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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Peru president wins confidence vote over corruption reform
Luis Jaime Cisneros – Agence France-Presse: 5 June 2019
Peru’s congress green-lighted President Martin Vizcarra’s anti-corruption reforms with a vote of confidence, relieving tensions after he threatened to dissolve the legislative body if it failed to pass the reforms.

Kenya’s new banknotes and the battle against corruption
BBC: 3 June 2019
Kenya has fired a direct shot at the nation’s endemic corruption by issuing a new generation of bank notes. The government announced the 1,000 shillings (U.S. $10) note will be discontinued by October in a bid to fight corruption, counterfeiting and money laundering.

For more on this theme:

Pakistan should focus on ‘hawala’ transfers to stem corrupt fund flows: report

The Peruvian Corruption-Buster Bigger Than Mueller
https://www.ozy.com/provocateurs/the-peruvian-corruption-buster-bigger-than-mueller/94518

UK Targets Properties in Corruption Investigation

Corruption and Your Money
https://blogs.imf.org/2019/05/28/corruption-and-your-money/

International anti-corruption poster, video competition in India

From transition to transition. Tackling corruption in emerging Europe

Nigeria Creates 1,500 Anti-Corruption Clubs for Students

Argentina’s Corrupt Federal Police: A Few Bad Apples?

North Koreans trapped in ‘vicious cycle of deprivation, corruption, repression’ and endemic bribery: UN human rights office
DRUG TRAFFICKING

As pressure for Afghan peace grows, drug threat remains
Reuters: 6 June 2019

The question of drugs is one that will determine Afghanistan’s future. While the talks between the United States and the Taliban continue, one key factor contributing to Afghanistan’s instability is not discussed – opium cultivation and drug trafficking.


Cocaine trafficking reaching record highs, says EU drug agency
Florence Schulz – EURACTIV: 6 June 2019

European authorities are seizing record quantities of increasingly pure cocaine, the European Union’s drug agency said in a report, pointing also to a growing use of synthetic drugs and dealing via smartphones. The rise in trafficking on social media, darknet markets and cocaine “call centers,” where dealers deliver quickly to users who order online, are creating a “potential Uberisation” of the drugs trade, the study said.


Full Report:
European Drug Report 2019: Trends and Developments

For more on this theme:
Brexit’s drug problem
https://www.redpepper.org.uk/breixts-drug-problem/

As drug flow from India to Bangladesh declines, officials raise concern of smuggling from Myanmar

Desperate Rohingya Caught on Cross-Border Narcotics Runs
https://theglobepost.com/2019/05/28/rohingya-narcotics-runs/

Pre-Teen Kids Being Groomed As Dealers For Drug Gangs
https://www.nova.ie/pre-teen-kids-being-groomed-as-dealers-for-drug-gangs-135532/

Social media platforms used by syndicates to recruit trafficking mules

Eurasian States Pouring Money into Incarceration, Not Harm Reduction
https://filtermag.org/2019/05/29/eurasian-states-pouring-money-into-incarceration-not-harm-reduction/

Drug traffickers’ favorite way to move fentanyl is FedEx and USPS
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Amazon Deforestation Rising Under Brazil’s Bolsonaro
Voice of America: 6 June 2019

Environmentalists fear 2019 will be one of worst years for deforestation of the Amazon in recent memory. Deforestation of the Brazilian Amazon surged last month, prompting concerns that President Jair Bolsonaro is giving a free pass to illegal logging, farming and mining.


With Coordinated Effort, Countries Gain Against Illegal Fishing
Dawn Borg Costanzi – PEW: 4 June 2019

There are signs around the globe that one day the international community could declare victory against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Numerous recent victories and progress over several years have made the fight against IUU more manageable, giving hope to the future.


For more on this theme:

What is magic without ape parts? Inside the illicit trade devastating Nigeria’s apes

Worldwide call to action by the Youth Against Wildlife Crime

Youth can spread positive messages to conserve wildlife, says WWF

How Satellite Data Can Fight Illegal Mining in Ghana

The harrowing truth about tiger farming in southeast Asia
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/tiger-farming-poaching-southeast-asia-laos-a8915351.html

Regional partnership underway to help Somalia enforce the ban on illegal charcoal trade

The world’s biggest reptile fair is also a hub for traffickers
https://news.mongabay.com/2019/05/the-worlds-biggest-reptile-fair-is-also-a-hub-for-traffickers/

Money laundering and the illegal wildlife trade
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Mexico freezes bank accounts in widening migration clampdown

Reuters: 6 June 2019

Mexico has frozen the bank accounts of a group of suspected human traffickers allegedly responsible for organizing U.S.-bound migrant caravans amid negotiations over Washington’s threatened tariffs over migration.


For more on this theme:

Extending ‘Zero Tolerance’ To People Who Help Migrants Along The Border

Cruel, and no deterrent: why Australia’s policy on asylum seekers must change

Inside law enforcement’s efforts to end human trafficking

How the U.S. and Mexico could find common ground on immigration
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/where-u-s-and-mexico-could-find-common-ground-on-immigration

Modern slavery campaigners turn to financial services

https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/HRC/41/38/Add.1

‘I had pain all over my body’: Italy’s tainted tobacco industry
https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/may/31/i-had-pain-all-over-my-body-italys-tainted-tobacco-industry?CMP=share_btn_tw
The “splinternet” has been accelerating rapidly as Russia creates Runet and China maintains its Great Firewall, and both seek to export their top-down internet models to other nations. It is becoming clear that governance over a completely free and open internet is a pipe dream.

http://fortune.com/2019/05/29/splinternet-online-censorship/

For more on this theme:

(Russia, Iran) Russia and Iran Plan to Fundamentally Isolate the Internet

(Russia, Global) A world divided by 5G: Russia’s Huawei deal is the latest sign of an emerging internet iron curtain

(Russia, China, Global) The Authoritarian Quest for a Sovereign Internet

Governments are not only reaching out to censor internet content for their own populations, but also to control speech globally. Active censorship of the net is becoming the norm, rather than the exception.


For more on this theme:

(Europe) UNESCO’s framework for assessing Internet to benefit Council of Europe

(U.S., China) US Companies Help Censor the Internet in China, Too

(China) Digital Dissidents Are Fighting China’s Censorship Machine
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

**Top Russian internet firm reportedly under pressure on data**
*The Associated Press: 4 June 2019*

Russia’s privately owned internet company, Yandex, has indicated it is being pressured by the country’s national intelligence agency to hand over encryption keys.

https://www.apnews.com/b8b8a59b1bf548509e24e30d8f0c6536

*For more on this theme:*

(Europe, Global) GDPR: One Year Down…Now What?  
https://www.securityweek.com/gdpr-one-year-down%E2%80%A6now-what

(Global) Making Big Tech companies share data could do more good than breaking them up  

(Russia) The Russian government demanded access to everybody’s Tinder user data in case its spies want to take a look  

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

**The Promise and Peril of the Digital Silk Road**
*Tin Hinane El Kadi – Chatham House: 6 June 2019*

China has its hands in all aspects of infrastructure and growth in Africa, particularly hosting a large digital footprint. While there are benefits to this presence, there are also numerous detractors.


*For more on this theme:*

(India) The Future of Internet policy in India – 2019  


(China) Why Did China’s Foreign Ministry Make Its Debut on Weibo?  
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Nation-State Security: Private Sector Necessity
Ellison Anne Williams – Security Week: 30 May 2019

The lines between threats to private industry and government are so blurred that they no longer fit on one side or the other. Public and private sectors working together is the only hope for countering these threats.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) State and Bloosurf announce wireless broadband partnership for Kent, Sussex

(Mexico) Internet for everyone?
https://www.internationallawoffice.com/Newsletters/Tech-Data-Telecoms-Media/Mexico/Hogan-Lovells-BSTL-SC/Internet-for-everyone

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Hackers Likely Associated With Vietnamese Government Are Attacking Foreign Economic Competitors and Governments Alike
Kevin Townsend – Security Week: 5 June 2019

Vietnam has rarely been associated with cyber crime activity in the same way other Asian nations have in recent years, such as China and North Korea. But that could change soon. According to a new report from the threat intelligence firm IntSights, cyber crime and cyber espionage activity in Vietnam are growing.


For more on this theme:

(China, U.S.) Deep-Sea Divers and Industrial Espionage: On the Front Lines of the Next Cold War

(India) Shaping a Digital-Ready Copyright Law: Challenges and Imperatives

(Europe) EU may be losing €60bn in annual sales through IP theft in goods and services
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Ethiopia plans to commence e-governance service delivery
Borkena: 31 May 2019

Ethiopia will be offering e-governance for as many as 150 government services online in the next six months.

https://borkena.com/2019/05/31/ethiopia-plans-to-commence-e-governance-service-delivery/

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) State Department proposes new $20.8 million cybersecurity bureau
https://www.cyberscoop.com/state-department-proposes-new-20-8-million-cybersecurity-bureau/

(Global) Opinion/Digital exclusion in this digital world is a real danger

(Africa, Global) Stockholm Internet Forum: Reflecting on democracy in the digital era, in Africa and beyond

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

Firms face targeted bespoke cyber attacks, dark web study reveals
Warwick Ashford – Computer Weekly: 6 June 2019

Researchers are witnessing an increase in the buying and selling of targeted hacking services, custom malware and corporate network access on the darknet.


For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) New Study Reveals Cybercrime May Be Widely Underreported — Even When Laws Mandate Disclosure

(Australia) Australian officials tackle international cyber crime

(India) Simulated environment training for cyber crime cops
INFORMATION SHARING

DHS needs help peeking into state and local networks, cybersecurity official says
Benjamin Freed – StateScoop: 5 June 2019

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security needs to work more closely with state and local governments to get a better understanding of their cyber security infrastructure, according to one U.S. official.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Lawmakers introduce bill to notify public about election cyberattacks
https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/05/politics/florida-cyberattack-bill/

(U.S.) The US Needs an Industrial Policy for Cybersecurity
https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/06/us-needs-industrial-policy-cybersecurity/157501/

(U.S.) Internet Providers in Maine Will Soon Have To Get Consent Before Selling Customer Data

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Cyber war could cripple a country in a month
Tracy Burrows – ITWeb: 28 May 2019

Governments may not be taking enough proactive measures to protect critical infrastructure from cyber attacks.

https://www.itweb.co.za/content/nWJadvb8wiXMbj01

For more on this theme:

(Russia, U.S.) Russia Effort in 2016 US Election Was ‘Vast,’ ‘Professional’
https://www.securityweek.com/russia-effort-2016-us-election-was-vast-professional

(Norway) Ransomware Attack Costs Norsk Hydro Tens of Millions of Dollars

(Finland) What the World Can Learn from Finland’s Brush with Critical Infrastructure Failure
ISIS makes first claim of Mozambique presence
Agence France-Presse: 5 June 2019
ISIS is claiming responsibility for an attack in Mozambique, although there is no evidence to support the claim and experts doubt the terrorist group has a presence in the region. “Islamic State is not in Mozambique,” one expert said. “It is just propaganda, but they might have links.”
https://www.thenational.ae/world/africa/isis-makes-first-claim-of-mozambique-presence-1.870775

Has Islamic State Really Entered the Congo and is an IS Province There a Gamble?
Sunguta West – The Jamestown Foundation: 31 May 2019
It appears that ISIS does have a foothold in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, likely following its modus operandi of affiliating with local terrorist groups. Though the evidence appears more solid in this case, some experts still dispute ISIS claims.
https://jamestown.org/program/has-islamic-state-really-entered-the-congo-and-is-an-is-province-there-a-gamble/

For more on this theme:
A Glimpse into the Islamic State’s External Operations, Post-Caliphate
https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/a-glimpse-into-the-islamic-states-external-operations-post-caliphate/
Not RIP: How ISIS Is Going Virtual
https://nationalinterest.org/feature/not-rip-how-isis-going-virtual-59917
How ISIS Still Threatens Iraq
In The Face Of Brutal Fates, Many Women Still Cling To ISIS
https://www.npr.org/2019/05/26/727190898/in-the-face-of-brutal-fates-many-women-still-cling-to-isis
Why ISIS Remains a Threat
https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2016/5/30/challenging-the-islamic-states-powerful-appeal
The growing Islamic State threat in Central Asia
ISIS in Somalia recruiting up as US airstrikes continue
Inside Islamic State: meeting Umm Sayyaf, the most senior female Isis captive
ISIS stole their childhood, now they must have a future
https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/editorial/isis-stole-their-childhood-now-they-must-have-a-future-1.870500
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

What doesn’t break Boko Haram in Niger makes it stronger

Niger is feeling the brunt of Boko Haram attacks despite recent upheavals to the group’s leadership. Boko Haram has actually increased attacks since the leadership change and appears more resilient and adaptable than ever.


For more on this theme:
Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS): The Nucleus of Jihad in South Asia

‘Over 100 youths from Othaya recruited to join al-Shabaab’
https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001328191/over-100-youths-from-othaya-recruited-to-join-al-shabaab

The Continuing Threat from Lone-Wolf Terrorists in America

The Taliban Peace Calculus
https://globalsecurityreview.com/afghanistan-taliban-peace-calculus/

IDF Intel Chief: Hamas Is Deterred, but Islamic Jihad Is a Wild Card
https://www.algemeiner.com/2019/06/05/idf-intel-chief-hamas-is-deterred-but-islamic-jihad-is-a-wild-card/

Hezbollah’s Worries Over Money Continues

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

A tribunal for ISIS fighters?

Calls for an international tribunal to prosecute Islamic State fighters are growing louder. European states, including Germany, refuse to bring home some of their citizens-turned-militants.

https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_a_tribunal_for_isis_fighters

For more on this theme:
Hard counter-terrorism lessons from the Sahel for West Africa’s coastal states

Could alternative justice help counter-terrorism?
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/could-alternative-justice-help-counter-terrorism
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

New online magazine aims to counter extremist propaganda

Jesse Morton, al-Qaida’s former chief American propagandist, is now propagandizing for peace. Morton has introduced Ahlu-Taqwa, a magazine that offers a very different vision of the Islamic State to its followers. His partner is Mitch Silber, a former New York Police Department intelligence director who used to spend his days tracking people like Morton.


Why Islamic State Recruitment Is Thriving on Telegram
Dell Cameron – Gizmodo: 6 June 2019

English-speaking Islamic State supporters are refusing to give up on the terror group’s ability to remain a force in Syria and Iraq, according to a new study that examined their behavior on the Telegram instant messaging service.

https://gizmodo.com/why-islamic-state-recruitment-is-thriving-on-telegram-1835300534

Full report:
Encrypted Extremism: Inside the English-Speaking Islamic State Ecosystem on Telegram
https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191/f/EncryptedExtremism.pdf

For more on this theme:
Terrorism 3.0: The rise of social media-based radicalization

Religious intolerance, poverty main drivers of terrorism, radicalization in PHL — US official

Rising Threat of Radicalization in Kerala and Connections to Sri Lanka

EU Council Asks Member States To Do More To Prevent Radicalization In Prisons

Terrorism in Sri Lanka – or anywhere – isn’t about religion

Radicalisation Blog Series: The advent of political Islam and the rise of radicalism
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Jihadists Head Home
Jytte Klausen – Foreign Affairs: 6 June 2019

Thousands of Westerners joined ISIS. Should they be allowed to return? Not according to the nations that have adopted extraordinary measures to ensure that terror suspects are not allowed back into their countries of origin.
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2019-06-06/jihadists-head-home

Inside the Iraqi courts sentencing foreign Isis fighters to death
Simona Foltyn – The Guardian: 2 June 2019

Iraq has expressed a willingness to try foreign fighters in its courts. But recent cases involving French foreign fighters might be setting a troubling precedent. Iraq’s courts are being questioned for the quick proceedings, convictions without evidence, and frequent death sentences.

For more on this theme:
Islamic State’s foreign exiles receiving worst medical care in Syria’s al-Hawl camp

French Foreign Fighters Sentenced to Death in Iraq

American women, children who lived under ISIS transferred to US from Syria
https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/american-women-children-lived-isis-transferred-us-syria/story?id=63505693

Norway to repatriate 5 orphan children of ISIS adherents from Syria
https://thedefensepost.com/2019/06/03/norway-repatriates-orphan-children-isis-woman-syria/

The Kids of the Islamic State
https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/03/the-kids-of-the-islamic-state-al-hol-refugees-isis/

Options for Dealing with Islamic State Foreign Fighters Currently Detained in Syria
http://www.ict.org.il/Article/2403/Dealing_with_IS_Foreign_Fighters_Detained_in_Syria#gsc.tab=0

Prosecuting Islamic State Foreign Fighters: Issues And Implications – OpEd

Iraq’s judiciary determines fate of over 1,000 foreign ISIS children

Beyond the Headlines podcast: The future of Europe’s foreign fighters
https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/beyond-the-headlines-podcast-the-future-of-europe-s-foreign-fighters-1.871536