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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Corruption Island: The Lavish Properties Of Former Kazakh Leader Nazarbaev And His Family
Manas Qaiyrtaiuly - Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 6 July 2022
In Kazakhstan’s capital of Nur-Sultan, Nursultan Nazarbaev and his family own a remarkable collection of palaces and grandiose properties, including a 12-hectare artificial island. This new investigation comes after a pair of RFE/RL reports that revealed more of the family’s palatial properties.
https://www.rferl.org/a/nazarbaev-kazakhstan-property-corruption/31931183.html

Africa: IMF Calls for Good Governance, Stronger Anti-Corruption Measures on the Continent
Nontobeko Mlambo - allAfrica: 23 June 2022
The African Union and the International Monetary Fund convened a two-day meeting on good governance and corruption in Botswana to discuss how Africa can reap the benefits of good governance, improve growth opportunities, create jobs, reduce poverty and achieve the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.
https://allafrica.com/stories/202206230722.html

For more on this theme:
‘Can’t Be Corrupt’: Vietnam Vows to Step Up Anti-Graft Campaign

South Africa’s Zuma slams corruption report as ‘irrational’

New direction for China’s anti-corruption campaign
https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/new-direction-for-chinas-anti-corruption-campaign/

Six years on: Did the Duterte administration deliver on its anti-corruption promise?

Former Chief Of Kazakhstan’s Border Guard Service Detained On Corruption Charges

Corruption Keeps Hold in LatAm as Governments Fight Economic Turmoil
https://nearshoreamericas.com/latin-america-corruption-coa/

Memo Fantasma May Walk Out of Prison: Corruption or Incompetence?
https://insightcrime.org/investigations/memo-fantasma-out-prison-corruption-incompetence/

Malaysia’s Corruption Pandemic – Analysis
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Why Did Latin America’s Drug Trade Thrive During COVID-19?
Alessandro Ford – InSight Crime: 5 July 2022

A recent report on worldwide drug production, trafficking and consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the resilience of Latin America’s cocaine trade and the region’s expanding role in producing other types of drugs.

For more on this theme:

China identifies use of crypto in drug trafficking as new phenomenon — report

Shipping companies and Customs authorities come together to step up the fight against narcotics trafficking

Peru’s indigenous communities fear rising violence from drug traffickers

Ghana identified as transit country for drug trafficking, particularly cocaine — British diplomat

Ketamine Dominating Synthetic Drug Market in Chile

The Channel Tunnel: Cocaine Bridge from Europe to UK
https://insightcrime.org/news/uk-channel-tunnel-cocaine-bridge-for-europe%ef%bf%bc/

Drug Networks and Weak States: Infrastructural Capacity and Transnational Power in Central America’s “Northern Triangle”

From Drugs to Corruption: The Growing Presence of Chinese Organized Crime in Latin America
https://www.militantwire.com/p/from-drugs-to-corruption-the-growing

Turkey: Cocaine Hub Between Europe and the Middle East

Narco-State: How German Investigators Are Pursuing Assad Regime’s Involvement in Syria’s Drug Trade
https://eaworldview.com/2022/06/narco-state-assad-syria-drug-german-investigators/
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Cyber-enabled wildlife trade in Central African Countries and Nigeria
TRAFFIC: 5 July 2022

Survey finds online sales of CITES-listed species in five African countries while cyber legislation lacks.

Gambia bans timber exports to combat illegal logging
Pap Saine – Reuters: 2 July 2022

The West African nation has banned timber exports and permanently revoked all timber export licenses. The ban targets timber of the highly prized African Rosewood tree, which is native in West and Central Africa. It has been nearly extinct since 2011.

For more on this theme:

Illegal pet sales still running wild on Facebook with endangered species ‘openly traded’
https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/illegal-pet-sales-still-running-27332194

Study shines light, and raises alarm, over online trade of West African birds

How the DRC is fighting deforestation with an eye on the human cost

Indigenous peoples warn of global delay on forest protection push
https://news.trust.org/item/20220623165612-qgeml

Illicit Chrome Mining Economy Thriving in South Africa

How illegal mining fuels poverty, river pollution, sacred grove desecration in Osun

Biden, NOAA announce new actions on illegal fishing

‘They Own the Ocean’: Gwadar’s Struggle With Illegal Fishing

Digital tool to map wildlife crime launched
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

G7 vs. BRICS: One Cyberworld, Two Summits and Three Approaches for the Governance of the Internet?
Wolfgang Kleinwächter – CircleID: 5 July 2022

Cybersecurity and digitalization were not at the center of the recent summit meetings of the presidents and prime ministers of the G7 (US, Canada, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Japan) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). But cybersecurity and digitalization are too important to be ignored when world leaders meet.


For more on this theme:
(Global) There’s just one thing businesses can do about the ‘splinternet’ — adapt

(Global) Haters gonna hate in the privatised online world: Time to take it on
https://ecfr.eu/article/haters-gonna-hate-in-the-privatised-online-world-time-to-take-it-on/

(Global) A Cyber Persistence Way to Norms
https://www.lawfareblog.com/cyber-persistence-way-norms

INTERNET FREEDOM

Kremlin tightens control over Russians’ online lives – threatening domestic freedoms and the global internet
Stanislav Budnitsky – The Conversation: 30 June 2022

Since the start of Russia’s war on Ukraine in February 2022, Russian internet users have experienced what has been dubbed the descent of a “digital iron curtain.”


For more on this theme:
(Iran) Iran censor protest coverage and is helped by company active in Europe

(China) Tough rules in China to control live internet freedoms

(Middle East, North Africa) Iron net: Digital repression in the Middle East and North Africa
How China uses search engines to spread propaganda
Jessica Brandt and Valerie Wirtschafter – Brookings: 6 July 2022

Authoritarian states like China increasingly use online platforms to disseminate narratives aimed at weakening their democratic competitors. These search engines represent a crucial battleground in their information war with rivals. For Beijing, search engines represent a key – and underappreciated – vector to spread propaganda to audiences around the world.


For more on this theme:
(U.K.) UK National Cyber Strategy 2022

(Europe) Missing in Europe’s Tech Regulations — Security
https://cepa.org/missing-in-europes-tech-regulations-security/

(U.S.) Taking the Elf Off the Shelf: Why the U.S. Should Consider a Civilian Cyber Defense

Hacker Claims to be Selling Leaked Data of a Billion Chinese Citizens
Inci Sayki – Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project: 5 July 2022

An anonymous hacker has claimed to have obtained the personal information of a billion Chinese citizens, allegedly stolen from the Shanghai police, in what could be the biggest data breach in history if true.


For more on this theme:
(Global) Universities are fighting a cyber security war on multiple fronts
https://www.itpro.co.uk/security/cyber-security/368395/universities-are-fighting-a-cyber-security-war-on-multiple-fronts

(Ecuador) Cyberattacks Threaten Security in Ecuador

(U.S.) Cyberattack disrupts unemployment benefits in some states
https://apnews.com/article/technology-tennessee-government-and-politics-70fa712920e2ce41ca8d3633157847d6

(Global) Marriott International Confirms Cyberattack
https://www.costar.com/article/2132441772/marriott-international-confirms-cyberattack

(U.K.) British Army suffers cyberattack to its social media accounts
https://www.intelligentcio.com/eu/2022/07/06/british-army-suffers-cyberattack-to-its-social-media-accounts/
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

**NATO establishes program to coordinate rapid response to cyberattacks**
Maggie Miller – Politico: 29 June 2022

NATO member countries agreed in Madrid to create a new program to quickly respond to cyberattacks.


*For more on this theme:*

(India, ASEAN) Expanding the India-ASEAN Cyber Frontiers

(Philippines) The Philippines to Improve E-Governance
https://opengovasia.com/the-philippines-to-improve-e-governance/

(India) Indian government keen to enhance digital governance

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Hackers can bring ships and planes to a grinding halt. And it could become much more common
Sam Shead – CNBC: 27 June 2022

Hackers are increasingly setting their sights on some of the biggest things that humans can build.


*For more on this theme:*

(Canada) Canada Introduces New Cybersecurity Legislation for Critical Infrastructure

(U.K.) UK critical national infrastructure at risk of ransom attacks

(U.S.) TSA to change cybersecurity rules for pipelines following industry criticism
https://therecord.media/tsa-to-change-cybersecurity-rules-for-pipelines-following-industry-criticism/

(Global) Cyberwarfare ‘here to stay’ as threat to critical infrastructure

(Global) Joint Cybersecurity Advisory on the DPRK Cyber Actors’ Threat to Critical Infrastructure
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Syrian Refugee Camp Becomes ISIS Incubator
Zvi Bar’el – Haaretz: 3 July 2022
Wives and children of ISIS fighters who are living in the al-Hawl refugee camp in Syria are carrying on the tradition of the organization, but most of them have nowhere to go.

Taliban labels Islamic State affiliate a ‘false sect’
Sahar Akbarzai, Ehsan Popalzai and Ivana Kottasová – CNN: 3 July 2022
The Taliban declares the Islamic State affiliate ISIS-K a corrupt “sect” and forbids Afghans from contact with it.

For more on this theme:
Islamic State claims raid on Nigerian prison, 440 inmates on run

IS calls for jihadist migration to Africa in new media campaign
https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/media-campaign-calls-jihadist-migration-africa

Killings continue inside the al-Hol camp
https://www.rudaw.net/english/opinion/20062022

ISIL-affiliate gains ground in the Sahel as massacres mount

Islamic State Attack in Cameroon is Part of Greater Trend of Jihadi Violence Against Christians in Africa
https://www.militantwire.com/p/islamic-state-attack-in-cameroon

The Rise of the Islamic State-Aligned East Asia Knights Outlet
https://www.militantwire.com/p/the-rise-of-the-islamic-state-aligned

Stripping ISIS supporter of Dutch citizenship contravened human rights: Council of State

Detainee Dilemma
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Taliban Chief Slams Foreign ‘Interference’ in His ‘Islamic’ Governance
Ayaz Gul – Voice of America: 1 July 2022
The Taliban’s reclusive supreme leader ruled out any talks or compromise on his “Islamic system” of governance in Afghanistan in an apparent rebuke to international calls for his hard-line ruling group to ease restrictions on women’s rights to work and education.

The vast Iran-Hezbollah drone threat is escalating – analysis
Seth J. Frantzman – The Jerusalem Post: 2 July 2022
Hezbollah, Hamas and other Iranian-backed groups have increased their drone threats over the past several years.
https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-711029

For more on this theme:
Burkina Faso: Dozens killed in militant violence

US Sponsors Int’l Conference on Countering Hezbollah’s Terrorist Activities

Israel accuses Hezbollah of cyber operation against UN peacekeepers
https://thearabweekly.com/israel-accuses-hezbollah-cyber-operation-against-un-peacekeepers

Abu Sayyaf Under Rising Pressure in Asia’s Backwater
https://www.asiasentinel.com/p/abu-sayyaf-rising-pressure-asia-backwater

India warns of Afghanistan becoming haven for JeM, LeT; calls for action

Israel accuses Hezbollah of trying to hack U.N. Lebanon peacekeepers

Hamas Officials Meet Hezbollah Chief Nasrallah, Discuss Strengthening Alliance

Taliban to Convene All-Male Meeting of Clerics, Elders for Afghan Unity Debate

Taliban’s Alleged Extrajudicial Killings in Afghan District Worry UN, Rights Groups
CONFLICT AND CRIME

High-profile murders in Brazil’s Amazon highlight soaring violence
Andre Cabette Fabio – Reuters: 1 July 2022

The deaths of British reporter Dom Phillips and Brazilian indigenous expert Bruno Pereira highlight growing Amazon violence.
https://news.trust.org/item/20220701130212-bhkpi

For more on this theme:

European Rights Court Tells Russia To Ensure Two Britons Captured In Ukraine Aren’t Executed

UN: At least 10,000 civilians injured or killed since Russia invaded Ukraine

Russian attack on Mariupol, Ukraine, theater a war crime, report says

Mariupol theater airstrike was ‘a clear war crime’ by Russian military, Amnesty International says

UK cyber crime body urges business to prepare for long haul over Russian conflict
https://bmmagazine.co.uk/news/uk-cyber-crime-body-urges-organisations-to-prepare-for-long-haul-over-russian-ukraine-conflict/

French prosecutors open war crime probe linked to Groupe Castel unit in Central African Republic

Russia’s Top War Crimes Against Ukraine
https://news.clearancejobs.com/2022/07/05/russias-top-war-crimes-against-ukraine/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukraine Has Exposed Russia as a Not-So-Great Power
Phillips Payson O’Brien – The Atlantic: 1 July 2022

Kyiv’s success against Moscow forces us to reexamine our assumptions about what it means to be powerful.


For more on this theme:

Ukraine defies Russia and launches electricity exports to EU neighbors

Shadow of the bomb: Russia’s nuclear threats

Putin’s War Splinters the Russian Opposition
https://cepa.org/putins-war-splinters-the-russian-opposition/

Europe’s task now: Embrace diversity and work together against Russia

Russia-Ukraine War: Implications for Asian Geoeconomics
https://thediplomat.com/2022/07/russia-ukraine-war-implications-for-asian-geoeconomics/

Russia says it has more than 6,000 Ukrainian prisoners of war
https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/06/30/Russia-says-it-has-more-than-6-000-Ukrainian-prisoners-of-war

In eastern Ukraine’s coal fields, Russia’s invasion sparks hopes of a comeback
https://www.npr.org/2022/07/06/1109381306/eastern-ukraine-coal-mining-russia-invasion

Putin’s poisonous anti-Western ideology relies heavily on projection

European Union to set up platform for Ukraine war reconstruction

Russia’s Studied Indifference Can’t Mask a New Defeat
https://cepa.org/russias-studied-indifference-cant-mask-a-new-defeat/

Shredded trees, dead dolphins and wildfires — how Russia’s invasion is hurting nature

Who will pay for Ukraine’s reconstruction?
https://www.aljazeera.com/program/inside-story/2022/7/5/who-will-pay-for-ukraines-reconstruction

Jokowi’s Russia-Ukraine Mission Offers Hope, But He Must Follow Up – Analysis
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

China: Third player in Russia-Ukraine conflict?
https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/02/opinion/columns/china-third-player-in-russia-ukraine-conflict/1849475

Ukraine’s Terms for Peace
https://cepa.org/ukraines-terms-for-peace/

Russia is Waging ‘Electronic Warfare’ on Ukraine

Assad Gambles On The Ukraine War — Analysis
https://www.eurasiareview.com/02072022-assad-gambles-on-the-ukraine-war-analysis/

Europe’s fate is intimately linked to Ukraine’s survival

Putin Sacks Top Priest over Ukraine War
https://cepa.org/putin-sacks-top-priest-over-ukraine-war/

Some Russians won’t halt war protests, despite arrest fears
https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-arrests-d8823e9471d492eaa08f868e8e211745

China not giving material support for Russia’s war in Ukraine — U.S. official

Funding Ukraine’s recovery with Russian riches causes legal headache

Ukraine: Four months after Russian invasion, humanitarian needs intensity

The Fallacy of Russian ‘Non-Humiliation’
https://cepa.org/the-fallacy-of-russian-non-humiliation/

Surge in Ukrainians who fled after the invasion returning home, data shows

Investing in Ukraine’s brains is vital for the country’s post-war prosperity

Spike seen in Russian media reports hammering false claim of Ukrainian Nazism

The story behind the proposed price cap on Russian oil
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2022/07/05/the-story-behind-the-proposed-price-cap-on-russian-oil/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Recent attacks on pro-Russian officials in southern Ukraine indicate signs of growing resistance movement

Defending NATO in the High North
https://cepa.org/defending-nato-in-the-high-north/

To Robot or Not to Robot? Past Analysis of Russian Military Robotics and Today's War in Ukraine

Ukraine’s case for EU membership

New ‘iron curtain’ descending between Russia and West: Lavrov

Russian hackers allegedly target Ukraine’s biggest private energy firm

The Week In Russia: Putin’s ‘Grim’ War Grinds On In Ukraine
https://www.rferl.org/a/week-russia-gutterman-ukraine-war-grim/31924154.html

Russia’s Jews fear resurgent anti-Semitism amid Ukraine war

Summit speed read: How the G7 and NATO pushed back on Putin
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/summit-speed-read-how-the-g7-and-nato-pushed-back-on-putin/


The Complex Reality of Cyber War and Ukraine

Immediate impact: How Western heavy weapons are already helping Ukraine halt Russia

All eyes are on the battle for the east. But the south might hold the key to Ukraine’s fate.
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Russian War Report: Russia claims Snake Island losses were ‘gesture of goodwill’**
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russian-hybrid-threats-report/russia-claims-snake-island-goodwill-gesture/

**Russia launches drive to recruit soldiers for Ukraine war**

**Did Tokayev Provide Putin With A Good Excuse For ‘Causing A Great Inconvenience’ To Kazakhstan, Europe? — Analysis**

**Moscow forcing teachers in occupied Ukraine to follow Russian curriculum**
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/01/moscow-forcing-teachers-in-ukraine-to-sign-up-to-russian-curriculum

**With all eyes on Ukraine, Vladimir Putin targets domestic dissidents**
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/with-all-eyes-on-ukraine-vladimir-putin-targets-domestic-dissidents/

**Despite support for Ukraine, NATO must continue to show resolve against Russia**

**Analysis: Russia hails capture of Luhansk region, but big Ukraine battles lie ahead**

**Examining the state of war in Ukraine after Russia seizes the Luhansk region**

**NATO Countries Signal Resolve at Summit: What Does It Mean for Russia?**

**Ukraine and Russia Grapple with Relentless Battle and Attrition**

**This Is How The Russians Lost Snake Island — OpEd**
https://www.eurasiareview.com/04072022-this-is-how-the-russians-lost-snake-island-oped/

**Policy, Guns and Money: Estonia's former president on the war in Ukraine**

**Europe sees China through a Russian lens, and Beijing is not happy**

**Interview: Why It’s Difficult To Measure Progress In The Ukraine War**
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

The Unraveling of Russian Spies
https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/the-unraveling-of-russian-spies

From Migrant Crisis To Aggression In Ukraine: Belarus Still On Baltic Agenda

Secret Economy: What Hiding the Stats Does for Russia
https://carnegieendowment.org/eurasiainsight/87432

What did the G7 and Nato summits really mean for Ukraine?
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/30/what-did-the-g7-and-nato-summits-really-mean-for-ukraine

The war in Ukraine is triggering a re-evaluation of global systemic risk
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/ukraine-war-global-systemic-risk-resilience/

How to mitigate the impact of the war in Ukraine on commodity markets
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2022/07/01/how-to-mitigate-the-impact-of-the-war-in-ukraine-on-commodity-markets/

Pandora’s box: The challenge of Western aid to Ukraine

Goodwill gestures and de-Nazification: Decoding Putin’s Ukraine War lexicon
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/goodwill-gestures-and-de-nazification-decoding-putins-ukraine-war-lexicon/