CONTENTS

COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)
Corruption
Drug Trafficking
Trafficking in Scarce or Protected Resources
Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)
Internet Governance
Internet Freedom
Privacy
Security
Cyberattacks, Threats and Vulnerabilities
Protection of Critical Infrastructure

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)
ISIS and Foreign Fighters
Terrorism Around the World
Irregular Warfare: Cyber
Irregular Warfare: Proxy Forces and Private Military Groups
Irregular Warfare: Information Operations and Malign Influence
COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

South Sudan plagued by violence and corruption, Human Rights Council hears
United Nations News: 23 September 2021

South Sudan continues to be “plagued” by violence and corruption, the U.N. Human Rights Council heard, jeopardizing the young nation’s efforts to establish lasting peace and get on the road toward sustainable development.


Whistleblowers are key to fighting corruption in South Africa. It shouldn’t be at their peril
Monray Marsellus Botha — The Conversation: 23 September 2021

Numerous corruption scandals have been reported in South Africa recently. Whistleblowing is one of the mechanisms used to deter corruption. Whistleblowers help combat crime and should be afforded protection by the state, but South Africa’s system is flawed.

https://theconversation.com/whistleblowers-are-key-to-fighting-corruption-in-south-africa-it-shouldnt-be-at-their-peril-168134

For more on this theme:

Corruption depriving Malawi of revenue from mining sector

Corruption at Every Stage: Legal Actors Meet Criminal Networks

Curbing Extractive Corruption, Illicit Financial Flows
https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-enters-global-transparency-program-curb-corruption-extractive-industries

WATCH: Iraq president on ‘national battle’ against corruption
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/watch-iraq-president-on-national-battle-against-corruption

Support for reforms in Ukraine ineffective in fighting grand corruption, says EU report

Shadow contracts, corruption keep the lights out in Iraq

Report: Corruption at S Africa health ministry during COVID

U.S. Returns to Equatorial Guinea Millions Seized from its Corrupt VP
**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

**Drug Traffickers May Have Set Up a Coconut Oil Brand To Hide Meth in Its Bottles**

*Viola Zhou — VICE: 29 September 2021*

Hong Kong customs seized about $19 million worth of methamphetamine disguised as coconut oil in the city’s biggest liquid-meth bust in two decades.


**Drug-Trafficking Mayor Ravaged a Local Economy, Fueling the Flight from Honduras**

*Reuters: 26 September 2021*

Drug trafficking and violence have overtaken the streets of El Paraiso and nearby towns and converted surrounding farms into passageways for cocaine headed north.


*For more on this theme:*

**Cocaine, the yuppie drug? Not now, say experts — its lure is crossing all classes**


**India’s record heroin haul shows drug trade out of Afghanistan will continue under Taliban**


**U.S. Authorities Designate Mexican, Colombian Drug Cartels Bosses**


**Narcotics smuggling: increasing risk for ships**

https://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/narcotics-smuggling-increasing-risk-for-ships/

**How Indian Anti-drug Agency Set Trap For Nigerian Drug Trafficker Using Zambian Smuggler**


**How drugs are brought into India: In weddings cards, by drones and hidden in sea cargo**


**Concerns raised over drug trafficking and seafarer welfare on foreign ships**


**Brazil’s Santa Catarina Becoming Country’s MDMA Hub**


**Prices soar at opium market in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan**

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Southeast Asia Faces Narrow Window to Tackle Endangered Wildlife Trade
Sebastian Strangio — The Diplomat: 27 September 2021

COVID-19 curbs have resulted in a sharp drop in the illicit trade, but the industry is poised to bounce back as travel restrictions ease.


China is financing infrastructure projects around the world — many could harm nature and Indigenous communities
Blake Alexander Simmons, Kevin P. Gallagher and Rebecca Ray — The Conversation: 20 September 2021

China is shaping the future of economic development through its Belt and Road Initiative, an ambitious multibillion-dollar international push to better connect to the rest of the world through trade and infrastructure. But development often expands human movement and economic activity into new areas, which can promote deforestation, illegal wildlife trafficking and the spread of invasive species.


For more on this theme:

11 Mongabay investigations in two years. Here’s what we found

Illegal Sand Mining Is Creating an Ecological Crisis in Bangladesh

Better Tracking of Vessel Ownership Needed to Fight Illegal Fishing

Cape Verde’s ‘fish detectives’ try to keep extinction at bay

Indonesia adds patrols after detecting ships in South China Sea

Tech Companies Block More than 11.6 Million Transactions for Endangered Wildlife Online
https://www.traffic.org/news/tech-companies-block-more-than-11.6-million-transactions-for-endangered-wildlife-online/

Malawi Court Hands Lengthy Prison Term to Chinese Wildlife Trafficker

Tackling Shark Species Decline Through Traceability
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Synthetic data set of human trafficking victims could allow big data work without privacy compromises
Devin Coldewey — TechCrunch: 23 September 2021

To combat human trafficking effectively, those fighting it must understand it — and these days, that means data. Unfortunately, there is no convenient index of trafficking victims, though this confidential information is in some ways abundant. Microsoft and the International Organization for Migration may have found a way forward with a new database that has all the important characteristics of the real trafficking data but is completely artificial.


For more on this theme:

A Perennial Offender, Malaysia Need Not Be on US Forced Labor Watch List Forever

Cyprus to tighten law so as clean up its human trafficking reputation

UK to Deploy New Migrant Pushback Tactics in the English Channel

Migrant Smuggling Routes, Hideouts in Colombia’s Indigenous Lands

Afghan refugees ‘particularly vulnerable’ to human trafficking, DoD IG says

Syrian migrants fall victims to “human trafficking mafia” in Libyan prisons

Many Ugandan children forced into hard labor, sex trafficking as COVID closes schools

Human trafficking from Nepal-India border continues unabated
https://english.khabarhub.com/2021/30/212418/

Time to end modern slavery at sea
https://www.phnompenhpost.com/opinion/time-end-modern-slavery-sea

Children forced into slavery risk lives deep-dive fishing in Ghana
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Stop worrying that crims could break the 'net, say cyber-diplomats — only nations have tried

Simon Sharwood — The Register: 24 September 2021

The Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace (GCSC) is worried that its guidance on preventing the internet from becoming a casualty of war is being misinterpreted, perhaps willfully.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Institute for Rebooting Social Media launched by Harvard University


(Global) New approach needed to make digital data flow beneficial for all


INTERNET FREEDOM

Rising internet censorship in Africa threatens citizens freedom, study reveals

Amos Abba — International Centre for Investigative Reporting: 28 September 2021

Online censorship is increasing as governments across the world impose harsh restrictions on internet freedom.


For more on this theme:

(China) China Orders Social Media to Block Banned Users From ‘Reincarnation’


(Global) System Rivalry: How Democracies Must Compete with Digital Authoritarians


(China) China draws up plan to bring algorithms under state control in sign of tightened censorship


(Hong Kong) Access to website dedicated to Tiananmen victims appears restricted in Hong Kong


(China) LinkedIn Blocks Some User Profiles in China

PRIVACY

UK marketing-led group takes antitrust complaint against Google’s Privacy Sandbox to the EU
Natasha Lomas — TechCrunch: 28 September 2021
A coalition of digital-marketing firms and others has taken its lobbying against Google’s plan to phase out tracking cookies — by replacing them with alternative technologies that the tech giant claims will protect user privacy — to the European Union, lodging a formal complaint with the bloc’s antitrust regulators.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Why Understanding Data Privacy is More Important Than Ever
(Hong Kong) Hong Kong legislature passes controversial anti-doxxing privacy bill

SECURITY

Case Study: Cyber and Physical Security Convergence
Dan Lohrmann — Government Technology: 26 September 2021
Marc Sokol shares a powerful case study on the benefits of cybersecurity convergence with physical security, an example of measuring risk reduction and other benefits to global enterprises.

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Cyber resilience: Protecting America’s digital infrastructure
(Zimbabwe) Cyber Security Bill to guarantee safety
https://www.herald.co.zw/cyber-security-bill-to-guarantee-safety/
(India) For cybersecurity, India must look to international law
https://www.forbesindia.com/blog/legalese/for-cybersecurity-india-must-look-to-international-law/
(Australia) How Australia punches above its weight in cyber security
CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Espionage group targeted hotels, governments, seized on Microsoft Exchange vulnerability
Tim Starks — CyberScoop: 23 September 2021
A cyber-espionage group that has targeted hotels and governments since at least 2019 has used a known Microsoft vulnerability to breach systems, according to research published by ESET, a Slovakian security vendor.
https://www.cyberscoop.com/famoussparrow-eset-microsoft-exchange-proxylogon/

For more on this theme:
(Global) Multi-party breaches cause 26-times the financial damage of the worst single-party breach: Report

(Global) 5 Deadliest Ransomware Gangs Terrorizing Organizations Worldwide

PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Port of Houston target of suspected nation-state hack
Alan Suderman — The Associated Press: 23 September 2021
A leading port in the United States successfully fended off an attempted cyberattack, which authorities think was sponsored by a foreign power.
https://apnews.com/article/business-technology-rob-portman-1e9ff8dac8dbb500d15661c816c22084

For more on this theme:
(Global) Critical networks under siege by cyber threats, CrowdStrike finds

(U.S.) The U.S. Should Get Serious About Submarine Cable Security

(Global) Digitalization Supports Safe and Effective Nuclear Facility Decommissioning

(U.K.) Port security — maritime cyberattacks
https://securitynewsdesk.com/port-security-maritime-cyberattacks/

(Nigeria) Pantami warns of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The Assad Regime’s Business Model for Supporting the Islamic State
Matthew Levitt — Lawfare: 26 September 2021
The Syrian regime supported ISIS, using its rise as a way to discredit the broader Syrian opposition.
https://www.lawfareblog.com/assad-regimes-business-model-supporting-islamic-state

Mozambique: ISIS-linked Group Using Child Soldiers
Human Rights Watch: 29 September 2021
An ISIS-linked group in northern Mozambique is kidnapping boys and using them to fight government forces in violation of the international prohibition on the use of child soldiers, Human Rights Watch claims.

For more on this theme:
Islamic State trying to spread tentacles through online propaganda: NIA

ISIS, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham gaining strength in Syria: India warns UN Security Council

ISIS and Its War on the Taliban
https://besacenter.org/isis-taliban-war/

Islamic State uses Taliban’s own tactics to attack Afghanistan’s new rulers

Is the surrender of a senior ISIS Sinai official a game changer?

Taliban takes on ISKP, its most serious foe in Afghanistan

US-Led Coalition Conducts Numerous Raids in Syria Killing ISIS Members

Displaced Children in Northeast Syria May Never Recover, Observers Fear
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Military leaders warn of al Qaeda reemergence
Jerry Dunleavy — The Washington Examiner: 29 September 2021

Top U.S. military leaders warned that it’s possible al-Qaida could strengthen itself in Afghanistan and threaten the U.S. homeland in as little as a year, testifying that “over-the-horizon” operations will be difficult but not impossible.


Thousands of Boko Haram Members Surrendered. They Moved In Next Door.
Ruth Maclean and Ismail Alfa — The New York Times: 23 September 2021

Fighters and family members of a terrorist group in Nigeria have defected in droves since the death of their leader. They’ve been relocated to a city they once terrorized.


For more on this theme:

FBI’s Domestic Terrorism Caseload Has ‘More Than Doubled’ Since 2020, Wray Says
https://www.hstoday.us/featured/fbis-domestic-terrorism-caseload-has-more-than-doubled-since-2020-wray-says/

Nigeria: Ex-Boko Haram fighters: To reintegrate or not to reintegrate?

Burgeoning Terrorism in Africa: A Critical Overview

The Taliban's Persistent War on Salafists in Afghanistan
https://jamestown.org/program/the-talibans-persistent-war-on-salafists-in-afghanistan/

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan’s Discursive Shift From Global Jihadist Rhetoric to Pashtun-Centric Narratives

How extremist groups feed simplistic views into would-be suicide bombers: analysis
https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20210927/p2a00m00na/029000c

Syrian jihadist group won't reconcile with al-Qaeda affiliate in Idlib

Al-Qaeda Magazine Encourages Lone Attackers to Use Planes as Weapons

Two Decades After 9/11: How The Extremist Threat Has Evolved — Analysis
IRREGULAR WARFARE: CYBER

‘Almost every nation’ now has cyber vulnerability exploitation program, NSA official says
Tim Starks — CyberScoop: 29 September 2021

Nearly every country now has a program to exploit digital vulnerabilities, a top National Security Agency cyber official said, and although most are focused on espionage, more are beginning to experiment with more aggressive techniques.

EU ‘denounces’ Russian malicious cyber activity aimed at member states
Maggie Miller — The Hill: 24 September 2021

A top European Union official called out Russia for its involvement in recent hacking efforts directed toward governments of multiple member states, describing the efforts as “unacceptable.”

For more on this theme:

China’s cyber warfare has grown on the back of civilian recruits
https://theprint.in/opinion/eye-on-china/chinas-cyber-warfare-has-grown-on-the-back-of-civilian-recruits/737651/

Lithuania says built-in cybersecurity risks found in Chinese-made Xiaomi and Huawei phones

Iran May Be Behind Cyberattack on Company Serving Major Names in Israeli Tech, Experts Say

The blurring line between nation-state and cyber-criminals

Evolution of China’s Cyber Threat
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/evolution-chinas-cyber-threat

NATO Is in a Cyberwar with Russia and Must Expand Article 5 to Include Cyberwarfare or Risk Losing and Diminishment
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/nato-cyberwar-russia-and-must-expand-article-5-include-cyberwarfare-or-risk-losing-and

China continues to pose cyber security threats to India
https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/china-continues-to-pose-cyber-security-threats-to-india-1856224-2021-09-23

The Curious Case of Russian Cyberattacks in India
IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS

Russia's Wagner Play Undermines the Transition in Mali
Joseph Siegle and Daniel Eizenga — Africa Center for Strategic Studies: 23 September 2021
The prospective deployment of Russia’s Wagner mercenaries should not be confused with addressing Mali’s security situation; it is a means of expanding Russian influence while propping up the military junta.

https://africacenter.org/spotlight/russia-wagner-undermines-transition-mali/

For more on this theme:

Europe Piles Pressure on Mali to Rethink Possible Mercenary Deal

IRREGULAR WARFARE: INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

China Is Borrowing a Page From Russia’s Disinformation Playbook
Emily Taylor — World Politics Review: 28 September 2021
In cyber operations, Russia historically has led when it comes to disinformation and sowing the seeds of social discord, while China traditionally was associated with intellectual property theft. There are signs that is changing, though, with China reportedly stepping up social-media disinformation campaigns.

https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/29995/for-china-social-media-is-now-a-tool-for-disinformation

For more on this theme:

Al-Shabaab and Chinese Trade Practices in Mozambique

Australia must adopt unorthodox options to disrupt China’s grey-zone threats

Russia threatens to block YouTube after German channels are deleted over coronavirus misinformation