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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Corruption in counterterrorism aid programs fuels extremist groups, says new report
Daniel Cebul – DefenseNews: 13 September 2018

“Corruption involves far more than a waste of money,” writes Colby Goodman, a director for the nonprofit Center for International Policy. “It also poses a grave danger to U.S. and global security by reducing the effectiveness of U.S. counterterror programs. In some instances, widespread corruption in military aid programs actually strengthens terrorist organizations by fueling anti-government sentiment, undermining the morale of front-line military personnel, and diverting U.S.-supplied equipment to groups like ISIS, the Taliban, and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.”

Corruption Is Wasting Chinese Money in Africa
Salem Solomon and Casey Frechette – Foreign Policy: 13 September 2018

China has been pumping investment money into Africa for decades. But a lack of transparency within African governments, a laissez faire approach by the Chinese and widespread corruption put the effectiveness of that Chinese money into question. It could be good for Africa, if used properly.

For more on this theme:
Corruption Is China’s Friend in Its Quest to Dominate Africa

Anti-Corruption Protests Take Over Guatemala City

In Peru, an Accidental President Moves Against Corruption
https://www.americasquarterly.org/content/peru-accidental-president-moves-against-corruption

Pervasive corruption costs $2.6 trillion; disproportionately affects ‘poor and vulnerable’ says UN chief

Corruption and conflict: An insidious plague

Corruption in Mongolia: A Problem for Youth

Pollution and corruption are choking the life out of Basra

How corruption encourages illegal fishing on Lake Victoria
DRUG TRAFFICKING

‘It Starts With Mindset’: What Portugal’s Drug Policy Experts Taught Me About Addiction Treatment
Lipi Roy – Forbes: 31 August 2018

Portugal is considered a role model for drug legalization efforts. The Portuguese model could teach other Western nations how to focus less on punitive measures and more on helping addicts.

U.S. official: Canadian marijuana users, workers and investors risk lifetime border ban
Luiza Ch. Savage – Politico: 13 September 2018

Canadians who invest in marijuana-related stocks could be banned from ever entering the U.S., according to a new report. While pot smokers and cannabis-industry workers have previously faced the prospect of lifetime travel bans, it may be news to investors that the risk extends to them as well.

For more on this theme:
A Controversial Fix for Overdose Deaths: Safe Injection Sites

Prisoners need drug and alcohol treatments but AA programs aren’t the answer

The Cocaine Ties That Bind Colombia and Venezuela

Drug trafficking a threat to Gambia’s peace: Interior Minister

Rohingya refugees at the mercy of drug gangs and human traffickers

Children and the anti-illegal drugs campaign: When the cure is worse than the disease

Getting high in the drug-riddled mountains of Laos

A new drug creeps into Bangladesh’s narcotics scene
http://www.atimes.com/article/a-new-drug-creeps-into-bangladeshs-narcotics-scene/

Myanmar remains well behind neighbours in cracking down on illicit trade
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Why the drone buzz is getting louder
Gabrielle Lipton – Forests News: 6 September 2018

Drones are being used ever increasingly in forest landscape research. This interview with scientist Yves Laumonier, the foremost drone ecologist at the Center for International Forestry Research, sheds light on the pros, cons and ethical questions regarding drones.

Wildlife group details growing illicit animal trade on Facebook
Ali Breland – The Hill: 10 September 2018

Wildlife trade monitor TRAFFIC discovered a dozen Facebook groups from Thailand offering animals for sale, including endangered species. The group found 1,521 animals listed, a sharp increase since 2016 when the first group was found.

For more on this theme:

Narok residents turn to alternative methods to protect wildlife
https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001294649/narok-residents-turn-to-alternative-methods-to-protect-wildlife

FOCAC: China-Africa cooperate on sustainable infrastructure, illegal wildlife trade

China Wolves Down Southeast Asia’s Wildlife

UK fingerprinting kits to help in fight against illegal wildlife trade

How naming poison frogs helps fight their illegal trade
https://theconversation.com/how-naming-poison-frogs-helps-fight-their-illegal-trade-101228

Why Botswana is no longer a safe haven for elephants

These Animals Are About to Disappear From the Planet Forever
https://www.thestreet.com/personal-finance/these-animals-are-going-to-disappear-from-the-planet-14694644

The great timber heist, illegal logging and tax evasion in Papua New Guinea
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

How to get good data about human trafficking
Melissa De Witte – Phys.org: 5 September 2018

Global statistics on human trafficking do not provide the data necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts. “One of the key gaps in our ability to respond effectively to the global trafficking crisis has to do with the lack of coordinated and reliable data,” said David Cohen, director of Stanford University’s Worldwide Support for Development Handa Center for Human Rights and International Justice. “We are far from where we need to be in terms of the kind of coordination and interoperability of data collection we need to address current challenges.”

Using tech to combat human trafficking
Sheith Khidhir – The Asean Post: 5 September 2018

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has yet to have a member nation crack the top tier on the U.S. State Department’s list of governments that effectively combat human trafficking. How could technology assist ASEAN nations in the fight against human trafficking?

For more on this theme:

The rise in human trafficking must be curbed

UN to assess human trafficking in Nigeria

Recognizing, Investigating And Prosecuting Human Trafficking: The Blue Campaign Comes To USVI

“Safe & Fair” working conditions: EU invests €25 million to counter exploitation, abuse, violence and trafficking of women migrant workers in Southeast Asia

In Bangladesh’s Teeming Refugee Camps, Rohingya Mothers Agonize Over Missing Children

At Libya’s unchecked southern borders, a key to easing the migration crisis

The Tebu: the little-known community at the heart of Libya’s people smuggling trade
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The changing dynamics of internet governance in the South Pacific  
Bart Hogeveen – Australian Strategic Policy Institute: 12 September 2018

With the Pacific island states in the bottom half of both the United Nations’ human development index and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s Asia-Pacific cyber maturity report, it was a great victory that Vanuatu hosted the ninth Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum in August.


For more on this theme:

(Global) The UN Panel on Digital Cooperation: Reinventing the Wheel or Innovating Internet Policy Making?  
http://www.circleid.com/posts/20180913_un_panel_digital_cooperation_reinventing_the_wheel_internet_policy/

(Haiti) iciHaiti — Technology: First International Forum on Internet Governance Haiti 2018  

(Global) ICANN at 20: Looking Back Forward  
http://www.circleid.com/posts/20180907_icann_at_20_looking_back_forward/

INTERNET FREEDOM

Google case set to examine if EU data rules extend globally  
Kelvin Chan – The Associated Press: 10 September 2018

French regulators have been arguing that Google must apply its “right to be forgotten” rules globally rather than just in France. The company presented its arguments to the European Union Court of Justice, which is expected to render a decision with serious ramifications for the global internet.

https://apnews.com/f260f53dd2df44478b8af0675bbd177

For more on this theme:

(China) China officially bans ABC website, claims internet is ‘fully open’  

(India) Netflix, Amazon, Hotstar contemplate creation of ‘voluntary censorship code’ for online content in India  

(China) Google Is Handing the Future of the Internet to China  
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Beyond the Cyber Leviathan: White Hats and U.S. Cyber Defense
Nina Kollars – War on the Rocks: 6 September 2018

Today’s U.S. cyber defense is largely a decentralized nonstate affair with input from security firms, independent researchers and not-for-profit organizations, in addition to U.S. government actors.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) NIST Cybersecurity Framework To Get Privacy Framework Companion

(U.S., U.K., Australia, Canada and New Zealand) Five Eyes Pledge to Force Encryption Backdoors: ‘Privacy Is Not Absolute’

(Global) Decentralisation: the next big step for the world wide web

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

A transatlantic alliance is crucial in an era of cyberwarfare
Keith Alexander – Financial Times: 4 September 2018

Nations on both sides of the Atlantic have yet to establish a collective defense when it comes to cyber security. Companies are expected to fend for themselves against attacks from state actors. The current strategy isn’t working, and it needs to be modernized.

https://www.ft.com/content/c01a7f94-af81-11e8-87e0-d84e0d934341

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Cyber Civil-Military Relations: Balancing Interests on the Digital Frontier

(U.S., Global) Is it time for a ‘slow food’ movement for the internet?

(Europe) Europe’s Digital Agenda – Week Two
https://www.governmentcomputing.com/brexit-eu/comment/europes-digital-agenda-week-two
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

MWCA: AT&T to partner with Los Angeles on smart cities
Corinne Reichert – ZDNet: 12 September 2018

AT&T and Los Angeles are in talks to form a public/private partnership that can foster the creation of a smart city. Through internet of things technology and the deployment of small-cell technology, the telecommunications giant will work with the city to address the problems that matter most to people who live, work and visit there.


For more on this theme:

(South Africa) Govt to finance Digital development through PPP's: Cwele

(Hong Kong) How public-private-government partnership heats up the innotech startup atmosphere

(Mexico) Mexico telecoms agency wants to focus on closing digital gap

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

EU approves controversial Copyright Directive, including internet ‘link tax’ and ‘upload filter’
James Vincent – The Verge: 12 September 2018

The European Parliament voted to approve controversial copyright reforms that have been in the works since 2016 and could transform the internet for users in Europe and beyond. The Copyright Directive is meant to protect content creators and has received strong support from some in the artistic and media communities. But its critics argue that the reforms would hamper the free flow of information, turn tech companies into content police and lead to widespread censorship.


For more on this theme:

(China, U.S.) U.S.’ top spy-catcher: China brings “ungodly resources” to espionage

(North Korea, U.S.) North Korean Hacking Team Allegedly Responsible for WannaCry Ransomware, Destructive Cyberattack on Sony Pictures, and Cybertheft from Bangladesh Bank
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Digital India finds global resonance: Indian talent has supported Silicon Valley, time to build a similar ecosystem at home
Ravi Shankar Prasad – Times of India: 13 September 2018

India has a deep pool of talented human resources that Silicon Valley has put to good use. But India needs to create its own Silicon Valley to solidify itself as an internet superpower.

For more on this theme:

(Global) Why Cyber Conflict as an Academic Discipline Struggles to Make Its Mark in Political Science

(ASEAN) ASEAN eyes strong digital growth amid new industrial revolution
http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1119602.shtml

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

Cyber crime costing German manufacturers $50bn with SMEs worst hit
Matthew Field – The Telegraph: 13 September 2018

Two thirds of Germany’s manufacturers have been hit by cyber attacks, costing $50 billion to industry in Europe’s largest economy, according to a survey by Bitkom. The survey of managers and security chiefs from across Germany’s manufacturing sector found that the small- and medium-size companies that are the economy’s backbone were particularly vulnerable to attacks.

For more on this theme:

(China) Round-the-clock cyber court opens in Beijing

(U.K, Global) Cyber crime is racing ahead, and we need to keep up

(Germany, India) Lessons from Germany to help cybercrime cops
INFORMATION SHARING

DHS Announces New Cybersecurity Center Aimed At Public-Private Coordination Of Cyber Operations
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom (U.K.) LLP: August 2018
The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will create a National Risk Management Center to focus on protecting critical infrastructure from cyber attacks. The goal of the center will be to identify and prioritize risks to critical infrastructure and manage public/private information sharing and risk management.
http://www.mondaq.com/unitedstates/x/736276/Security/DHS+Announces+New+Cybersecurity+Cen-
ter+Aimed+At+PublicPrivate+Coordination+Of+Cyber+Operations

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Understanding & Solving the Information-Sharing Challenge
https://www.darkreading.com/risk/understanding-and-solving-the-information-sharing-challenge-/a/d-
id/1332717

(GLOBAL) Cyber threats ‘blurring’ line between agencies’ foreign, domestic intelligence operations
https://federalnewsradio.com/cybersecurity/2018/09/cyber-threats-blurring-line-between-agencies-for-
eign-domestic-intelligence-operations/

(GLOBAL) Global cooperation ‘needed for collaborative, open cyberspace’

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Former Defense Department official outlines plan to protect U.S. energy grid from cyber attacks
Geoffrey Brown – Johns Hopkins University: 5 September 2018
A new study examines how power companies can partner with the U.S. Department of Energy to defeat attacks on the U.S. electric system.
https://hub.jhu.edu/2018/09/05/cyber-attacks-power-grid/

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Cyber security in the energy sector: A danger to society – Part 1

(U.S.) House passes cyber deterrence bill that would name and shame foreign hackers
and/

(U.S.) GAO: ‘Urgent Action’ Needed to Address Nation’s Cyber Challenges
es/151108/
ISIS

**Fight to Retake Last ISIS Territory Begins**

U.S.-backed forces have launched what they hope will be the final battle for territory in the 4-year-old war against the Islamic State with an assault on the militants’ last major bastion in the eastern Syrian desert, the U.S. military said.


**The Islamic State’s Enduring Narrative**
*The Cipher Brief: 11 September 2018*

Largely defeated on the ground, ISIS is likely to focus more attention on its digital propaganda and its virtual presence.

https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/the-islamic-states-enduring-narrative

*For more on this theme:*

**Political instability facilitates resurgence of Islamic State in Iraq**
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/political-instability-facilitates-resurgence-of-islamic-state-in-iraq

**Why a ‘Dramatic Dip’ in ISIS Attacks in the West Is Scant Comfort**

**Islamic State Says Libya Oil Fields Are a ‘Legitimate Target’**

**ISIS Isn’t Dead Yet**
https://nationalinterest.org/feature/isis-isnt-dead-yet-30152

**Words Are Weapons: Inside ISIS’s Rhetoric of Terror**
https://www.meforum.org/articles/2018/words-are-weapons-inside-isis%E2%80%99s-rhetoric-of-terr

**Isis threat to UK remains despite terror group’s demise in Middle East, warns commander**

**U.S. Update on ISIS in Iraq in Syria**

**‘Dangerous’ Islamist Preacher Set To Be Released Early From U.K. Prison**

**Researchers to archive ISIS documents with The New York Times**
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Tunisia feared the return of militants from abroad. The threat now is those who never left.
Sudarsan Raghavan – The Washington Post: 8 September 2018
Fear of returning jihadis from Syria and Iraq have largely been unfounded thus far. But a greater threat lurks: ISIS and al-Qaida are recruiting new generations of locals to attack at home.

How al-Qaeda survived the war on terror
Tricia Bacon – Quartz: 11 September 2018
The U.S. struck back at al-Qa’ida shortly after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. Seventeen years later, the group has somehow managed to beat the odds and survive — and even thrive. How is that possible?

For more on this theme:
The Jihadi Movement in Indonesia, an Overview
https://eeradicalization.com/the-jihadi-movement-in-indonesia-an-overview/
Al Qaeda Is Very Much Alive
https://www.weeklystandard.com/thomas-joscelyn/sept-11-anniversary-17-years-later-al-qaeda-is-alive
Boko Haram Leader Mamman Nur Killed By Own Fighters
U.S. Military’s Worst-Case Scenario: Large Parts of Africa Seized by ISIS, Al Qaeda, and Boko Haram
Seventeen years after Sept. 11, Al Qaeda may be stronger than ever
Understanding ISIS and al Qaeda
https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/understanding-isis-and-al-qaeda
Exclusive: Al-Shabab moves in on central Somalia
Deadly Cooperation: The Shifting Ties Between Al-Qaeda and the Taliban
Al-Qaeda Is Back and Its Leader Has a New 9/11 Message: ‘How Do We Face America?’
Al Qaeda Won
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

How to prevent a massacre and the creation of ISIS 2.0 in Syria’s Idlib province
Michael O’Hanlon and Steven Heydemann – USA Today: 11 September 2018

The American public will not tolerate a strategy toward Syria that requires new investments in U.S. troops, lives or treasure, according to the authors. But with the right modification of previous policies, it might not be too late to partially salvage what is left of Syria.


New research can identify extremists online, even before they post dangerous content
Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences – Phys.org: 12 September 2018

New research has found a way to identify extremists by monitoring social media accounts. “Using statistical modeling of extremist behavior with optimized search policies and actual ISIS user data, the researchers developed a method to predict new extremist users, identify if more than one account belongs to the same user, as well as predict network connections of suspended extremist users who start a new account,” according to the article.


For more on this theme:

Extremists exploiting small social media websites, experts warn

Residents of Hiiran embrace policing to tackle violent extremism

Stuck Fighting the Last War

New Global Strategy Needed to Fight Extremism, Britain’s Blair Says

MHA looks to engage non-state actors to counter radicalization

Deradicalisation and courage to face realities

When science challenges terrorism

“Where Do I Belong?” – Identity Crises and Islamic Radicalism
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Passport to jihad: European foreign fighters joining ISIS in the Philippines
Robert Postings – The Defense Post: 12 September 2018

As ISIS collapses in Syria, foreign fighters might be looking to the Philippines for a new home. This year has seen increasing attempts by foreign fighters to enter the country, looking to join the local fight.


For more on this theme:

Foreign fighters in Syria’s Idlib face last stand

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

Report: Counterterrorism Should Pivot To Strengthen Fragile States
Greg Myre – NPR: 11 September 2018

The U.S. Institute of Peace says that U.S. counterterrorism efforts should switch focus and look at preventing extremism by supporting fragile and at-risk countries.


Full report:

Beyond the Homeland: Protecting America from Extremism in Fragile States

For more on this theme:

Iran Tricked ISIS Supporters Into Downloading Wallpaper That Spied on Them, Report Says

If we refuse to work with the European Union on counterterrorism following Brexit, we will all be at risk

Have US counterterrorism efforts improved since 9/11?
https://www.brookings.edu/podcast-episode/have-us-counterterrorism-efforts-improved-since-9-11/

Counterterror Costs Since 911: $2.8 TRILLION And Climbing
https://inhomelandsecurity.com/counterterrorism-since-911/

Lessons from ISIS: Using the internet for counter-terrorism