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CORRUPTION

The Next Frontier in Latin America’s Anti-Corruption Drive
Roberto Simon and Emilie Sweigart – Americas Quarterly; 22 July 2019

Latin America has been rife with corruption for decades, but citizens have recently stepped up to do something about it – protesting, ousting corrupt leaders and demanding anti-corruption legislation and prosecutions. To support these investigations and judicial proceedings, law enforcement bodies are increasingly looking to build avenues of international cooperation.

https://www.americasquarterly.org/content/new-trend-anti-corruption-cooperation

How global anti-corruption efforts are being corrupted
Robert Amsterdam – The Hill; 21 July 2019

Anti-corruption efforts are a popular political tool as citizens embrace anti-graft campaigns. As such, politics often get in the way as politicians use the investigations to pursue their own agendas.

https://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/453547-how-global-anti-corruption-efforts-are-being-corrupted

For more on this theme:

Inspiring Protests in Puerto Rico Show It’s Still Possible to Hold Callous, Corrupt Leaders Accountable

Zimbabwe tourism minister detained by new anti-corruption agency
https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKCN1UK1C7-OZATP

For Argentina’s Polarizing Anti-Corruption Chief, Reform Is “Life or Death”
https://www.americasquarterly.org/content/argentinas-polarizing-anti-corruption-chief-reform-life-or-death

Brazil: Crypto Exchanges Dragged Into Major Anti-Corruption Case

Is bribery and corruption being overlooked by UK authorities?

Family Business: Corruption In The Maduro Regime

The new law against corruption in Costa Rica and its impact on private companies

‘We are watching you’: the 500-day protest against corruption in Romania

Government dissolves Anti-Corruption Council
https://armenpress.am/eng/news/982812/
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Cartel kingpin El Chapo is jailed for life, but the US-Mexico drug trade is booming
Luis Gómez Romero – The Conversation: 18 July 2019

Little has changed since the capture and conviction of Joaquín Guzmán Loera, known as El Chapo, the “biggest fish” in the drug-trafficking sea. The flow of illicit drugs has not been diminished, and the Sinaloa cartel remains a top trafficker. The new leader who took El Chapo’s place has made the organization even more difficult to dismantle by expanding its criminal activities and making the leadership structure more horizontal and less hierarchical.

https://theconversation.com/cartel-kingpin-el-chapo-is-jailed-for-life-but-the-us-mexico-drug-trade-is-booming-120556

Asia’s meth trade is worth an estimated $61B as region becomes ‘playground’ for drug gangs
Joshua Berlinger – CNN: 20 July 2019

A report from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime underscored the massive problem the Indo-Pacific region has with methamphetamines. The illegal trade is perhaps four times greater than it was just a decade ago.

https://www.cnnphilippines.com/world/2019/7/20/asia-drugs-methamphetamine.html

Full report:
Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact

For more on this theme:
No Evidence Migrant Families Are Aiding Drug Smuggling
https://www.cato.org/blog/no-evidence-migrant-families-are-aiding-drug-smuggling

Opioid makers say there’s no proof they are responsible for the epidemic’s harms
https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/opioid-makers-say-theres-no-proof-they-are-responsible-for-the-epidemics-harms/2019/07/24/f94e0a7c-ae24-11e9-a0c9-6d2d7818f3da_story.html

Senate bill would authorize use of drones to identify illicit drug smuggling

Cops warn parcel firms over drug smuggling
https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1716835/cops-warn parcel-firms-over-drug-smuggling

‘They thought they were buying heroin’: How fentanyl invaded the U.S.

Time to rethink Vietnam’s drug policies

An Overview of Drug Trafficking in Pakistan
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Is Tunisia turning a blind eye to illegal hunting?
Jihane Ben Yahia – Institute for Security Studies: 23 July 2019

While hunting in Tunisia is strictly regulated to protect threatened species, it appears that large hunting parties are able to bypass these regulations. According to reports, the government may be sanctioning the illegal activity.
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-tunisia-turning-a-blind-eye-to-illegal-hunting

Tackling logging in Cambodia? There’s an app for that
Hugh Biggar – Landscape News: 22 July 2019

Cambodian deforestation is a massive problem. So, a Danish university partnered with Cambodia to develop a smartphone app that local motorbike patrols can use to track their findings and expose criminals.
https://news.globallandscapesforum.org/37283/tackling-logging-in-cambodia-theres-an-app-for-that/

For more on this theme:
Op-Ed: How cracking down on organized crime could save a tiny porpoise from extinction

Pills, pangolins and purses
https://theaseanpost.com/article/pills-pangolins-and-purses

Opinion: Calling all hackers — endangered wildlife needs you
https://ensia.com/voices/hackers-endangered-wildlife-online-trade/

Armenia Introduces Tougher Penalties for Illegal Logging

#Mediterranean countries advance on fighting illegal fishing in world’s most overfished sea

Songbirds are being snatched from Miami’s forests
https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2019/07/songbirds-are-being-snatched-from-miamis-forests/

Illicit trade endangers the environment, the law and the SDGs. We need a global response
SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

African Country Turns to Blockchain to Stem Deadly Fake Drug Epidemic
Benjamin Vitáris – CCN: 25 July 2019
The government of Uganda wants to use blockchain to curb the distribution and sale of counterfeit drugs in the country.

Dubai to detect counterfeit goods using AI technology
Fareed Rahman – The National: 22 July 2019
Dubai plans to employ a device that relies on artificial intelligence to identify counterfeit items. Developed by a U.S. company, the device will help detect fake luxury goods in shops across the country.
https://www.thenational.ae/business/dubai-to-detect-counterfeit-goods-using-ai-technology-1.888883

For more on this theme:
Gold mining may be all that’s keeping Venezuela in business. Organized crime runs it

On Instagram, counterfeit cash is for sale — and a short search away

Counterfeit Alcohol May Be Responsible For 20 Deaths In Costa Rica
https://www.thefix.com/counterfeit-alcohol-deaths-costa-rica

US e-commerce platforms struggle to rein in counterfeit products

Counterfeit Products: Is There Any Way To Hold Back The Flood?

Mafia’s alleged laundering of money in Ontario casinos was a surprising choice, experts say in wake of crime bust
https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-mafias-laundering-of-money-in-ontario-casinos-was-a-surprising-choice/

Mexico-US to Launch Plan Against Arms Smuggling at Border

Mizoram is biggest hub of drugs, gold and arms smuggling in South Asia

These idyllic Caribbean islands are trading illegal Venezuelan gold. Can it be stopped?
MONEY LAUNDERING

EU urges reforms against multi-billion-euro flow of dirty money
Francesco Guarascio – Reuters: 24 July 2019

The European Union is calling for improvements to its money laundering regulations after identifying numerous failures across the bloc that led to scandals in the financial system.
https://af.reuters.com/article/tanzaniaNews/idAFL8N24P33V

For more on this theme:

Cyber laundering: What are some key challenges in detection and regulation?
https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=98410b41-b400-4ab4-9575-29184ab74fe2

Fiat Money Outpaces Bitcoin 800:1 for Money Laundering: Report

Brazil’s Supreme Court halts anti-money laundering investigations
https://voices.transparency.org/the-role-of-financial-intelligence-units-and-the-fight-against-corruption-in-brazil-e745f1c8e749

Money Laundering Scandals Have Prompted The Nordic Region’s Biggest Banks To Work Together
http://www.mondaq.com/uk/x/829994/White+Collar+Crime+Fraud/Money+Laundering+Scandals+Have+Prompted+The+Nordic+Regions+Biggest+Banks+To+Work+Together

This Ohio man is accused of trying to launder $19 million of bitcoin from the dark web

How $220 Billion Of Dirty Money Is Laundered Through Europe

Follow the (Dirty) Money
https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/kleptocracy-money-laundering-book/
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The internet is rotting – let’s embrace it
Viktor Mayer-Schönberger – The Conversation: 25 July 2019
The internet is making it too hard to forget things and move on. You have to actively seek to destroy information. The author argues that everyone should embrace the purging of rotting information.
https://theconversation.com/the-internet-is-rotting-lets-embrace-it-116239

For more on this theme:
(U.S., Global) False Assumptions Behind the Current Drive to Regulate Social Media

(Global) A Mexican Standoff in Wonderland
http://www.circleid.com/posts/20190722_a_mexican_standoff_in_wonderland/

(Global) Identity governance and administration in a digital world: #GovernanceForAll

INTERNET FREEDOM

Kazakhstan’s move to control internet prompts censorship, surveillance concerns
Madeline Earp – Committee to Protect Journalists: 25 July 2019
Kazakhstan’s new regulation requiring subscribers to have their internet traffic intercepted when using certain sites has critics worried that this is just another tool for censorship and surveillance. Especially concerning is that this arrangement breaks end-to-end encryption protocols.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Digital authoritarianism and the threat to global democracy

(South Korea) Internet Censorship is Part of South Korea’s Democracy Package
https://international.thenewslens.com/article/122579

(Global) Control Freaks and Bond Villains
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Roll Back Internet Data Collection. Start With Facebook.
Shira Ovide – Bloomberg: 24 July 2019

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) hit Facebook with a record $5 billion fine for sharing the personal information of tens of millions of its users without their permission. The social media giant must also make structural changes to protect the privacy of its users. Yet, many critics think the FTC didn’t go far enough.


For more on this theme:

(Australia) Experts demand increased transparency in metadata surveillance laws

(U.S.) The challenge in securing critical information

(Global) The internet has become a dark place. I want the old one back

CYBER STRATEGY AND POLICY

Agencies Need to Fully Establish Risk Management Programs and Address Challenges

The U.S. GAO investigated 23 federal agencies to determine how they protect against cyber threats. Not one of the agencies fully incorporated the government’s recommended cyber security practices into their programs.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) NSA Launches Cybersecurity Arm To Defend The U.S. From Foreign Adversaries

(U.S., Global) I helped write the rules for the internet in the 1990s: This is what we missed

(Australia) Ensuring the protection and integrity of Australians’ data
MASS SURVEILLANCE AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

China’s globally popular camera apps may open up user data to Beijing requests
Grace Shao – CNBC: 24 July 2019

Cyber security experts are concerned about China’s control over camera apps and the potential for mass surveillance. Many of the world’s most popular photo and video apps come from China, and the companies are forced to turn over their data to the Chinese government if asked.


For more on this theme:
(Russia) Old-age challenge: is FaceApp really a Russian spy in digital form?

(China, North Korea) Here’s the clearest evidence yet of why Huawei can’t be trusted, and it involves North Korea

(China, Czech Republic) China’s Huawei Faces New Allegations Over Cyber Security

RISK MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION

Global collaboration needed to mitigate cyber threats
Jamie Brown – Government News: 22 July 2019

Cyber attacks now rank just below extreme weather and natural disasters as a potential global risk. Prioritizing cyber threats and mitigating them warrants an international approach.


For more on this theme:
(U.S.) What’s keeping generals up at night? Cyber threats
https://taskandpurpose.com/cyber-threats-generals

(Europe) EU completes first phase of 5G cybersecurity risk assessment
https://www.rcrwireless.com/20190722/policy/eu-5g-cybersecurity-risk-assessment
COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

New Cyber Attack Trends Report Reveals That Digital Criminals Made Off With $45 Billion in 2018
Scott Ikeda – CPO Magazine: 22 July 2019

The Internet Society’s Online Trust Alliance’s report shows that cyber crime increased by tens of billions of dollars over 2017 to end at $45 billion in 2018. The report notes that while cyber crime incidents are down overall, the financial impact has dramatically increased.


Full report:
Cyber Incident & Breach Trends Report

For more on this theme:
(India) India fights Cyber Crime
(The Netherlands) Dutch police aim to divert youngsters from cybercrime
https://portswigger.net/daily-swig/dutch-police-aim-to-divert-youngsters-from-cybercrime
(U.S.) The Way Forward: Working Together to Tackle Cybercrime

NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

Darknet DDoSer Does Damage to Dread
Zane Pokorny – Recorded Future: 15 July 2019
Daniel Byrnes, a senior threat intelligence analyst, discusses how criminal markets work on the darknet.
https://www.recordedfuture.com/podcast-episode-116/

For more on this theme:
(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast: Episode 900
(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast: Episode 897
(Global) Intelligence for the OSINT Curious
https://www.recordedfuture.com/podcast-episode-115/
Cyber Protection of Critical Infrastructure

Europe seeks to harmonise smart grid security requirements

SmartCitiesWorld: 23 July 2019

To increase resilience across Europe, the European Network for Cyber Security and the European Distribution System Operators’ Association introduced a set of baseline security requirements for smart meters and data concentrators.


For more on this theme:

(Venezuela) Venezuelan government blames ‘electromagnetic attack’ for nationwide blackout


(Global) Managing the cyber-nuclear nexus

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

IS Decentralizing Into ‘Provinces’ in Bid to Return
Rikar Hussein, Ezel Sahinkaya, Sirwan Kajjo and Nafisa Hoodbhoy – Voice of America: 21 July 2019

ISIS has announced several new “provinces” over the past few months since losing its territory in Iraq and Syria. This increasingly decentralized ISIS could be more dangerous than the first iteration of the group.

Hundreds of Islamic State militants are slipping back into Iraq. Their fight isn’t over.
Louisa Loveluck and Mustafa Salim – The Washington Post: 21 July 2019

According to an Iraqi security analyst, ISIS militants have been sneaking back into Iraq and waging small-scale attacks across the central and northern parts of the country, specifically in rural areas where they can hide undetected. About 1,000 militants are estimated to have returned to Iraq.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/hundreds-of-islamic-state-militants-are-slipping-back-into-iraq-their-fight-isnt-over/2019/07/21/1fbe4262-a259-11e9-a767-d7ab84aef3e9_story.html

For more on this theme:

Egypt hands out 11 life sentences for joining Islamic State
https://apnews.com/66aebe992e104eeb9a65da536baed1e

Abu Sayyaf Is Bringing More of ISIS’ Brutal Tactics to the Philippines

Syria: Dire Conditions for ISIS Suspects’ Families

Isis suspects in Syrian camp raise thousands through online crowdfunding campaign
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-syria-camp-al-hol-paypal-telegram-online-crowdfunding-a9021006.html

Islamic State fighters heading home: Is Southeast Asia ready?

Families of ISIS adherents to sue Australia over repatriation

Exclusive - Turkey, Qatar and the Return of ISIS to Libya

Foreign Militants Working With New Islamic State Leader In Philippines
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

How viable is dialogue with al-Shabaab and Boko Haram?
Akinola Olojo – Institute for Security Studies: 24 July 2019

The fights against al-Shabaab and Boko Haram have focused largely on military intervention as the key strategy, but the campaigns continue without significant results. Dialogue with these groups may be the key to ending their reigns of terror.


The UK Now Considers Far-Right Terror As Dangerous As Islamic Extremism
Tim Hume – VICE: 25 July 2019

The United Kingdom has now placed right-wing terrorist groups on par with the threat levels from foreign and jihadist threats. “While the Islamist threat remains, we have recently seen an increase in terrorist activity motivated by the extreme right-wing,” Home Secretary Sajid Javid said. “Our approach to stopping terrorists is the same, regardless of the twisted ideology that motivates them.”


For more on this theme:
Terrorism does increase with immigration — but only homegrown, right-wing terrorism

Envoy cites link between terrorists, crime groups in Philippines

Peace for Afghanistan: How to Reintegrate Taliban Fighters?

The new risks of criminality, terrorism and extremism

Women Jihadists: Dupes of Emotional Trap

Why did Argentina declare Hezbollah a terrorist group?

Iran ‘Ready To Strike’ In The West Using Sleeper Terror Cells: Report Claims

Where will Boko Haram go next after ten years of moving around?
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Researchers simulate mafia and terrorism recruitment
Loredana Pianta – Phys.org: 25 July 2019

Researchers have developed a new tool to help measure the future economic and social effects of their policies. The idea is to eradicate and weaken Mafia and terrorist recruitment efforts. Computational and social sciences are being employed to build simulations to study how recruitment processes work.


After ISIS: how Kosovo is rehabilitating women and children repatriated from Syria
Sara Manisera – The National: 25 July 2019

Much of Europe has been reluctant to bring home the families of ISIS members, but not Kosovo. It has launched a rehabilitation program and brought home women and children from Syria to repatriate them into society.

https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/after-isis-how-kosovo-is-rehabilitating-women-and-children-repatriated-from-syria-1.890533

For more on this theme:

Afghan authorities alarmed by ISIS recruiters at Kabul University
https://www.thenational.ae/world/asia/afghan-authorities-alarmed-by-isis-recruiters-at-kabul-university-1.890394

Facebook Takes Action As Terrorists Found Using Platform To Recruit And Campaign

Specialist jails aimed at stopping radicalisation are underused, say staff
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jul/22/specialist-jails-to-prevent-extremism-are-undersubscribed

What are the individual roots of each extremist’s radicalisation?
https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/opinion/114471189/what-are-the-individual-roots-of-each-extremists-radicalisation

Opportunities for youth could eliminate extremism

The changing face of violent extremism

Commission releases new research into extremism in the UK
https://aboutmanchester.co.uk/commission-releases-new-research-into-extremism-in-the-uk/

What does extremism mean? The British public aren’t sure

Why is the violent far right still able to organise online?
https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/violent-organise-online-190721185447179.html
FINANCING TERRORISM

To Fight Terrorists, Follow the Money
Emanuele Ottolenghi – Foreign Policy: 19 July 2019

By going after money launderers, governments can curtail terrorism and corruption. It’s time to look beyond military actions and disrupting attacks and focus on prosecuting those who finance the group’s activities.


For more on this theme:

EU Fight against money laundering and terrorist financing

#SecurityUnion – EU-US co-operation on tackling terrorist financing continues to produce results

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

UN calls for stronger ‘global response’ to terrorism, organized crime
Agence France-Presse: 20 July 2019

The United Nations Security Council is concerned with the “global response” to terrorism and organized crime and called for the international community to work together to identify and eliminate the threats.


For more on this theme:

From counter-terrorism to recovery: Lessons from international experience

What’s Behind the Philippines’ New Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism?

Counterterrorism with the Taliban

Social media companies are failing to stop the spread of terrorism online

Women and the war on terror: An insider account
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/07/22/women-and-the-war-on-terror-an-insider-account/