a pivotal moment in the conflict. But the Russians have had nearly six months to prepare the ground – and build an elaborate array of defenses.

https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/29/europe/russia-ukraine-spring-offensive-intl/index.html

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Baku's Cooperation With West on Ukraine Leaves Moscow With Few Options

https://jamestown.org/program/bakus-cooperation-with-west-on-ukraine-leaves-moscow-with-few-options/

Will Russia Become a "Complete Dystopia?"

https://jamestown.org/program/will-russia-become-a-complete-dystopia/

Political Games Abound Over Ukraine's Coming Offensive

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Will Iran's and Russia's Meddling Start Another War in the South Caucasus?

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'Liberating Crimea Changes Everything'

https://cepa.org/article/liberating-crimea-changes-everything/

Russia's Place in the Emerging World

https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/russias-place-emerging-world

Russia Exits Europe

https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/russia-exits-europe

As Ukraine prepares counteroffensive, Russia appears in disarray

https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/01/europe/ukraine-russia-counteroffensive-analysis-intl-hnk/index.html

How Russia Could 'Deliberately Engineer' a Nuclear Disaster in Ukraine

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Russia-Ukraine war: Wagner suffers big losses due to lack of weapons and supplies

https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/russia-ukraine-war-wagner-suffers-massive-losses-lack-weapons-sup-

How Ukraine Could Retake Crimea

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How strong is Russian public support for the invasion of Ukraine?

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-strong-is-russian-public-support-for-the-invasion-ofukraine/

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

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Placing Russian nukes in Belarus could destabilize Putin's last ally

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Rattling the Nuclear Saber: What Russia's Nuclear Threats Really Mean

https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/05/04/rattling-nuclear-saber-what-russia-s-nuclear-threats-reallymean-pub-89689

Russia's Database of Draft Dodgers Will Only Cause More Chaos

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What Has North Korea Learned from Russia's Invasion of Ukraine?

https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/what-has-north-korea-learned-russias-invasion-ukraine

Ukraine Shuns Russia's Frenzied Victory Cult

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Ukraine: No Choice but to Fight On

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Ukraine's Offensive: Why it May Be Decisive

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Victory Cult: Putin Under Time Pressure

https://cepa.org/article/victory-cult-putin-under-time-pressure/

Iranian and Syrian factors shape Israeli response to Russia's Ukraine invasion

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/iranian-and-syrian-factors-shape-israeli-response-to-russias-ukraine-invasion/

Ukrainians who grew up speaking Russian learn a new mother tongue

https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/4/28/ukrainians-who-grew-up-speaking-russian-learn-a-new-mother-tongue

Kazakhstan's 'Multi-Vector' Foreign Policy Amidst The Ukraine War – Analysis

https://www.eurasiareview.com/30042023-kazakhstans-multi-vector-foreign-policy-amidst-the-ukraine-waranalysis/

How A German Gas Giant's Investments May Be Fueling Russia's Military, **Including In Ukraine**

https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-germany-gazprom-wintershall-investigation-fueling-military-ukraine/32383490.

Analysis: China's Ukraine plan mixes peace, self-interest

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Analysis: Xi's Call With Zelenskiy Sets The Stage For Greater Chinese Diplomatic **Push In Europe**

https://www.rferl.org/a/analysis-xi-call-zelenskiy-chinese-diplomatic-push-europe/32382420.html

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https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/03/europe/ukraine-russia-strikes-analysis-intl-cmd/index.html

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https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/ukraines-defence-against-russian-cyber-offensive/

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https://inews.co.uk/news/ukraine-war-more-than-20-russian-mercenary-groups-supporting-putins-invasion-study-finds-2310514

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