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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Myanmar military junta charges Aung San Suu Kyi with corruption
Helen Regan and Sophie Jeong – CNN: 10 June 2021
Deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi is accused of misuse of land for a charity foundation and of accepting bribes of gold and cash.

For more on this theme:
Zambia ex-minister jailed in graft case that led to aid freeze
Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission Arrests Imposter Amid Fears of Rising Numbers of ZACC Conmen
EU Launches Joint Public Prosecutor to Handle Misuse of its Funds
Coup de Grâce for El Salvador’s Anti-Corruption Commission
https://insightcrime.org/news/coup-de-grace-el-salvador-anti-corruption-commission/
Statement by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. on the National Security Study Memorandum on the Fight Against Corruption
UN hails new anti-corruption network, as “important step” to build trust, promote justice
U.S. ‘Modernizes’ Sanctions Policy For Western Balkans To Go After Corruption
https://www.rferl.org/a/western-balkans-us-modernizes-sanctions-corruption/31297669.html
Corruption costs developing countries $1.26 tr each year: NAB chairman
Kyrgyzstan Detains Ex Prime Minister in Gold Mine Corruption Case
President of Moldova Maia Sandu launches committee to investigate grand corruption
Access to the comments
https://www.euronews.com/2021/06/08/president-of-moldova-maia-sandu-launches-committee-to-investigate-grand-corruption

Pervasive Corruption, Lack of Economic Freedom Pose Bleak Future for Russians
DRUG TRAFFICKING

More US citizens apprehended for moving drugs over border

An increasing number of American citizens have been apprehended because they have tried to smuggle illegal drugs into the U.S. since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.


For more on this theme:

Drugs, fire, settlers poised to wipe out one of Paraguay's most biodiverse forests

Chemicals in, Meth Out in Asia’s Booming Golden Triangle Drug Trade

Asia's synthetic drug trade expanded amid Covid-19 pandemic

Colombia cut coca crop area in 2020 but cocaine output rose -UNODC

Australian airline Qantas ‘disturbed’ by reports of gangs infiltration, drug trafficking

El Chapo's alleged top money launderer extradited to face conspiracy charges in US

El Chapo's wife, Emma Coronel, could hold the keys to dismantling the world's most dangerous drug cartel

Drug and Human Trafficking, Major Regional Challenges for SOUTHCOM

Illegal drug trade booming amid Covid-19 pandemic, Asia sees record rise in crystal meth use

Brazilian city shuts schools and transport as drug gangs avenge leader's killing

Afghanistan Starts New Drive To Weed Out Poppies In Counternarcotics Campaign
https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-opium-poppies-drug-trafficking/31296911.html
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Bear paws, pangolin scales: Wildlife trade flourishing in Mekong
Al Jazeera: 4 June 2021

A new study by TRAFFIC, a group that monitors the illegal wildlife trade, has found thousands of animal parts and products — such as pangolin scales, ivory and bear bile — for sale in five countries in mainland Southeast Asia, underlining the region’s struggle to address wildlife crime and the need to intensify anti-trafficking efforts.


Full report:
Wildlife Trafficking in The Mekong

For more on this theme:
Shell Shocked: Japan’s role in the illegal tortoiseshell trade

How CSI Kenya is helping boost efforts to end wildlife crime
https://www.independent.co.uk/stop-the-illegal-wildlife-trade/kenya-wildlife-crime-b1854102.html

Video platforms normalise exotic pets and their trade: Study

Ivory Trade Loopholes Close as Nations Race to Crush Poachers

From a forest in Papua New Guinea to a floor in Sydney: how China is getting rich off Pacific timber

Friday essay: the guitar industry’s hidden environmental problem — and the people trying to fix it

Timber Mafias at Ecuador’s Borders Cash in on Balsa Boom

Hundreds of fishing fleets that go ‘dark’ suspected of illegal hunting, study finds

How illegal fishing harms Nigeria and what to do about it
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Fact check: Is sea rescue a pull factor for refugees?
Ines Eisele – Deutsche Welle: 7 June 2021

For years there have been claims that sea rescue is a pull factor in asylum-related migration. But is this theory true?

For more on this theme:
Asia, the hub of modern slavery

Human Trafficking leading organised crime needs bursting
https://www.the-star.co.ke/opinion/2021-05-22-human-trafficking-leading-organised-crime-needs-bursting/

Results of UofL child trafficking study reveal opportunities for education, training and policy development

Montenegro Urged to Compensate Human Trafficking Victims

Egypt’s gov’t keen on supporting anti-human trafficking efforts

Bangladesh’s human trafficking chain exposed, gang used TikTok to lure young girls

India promises to take care of Covid orphans amid child trafficking concerns

Small boats carrying migrants across Channel hit record levels in May
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/02/small-boats-carrying-migrants-across-channel-hit-record-levels-in-may

Blinken Urges Central America to Confront Root of Irregular Migration

Attorney General Announces Initiatives to Combat Human Smuggling and Trafficking and to Fight Corruption in Central America

Understanding Migration: Corruption, Poor Governance, and their Effects on Migration in Central America
MONEY LAUNDERING

Balkan Corruption Risks Derailing Bid to Join European Union
Jamie Dettmer – Voice of America: 1 June 2021

European Union leaders in the next few weeks will discuss once again advancing the long-stalled applications from Balkan states to join the bloc. But recent studies exploring the scale of money laundering in the region are unlikely to assuage France and the Netherlands, which, among other member states, want to delay EU enlargement.


For more on this theme:
5 practices to prevent and disrupt illicit financial flows
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/06/5-practices-to-prevent-and-disrupt-illicit-financial-flows/

Swiss Bank Admits to Laundering $36 Million in Bribes to Soccer Officials

Swiss bank Julius Baer to pay $80 million in deferred prosecution deal for FIFA soccer corruption case

Malta: improvement in fighting money laundering and terrorist financing

Slovenia made progress in tackling money laundering and terrorist financing, but deficiencies remain

Dirty Money Flows Continuing Over New Channels, Latvia Says

China ups fines and widens scope of draft money laundering law

Australia widens anti-money laundering probe to biggest casinos

Crypto firms fall short on anti-money laundering rules, UK watchdog says

MONEYVAL: States must improve their effectiveness against money laundering and terrorist financing
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

**UN report could be 'positive step' in establishing nation-state cyberspace norms, says Canadian expert**
*Howard Solomon – ITWorld Canada: 2 June 2021*

A Canadian expert on nation-state cyberattacks is looking forward to the release of a closed-door United Nations committee report on guidance for adhering to norms of behavior by nations in cyberspace. The guidance might limit the ability of countries to launch cyberattacks, and more important, help the less technically advanced countries to defend against them.


For more on this theme:

- *(Global)* The case for the digital commons
  
  https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/06/the-case-for-the-digital-commons/

- *(Global)* A Digital Bill of Rights (& Responsibilities), Part 1: Why Do We Need It
  

- *(Global)* Is a new decentralized internet, or Web 3.0, possible?
  
  https://cointelegraph.com/news/is-a-new-decentralized-internet-or-web-3-0-possible

INTERNET FREEDOM

**Nigeria’s Twitter Ban Could Backfire, Hurting the Economy and Democracy**
*Jeff Conroy-Krutz – The Wire: 10 June 2021*

President Muhammadu Buhari’s Twitter shutdown will be hard to enforce and could have dire consequences for Nigeria’s fragile democratic institutions and economy.

https://thewire.in/world/nigeria-twitter-ban-could-backfire

For more on this theme:

- *(Africa)* Twitter’s Presence in Africa Won’t End Internet Censorship
  
  https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/06/03/twitter-ghana-africa-wont-end-internet-censorship/

- *(China, Global)* China’s Tiananmen anniversary crackdowns reach far beyond the firewall
  
  https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/06/04/1025774/china-tiananmen-anniversary-protest-censorship/

- *(U.S., Global)* DARPA Calling for AI Proposals to Measure How Authoritarian Regimes Control Information
  
  https://www.nextgov.com/emerging-tech/2021/06/darpa-calling-ai-proposals-measure-how-authoritarian-regimes-control-information/174442/
SECURITY

Optimising Cyber Security Public–Private Partnerships
Jamie Collier – Royal United Services Institute: 28 May 2021

Industry and government are vital cybersecurity providers, yet the ways they can work together remain misunderstood.

https://rusi.org/commentary/optimising-cyber-security-public-private-partnerships

For more on this theme:

(Europe) Cloud development in Europe passes by GDPR compliance

(Global) The dichotomy of cognitive bias in cyber security awareness

(U.S.) CISA launches platform to let hackers report security bugs to US federal agencies

CYBER STATECRAFT

Nakasone Says U.S. Works to Stay Ahead of Cybersecurity Curve

Twenty years after the September 11, 2001, attacks, the great threat to the nation has evolved into cyberspace — a new strategic environment where cyber actors can increase their power, degrade the power of others and gain a strategic advantage, said Army Gen. Paul M. Nakasone, commander of U.S. Cyber Command.


For more on this theme:

(China, Global) Behind the Curtain: Assessing China’s Cyber and Human Intelligence Activities

(U.S., Global) Cyber Diplomacy for Strategic Competition
https://afsa.org/cyber-diplomacy-strategic-competition

(Global) The Intense Cyber Struggle over Intellectual Property Threatens the Global Order
CYBERCRIME

FBI, DOJ to treat ransomware attacks with similar priority as terrorism
Jonathan Greig – ZDNET: 4 June 2021

Top legal authorities are taking strides to more easily investigate cyber threats as ransomware attacks increase.


For more on this theme:

(Global) UN approves timetable for new treaty to combat cybercrime
https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-general-assembly-united-nations-technology-06be1f9990a-541ece51eb01fc89d1

(U.S.) Coast Guard releases ransomware prevention, recovery and reporting requirements

(U.S.) U.S. Cyber Command Hunts Forward
https://www.afcea.org/content/us-cyber-command-hunts-forward

CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Qatar’s Al Jazeera Network Says It Combated Cyber Attack
Reuters: 10 June 2021

Pan-Arab satellite network Al Jazeera said it had fended off continual hacking attempts in recent days.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Cyberattack on food supply followed years of warnings
https://www.politico.com/news/2021/06/05/how-ransomware-hackers-came-for-americans-beef-491936

(U.S.) F.B.I. Investigates Cyberattack That Targeted N.Y.C. Law Department

(Germany) German Cooperative Banks Hit by DDoS Hack Attack on IT Provider
PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Private companies need federal support to protect our critical infrastructure
David Hickton – The Hill: 8 June 2021

Cyberattacks are hitting hospitals, municipal governments and manufacturers — and, as has been in the news more recently, our food supply and our pipelines. Often the protection of critical infrastructure has been left to the private sector, but those companies need more decisive support from the federal government to ensure the public’s safety.

https://thehill.com/opinion/cybersecurity/556971-private-companies-need-federal-support-to-protect-our-critical

For more on this theme:

(Global) Major internet outage ‘shows infrastructure needs urgent fixing’

(Global) Hackers have a devastating new target

(Global) Rise in low-level hacking of critical infrastructure globally
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The case for repatriating ISIS families in Syrian camps
Janine di Giovanni – The National: 8 June 2021
At the height of its power, ISIS recruited thousands of people from across the world. Many of them were women and minors. The most pressing argument for repatriation is that the children are at greatest risk of radicalization in the camps.
https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/the-case-for-repatriating-isis-families-in-syrian-camps-1.1237331

After attack on rival, Islamic State jihadists battle for control in northeast Nigeria
Agence France-Presse: 4 June 2021
The terrorist group Islamic State West Africa Province is targeting rival Boko Haram’s soldiers after raiding its stronghold in Sambisa forest in Borno State, local and security sources said.

For more on this theme:
Syrian Kurds Hand ISIS Relatives to Dutch Authorities
Wannabe jihadi googled ‘how to join ISIS’
The United States and UAE partner against ISIS propaganda
https://ge.usembassy.gov/the-united-states-and-uae-partner-against-isis-propaganda/
Islamic State Is Defeated, But Their ‘Brides’ Are Still An Issue – OpEd
The Islamic State has ‘provinces’ in Africa. That doesn’t mean what you might think.
What to do about Islamic State supporters still in Syria? Denmark’s decision sets a worrying trend
Islamic State’s Pakistan Province Launches New Jihadist Magazine
ISWAP Launches Hearts and Minds Strategy to Counter Nigerian Army Offensive
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Boko Haram leader killed on direct orders of Islamic State
Jason Burke – The Guardian: 7 June 2021
ISIS ordered the death of Abubakar Shekau over concerns about indiscriminate targeting of “believers.”

For more on this theme:

DHS Budget: Mayorkas Stresses Importance of Right Resources to Fight ‘Dynamic’ Domestic Terrorism
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/dhs-budget-mayorkas-stresses-importance-of-right-resources-to-fight-dynamic-domestic-terrorism/

Hamas Tapped Binance to Launder Bitcoin Donations, Blockchain Data Suggests
https://www.coindesk.com/hamas-binance-localbitcoins-bitcoin-donations

Death toll rises after Burkina Faso village attack
https://apnews.com/article/world-news-islamic-state-group-burkina-faso-africa-religion-2430cbdf4e324f49e20612e94ba5a800

Fragile democratic gains at risk in Central Africa as violence by armed groups escalates

One Down, Many More Challenges: The UK and Threats of African Terrorism

West Africa’s Islamist insurgency: Fight at a critical stage
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57324672-

Taliban Pledge No Retaliation Against Afghans Who Worked for Foreign Troops

U.N. report cites new intelligence on Haqqanis’ close ties to al Qaeda

Death of Boko Haram’s leader spells trouble for Nigeria and its neighbors

Head of Lebanon’s Hezbollah says group is ready to go to Iran to seek fuel
https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/head-lebanons-hezbollah-says-group-is-ready-go-iran-seek-fuel-2021-06-08/

Hezbollah founder dies of coronavirus
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Maybe You Have to Be Disagreeable to Convert
Graeme Wood – The Atlantic: 6 June 2021

Muslim converts tend to be less religious than their nonconvert peers. So what explains their overrepresentation among jihadists?

For more on this theme:
The Importance of Early Warning Systems in Counterterrorism

New documentary exposes radicalization of children by terrorist groups

How IS exploits gamification of violence in bid to appeal to youths online during the pandemic

Can Boko Haram Fighters be Rehabilitated?
https://intpolicydigest.org/can-boko-haram-fighters-be-rehabilitated/

What are the causes of Radicalisation?
http://www.slguardian.org/2021/06/what-are-causes-of-radicalisation.html

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS

US CENTCOM: Iran drone threat in Iraq
Seth J. Frantzman – The Jerusalem Post: 8 June 2021

At a briefing, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, commander of U.S. Central Command, discussed the increasing drone threat from Iran.

For more on this theme:
Russian mercenaries left booby-traps after Tripoli offensive

Is Russia again undermining Libya’s peace with its embassy move?
IRREGULAR WARFARE: DISINFORMATION AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

France Freezes Aid to Central African Republic Over its Collusion With Russia
Steve Balestrieri – SOFREP: 9 June 2021

France has suspended financial support and military cooperation with the Central African Republic, accusing it of backing out of political commitments and of being complicit in a Russian-backed disinformation campaign targeting France’s presence in Africa.


For more on this theme:
Fake news alert: Taiwan fights disinformation as COVID surges

Africa in grip of China’s malign power - UK must help break stranglehold
https://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/1442993/china-belt-and-road-project-Brexit-trade-deal-with-Africa-commonwealth

The China Problem for American Higher Ed
https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/the-china-problem-for-american-higher-ed/

‘Disinformation efforts’ to discredit Belarus activist

Researchers developed an AI to combat social media disinformation

Russia is using the power of ‘Black PR’ to destroy political reputations and spread disinformation in the West
https://www.businessinsider.com/black-pr-is-powering-russia-disinformation-efforts-in-the-west-2021-6

Exclusive: Iran Steps up Efforts to Sow Discord Inside the U.S.
https://time.com/6071615/iran-disinformation-united-states/

Russian Dissidents Urge ‘More Decisive’ Action Against Putin
https://www.voanews.com/europe/russian-dissidents-urge-more-decisive-action-against-putin

How Have Information Operations Affected the Integrity of Democratic Elections in Latin America?
https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-have-information-operations-affected-integrity-democratic-elections-latin-america

Foreign Actors Are Hacking America’s Democracy
https://nationalinterest.org/feature/foreign-actors-are-hacking-america%E2%80%99s-democracy-186252

Wuhan lab staff sought hospital care before COVID-19 outbreak disclosed - WSJ
https://www.zawya.com/mena/en/life/story/Wuhan_lab_staff_sought_hospital_care_before_COVID19_outbreak_disclosed__WSJ-TR20210524nL2N2NB0CPX1