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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Transparency, anti-corruption, and sustainable development: Is progress possible?
Brookings: 18 September 2017

The Brookings Institution hosted an event to discuss how “open governance” — transparency, accountability and participation — could contribute to reducing corruption and achieving sustainable development.

https://www.brookings.edu/events/transparency-anti-corruption-and-sustainable-development-is-progress-possible/

Guatemalans Hold ‘National Strike’ Against Corruption
Telesur: 20 September 2017

Thousands of Guatemalans rallied in the capital in response to a call for political and social organizations to march against corruption.


For more on this theme:

US Advises Banks to Watch for Venezuelan Corruption

Ukraine must create an independent anti-corruption court
https://www.transparency.org/_view/pressrelease/7957

Hold directors criminally responsible for corruption under their watch – BUSA

Tajikistan: Ex-Top Anti-corruption Officials Jailed for Corruption

Increasing awareness on prevention of corruption, power abuse

3 things we’ve learned since the Anti-Corruption Summit in London 2016
https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/3_things_weve_learned_since_the_anti_corruption_summit_in_london_2016?src=ilaw

Anti-corruption fatigue?
http://thenationonlineng.net/anti-corruption-fatigue/

Tunisians march against contested corruption amnesty
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-tunisia-corruption/tunisians-march-against-contested-corruption-amnesty-idUSKCN1BR0TU

How Mexico’s Anti-Corruption Fight Went Off-Track
http://americasquarterly.org/content/how-mexicos-anti-corruption-fight-went-track
**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

**Bring in the Banks? Legal Cannabis Industry Struggles to Find Financing**  
*Erin Mundahl – Inside Sources: 20 September 2017*

Cannabis dispensaries in the United States must walk the line between state and federal laws. In states where the drug is legal, dispensaries are forced to make cash sales only because regular banking is unavailable to them. With legal retail cannabis sales totaling more than $6.5 billion last year, the financial hurdles are problematic at best.

http://www.insidesources.com/legal-cannabis-industry-struggles-to-find-financing/

**Could Legalizing All Drugs Solve America’s Opioid Epidemic?**  
*Jeffrey Miron – Fortune: 19 September 2017*

Globally, liberal drug policies have been successful in reducing some of the harmful effects of drug addiction, such as HIV and overdoses. In the midst of an opioid crisis, perhaps the U.S. should consider modeling itself after countries like Portugal and the Czech Republic.


*For more on this theme:*

**Trump’s return to ‘drug war’ rhetoric is unlikely to succeed in a region that has largely rejected its effectiveness**  

**Panama vows to combat drug trafficking, asks for help to eliminate ‘blood money’ driving scourge**  

**Drug smuggling, and the endless battle to stop it**  
https://www.usatoday.com/border-wall/story/drug-trafficking-smuggling-cartels-tunnels/559814001/

**Russia Takes Down Dark Web Drug Market**  

**Colombia’s Santos reiterates calls to rethink war on drugs in final UN speech**  

**Should drugs be legalised? Some answers to Prince William’s ‘massive question’**  
https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/sep/20/should-drugs-be-legalised-some-answers-to-prince-williams-massive-question

**Fentanyl Seized In Record NYC Bust Was Enough To Kill 32 Million**  
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fentanyl-new-york-city_us_59c1f530e4b0f22c4a8d8bd2

**41 state attorneys general subpoena opioid manufacturers**  

**America’s opioid epidemic is so bad it’s causing average life expectancy to drop**  
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

To fight wildlife crime, experts say ‘follow the money'

Going after wildlife smugglers the same way authorities would fight drug lords or crime kingpins has proven effective in some cases, particularly since organized crime syndicates are getting more involved in the lucrative wildlife trafficking business.

Does forest certification really work?
Shreya Dasgupta – Mongabay: 21 September 2017

Use of tropical wood doesn’t always mean old growth forests were cut illegally. According to a review of 40 studies, certified tropical forests are better for the environment than conventionally managed forests.

For more on this theme:
Is your chocolate bar fuelling deforestation in West Africa?
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-westafrica-chocolate-deforestation/is-your-chocolate-bar-fuelling-deforestation-in-west-africa-idUSKCN1BP1J4

Combating wildlife trafficking with “detect and disrupt”

Brazilians toil for gold in illegal Amazon mines

UN Adopts New Resolution on Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife

Fresh bid to tackle illegal wildlife trade
http://www.nationmultimedia.com/detail/national/30326877

Legislation, without enforcement, is useless in combating poaching in Africa: expert

What Is Behind Killings in Venezuela Illegal Mining Regions?

Organized criminal gangs behind rhino horn processing in South Africa — new study

The Online Sale of ‘Exotic’ Animals Carries On. It must be Stopped
http://cleanmalaysia.com/2017/09/18/online-sale-exotic-animals-carries-must-stopped/
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

**UN Secretary General: Human Trafficking Not Taken Seriously**
*Melanie Arter – CNS News: 20 September 2017*

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that decision-makers around the world don’t take the problem of human trafficking seriously. “Why were we able to arrest drug lords but not lords of human trafficking? If I want to be cynical, I can justify it. When I was in government, I thought that my children could be victims of drugs but never thought they could be victims of human trafficking. That’s probably why decision-makers around the world never took this problem seriously,” he said.


‘EU grants’ for migrant smugglers: Traffickers ‘receive up to £6,000 EACH to give up the life of crime and move into new employment’
*Liz Hull – Daily Mail: 19 September 2017*

Human smugglers are being given cash via third parties to stop trafficking and start legal businesses, according to an unnamed European Union official. An EU spokesman denied the accusation.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4893610/EU-grants-migrant-smugglers.html

For more on this theme:

The human trafficking jigsaw puzzle

How Israel’s Tourism Industry Enables Prostitution and Human Trafficking
http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.812760

Out of 4,000 human trafficking victims only 4 have received compensation - and they had lawyers
http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/out-4000-human-trafficking-victims-11186058

People smugglers test new migrant sea route through Romania

The Wrong Catch: Italy Imprisons Refugees Who Were Forced to Pilot Smuggling Boats at Gunpoint
https://theintercept.com/2017/09/16/italy-imprisons-refugees-who-were-forced-to-pilot-smuggling-boats-at-gunpoint/

Processing centres in North Africa are not the answer for EU refugees

One year on, UN officials take stock of efforts to address large movements of refugees, migrants
INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Digital future a fragile mix of promise and uncertainty – report
Nick Ismail – Information Age: 21 September 2017

The Internet Society, a global nonprofit dedicated to ensuring the open development, evolution and use of the internet, released its annual report. Titled “Paths to our Digital Future,” the report examines the internet over the next five to seven years and identifies the factors that will shape its future.


For more on this theme:
(China, U.S.) The missing trade war against China’s digital protectionism

(ASEAN) ASEAN hones in on cyber collaboration

INTERNET FREEDOM

Meet Shadowsocks, the underground tool that China’s coders use to blast through the Great Firewall
Josh Horwitz and Nikhil Sonnad – Quartz: 19 September 2017

In response to China’s war against virtual private networks, many of the more tech savvy have been using Shadowsocks, an open-source proxy to circumvent China’s “Great Firewall.”


For more on this theme:
(India) Talk Point: Are internet shutdowns the best way to restore peace during violent protests?
https://theprint.in/2017/09/21/internet-shutdown-protests/

(U.S.) Congress Versus Internet: Lawmakers Want to Stop Russian Interference and Sex Traffickers on the Web

(U.S., Global) Is Trump right about cutting off the Internet to prevent terror attacks?

(U.S.) How Google’s ‘Free Speech’ Ideology Facilitates Sex Trafficking And Online Censorship
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

California Planned on Strengthening Internet Privacy. It Didn’t.
Chris Morris – Fortune: 18 September 2017

California legislators failed to push through a bill that would have restored the internet privacy rules killed by the U.S. Congress and the Federal Communications Commission this year.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Can Jigsaw’s Designers Make the Internet Safer?

(Saudi Arabia) Saudi lifting ban on Skype, WhatsApp calls, but will monitor them
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-telecoms-ban/saudi-lifting-ban-on-skype-whatsapp-calls-but-will-monitor-them-idUSKCN1BW12L

(U.S.) State internet ‘privacy’ regulations are completely unnecessary

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

Working to Preserve the Stability of Cyberspace
Paul Nicholas – The Diplomat: 20 September 2017

This article asks the question: What can we do to encourage responsible nation-state behavior and restraint in cyberspace?

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Reps. Royce, Engel introduce Cyber Diplomacy Act

(U.S., Russia, China) eBook: The Coming Cyber Storm — Examining the Russia-US-China Hacking Nexus

(U.S., North Korea) US on high alert amid North Korea’s cyber threats
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

NGA wants to swap years of government data for industry know-how
Jared Serbu – Federal News Radio: 15 September 2017

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency hopes to find legal ways to work with industry—swapping data from its archives for private sector expertise.


For more on this theme:
(Singapore, Australia) Singapore and Australia First to Launch DQ Institute Cyber-risk Reporting System for Children

(Singapore, Global) Delegates converge for Singapore International Cyber Week

(U.S.) Raytheon’s Thomas Kennedy: DoD-Industry Collaboration Essential to Address Cyber Threats

PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Newly uncovered Iranian hacking group targeted energy, aerospace firms to steal secrets
Chris Bing – CyberScoop: 20 September 2017

A suspected Iranian hacking group has been targeting aviation and energy companies in the United States, Saudi Arabia and South Korea since 2013, computer security company FireEye said in a recent report.

https://www.cyberscoop.com/apt33-iranian-hackers-fireeye/

For more on this theme:
(Global) Researchers Link CCleaner Hack to Cyberespionage Group
https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/7xkxa/researchers-link-ccleaner-hack-to-cyberespionage-group

(U.S., Russia) U.S. Senate votes to ban Kaspersky Lab software from government networks
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

New academy to train cyber security professionals in govt, critical sectors
Tan Weizhen – Today: 20 September 2017
Singapore’s Cyber Security Agency is establishing an academy to train cyber security professionals and fill in the gaps left by higher education.


For more on this theme:
(Singapore) Two new programmes to ramp up technological talent in Singapore

(EU) EU security chief: Europe faces a “cyber security skills gap”

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

Cyber impersonation attacks the latest security threat to businesses
IT News Africa: 18 September 2017
Impersonation attacks in which cyber criminals use the name of a CEO, executive or employee to get sensitive information from victims have become increasingly common.


For more on this theme:
(Europe, Global) Britain, France And Italy To Pressure Internet Companies To Tackle ‘Terrorist Content’ Faster
http://www.silicon.co.uk/e-regulation/governance/britain-wants-internet-firms-to-remove-extremist-content-faster-222045?inf_by=59c47bd8681db83c738b4809

(GLOBAL) Pirate Bay ‘borrows’ visitor CPUs to mine virtual coins

(GLOBAL) What is a fileless attack? How hackers invade systems without installing software
https://www.networksasia.net/article/what-fileless-attack-how-hackers-invade-systems-without-installing-software.1506053537
INFORMATION SHARING

Europe to set up cybersecurity agency
Out-Law: 20 September 2017

The European Commission is proposing a new agency to focus on cyber security. It would build on the European Agency for Network and Information Security and facilitate better threat-intelligence sharing.


For more on this theme:
(UAE) UAE banks share information to combat cyber threats
(U.S.) Informal Communication is Key to Information Sharing
https://www.meritalk.com/articles/informal-communication-is-key-to-information-sharing/

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Australian government pledges AU$50m for cybersecurity research centre
Asha McLean – ZDNet: 22 September 2017

The Australian government will invest AU$50 million over seven years to establish a new industry-led Cyber Security Cooperative Research Centre. The center will build Australia’s cyber security capability and ensure the safety of businesses and citizens in cyberspace.

http://www.zdnet.com/article/australian-government-pledges-au50m-for-cybersecurity-research-centre/

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Can Washington Protect America’s Electoral Process from the next Cyber Attack?
http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-washington-protect-americas-electoral-process-the-next-22337
(U.S.) Cyber Attacks on Government Agencies On the Rise
https://www.afcea.org/content/cyber-attacks-government-agencies-rise
(U.S.) DoE Selects Guardtime To Develop Blockchain-Based Cybersecurity For Energy Grids
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS

Islamic State backers find new way to share propaganda: Instagram
Chris Ciaccia – Fox News: 21 September 2017
ISIS supporters are using Instagram’s “stories” feature, which causes posts to disappear after 24 hours, to promote their message, according to new research. A cyber security research group identified more than 50,000 accounts linked to ISIS supporters posting Instagram stories.

Why ISIS Is So Good at Branding Its Failures as Successes
Charlie Winter and Haroro J. Ingram – The Atlantic: 19 September 2017
ISIS has mastered the post-attack narrative, claiming responsibility for an attack — even an unsuccessful one — and then shifting focus toward greater threats rather than the failure of the past attack. This was on display after the recent metro station attack in England. Even though the attack failed, ISIS succeeded in making the United Kingdom raise the threat level by stating there were more to come.

For more on this theme:
US-backed fighters ‘seize 80% of Raqqa from Islamic State’

UN Team to Collect Evidence of Islamic State War Crimes in Iraq

Where Will Islamic State Strike After it Collapses in the Middle East?

UN: Islamic State Expands Activities to Seven Afghan Provinces
https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/afghanistan-islamic-state/4037045.html

Terror in Indonesia: the threat posed by returning Islamic State fighters

Islamic State rescinds one of its most problematic religious rulings

The 5 countries where people click most on ISIS propaganda (and the U.S. is No. 2)
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

UN brokers deal to end use of children in Nigeria’s battle with Boko Haram
Emmanuel Akinwotu – The Guardian: 20 September 2017

The United Nations has reached an agreement with the Civilian Joint Task Force vigilante group to end the use of children in the conflict against Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria. The U.N. said that between October 2015 and August 2017 the group used more than 360 children. Some of the soldiers are said to be as young as 9 years old.


Snapchat: Al-Qaeda’s Propaganda App
Abawaba News: 20 September 2017

Al-Qaïda-affiliate Jabhat Fateh al-Sham is using yet another online social media service to espouse its propaganda – Snapchat.


For more on this theme:

Boko Haram: 1.9m people in need of support – UNDP

Countering Al-Shabaab Propaganda and Recruitment Mechanisms in South Central Somalia

Terror groups pose biggest threat to Kenya’s security – NIS

Revealing the relationship of al-Qaeda’s Minister of Information with Iran

ISIS, Al-Qaeda drawn to crisis in Rakhine state

War On Terror 2.0: Osama bin Laden’s Son Gaining Power Within al-Qaeda
http://inhomelandsecurity.com/bin-ladens-son-war-terror/

Al-Qaeda called for train stations to be targeted and gave terrorists permission to strike ‘without martyrdom’ months before Parsons Green bomb
http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/al-qaeda-called-train-stations-11176996

Questions on al-Qaeda’s Possible Return

Al-Qaeda’s Al-Shaabab retakes key town in central Somalia
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

ISIS has planted a ticking bomb that is hard to defuse: traumatized children

Left behind after a savage war, the children who grew up with the brutality of ISIS are in a precarious position. Indoctrinated by the terror group, child soldiers and children of ISIS members are now forced to deal with a new reality. Is Iraq, or the rest of the world, prepared?


How ISIS is beating governments in the online fight against terror
Lizzie Dearden – The Independent: 19 September 2017

Research by the British think tank Policy Exchange indicates that almost 75 percent of the surveyed population want companies like Facebook and Twitter to do more to delete terrorist content. The report also indicates that ISIS and other terrorist groups are winning the propaganda war.


For more on this theme:

Indonesian migrant workers and the radicalization threat

Can We Prevent Violent Extremism?
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/can-we-prevent-violent-extremism_us_59c3ef2fe4b0f0ffec2d-edb5bb6

Moroccan Anti-Terror Chief Promises Doubled Efforts to Fight Radicalization of Diaspora

Indonesia releases former IS followers after de-radicalization
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/15/c_136612768.htm

Pakistan’s Provincial Authorities Seek to Identify Educated Radicals

Is Twitter Winning Its War on Terrorism?

Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube to rope in recruits to tackle terrorists online
FOREIGN FIGHTERS

‘Grave Fears’ After Iraq Moves More Than 1,300 Wives, Children Of ISIS Suspects
Merrit Kennedy – NPR: 18 September 2017

The family members of suspected ISIS fighters – 1,300 women and children – are being transferred to a new area of Mosul in Iraq. The Norwegian Refugee Council is concerned about the vulnerability of the group and fears potential retribution.


For more on this theme:
The Terrorist Diaspora, its Returnees, and Disrupting the Rise of Homegrown Violent Extremists

Will Former ISIS Fighters Help the Rohingya?
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/burma-myanmar/2017-09-22/will-former-isis-fighters-help-rohingya

Possible Return of IS Central Asian Fighters a Cause for Concern in Region

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

Met chief warns of ‘hard choices’ as resources focus on counter-terrorism effort
Belfast Telegraph: 22 September 2017

Strained by additional counterterrorism duties, the British police force has been forced into an untenable position, according to one of the country’s most senior officers.


For more on this theme:
ASEAN, dialogue partners call for closer counter-terror cooperation
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/21/c_136627268.htm

US, Philippines Launch New Terror Drills

The United Nations global counter-terrorism strategy

Suu Kyi bats for resisting collateral damage in counter-terrorism operations, avoids mentioning Pak
CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

WATER SECURITY

Water security is vital for financial stability, says Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu

The Hans India: 19 September 2017

India’s chief minister believes that in addition to having a surplus in power production, water security is crucial for financial stability.

http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Andhra-Pradesh/2017-09-19/Water-security-is-vital-for-financial-stability-says-Chief-Minister-N-Chandrababu-Naidu/327532

Global Report on Water and Peace launched in Geneva - To promote security and development

Ransford Tetteh – Graphic Online: 20 September 2017

A report by the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace seeks to generate awareness about the importance of water security and resource management.


For more on this theme:

Video: Will the river interlinking project solve India's water security problems?
https://video.scroll.in/851088/video-will-the-river-interlinking-project-solve-indias-water-security-problems

Fresh Water Projects ‘Critical’ For Islands

PM seeks support of World Bank for Diamer Bhasha Dam

Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict

Bahamas Fresh Water Resource addressed at 12th UNESCO International Hydrological Meeting

Why recycling water has become inevitable

Northeastern University Researchers Remove Salt From Seawater Using Nanotubes
https://www.tun.com/blog/northeastern-university-remove-salt-seawater-nanotubes/

Hong Kong’s water insecurity: A reflection of its political dilemma