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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Corrupt Security Services Worsen Ecuador’s Murder Problem
Gabrielle Gorder – InSight Crime: 31 May 2022
The siphoning of guns in police custody to criminals and a naval officer accused of acting in a hit squad are but two of the latest examples of how corruption in Ecuador’s security forces adds to the country’s struggles against violence.

Tunisian president sacks dozens of judges as he consolidates rule
Al Jazeera: 2 June 2022
President Kais Saied sacked 57 judges, accusing them of corruption and protecting terrorists, as he seeks to remodel the country’s political system after consolidating one-man rule.

For more on this theme:

Anti-corruption conference focuses on enhancing prevention and dialogue
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/anti-corruption-conference-sibenik-croatia/

Corruption: New Insights for Fighting an Age-Old Business Problem
https://hbr.org/podcast/2022/05/corruption-new-insights-for-fighting-an-age-old-business-problem

Nigeria’s hopeless fight against corruption

What’s Behind Vietnam’s Latest Anti-Corruption Fight

Anti-Corruption Action Center Pushes for Transparency in Ukraine

FLASHPOINT UKRAINE: Anti-Corruption campaigners see no signs of misused aid
https://www.voanews.com/a/6595618.html

Myanmar Junta Detains Petrol Tycoon With Corruption Charge

Defence corruption and fraud totals R2.2 billion – Provost Marshal General

‘Fight against corruption requires effective monitoring’
https://cyprus-mail.com/2022/05/28/fight-against-corruption-requires-effective-monitoring/
DRUG TRAFFICKING

How Mexico’s Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación rules
Vanda Felbab-Brown – Mexico Today: 29 May 2022
In a new series, Vanda Felbab-Brown outlines the way Mexico’s two largest cartels — the Sinaloa Cartel and Cartel Jalisco Nueva-Generación (CJNG) — as well as smaller criminal groups take over and rule local people, economies, and territories. Here she focuses on the strategies, choices, and approaches to rule of the CJNG.

The battle against captagon
Vanda Felbab-Brown – Chatham House: 27 May 2022
The “poor man’s cocaine” is now rife across the Middle East, heralding an era of violent, state-sponsored drug-trafficking, says Vanda Felbab-Brown.
https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-06/battle-against-captagon

For more on this theme:
VIDEO: Drug Cartels War on America’s Wildlands
https://alec.org/article/video-drug-cartels-war-on-americas-wildlands/

International investigation finds Colombian drug cartels laundered money through US banking system

Betrayals, In-Fighting, Mysteriously Vanished Leader — Is Jalisco Cartel on the Brink?

Mexican Cartel Allegedly Sold ‘Poison’ Drugs Out of Taco Trucks

Jordan says Iran-linked groups in Syria wage drug war along border

Emerging Cocaine Trafficking Routes Between Latin America and Middle East Fuel Drug Trade Expansion

Taliban unlikely to curb Afghanistan’s drug trade: Report

Ghost towns left in the wake of fighting for Colombia’s drug spoils
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Shady cocoa farming at the root of Côte d'Ivoire’s deforestation
Allan Ngari and Duncan E Omondi Gumba – Institute for Security Studies: 31 May 2022
Cocoa thrives in the rich forest soil left behind from illegal logging, stripping Côte d’Ivoire’s economy and environment.

For more on this theme:

EU must harness critical opportunity to address business practices that harm human and environmental rights

Snake trade in Indonesia is not sustainable enough — but it could be
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/05/220520073146.htm

UN moves towards crackdown on illegal wildlife trade in historic resolution

The Online Spider Market Is Massive — and Crawling With Issues
https://www.wired.com/story/the-online-spider-market-is-massive-and-crawling-with-issues/

Illicit trade funding terrorism and wars

Wildlife, forest crime analytic toolkit launched in Philippines

China’s Illegal Rosewood Trade with Mali Under Scrutiny

Brazil’s Bolsonaro hikes environmental fines to protect Amazon rainforest

Algorithm to save wildlife from poaching developed

Federal Government Operations Reach only 2% of The Illegal Mines on Yanomami Land

Illegal miners and fouled waterways in Mpumalanga underscore coal’s toxic legacy
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The European Union AI Act: Next steps and issues for building international cooperation in AI
Joshua P. Meltzer and Aaron Tielemans – Brookings: 1 June 2022

The European Commission submitted its proposal for a European Union regulatory framework on artificial intelligence. The Artificial Intelligence Act represents the first attempt globally to regulate artificial intelligence.


For more on this theme:
(UK, Global) Democratic digital governance needs UK and its allies
https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/05/democratic-digital-governance-needs-uk-and-its-allies

(Global) Revitalising Global Internet Governance

(Global) World Economic Forum Davos 2022: War in Ukraine, Metaverse und Splinternet

INTERNET FREEDOM

China Is Manipulating Search Engines to Push Propaganda on COVID, Uyghur Muslims
Imad Khan – CNET: 27 May 2022

Chinese state media uses search engine optimization strategies to place stories about the country at the top of results pages outside of China, a new report says.


For more on this theme:
(Turkey) Turkey’s Planned Internet Law to Criminalise ‘Spreading Misinformation’
https://balkaninsight.com/2022/05/27/turkeys-planned-internet-law-to-criminalise-spreading-misinformation/

(Russia) Russian Officials Have Spent Millions on VPNs Since Invading Ukraine
https://www.pcmag.com/news/russian-officials-have-spent-millions-on-vpns-since-invading-ukraine

(Iran) Experts: Iran disrupts internet; tower collapse deaths at 36

(China) How censoring China’s open-source coders might backfire
https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/05/30/1052879/censoring-china-open-source-backfire/
CYBER STATECRAFT AND STRATEGY

US ran offensive cyber ops to support Ukraine, says general
Jessica Lyons Hardcastle – The Register: 2 June 2022
America’s military conducted offensive cyber operations to support Ukraine in its response to Russia’s illegal invasion, according to U.S. Cyber Command chief Gen. Paul Nakasone.
https://www.theregister.com/2022/06/02/nakasone_us_hacking_russia/

For more on this theme:
(Europe) European Council extends sanction regime to deter future cyber-attacks
https://portswigger.net/daily-swig/european-council-extends-sanction-regime-to-deter-future-cyber-attacks
(Russia) Putin promises to bolster Russia’s IT security in face of cyber attacks
(Global) Cybersecurity: A global problem that requires a global answer
https://www.welivesecurity.com/2022/05/27/cybersecurity-global-problem-requires-global-answer/
(China, Global) China offering ten nations help to run their cyber-defenses and networks
https://www.theregister.com/2022/05/27/china_south_pacific_tech_assistance/

CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

FBI Director Says Agency Thwarted Cyberattack on Boston Children’s Hospital
Marc Fortier – NBC: 1 June 2022
FBI Director Christopher Wray says hackers “sponsored by the Iranian government” were behind a thwarted cyberattack against Boston Children’s Hospital last year.

For more on this theme:
(Costa Rica) How Costa Rica found itself at war over ransomware
https://www.csonline.com/article/3662311/how-costa-rica-found-itself-at-war-over-ransomware.html
(U.S.) FBI warns US colleges of widespread VPN credential leaks on Russian cybercrime forums
(Russia, Italy) Russian Killnet cyber attacks begin on Italian-linked businesses
https://www.itpro.co.uk/security/cyber-warfare/367859/russian-killnet-cyber-attacks-begin-on-italian-linked-businesses
(Canada) Cyberattack downs Regina Public Schools’ computer systems
CYBER CRIME

Ransomware Built in Venezuela Used to Target Institutions Across Latin America
Scott Mistler-Ferguson – InSight Crime: 24 May 2022

Venezuela has emerged as a potential base for the development of ransomware tools to cybercriminals after one man was charged with designing software used to carry out a range of cyberattacks.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Top cyber criminal earnings outpace those of business leaders

(EU, Global) EU data protection authority raises alarm over UN cybercrime treaty negotiations
https://therecord.media/edps-privacy-un-cybercrime-convention/

(Global) Scams account for most of all financially motivated cybercrime
https://www.helpnetsecurity.com/2022/06/01/scams-cybercrime-video/

(UK) Crypto Firms Are Poaching UK’s Cyber Crime Police Officers

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Federal government invests thousands in strategy that will protect energy sector from cyber attacks
Nida Zafa – MobileSyrup: 26 May 2022

The federal government is investing in protecting Canada’s energy systems from cyberattacks. Natural Resources Canada says cyber threats are growing in this field and becoming more complex and costly.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Why defining and securing systemically important critical infrastructure is so vital
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/securing-systemically-important-critical-infrastructure/

(U.S.) Protecting The Power Grid Through Cyber-Physical Threat Response
https://today.tamu.edu/2022/05/26/protecting-the-power-grid-through-cyber-physical-threat-response/

(U.S.) Securing Critical Infrastructure to the Cloud: Why Federal Operators Need Hardware-Enforced Cyber Defense
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Turkish Officials Claim Capture of New Islamic State Leader
Jeff Seldin – Voice of America: 26 May 2022
The reign of new ISIS terror group leader Abu al-Hassan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi may be over, less than three months after it began.

Swift action needed on Indonesians in Islamic State refugee camps
Alif Satria – Benar News: 20 May 2022
While Indonesians in ISIS refugee camps might be out of sight, they should not be out of mind.

For more on this theme:
Teaching the Next Generation of IS Fighters in Syria

Irqi Al-Hol returnees face ISIS stigma, ‘security checks’

ISIS Plotted to Seize Syria’s Hasakeh, Declare Formation of New Group

Shades of Jihad in Syria

Sahel: The Islamic State on the offensive again, how do Mali and Niger reply?

Ex-Soldier Found Guilty of Islamic State Membership
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/ex-soldier-found-guilty-of-islamic-state-membership/

High-Level ISIS Member Faces Life Imprisonment
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/high-level-isis-member-faces-life-imprisonment/

Mali: The Islamic State Sahel is building a sanctuary on the border with Niger
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Ansaru’s comeback in Nigeria deepens the terror threat
Akinola Olojo, Malik Samuel and Idris Mohammed – Institute for Security Studies: 1 June 2022

The resurgence of Boko Haram’s breakaway faction, with its al-Qaeda backing, threatens national and regional security.
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/ansarus-comeback-in-nigeria-deepens-the-terror-threat

For more on this theme:
How Education Decreases the Fear of Terrorism
https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-education-decreases-fear-terrorism

Belarus: ‘Attempted terrorism’ to be punishable by death

Terrorism in the UK: the rising threat of far-right extremists
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/may/16/terrorism-in-the-uk-the-rising-threat-of-far-right-extremists

Human rights must be ‘front and centre’ in the fight against terrorism

How Strong Is al-Qaeda? A Debate
https://warontherocks.com/2022/05/how-strong-is-al-qaeda-a-debate/

Confronting The Taliban — OpEd
https://www.eurasiareview.com/20052022-confronting-the-taliban-oped/

IntelBrief: The Threat Posed by Transnational Jihadist Groups Continues to Evolve
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2022-may-23/

Online Jihadist Propaganda — 2021 in review

Strategic Challenges For The Taliban Around Afghanistan – Analysis

Generation Jihad Ep. 71 — Al Qaeda under Zawahiri
https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2022/05/al-qaeda-under-zawahiri.php

Tajik terrorist serves as Taliban commander in northern Afghanistan

Support Africa to Weaken Boko Haram and the Lord Resistance Army
CONFLICT AND CRIME

An Independent Legal Analysis of the Russian Federation’s Breaches of the Genocide Convention in Ukraine and the Duty to Prevent
Newslines Institute for Strategy and Policy and Raoul Wallenberg Center for Human Rights: 26 May 2022

This report addresses one of the more contentious and consequential questions of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine: whether the war is genocidal in character. With fighting still ongoing, modern tools have made it vital that this question be examined and its truth made known.

For more on this theme:
First rape case against Russian soldier since Ukraine invasion sent to court

A Tale Of Two Genocide Cases: International Justice In Ukraine And Myanmar

In Defense of a Democracy: Prosecuting Russian Aggression Against Ukraine

EU-Africa: Common challenges in organized crime and lessons learned
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/eu-africa-ocindex/

Observatory of illicit economies in South Eastern Europe
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/seeobs-risk-bulletin-12/

Ukraine identifies 600 Russian war crime suspects: Prosecutor

Interpol warns of flood of illicit arms after Ukraine war
https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/06/01/Interpol-warns-of-flood-of-illicit-arms-after-Ukraine-war-

Almost 15,000 war crime cases already, says Ukraine prosecutor
https://euobserver.com/ukraine/155104

Establishment of the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group (ACA) for Ukraine
https://www.hstoday.us/ukraine/establishment-of-the-atrocity-crimes-advisory-group-aca-for-ukraine/

Ukraine and Russia Are Both Looking to the Nuremberg Trials — But Finding Different Lessons in the History
https://time.com/6181464/ukraine-war-crimes-nuremberg/

Kremlin mulls Nuremberg-style trials based on second world war tribunals
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/28/kremlin-mulls-nuremberg-style-trials-based-on-second-world-war-tribunals
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Putin’s purposes an affront to his office, his people, and their future
Andrew Wood – Chatham House: 30 May 2022

Russia’s tragedy is its continuing moral, political and economic degradation, which Putin and his regime have neither the courage nor the ability to reform for the sake of a more promising future for their country’s stability and future prosperity.

https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/05/putins-purposes-affront-his-office-his-people-and-their-future

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Russian Propagandists Feast on Turkey’s NATO Ire
https://cepa.org/russian-propagandists-feast-on-turkeys-nato-ire/

War in Ukraine: The world reaction — India and ASEAN
https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/06/war-ukraine-world-reaction-india-and-asean

From White Russia to Belarus: Norway snubs Kremlin with name change

Moscow Raises Two Territorial Issues After Helsinki Requests to Join NATO

The Untold Story of the Battle for Kyiv
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrn1/art/untold-story-battle-kyiv

Analysis: How the Ukraine conflict is reshaping global oil markets

The Russian Far Right and the War in Ukraine
https://jamestown.org/program/the-russian-far-right-and-the-war-in-ukraine/

The Evolution of Russia’s Ukraine Strategy

Win, Lose or Draw, No Good End to the Ukraine War
https://thetyee.ca/Analysis/2022/05/27/No-Good-End-Ukraine-War-Greatest-Casualties-Bystanders/

2 Russian lawmakers branded traitors and ordered out of meeting for demanding Putin end invasion of Ukraine

Time to Tame Transnistria
https://cepa.org/time-to-tame-transnistria/

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine: A volunteer’s perspective
https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/05/russias-invasion-ukraine-volunteers-perspective

Russia’s Syrian Strategy Finds a Repeat in Ukraine
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Moscow to Expand Use of Russia’s Commercial Fleet for Military Purposes
https://jamestown.org/program/moscow-to-expand-use-of-russias-commercial-fleet-for-military-purposes/

Is ‘Neutralization’ Obsolete After the Ukraine War?
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/06/neutralization-obsolete-after-ukraine-war

Who Are The Neo-Nazis Fighting For Russia In Ukraine?
https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-neo-nazis-fighting-ukraine/31871760.html

Natural gas, rare earth minerals: What’s at stake for Ukraine in the territory Russia is trying to conquer
https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/natural-resources-ukraine-war-1.6467039

The Russia sanctions will transform the global economy

Dealing With the Naval Blockade of Ukraine: A Diversity of Views

Analysis: Russia’s ‘political’ debt default sets emerging market precedent

Russia Targets Italy
https://cepa.org/russia-targets-italy/

Now is the right time to launch a Digital Marshall Plan for Ukraine

Serbia’s gas deal with Putin has created a fresh headache for Europe

Growing Scrutiny of Russian ‘Infowars’ in Italy
https://jamestown.org/program/growing-scrutiny-of-russian-infowars-in-italy/

Putin’s War Backfires as Finland, Sweden Seek to Join NATO
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/05/putins-war-backfires-finland-sweden- seek-join-nato

Putin masking invasion policies with 1990s humanitarian propaganda, finds extensive analysis
https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/953584

South Ukraine holds the key to Putin’s dreams of a new Russian Empire
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

What's next for Ukraine after Russia's Donbas offensive?
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/31/whats-next-for-ukraine-after-russias-donbas-offensive

Analysis: Indian private refiners profit from cheap Russian crude as state refiners suffer

African Union Delegation Plans to Visit Russia and Ukraine

Analysis: Russians feel little economic pain now, long-term outlook darkens

Food security is biggest global crisis alongside energy as Russia-Ukraine war drags on

Sanctions against Russia risk exacerbating global famine, says new analysis

The buzz in Europe's halls of power about Ukraine's EU bid

Analysis: Shortage of oil refineries haunts Africa as fuel prices rocket

Three possible futures for a frozen conflict in Ukraine

How Ukraine is using artillery to stop Russian forces in their tracks
https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/ukraine-artillery-russia-invasion/

Experts Put The World On Notice: There Is A Risk Of Genocide In Ukraine
https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2022/05/29/experts-put-the-world-on-notice-there-is-a-risk-of-genocide-in-ukraine/?sh=7b5f6e8a6a5c

Conflict In Ukraine: How Long Can The Middle East Walk A Tightrope? – Analysis

Putin’s ‘Private Army’ Troops Fired for ‘Refusing’ to Fight in Ukraine

Is A Bulgarian Battalion Fighting In Ukraine Or Is It Only On Social Media?

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Putin’s Black Sea blackmail sets stage for Belarus “deal with the devil”

In Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region, Russian forces are taking control one town at a time
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/in-ukraines-eastern-donbas-region-russian-forces-are-taking-control-one-town-at-a-time

Shrinking Russia Seeks China’s Aid
https://cepa.org/shrinking-russia-seeks-chinas-aid/

Russia’s war on global food security
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/russias-war-on-global-food-security/

Has Ukraine Broken the Russian Military?
https://www.defenseone.com/threats/2022/05/has-ukraine-broken-russian-military/367480/

Military Expert Points Out Weaknesses in Russian Strategy on State TV

As The World Sanctions Russia, China Takes Note – Analysis

Russia ‘Embarrassed’ by Diplomat Resignation, but Fear Enforces Loyalty

The View From Finland: ‘The Russian Garrisons Have Been Emptied. They Don’t Have Anything’
https://www.rferl.org/a/finland-russia-nato-analysis/31869756.html

NATO’s AI Push And Military Implications – Analysis

The Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Implications for Kazakhstan’s Energy Sector
https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/the-russia-ukraine-conflict-implications-for-kazakhstan-3-energy-sector/

Russia ‘Refusing’ to Risk Equipment to Evacuate Wounded in Ukraine: Report

Western allies are considering lifting sanctions on Russian oligarchs who voluntarily donate some of their fortune to fund Ukraine, report says
https://sports.yahoo.com/western-allies-considering-lifting-sanctions-155953044.html

Companies staying in Russia are being punished by markets and consumers
https://www.investmentmonitor.ai/special-focus/ukraine-crisis/companies-russia-punished-markets-consumers
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**China gains from Russia-Ukraine war, increases aluminium exports to Europe**
https://theprint.in/world/china-gains-from-russia-ukraine-war-increases-aluminium-exports-to-europe/977345/

**Ukraine War Three Months On: Understanding Global Impact Of A Multifaceted Crisis — OpEd**

**Russia's War in Ukraine: The War in Cyberspace**
https://www.oodaloo.com/technology/2022/05/31/russias-war-in-ukraine-the-war-in-cyberspace/

**Middle East And North Africa's Commodity Importers Hit By Higher Prices — Analysis**

**Russia-Ukraine war: New face of 21st century conflict — no victor and no vanquished | OPINION**

**What Russia's Black Sea blockade means for the global food crisis**

**Russia invasion of Ukraine threatens food security in Nigeria**

**Anti-Russia sanctions will last ‘a long time’ – key EU member — Analysis**
https://www.massnews.com/anti-russia-sanctions-will-last-a-long-time-key-eu-member-analysis/

**Top US general suggests how Ukraine conflict should end — Analysis**
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**Putin Doesn't Combat Nazism, He Cultivates It**

**War in Ukraine: Gloomy prospects**
https://www.iowynstitute.org/the-interpreter/war-ukraine-gloomy-prospects

**Should the EU Offer Ukraine Candidate Status?**
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**Anticipated Foreign Fighter Flow to Ukraine Likely Just a Trickle**
https://www.voanews.com/a/anticipated-foreign-fighter-flow-to-ukraine-likely-just-a-trickle-/6593263.html