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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

How much of a problem is corruption in Ukraine?
Thomas O. Falk – Al Jazeera: 15 June 2022

Analysts say that Ukraine has long suffered from systemic corruption, and Russia, which often weaponizes the issue, is in no position to judge.


For more on this theme:

Why Ukraine helps global causes for honest leaders
https://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2022/0526/Why-Ukraine-helps-global-causes-for-honest-leaders

Following a Trail of Tainted Money From China Into Vancouver Real Estate

Ukraine’s hopes of joining EU are being held up by corruption claims and eastern Europe’s democracy problems
https://inews.co.uk/news/world/ukraines-hopes-of-joining-eu-are-being-held-up-by-corruption-claims-and-eastern-europes-democracy-problems-1657210

20 most corrupt countries in Africa, according to latest corruption index report

Iraqi President urges to form international coalition to combat corruption

Brazil releases blockchain network to fight of corruption

Africa’s urban planners face huge corruption pressures: some answers
https://theconversation.com/africas-urban-planners-face-huge-corruption-pressures-some-answers-170281

Slovakia makes slow progress in tackling corruption
https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/06/02/slovakia-makes-slow-progress-in-tackling-corruption

GRECO urges European governments to increase transparency and accountability of lobbying

The COVID-19 Pandemic Provided Fertile Ground for Corruption
https://thediplomat.com/2022/06/covid-pandemic-provided-fertile-ground-for-corruption/

Former official and regulator sentenced to death by China for corruption
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Ukraine war forces switch in drug trafficking routes, EU body warns
Catarina Demony – Reuters: 14 June 2022

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is triggering shifts in the smuggling routes for illegal drugs to Europe, the EU drugs agency said.

Drug supply and use bounce back after COVID-19 disruption
European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction: 14 June 2022

The rapid rebound of drug supply and use following COVID-19 disruption is among the issues highlighted by the EU drugs agency in its European Drug Report 2022: Trends and Developments.

For more on this theme:

Narcotics use on the rise among youth in Myanmar’s Kachin state following coup

Traffickers use refugees to smuggle drugs from Iran to Turkey
https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/05/traffickers-use-refugees-smuggle-drugs-iran-turkey

Jordanian Army Accuses Damascus, Tehran of Sponsoring Drug Smuggling Into Kingdom

The UK’s War on Cocaine is Intensifying

Al Arabiya doubles down on Hezbollah drug trafficking report after Lebanese terror group threatens network
https://www.arabnews.com/node/2091021/media

Top narcotics buster says Malaysia’s drug laws need updating to fit the growing global trade

No Addiction Required: How Fake Drugs Are Quickly Killing Gen-Z

Solar panels driving opium trade in Afghanistan
https://www.greenprophet.com/2022/06/solar-panels-opium-afghanistan/

How illicit drugs are imported into Nigeria through sea
https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/06/how-illicit-drugs-are-imported-into-nigeria-through-sea/
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Elephant tusk ivory sold on eBay a decade after self-imposed ban
Victoria Gill – BBC: 10 June 2022

Sellers are flouting eBay’s self-imposed ban on the sale of elephant ivory by listing it under pseudonyms. An investigation by the BBC and legal experts found ivory listed as “bovine bone.”

China’s forays into Africa’s forests & illegal trade could lead to environmental disaster
Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury – The Economic Times: 11 June 2022

Earthsight, a London environmental NGO, estimated that the annual value of worldwide rosewood smuggling exceeds a billion dollars. Following the depletion of forests in Southeast Asia in the 2010s, trafficking networks moved to West Africa, which is home to Kosso — a rosewood species native to the region.

For more on this theme:
Large-scale logging in Cambodia’s Prey Lang linked to politically-connected mining operation

How illegal logging is threatening Romania’s unique virgin forests
https://www.euronews.com/2022/05/31/how-illegal-logging-is-threatening-romania-s-unique-virgin-forests

Gabon takes grassroots approach in anti-poaching drive

Illegal fishing on East Africa’s coastline poses threat to sea turtles

“Black Ships,” the Quad and Space
https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/black-ships-quad-and-space

Government inaction sees 98% of deforestation alerts go unpunished in Brazil

Singapore lab cracks down on wildlife traffickers with forensic tech

Photo Story: Asian countries collaborate to fight illegal wildlife trade

The Roots of Environmental Crime in the Peruvian Amazon
https://insightcrime.org/investigations/the-roots-of-environmental-crime-in-the-peruvian-amazon%ef%bfcf%bc/
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

West faces ‘moment of reckoning’ over China’s online influence, GCHQ warns
Joe Pinkstone – The Telegraph: 11 June 2022

Britain’s spy agency chief calls for creation of unified internet governance protocols to protect against the loss of “Western liberal” values.
https://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/west-faces-moment-of-reckoning-over-china-s-online-influence-gchq-warns/ar-AAYi6zJ

For more on this theme:
(Africa) Controlled or free internet? Time for Africa to speak out
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/controlled-or-free-internet-time-for-africa-to-speak-out

(Togo, Global) ICANN to help Togo improve its expertise in domain names

(Global) Don’t let digital authoritarians lead the way in connecting the world

INTERNET FREEDOM

Internet Freedoms in Turkey Continue to Deteriorate: Report
Hamdi Firat Buyuk – Balkan Insight: 10 June 2022

The Media and Law Studies Association said internet censorship and surveillance is likely to increase in Turkey because of new regulations intended to boost government control and social media companies submitting to official demands.

For more on this theme:
(Russia) The New Iron Curtain
https://cepa.org/the-new-iron-curtain-2/

(Burma) Myanmar: UN experts condemn military’s “digital dictatorship”

(India) Another VPN quits India, as government proposes social media censorship powers
https://www.theregister.com/2022/06/08/india_it_regulation_criticism/
Does Pakistan's First Cybersecurity Policy Go Far Enough?
Muhammad Riaz Shad – The National Interest: 10 June 2022

The new government must work to modernize its cybersecurity infrastructure and the security framework behind it.

For more on this theme:
(Australia) Australia finally has a dedicated minister for cyber security. Here’s why her job is so important

(Global) Diplomacy in the time of cyber conflict
https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2022/06/02/diplomacy-in-the-time-of-cyber-conflict/

(Kenya) Govt Moves To Enhance Cyber Security Systems To Protect Digital Economy

(Africa) Complacency could cost Africa its seat at the cyber diplomacy table
https://www.itweb.co.za/content/j5alrvQAgZEvpYQk

Got hit by a cyberattack? Hackers will probably come after you again — within a year
Danny Palmer – ZDNet: 15 June 2022

Criminals are taking advantage of companies that don’t update their cybersecurity strategies.

For more on this theme:
(Global) HanesBrands Suffers Ransomware Attack

(Europe, Global) More than 90% of cyber attacks made possible by human error

(India) Prophet remark: Slew of cyber attacks on Indian govt, private sites

(Canada) Canada wants companies to report cyber attacks and hacking incidents
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Internet’s potential to spur social, economic progress still largely untapped, says UN chief

ITP.net: 7 June 2022

The cost of broadband subscriptions and digital devices remains a major barrier to connectivity.


For more on this theme:

(Rwanda) New push to bridge gender gap in digital access


(U.S.) FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Announces Over $25 Billion in American Rescue Plan Funding to Help Ensure Every American Has Access to High Speed, Affordable Internet


(U.S.) U.S. National Guard’s Cyber Training Emphasizes Social Media, Supply Chain Protection


CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Critical Infrastructure Companies Must Address Cyber Threats More Efficiently

Gaurav Banga – CPO Magazine: 15 June 2022

The need for increased cybersecurity automation for critical infrastructure is more important than ever.


For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) How the Colonial Pipeline attack has changed cybersecurity


(U.S.) Building America’s Cybersecurity Infrastructure

https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities-threats/building-america-s-cybersecurity-infrastructure

(U.S.) The FAA Moves to Zero Trust Strategy for Preventing Cyber Attacks


(U.S.) Cooperation — Not Regulations — Will Protect Our Critical Infrastructure

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Nigeria suspects Islamic State of killing 40 in Catholic church
Camillus Eboh And Felix Onuah – Reuters: 9 June 2022
Nigerian authorities suspect the insurgent group Islamic State West Africa Province carried out a massacre at a Catholic church in which 40 people were killed, Interior Minister Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola said.

For more on this theme:
Islamic State In Khorasan Province's Rocket Attack In Tajikistan – Analysis
Remarks at a UN Security Council Briefing on Da'esh/ISIL
Terrorist Teamwork Leaves the World on Defense, ISIS Alive and Expanding
Insecurity: Nigeria now most targeted country by ISIS
https://www.icirnigeria.org/insecurity-nigeria-now-most-targeted-country-by-isis/
Kyrgyzstan studies neighbors’ experiences returning children from Islamic State
https://eurasianet.org/kyrgyzstan-studies-neighbors-experiences-returning-children-from-islamic-state
After losing ground in Middle East, Islamic State expands operations in Africa
Islamic State on the run in Mozambique, but battles remain
Significant Progress Being Made in Evidence Collection of ISIL/Da'esh's Crimes in Iraq, Investigating Team Head Tells Security Council
US-led coalition fighting ISIS says it’s detained a senior ISIS leader in Syria
France captures Islamic State group leader in Mali
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

15 Ways Social Media Fuels Violent Extremism
Bridget Johnson – Homeland Security Today: 9 June 2022
Social media is used not just as a venting space for unpopular or hateful opinions but as a tool for extremists to grow, inspire, share information and promote violence.

Study: Facebook fails to catch East Africa extremist content
Cara Anna – The Associated Press: 15 June 2022
A study found that Facebook missed Islamic State group and al-Shabab extremist posts as Kenya prepares to vote in a closely contested national election.

For more on this theme:
The Paradoxes Of Jihadism In Nigeria — Analysis
Hezbollah says 'ready' to act if Lebanon says Israel violating water rights
Inside the Taliban's secret war in the Panjshir Valley
https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/08/afghanistan-panjshir-valley-taliban-resistance/
Afghanistan dominates global opium production. The Taliban is shutting that down
https://www.npr.org/2022/06/02/1102586941/afghanistan-opium-heroin-taliban-poppy-farmers-ban
Can Iran Get Along with the Taliban?
https://warontherocks.com/2022/06/can-iran-get-along-with-the-taliban/
‘Unprecedented Differences’: Rifts Within The Taliban Come Out In The Open
https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/taliban-rifts-exposed-afghanistan/31880018.html
The United Nations' List of ‘Not Listed’ Terrorist Entities
https://www.lawfareblog.com/united-nations-list-not-listed-terrorist-entities
Recent Al-Qaeda threats and possible way out
“Mowing the Grass” in Somalia: The Only Option for the al-Shabaab Problem?
https://mi.usma.edu/mowing-the-grass-in-somalia-the-only-option-for-the-al-shabaab-problem/
Inside Al Shabaab: The extremist group trying to seize Somalia
CONFLICT AND CRIME

‘Show’ trial of foreign fighters in Donetsk breaks with international law – and could itself be a war crime
Robert Goldman – The Conversation: 13 June 2022

The sentencing to death of three foreign fighters captured by Russian troops and handed over to authorities in a breakaway region in Ukraine presents a serious deviation from international law — one that in itself represents a war crime.


For more on this theme:
Russia accused of deliberately targeting Ukraine’s medical facilities

Death sentence for Ukraine foreign fighters is a war crime: UN rights office

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Restoration of empire is the endgame for Russia’s Vladimir Putin
Nathan Hodge – CNN: 11 June 2022

Reading Russian President Vladimir Putin’s mind is rarely a straightforward task, but on occasion the Kremlin leader’s words speak for themselves: What he is aiming for in Ukraine is the restoration of Russia as an imperial power.


For more on this theme:
Vladimir Putin’s Ukraine invasion is the world’s first full-scale cyberwar

Bad News for Me Is Good News for Russia
https://cepa.org/bad-news-for-me-is-good-news-for-russia/

How Iran stands to gain from the war in Ukraine – analysis
https://www.jpost.com/international/article-709243

Russia’s Invasion Of Ukraine: What Does Russia Stand To Gain Through Its Maritime Operations? – Analysis

Analysis: China’s teapots crank back to life, aided by cheap Russian oil
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Russia Is Taking Over Ukraine's Internet
https://www.wired.co.uk/article/ukraine-russia-internet-takeover

NATO priorities: Initial lessons from the Russia-Ukraine war
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/nato-priorities-initial-lessons-from-the-russia-ukraine-war/

Renewed Belarus military buildup is a sign of Lukashenka’s desperation

A Ragtag Band of Hackers Is Waging Cyberwar on Putin’s Supply Lines

Russia Unexpectedly Poor at Cyberwar: European Military Heads
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2022/06/09/russia-poor-cyberwar/

Can Azerbaijan Help Solve Europe's Gas Crisis? – Analysis

As Russia goes dark, Vladimir Putin could be taking cues from Kim Jong Un on how to quash dissent

Moldova looking into quitting CIS amid Russia-Ukraine war - foreign min

Putin’s War Accelerating Ukraine’s Demographic Collapse, Experts Say
https://jamestown.org/program/putins-war-accelerating-ukraines-demographic-collapse-experts-say/

The Evolution Of Russia’s Ukraine Strategy – Analysis

Why Ukraine’s longshot bid to join the EU is likely to enrage Putin

The Shifting Political Hierarchy in the North Caucasus
https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/the-shifting-political-hierarchy-in-the-north-caucasus/

Russia's Lesser-Known Intentions in Ukraine
https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/87319

More than 15,000 millionaires expected to leave Russia in 2022
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

The future of global security will be decided in Ukraine

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin says the Russian invasion of Ukraine is a 'preview of a possible world of chaos and turmoil'

Russian Elites Demonstrate Loyalty to Putin, but Are Preparing for Unruly Succession
https://jamestown.org/program/russian-elites-demonstrate-loyalty-to-putin-but-are-preparing-for-unruly-succession/

European Energy Security Post-Russia
https://cepa.org/european-energy-security-post-russia/

UN’s Bachelet concerned over Ukraine orphans ‘deported’ to Russia for adoption

Exclusive: U.S. targets Russia with tech to evade censorship of Ukraine news

Russia-Ukraine war is teaching the Pentagon a lesson about the Pacific
https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2022/06/13/russia-ukraine-war-is-teaching-the-pentagon-a-lesson-about-the-pacific/

Why Lithuania is polarised over Russia’s war in Ukraine
https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/06/14/why-lithuania-is-polarised-over-russia-s-war-in-ukraine

How Ukraine wants to make Russia pay for war’s environmental damage
https://www.politico.eu/article/how-ukraine-want-make-russia-pay-for-war-environmental-damage/

Climate Action Meets Energy Security: The Russian Invasion of Ukraine Adds a New Dimension to Energy Transition

Supporting Democracy After the Invasion of Ukraine
https://carnegieeurope.eu/2022/06/14/supporting-democracy-after-invasion-of-ukraine-pub-87290

China and Russia: Exploring Ties Between Two Authoritarian Powers
https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-russia-relationship-xi-putin-taiwan-ukraine

Georgian Transit Booming Because of War in Ukraine and Anti-Russian Sanctions

Is time on Ukraine’s side?
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/06/10/is-time-on-ukraines-side/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Do not believe Putin's propaganda, there are far more neo-Nazis among the pro-Russians

Vladimir Putin's dark journey from economic reformer to war criminal

The War's Impact on Russia's Economy and Ukrainian Politics

Ukraine's high casualty rate could bring war to tipping point
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/10/ukraine-casualty-rate-russia-war-tipping-point

Middle East Renewables Can Blindside Russia
https://cepa.org/middle-east-renewables-can-blindside-russia/

The Evolving Political-Military Aims in the War in Ukraine After 100 Days
https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/the-evolving-political-military-aims-in-the-war-in-ukraine-after-100-days/

It is in the best interests of Ukraine, and the west, to end this war as soon as possible

Flaming June Could Be Ukraine's Decisive Month
https://cepa.org/flaming-june-may-be-ukraines-decisive-month/

How Russia's Invasion of Ukraine has Affected Kazakh Politics
https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/how-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-has-affected-kazakh-politics/

Analysis: Europe fills up on gas but race to replace Russia far from over

The Risk of Russian Cyber Retaliation for the United States Sending Rockets to Ukraine
https://www.cfr.org/blog/risk-russian-cyber-retaliation-united-states-sending-rockets-ukraine

The Textbook War
https://cepa.org/the-textbook-war/

Japan-Russia Relations After the Russian-Ukrainian War
https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/japan-russia-relations-after-the-russian-ukrainian-war/

Russia's War in Ukraine Is Taking a Toll on Africa
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/06/russias-war-ukraine-taking-toll-africa

History Lessons
https://cepa.org/history-lessons-to-pay-attention-to/