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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Haiti Reveals ‘Colossal Loss’ of $4M Worth of Corruption
Evens Sanon and Danica Coto – The Associated Press: 26 August 2022

Officials say dozens of alleged acts of corruption cost Haiti’s government a “colossal loss” of some U.S. $4 million at a time when state infrastructure is collapsing amid political instability and deepening poverty.

https://apnews.com/article/latin-america-port-au-prince-haiti-property-taxes-6b34010802237d-34412b711eac795e3b

How Russian Corruption Is Foiling Putin’s Army in Ukraine
Paul D. Shinkman – U.S. News & World Report: 31 August 2022

Though Ukraine has fielded a remarkable defense, another deadly battlefield foe has emerged for Putin: endemic corruption and graft from top to bottom in the Russian army.


For more on this theme:

Kyrgyz President Fires Health Minister Arrested On Corruption Charges
https://www.rferl.org/a/kyrgyzstan-health-minister-fired/31996167.html

Corruption probe launched into Albania’s ex-president Meta

Russia’s Alexei Navalny Launches International Anti-Corruption Fund
https://theowp.org/russias-alexei-navalny-launches-international-anti-corruption-fund/

China probes current, former bosses at real estate firms

EU Anti-Corruption Initiative in Ukraine to help develop a board role-playing game for young people

Lawmakers suspect corruption for Isimba Hydropower Plant shutdown

Engaging Thailand’s Public Sector To Prevent Corruption

OECD ready to help Ukraine eliminate corruption risks in post-war reconstruction process
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Death and deforestation: Cocaine trade adds to Amazon’s woes
Andre Cabette Fabio – Reuters: 29 August 2022
The killings of indigenous expert Bruno Pereira and British journalist Dom Phillips at the Javari Valley in June highlighted increasing violence in the Amazon and fueled concern about links between drug traffickers and environmental crimes.
https://bdnews24.com/the-long-read/v77gii3vbf

Afghanistan’s drug trade is booming under Taliban rule
Rupert Stone – Atlantic Council: 24 August 2022
Soon after taking power last August, the Taliban vowed to crack down on narcotics. Fast forward to April of this year when they seemed to make good on that promise, issuing a decree that unequivocally banned the production and sale of illicit drugs. Unfortunately, that decree has been inadequately enforced, and Afghanistan’s drug trade is booming under Taliban rule.

For more on this theme:
The foreign policies of the Sinaloa Cartel and CJNG — Part III: Africa
Opium Poppy Cultivation in Afghanistan Appears To Be Declining — At a Cost
The cartels flexed their power in Tijuana — and now the battle for influence is on
https://www.npr.org/2022/08/20/1118420516/mexico-cartel-drug-violence-tijuana-border
Kashmir’s rising narco-terrorism: Why are religious leaders silent?
https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/kashmirs-rising-narco-terrorism/
Myanmar’s military regime encourages yaba smuggling to Bangladesh
https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/myanmars-military-regime-encourages-yaba-smuggling-bangladesh-483878
DEA Warns of Brightly-Colored Fentanyl Used to Target Young Americans
Booming cocaine trade spreads across Latin America
No choice: Colombia’s ex-guerrillas revert to coca, crime
Indigenous leaders get a choice: Join the narcos or run for your lives
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

How the pandemic has driven a surge in wildlife smuggling through North East India
Rokibuz Zaman – Scroll.in: 28 August 2022
Gaps in the law to regulate the trade of ‘exotic’ animals have helped.
https://scroll.in/article/1031395/how-the-pandemic-has-driven-a-surge-in-wildlife-smuggling-through-north-east-india

Swarms of Satellites Are Tracking Illegal Fishing and Logging
Jonathan O’Callaghan – Wired: 30 August 2022
In some of the world’s most inaccessible places, tiny satellites are watching — and listening — for signs of destruction.
https://www.wired.com/story/satellite-constellations/

For more on this theme:

Crimes against the Amazon reverberate across Brazil, analysis shows

Conservationists Risk Their Lives Protecting Animals
https://www.aol.com/conservationists-risk-lives-protecting-animals-134700588.html

Direct jail sentences a win in fight against South Africa’s illegal wildlife trade

Latest death by Indigenous tribe highlights rising tensions in Peru

Raids reveal how illegal gold from Indigenous lands gets laundered in Brazil

Mining the Mekong: Land and livelihoods lost to Cambodia’s thirst for sand

Venezuelan Amazon deforestation expands due to lawlessness, mining, fires: Reports

Fisheries crackdown pushes Cambodians to the brink on Tonle Sap lake
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET FREEDOM

When internet shutdowns spill over borders
Julia Bergin and Louisa Lim – The Guardian: 28 August 2022

The mechanics of the internet mean that blocks on access imposed by one country can be felt half a world away.
https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/aug/29/when-internet-shutdowns-spill-over-borders

For more on this theme:
(Pakistan) YouTube is temporarily blocked during former PM’s political rally in Pakistan

(India) Unfreedom Monitor Report: India
https://globalvoices.org/2022/08/18/unfreedom-monitor-report-india/

(Global) Activists: Internet shutdowns violate human rights

CYBER STATECRAFT AND STRATEGY

Organizations changing cyber strategy in response to nation-state attacks
Help Net Security: 25 August 2022

Two thirds of organizations have changed their cybersecurity strategy as a direct response to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, while nearly as many suspect their organization has been either directly targeted or affected by a nation-state cyberattack, according to Venafi.

For more on this theme:
(EU) EU Outlines Critical Cyber Response to Ukraine War

(Global) Shifting Cyber Agenda in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

(Global) Do Cybersecurity Bilateral Agreements Do Anything?

(EU) The EU prioritises Internet trust and citizen empowerment
CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Montenegro Accuses Russia of Cyber-Attacks on Govt Server  
Samir Kajosevic – BIRN: 26 August 2022

The Montenegrin Agency for National Security alleged that Russian services have staged coordinated attacks on government servers but said the authorities managed to prevent any damage.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Ransomware cyber attacks spike to over 1.2 mn per month in H12022

(U.S.) New Hampshire Lottery website back online after experiencing cyber attack

(China, Australia) Chinese cyber attack on Australia exposed
https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/chinese-cyber-attack-on-australia-exposed/O75SMU5QGPDL5US3D6T5GFZSWU/

(U.K.) Advanced cyber-attack: NHS doctors’ paperwork piles up

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Deutsche Katastrophe – Germany Fights Digital Backwardness  
Laura Kabelka – Center for European Policy Analysis: 30 August 2022

Although Germany is known for efficiency, it lags in broadband connectivity and other digital measurements. Berlin aims to improve — but many doubt its determination to shield important EU tech dossiers.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) State Department Makes Inroads for Public-Private Tech Partnerships at Home

(Asia, Global) Asia’s digital economy needs a new fair play rulebook

(Singapore, Global) Singapore has lessons to offer the world on digitizing government
**CYBERCRIME**

*Ransomware: Cyber criminals are coming for the Global South*

Janosch Delcker – Deutsche Welle: 27 August 2022

Hackers are targeting governments and public institutions in middle-income and developing countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. They extort millions — and often find easy targets.


*For more on this theme:*

(U.K.) How and Why Do Teens Become Cyber Criminals?

(India) Cyber crime rate in Delhi increased over 100% during 2020-21, shows data

(Global) Cyber Criminals Increasingly Exploit Vulnerabilities in Decentralized Finance Platforms to Obtain Cryptocurrency

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**CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION**

*Will Voluntary CISA Cyber Goals Be Enough to Protect Critical Infrastructure?*

Dan Lohrmann – Government Technology: 28 August 2022

The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is getting pushback from critical infrastructure owners and operators on cyber goals and objectives.


*For more on this theme:*

(U.S.) Redefining Cybersecurity as International Security, Not Just National Security
https://www.csis.org/analysis/redefining-cybersecurity-international-security-not-just-national-security

(U.S.) How U.S. Cyber Command, NSA Are Defending Midterm Elections: One Team, One Fight

(Bahamas) Bahamian Government warns of increase in digital threats and malicious cyber activities
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

ISIS-Linked Transnational Networks Formalize Priority of Freeing Loyalists from Syrian Prison Camps
Mona Thakkar and Anne Speckhard – Homeland Security Today: 29 August 2022
The terror group sees the move as preventing return of their youth to the “disbelieving lands” and as a quick way to forge them into future extremists.

ISIS and al-Qaeda on the Move in Africa, Intent on Spreading Their Influence and Jihadist Ideology
Mahmut Cengiz – Homeland Security Today: 29 August 2022
Terrorist organizations are shrewd and calculating when it comes to target selection, message and intended audience.

For more on this theme:

26 people died in al-Hol camp so far in 2022, UN official says

Kurdish forces arrest suspected ISIS extremists in sweep of Syria’s al-Hol camp

Defying ISIS terrorists through research
https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02768-8

Afghans from minority groups face new threats — this time from ISIS
https://www.npr.org/2022/08/26/1119568465/afghans-from-minority-groups-face-new-threats-this-time-from-isis

Shamima Begum ‘smuggled into Syria for Islamic State by Canadian spy’
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/aug/31/shamima-begum-smuggled-into-syria-for-islamic-state-by-canadian-spy

Perspectives | Islamic State recruiting Uzbeks to fight in Afghanistan

The Taliban’s Battle Against Islamic State Khorasan
https://inkstickmedia.com/the-talibans-battle-against-islamic-state-khorasan/

Islamic State Khorasans’s Expanded Vision in South and Central Asia
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Can Nigeria finance its war against insurgents?
Teniola Tayo – Institute for Security Studies: 25 August 2022
The revenue crunch will make it difficult to counter the surge in violence from Boko Haram and other groups.
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/can-nigeria-finance-its-war-against-insurgents

Forty years on, Hezbollah is isolated but more powerful than ever
Adam Pourahmadi – CNN: 29 August 2022
The Lebanese Shiite group has tried to rebrand itself from a paramilitary organization backed by Iran to a serious political and regional player.

For more on this theme:
Afghanistan and the region: One year after the fall of Kabul
A Year into Taliban Rule, Afghans Face Spiraling Economic, Humanitarian Crises
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/08/after-year-taliban-rule-advances-afghan-women-and-youth-have-all-evaporated
One Year Later: Taliban Reprise Repressive Rule, but Struggle to Build a State
https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/08/one-year-later-taliban-reprise-repressive-rule-struggle-build-state
JNIM in Burkina Faso
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/jnim-burkina-faso/
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on extremist groups’ use of IEDs
Buhari’s War On Terror – OpEd
https://www.eurasiareview.com/31082022-buharis-war-on-terror-oped/
Cameroon, Nigeria Reopening Border Markets and Schools with Boko Haram Threat Diminished
Palestinians grow frustrated with militants in Gaza, and a rift could be forming
https://www.npr.org/2022/08/26/1119220569/palestinians-gaza-hamas-islamic-jihad-israel
Islamic Jihad looks to Hezbollah after disastrous Gaza war
AL-QAIDA

Is Abu Bakar Bashir Really Walking Away From Violent Extremism?
Bilveer Singh – The Diplomat: 31 August 2022

The former JI leader recently pledged his loyalty to the Indonesian state, but there are reasons to question the sincerity of his conversion.

https://thediplomat.com/2022/08/is-abu-bakar-bashir-really-walking-away-from-violent-extremism/

For more on this theme:
Al-Qaeda is a Cancer that Won’t Die
https://intpolicydigest.org/the-platform/al-qaeda-is-a-cancer-that-won-t-die/
Al-Qaeda Still Potent
After al-Zawahiri, what lies next for al-Qaeda

RADICALIZATION

Majority of posts on extremist online forums made by ‘hyper-poster’ cliques, study shows
University of Exeter – Phys.org: 30 August 2022

Those posts are made by a clique of particularly committed members, a major new study shows.


For more on this theme:
Designation and Moderation of Online Terrorist Content
https://eeradicalization.com/designation-and-moderation-of-online-terrorist-content/
Assam Police implementing ‘counter-radicalisation measures’ after persons linked with Al-Qaeda Indian Subcontinent arrested
Far-right groups targeting young people, inquiry finds
Amnesty announces review as Ukraine report backlash continues
CONFLICT AND CRIME

Yale researchers use satellite images to locate detention camps in Russian-occupied Ukraine
Sophie Wang & Isaac Yu – Yale Daily News: 1 September 2022
The Yale School of Public Health’s Humanitarian Research Lab’s collaboration with the U.S. State Department is set to be discussed at the U.N. Security Conference.
https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2022/09/01/yale-researchers-use-satellite-images-to-locate-detention-camps-in-russian-occupied-ukraine%EF%BF%BC/

For more on this theme:

New Report Reveals Evidence of Mass Graves in Russian-Held Ukraine

Russia must be held accountable for committing genocide in Ukraine

Accountability for War Crimes and Other Atrocities in Ukraine: Recent Reporting and the Commitment of Additional Funding

Ukraine: Russian sham trials of prisoners of war in Mariupol ‘illegal and unacceptable’

The Complexity of Prosecuting Forced Conscription
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/complexity-prosecuting-forced-conscription

How the International Criminal Court Could Prosecute Putin
https://bostonreview.net/articles/how-the-international-criminal-court-could-prosecute-putin/

Sudan denies impeding ICC officials’ access to Darfur crime suspects
https://www.theafrican.co.ke/tea/rest-of-africa/sudan-icc-officials-access-to-darfur-crime-suspects-392700

Conflict victims, human rights activists write to UN chief on Nepal’s transitional justice

An unnamed Syrian official is a key witness in proving war crimes of the regime
https://www.npr.org/2022/08/30/1120023691/an-unnamed-syrian-official-is-a-key-witness-in-proving-war-crimes-of-the-regime

“We Felt Like Hostages”: Ukrainians Describe Forcible Transfers and Filtration by Russian Forces
https://theintercept.com/2022/09/01/ukraine-russia-war-forced-deportations/
CONFLICT AND CRIME

For more on this theme:

**An Architecture for Justice in Ukraine**
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/architecture-justice-ukraine

**Talking About “War Crimes”**
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/talking-about-war-crimes/

**Myanmar junta forces said to have burned tens of thousands of homes**

**Ukraine train station attack may be war crime, experts say**
https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/ukraine-train-station-attack-war-crime-experts-88902169

**Report: Russia Is Targeting Ukraine’s Healthcare Facilities With Impunity**

RUSSIA/UKRAINE

**A Deadlocked War for Ukraine and Russia**
*Tom Mutch – Newslines: 29 August 2022*

Despite recent action in Kherson, neither side is winning six months into the conflict.
https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/a-deadlocked-war-for-ukraine-and-russia/

For more on this theme:

**IntelBrief: Russia Leans More on Wagner Group in Sign of Growing Desperation**

**Collateral Damage: The Environmental Cost of the Ukraine War**
https://e360.yale.edu/features/ukraine-russia-war-environmental-impact

**Ghosts of the Past: Russian Strategic Failures in the First Chechen War**

**Russia’s Limits Meet Ukraine’s Discretion to Slow the War Down to Ukraine’s Advantage**

**Ukraine’s much-heralded counteroffensive could work. The defeatists won’t admit it.**

**When Russia and Ukraine eventually restart peace talks, involving women — or not — could be a key factor in an agreement actually sticking**
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Ukraine has hobbled Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Could it turn the tide of the war?

Russia's war on Ukraine has put Arctic defence back on Canada's agenda. Here's why

UK says it is unclear how Russia will recruit more soldiers

Russian troops in a new combat unit meant to turn the tide in Ukraine keep getting drunk and harassing locals, nearby residents say

U.S. expects Russia to prepare sham referenda in Ukraine — State Dept

Russia-Ukraine War and The Media
https://www.ithaca.edu/intercom/2022-08-25-russia-ukraine-war-and-media

What are the West's strategic goals in the Ukraine war?
https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/what-are-the-wests-strategic-goals-in-the-ukraine-war/

Russia Is Sending A Fresh Army Corps To Ukraine. Its Troops Are 'Unfit And Old.'

Ukraine's Outnumbered Air Force Wants to Dominate Russian Skies
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/ukraines-outnumbered-air-force-wants-dominate-russian-skies-204479

Russian parents and teachers urged to boycott 'propaganda classes'
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/01/russian-parents-and-teachers-urged-to-boycott-propaganda-classes

The Ukrainian military must reorganize to defeat Russia
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-ukrainian-military-must-reorganize-to-defeat-russia/

How Ukraine Is Remaking War
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/how-ukraine-remaking-war

The war in Ukraine is an opportunity to upgrade the transatlantic architecture. Here’s how.
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**OSINT’s influence on the Russian air campaign in Ukraine and the implications for future Western deployments**

**A web of partnerships: Ukraine, operational collaboration, and effective national defense in cyberspace**

**Early lessons from the Russia-Ukraine war as a space conflict**

**A Western Strategy for Ukraine**
https://cepa.org/a-western-strategy-for-ukraine/

**Circumventing Russia**
https://cepa.org/circumventing-russia/

**Ukraine’s Offensive — What to Look For**

**Red Hands, Red Faces**
https://cepa.org/red-hands-red-faces-russian-spies-squirm/

**Putin’s Greatest Enemy? A Prosperous Russia**
https://cepa.org/putins-greatest-enemy-a-prosperous-russia/

**Ukraine’s ‘War of the Bridges’ Begins With Southern Push**
https://cepa.org/ukraines-war-of-the-bridges-begins-with-southern-push/

**Analysis: Full gas storage no fix for Europe's winter energy crunch**

**Russia-China Axis Intensification: Implications For India – Analysis**

**Putin Causing Trouble? Why Russia Blocked Consensus On the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

**The war in Ukraine is reaching a critical moment**
https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/ukraine/2022/08/kherson-counterattack-ukraine-war-critical-moment
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Russia’s Conspiracy-Theory Factory Is Swaying a Brand New Audience

Winter Is Coming: Breaking Down Russian Propaganda Across Europe
https://worldcrunch.com/focus/russian-propaganda-in-europe

Cyber Element in the Russia-Ukraine War & its Global Implications

How Russia is making ‘friends’ in Africa during the Ukraine war

Russia-Installed Kherson Leader Has Fled to Russia, Video Analysis Suggests

As Russia’s war ‘drags on,’ EU expands Ukraine’s military training to include ‘NATO-class weaponry’