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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Halting the Kleptocratic Capture of Local Government in Nigeria
Matthew T. Page and Abdul H. Wando – Carnegie: 18 July 2022
Despite their hard-hitting rhetoric, Nigeria’s political leaders have done little to rein in local government corruption and the failures it causes.

Ukraine picks new anti-corruption prosecutor
Reuters: 19 July 2022
Ukraine has chosen an experienced investigator to head the anti-corruption prosecutor’s office, pending approval by the country’s prosecutor general, Parliament said.

For more on this theme:
Deep-rooted corruption tops the list of reasons South Africa is a ‘failing state’
https://www.theafrican.co.ke/tea/rest-of-africa/corruption-tops-the-list-south-africa-is-a-failing-state-3873984
Indonesian anti-corruption agency’s deputy chief resigns over MotoGP perks
https://coconuts.co/jakarta/news/indonesian-anti-corruption-agencys-deputy-chief-resigns-over-motogp-perks/
Survey Says! Cypriots Believe Country Corrupt, Getting Worse
34% of companies in the EU say that corruption is a problem when doing business
TI Calls for Stronger Anti-Corruption Efforts in the Pacific
Endemic corruption and policy impasses are holding Vietnam back
Chinese Bank Depositors Face Police in Angry Protest
Did China Deploy Tanks Against Protesters? What We Do Know, What We Don’t
China’s banking crisis is a litmus test of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign
**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

**What Mexico Gets Wrong About Its Fentanyl Problem**  
Victoria Dittmar and Sara Garcia – InSight Crime: 14 July 2022  
An announcement by the Mexican government about the largest seizure of illegal fentanyl in the country’s history appeared to ignore the complex realities of how this synthetic opioid is produced.  

**Rafael Caro Quintero’s Capture in Mexico Celebrated and Overstated**  
Peter Appleby and Chris Dalby – InSight Crime: 16 July 2022  
Rafael Caro Quintero, the long-pursued Mexican drug lord and former head of the defunct Guadalajara Cartel, has been apprehended by authorities in a symbolic move that will have scant impact on the country’s drug-trafficking landscape.  

*For more on this theme:*

- **Fentanyl Sold Under the Counter by Paraguay Pharmacies**  

- **Drug Traffickers in Fresh Round of Violence Against Peru’s Indigenous Communities**  

- **Lake Itaipú — The Smugglers’ Paradise Between Brazil and Paraguay**  

- **Cocaine and Narco-Politics in the Mosquitia Region of Honduras**  

- **Turkish Bananas: The Cocaine Road to Russia and the Persian Gulf**  

- **Why Putin’s War on Ukraine Is Great News for Drug Traffickers**  
  https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-putin%E2%80%99s-war-ukraine-great-news-drug-traffickers-203579

- **Cryptocurrency increasingly used in drug, human trafficking**  

- **Turkey Is Now a Major Hub for Cocaine Trafficking**  

- **Afghanistan, Pakistan emerge as lethal platforms for narco-terrorism**  
  https://theprint.in/world/afghanistan-pakistan-emerge-as-lethal-platforms-for-narco-terrorism/1033029/
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

From Catwalk to Court Room — The Fall of a Colombian Fashion Designer
Juliana Manjarrés – InSight Crime: 14 July 2022

A well-known Colombian fashion designer who sold leather handbags to celebrities will be extradited to the United States to stand trial for alleged wildlife trafficking in the first case of its kind.

Turtle DNA database traces illegal shell trade to poaching hotspots
Carolyn Cowan – Mongabay: 18 July 2022

Experts say they hope the launch of a global turtle DNA database coupled with wildlife forensics can turn the tables on poachers and illegal traders.

For more on this theme:
Venezuela: Mining Destroys Lives of Indigenous Communities

U.S. Targets IUU Fishing

Vietnam ready to cooperate to combat illegal fishing
https://www.nationthailand.com/international/40017532

Africa’s Donkeys Being Stolen and Slaughtered for Chinese Traditional Medicine

Online markets for pangolin-derived products
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/online-markets-for-pangolin/

How Illegal Trade Of Exotic Animals Is Risking A Zoonotic Disease Outbreak In Chennai

Researchers Sampled Shark Fin Trimmings From Hong Kong and Unraveled the Mystery of Where the Fins Belong

Report: Brazil authorities pay no mind to deforestation
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The International Law Sovereignty Debate and Development of International Norms on Peacetime Cyber Operations
Mark Visger – Lawfare: 12 July 2022

The United Kingdom’s position on sovereignty has limited progress in reaching state consensus on prohibited behaviors in cyberspace. The U.K. maintains that violations of sovereignty do not, on their own, constitute violations of international law. This position was largely rejected by other states.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Behind the Race to Run the UN’s Internet Agency
https://cepa.org/behind-the-race-to-run-the-uns-internet-agency/

(Russia, Global) Beware: Russia Eyes UN Internet Takeover
https://cepa.org/beware-russia-eyes-un-internet-takeover/

(Global) A proactive approach toward addressing the challenges of the metaverse
https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/a-proactive-approach-toward-addressing-the-challenges-of-the-metaverse/

CYBER STATECRAFT AND STRATEGY

A New U.S. Foreign Policy for Cyberspace
Adam Segal – Council on Foreign Relations: 12 July 2022

The era of the global internet has ended. The U.S. should pursue a new strategy in cyberspace by creating a coalition of allies, balancing pressure with disruptive cyber operations and improving cybersecurity policy.

https://www.cfr.org/blog/new-us-foreign-policy-cyberspace

For more on this theme:

(Poland) Proud Poland: A Pro Digital Power Haunted by Nationalist Nightmares

(Iran) Escalating emigration and the “drought” in Iran’s IT industry
https://www.mei.edu/publications/escalating-emigration-and-drought-irans-it-industry

(India, Global) Digital Diplomacy: Game of Codes in Geo-Politics

(France) La France Numérique: Grandeur and Decadence
https://cepa.org/la-france-numerique-grandeur-and-decadence/
CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

U.S. Cyber Command exposes malware targeting Ukrainian entities
AJ Vicens – CYBERSCOOP: 20 July 2022

U.S. Cyber Command shared the technical details related to what the agency says are several types of malware targeting Ukraine in recent months.
https://www.cyberscoop.com/cyber-command-malware-ukraine/

For more on this theme:
(Russia, Ukraine) Unprecedented Shift: The Trickbot Group is Systematically Attacking Ukraine
https://securityintelligence.com/posts/trickbot-group-systematically-attacking-ukraine/

(Russia, Ukraine, Global) The Cyberwar That Never Was: Reassessing Choices During Cyber Conflicts — Analysis
https://www.eurasiareview.com/17072022-the-cyberwar-that-never-was-reassessing-choices-during-cyber-conflicts-analysis/

(Albania) Albanian Government Hit by “Massive Cyber-Attack”

(Japan) Videogame maker Bandai Namco confirms cyber attack

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

How Israel plans to tackle cyberattacks with a ‘Cyber-Dome’
Kolawole Samuel Adebayo – VentureBeat: 13 July 2022

At CyberWeek in Tel Aviv, Israel, Gaby Portnoy, the new director general of the country’s Cyber Directorate, announced the Cyber-Dome project — a big data and AI approach to proactive cyber defense.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Cybersecurity Has a Talent Shortage & Non-Technical People Offer a Way Out

(Germany, Russia) Germany bolsters defenses against Russian cyber threats

(Africa) African start-ups explore metaverse and NFTs to tackle economic woes

(Europe) Divided Digital Europe
https://cepa.org/event/divided-digital-europe/
CYBERCRIME

**DOJ report warns of escalating cybercrime, ‘blended’ threats**
*Shaun Nichols – TechTarget: 20 July 2022*

The Department of Justice’s cyber review warned that lines between conventional cybercriminal activity and national security threats have all but disappeared.


For more on this theme:

**(Global) Why Isolation Is A New Weapon In The Battle Against Cybercrime**

** (Philippines) Police efforts vs cyber-crime to be strengthened**

** (Global) Cybercrime Has Reached Epidemic Proportions, And It Is Time For Action**
https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2022/07/11/cybercrime-has-reached-epidemic-proportions-and-it-is-time-for-action/?sh=59609f87582f

** (North Korea, U.S.) Feds Disrupt N Korea Hackers in New Cyber Security Crackdown**

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

**Critical infrastructure under attack, businesses slow to respond**
*Catherine Knowles – Security Brief: 15 July 2022*

Barracuda Networks has released key findings from a report titled “The State of Industrial Security in 2022,” finding that critical infrastructure is under attack and despite agreement that industrial internet of things/operational technology security is critical, businesses are facing significant challenges as the geopolitical landscape becomes increasingly tense.


For more on this theme:

**(Australia) Securing Australia’s Critical Infrastructure**

**(U.S., Global) The cyber insurance market has a critical infrastructure problem**

**(India) How India aims to protect key infrastructure amid rise in cyber attacks from across the border**
ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

ISIS stands to gain from potential Turkish offensive in Syria, Pentagon warns
Courtney Kube – MSNBC: 15 July 2022
Defense officials fear that Turkish military operations may prompt U.S. allies in the region to move north, leaving a vacuum that could allow ISIS to regroup.

ISIS fighters’ children are growing up in a desert camp. What will they become?
Syria’s Al-Hol is a detention camp for people displaced by the Islamic State’s war. Left behind are tens of thousands of children growing up under brutal circumstances and intensely vulnerable to radicalization.
https://indianexpress.com/article/world/isis-fighters-children-syria-camps-8040377/

For more on this theme:
Greater risk of ISIS-inspired attacks in region due to ‘cyber jihad’: Singapore ISD
The Challenge of Reintegrating Kyrgyz Children of ISIS Fighters in Iraq
“Irish ISIS Bride” Lisa Smith could receive up to eight years in prison
Could ISIS Make A Comeback?
https://www.19fortyfive.com/2022/07/could-isis-make-a-comeback/
Islamic State Prison Break Signals Expanding Salafi-Jihadi Threat in Nigeria
Hijra And Jihad: What Islamic State’s Call For Migration Means For Terrorism In Africa
Islamic State-linked ‘Amaq’ releases video of Srinagar attack
France Repatriates ISIS-associated Women and Children, Reversing Earlier Position
US Officials Speak Out Against Turkish Plans for Northern Syria
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

UN experts warn of ‘alarming’ trend of terrorists profiting from natural resources
Nicky Harley – The National: 15 July 2022

The U.N. Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee has raised concerns over the “alarming” trend of terror groups profiting from natural resources – from oil to diamonds.


Al-Qaida Positioned to Surpass Islamic State Among Jihadis
Jeff Seldin – Voice of America: 19 July 2022

Al-Qaida, boosted by leadership stability and the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, appears to be positioning itself to once again be seen as the world’s preeminent terror group and as the greatest long-term threat to the West.


For more on this theme:
Terrorism Redefined
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/terrorism-redefined

Taliban emir ‘promises’ Afghanistan won’t be a base for terrorism

Boko Haram, ISWAP: Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Shabaab funding terrorists in Nigeria – Somalia’s President Mohamud

Munich Gives Way To Soccer V. Jihad – Analysis

Mali Denies U.N. Investigation Into Military, Terrorist Violence
https://theowp.org/mali-denies-un-investigation-into-military-terrorist-violence/

The secret behind al-Shabaab’s longevity: A formidable spy wing
https://intelnews.org/2022/07/11/01-3208/

Why is Hamas restoring ties with the Syrian regime?
https://english.alaraby.co.uk/analysis/why-hamas-restoring-ties-syrian-regime

Hezbollah chief vows ‘no one’ will extract gas, oil from maritime zones if Lebanon unable to do so

Lebanon forced to dance to Hezbollah’s beat
https://www.arabnews.com/node/2121846
CONFLICT AND CRIME

Russia’s mass kidnappings of Ukrainians are a page out of a wartime playbook — and evidence of genocide

Alexander Hinton – The Conversation: 20 July 2022

Following months of speculation, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed that Russia had forcibly relocated from 900,000 to 1.6 million Ukrainians into Russia.


For more on this theme:

US Places Russia on Human Trafficking, Child Soldier Lists


Soldiers, Not Soldiers of Fortune

https://www.lawfareblog.com/soldiers-not-soldiers-fortune

The Ramifications Of Recognition Of Genocide


Inside the Ukraine war crimes investigation, Part 3: The resistance


‘The mouth of a bear’: Ukrainian refugees sent to Russia

https://apnews.com/article/Ukraine-Russia-refugees-Mariupol-war-investigation-31880d51ae29818b-6c3b04156aae38d5

Nations discuss coordinating Ukraine war crimes probes

https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-kyiv-netherlands-the-hague-d720ae1f6801731d-1979dcdaa988997a

Ukraine war crimes investigation receives support of 45 nations


Ukraine Boosts Its Campaign to Find Children That Russia Has Abducted

https://www.passblue.com/2022/07/14/ukraine-boosts-its-campaign-to-find-children-that-russia-has-abducted/

Ukrainian boy held hostage by Russia tells of cleaning up torture rooms

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/19/ukrainian-boy-held-hostage-by-russia-tells-of-cleaning-up-torture-rooms

Russia’s illegal war against Ukraine increases risk of trafficking: UK statement to the OSCE

CONFLICT AND CRIME

For more on this theme:

‘They hunt us like stray cats’: pro-Russia separatists step up forced conscription as losses mount
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/20/pro-russian-separatists-step-up-forced-conscription-as-losses-mount

Ukraine Symposium – Rebel Prosecutions of Foreign Fighters in Ukraine
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/rebel-prosecutions-foreign-fighters-ukraine/

Report: In Crimea and the Donbas, Organized Crime Reigns Supreme

Threat of prosecution hangs ‘forever’ over Ukraine war crimes perpetrators, EU’s top justice official says

‘Myanmar’s landmine use a war crime’
https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/21/news/world/myanmars-landmine-use-a-war-crime/1851682

G9 vs. G-PEP — The Two Gang Alliances Tearing Haiti Apart
https://insightcrime.org/news/g9-gpep-two-gang-alliances-tearing-haiti-apart/

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukraine can win
Richard D. Hooker, Jr. – Atlantic Council: 20 July 2022

In many circles it has become de rigueur to assert that Ukraine cannot hope to prevail against the Russian military in the current war. As matters now stand, Ukraine probably cannot “win” if victory is defined as recovering all internationally recognized Ukrainian territory and dealing a decisive defeat to Russia in the field.

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/ukraine-can-win/

For more on this theme:

The necessity of territorial integrity

Kazakhstan Pivots From Russia Amid Ukraine War — Analysis

Invasion of Ukraine Has Unintended Consequences for Russian Ethnic Minorities
https://jamestown.org/program/invasion-of-ukraine-has-unintended-consequences-for-russian-ethnic-minorities/

Will the Ukraine conflict turn private?
https://asiatimes.com/2022/07/will-the-ukraine-conflict-turn-private/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

How Sweden and Finland Can Bolster NATO

What the Chinese Army Is Learning From Russia’s Ukraine War
https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/07/21/what-chinese-army-is-learning-from-russia-s-ukraine-war-pub-87552

Putin believes he’s winning in Ukraine but will become ‘most dangerous’ when he thinks Russia is losing, expert warns

Putin’s Captives: How a Ruinous Imperial War Has Strengthened His Rule at Home

The golden arches go to war

Ukraine in the age of unpeace with Fiona Hill

Russia’s Ukraine War Has Narrowed — But Not its Goals
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/07/russias-ukraine-war-has-narrowed-not-its-goals

Iran’s Central Asia Policy Gains Momentum Amid Russia-Ukraine War – Analysis

Russia Considers Annexing Ukrainian Territories Through Referendums
https://jamestown.org/program/russia-considers-annexing-ukrainian-territories-through-referendums/

Dolphins in Black Sea Dying by the Thousands During Russia-Ukraine War

A sobering view of the Ukraine war from behind the new ‘Iron Curtain’

China’s Belt And Road Focuses On New Eurasian Trade Routes Due To Ukraine War
https://www.rferl.org/a/china-ukraine-war-eurasian-trade-routes-russia-standish/31948987.html

Russia’s neighbours are looking towards the EU or China for protection
https://theconversation.com/russias-neighbours-are-looking-towards-the-eu-or-china-for-protection-186690

Russia’s Information War Expands Through Eastern Europe
https://www.voanews.com/a/russia-s-information-war-expands-through-eastern-europe-6662042.html
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Costs of Ukraine war pose tests for European leaders – and things may get worse
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/18/costs-of-ukraine-war-cause-tests-for-european-leaders-and-it-may-get-worse

Russia’s Energy Blackmail — Just Say Nyet
https://cepa.org/russias-energy-blackmail-just-say-nyet/

China Is Quietly Supplying Russia’s War Machine In Ukraine: Report
https://dailycaller.com/2022/07/15/china-fuels-russian-war-exports-report/

Russia Making False Claims Of Success To Boost Troop Morale: UK MoD

Ambassador William Taylor on the State of Russia’s War with Ukraine
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/07/ambassador-william-taylor-state-russias-war-ukraine

EU candidate status is an historic opportunity to transform Ukraine

Europe’s Continued Commitment to Ukraine Hinges on Germany
https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/87531

Peace versus Justice: The coming European split over the war in Ukraine

The ‘Goebbels Method’: RIA Novosti As Window Into Russian Propaganda — Analysis

Is a Military Coup Expected in Russia?
https://jamestown.org/program/is-a-military-coup-expected-in-russia/

Fly for a might guy: Putin’s drone deal with Iran

Energy Transformation after the Second Russo-Ukrainian War
https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/07/energy-transformation-after-the-second-russo-ukrainian-war/

Russia is preparing for next stage of offensive, Ukraine says

How much damage have Putin’s threats done to the nuclear non-proliferation regime?

Russia In The Black Sea: What Happened To The Moskva? — Analysis
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Russian ruble: How resilient against sanctions is Russia's economy?
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/07/russia-ruble-economy-resilience-sanctions/

How to Ensure Putinism Survives Putin
https://cepa.org/how-to-ensure-putinism-survives-putin/

Building a better Ukraine: Rule of law is essential for post-war prosperity
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/building-a-better-ukraine-rule-of-law-is-essential-for-post-war-prosperity/

Moscow Turns to Regions to Replace Losses and Boost Forces in Ukraine

Economics of war: Pain for Europe now, later for Russia

Blow Out: How Ukrainian Forces Discovered a Way to Destroy Russian T-72 Tanks

CIA director estimates 15,000 Russians killed in Ukraine war
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Ukraine’s Zelensky fires top security chief and prosecutor
https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Sidelining of spy chief spotlights Ukraine's battle to purge Russian agents
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Russia hits Ukrainians far from front lines, striking entire nation's morale
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

How China could follow Russia's Ukraine playbook
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Misleading Posts Peddle Russia's Ukraine Weapons 'Smuggling' Propaganda
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Russia punishes Wikimedia Foundation for hosting 'prohibited materials' on Ukraine war
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-

Russia using mercenary group Wagner to reinforce Ukraine frontlines, UK says
https://www.cia.org/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-black-sea-moldova-3c4521b4371c07c852534d-
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**No clear timeframe of ‘special operation’ in Ukraine: Russia**

**Russia sending hundreds of teachers to Ukraine to offer ‘corrected’ education: report**

**What’s happening to Russian gold?**
https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/7/19/whats-happening-to-russian-gold

**‘Russia stole our history’: Ukraine’s bitter struggle to keep the truth alive**
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/16/russia-stole-our-history-ukraine-bitter-struggle-to-keep-the-truth-alive

**The Road to Stalemate**
https://graphics.reuters.com/UKRAINE-CRISIS/CONTROL/gdpzygorxvw/