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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Moldova’s Top Prosecutor Detained On Corruption Charges
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: 6 October 2021

Moldova’s general prosecutor faces a raft of corruption charges related to his time in office, with the justice minister claiming he was a “puppet” in the hands of corrupt officials and of “thieves who have robbed the country for decades.”
https://www.rferl.org/a/moldova-prosecutor-corruption-arrested-/31495115.html

Russia Makes Covering Military Corruption News Grounds for ‘Foreign Agent’ Status
The Moscow Times: 1 October 2021

News organizations in Russia risk being labeled “foreign agents” for covering corruption, crime and other issues within the military and space industries under new rules that will likely further strain the country’s media landscape.
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/10/01/russia-makes-covering-military-corruption-news-grounds-for-foreign-agent-status-a75183

For more on this theme:

Supporting the banking sector of Morocco in preventing and managing corruption risks

Inside the David and Goliath battle against corruption in Indonesia

Saudi Arabia’s corruption crackdown strengthens economic growth
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1936566

Slovenia shamed on corruption by European watchdog
https://euobserver.com/democracy/153149

Time to rethink Ukraine’s fight against corruption
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainalert/time-to-rethink-ukraines-fight-against-corruption/

Corruption can only reduce with Nigerians playing prominent roles – MacArthur Foundation

Could Czechia’s Newest Anti-Corruption Party Be this Election’s Dark Horse?

Armenia’s former defence minister arrested on corruption charges
https://www.euronews.com/2021/09/30/armenia-s-former-defence-minister-arrested-on-corruption-charges
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Albania struggles to contain drug trafficking problem
Deutsche Welle: 6 October 2021

Albania has fulfilled criteria to start European Union accession talks. But the country, which the media has called "Europe's Colombia," has problems with drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption.


Ecuador's prison riot: Drug cartels, overcrowded cells and a bloodbath
Samantha Schmidt and Diana Durán Núñez  The Washington Post: 30 September 2021

Ecuador's president has declared a state of emergency in the prison system following a battle among gang members in a coastal lockup. At least 118 people died and 79 injured in what authorities say was the country's worst prison bloodbath.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/09/30/ecuador-prison-riot-cartels/

For more on this theme:

Drug Enforcement Administration seizes 1.8 million fentanyl-laced pills and arrests more than 800 in nationwide sting

WhatsApp chats of Aryan Khan, 2 others in cruise ship drug case hint international drug trafficking: NCB to court

Dutch PM under protection as the 'Mocro Mafia' drug cartel sows fear in the Netherlands

A Number Of Serving Gardaí Investigated About Drug Trade In Dublin

Afghanistan’s “Forever” Drug War Has No End in Sight
https://filtermag.org/afghanistan-forever-drug-war/

Argentina struggles with booming drug trade, violence

The long shadow of narco-terrorism

Emerging Afghan methamphetamine trade poses ‘threat' to Europe
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Illegal wildlife trafficking concerns rise during COVID-19 pandemic, with more people at home, online
Jane McNaughton — Australian Broadcasting Corp.: 2 October 2021
Illegal wildlife-trafficking concerns have risen sharply since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic with more people reporting suspicious trade online.

Making traditional Chinese medicine from lab-grown meat
Chermaine Lee — Deutsche Welle: 5 October 2021
Could synthetic tiger claw and bear bile counteract the illegal market for animal products and help protect endangered species?

For more on this theme:
Elephants, rhinos and chimps under siege as African tourism drops

Monitoring reveals Indonesia's 'legal timber' scheme riddled with violations

Nigeria's mining sector in crisis, $9bn lost to illegal miners yearly

DRC: Lessons from Ghana's dealings with illegal Chinese mining companies

Takeaways from AP and Univision China Fishing Investigation
https://apnews.com/article/china-fish-south-america-pacific-ocean-overfishing-733633c3d-67c17b322b382fd9ec10183

In Colombia, legal mining proves a win-win for environment, traditional communities

tional-communities/

How illegal fishing off Cameroon's coast worsens maritime security

Vigilante Patrol Finds Chinese Ships Fishing Near Galapagos, Unesco Heritage Site
s-doorstep
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

**Report: Human Trafficking is World's No 1 Criminal Economy**  
*David Klein — Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project: 6 October 2021*

People are the most traded commodity in the world, but whatever criminals choose to profit from, in most cases they have the blessing of state actors, a Swiss civil-society organization said in its first Global Organized Crime Index, which attempts to quantify criminal activity across the 193 United Nations member states.


Full Report:

**Global Organized Crime Index**

https://ocindex.net/

*For more on this theme:*

- **Supermarkets vow to cut ties with meat suppliers found to exploit workers**  

- **EU: we must find a way to stop people-smuggling**  
  https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/09/30/eu-we-must-find-a-way-to-stop-people-smuggling/

- **Vineyards, farms across EU raided in labor abuse crackdown**  
  https://apnews.com/article/science-business-france-italy-spain-769923fe00f34206d33639c4e9b-58fb5

- **Trafficking in persons — UNODC: Lack of data could lead to ineffective anti-trafficking policies**  

- **Human tracking remains big concern for financial institutions**  

- **Zimbabwe: How Women Are Taking Over Cross-Border Smuggling**  
  https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/zimbabwe-how-women-are-taking-over-cross-border-smuggling

- **Global Child Labor Increasing, Worsened by Pandemic's Impact**  

- **INTERPOL Report Highlights Human Trafficking for Organ Removal**  
INTERNET FREEDOM

China censors criticism of using ‘patriotic sentiments’: Report
ANI: 30 September 2021

In yet another case of draconian censorship, Chinese authorities closed the WeChat account of the Chinese Communist Youth League after it issued an article titled “Patriotic Business” that criticized the new phenomenon of using “patriotic sentiments” to gain internet traffic.


For more on this theme:
(Russia) Russia boosts online monitoring tools in clampdown on banned content

(China) For a dissident living in Germany, China’s digital policing is winning

(Kashmir) Social media giants accused of ‘silencing’ Kashmir voices

SECURITY

Asean champions regional efforts in cybersecurity, urges international participation
Eileen Yu — ZDNet: 6 October 2021

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the only regional organization to have agreed to the United Nations’ 11 norms of state cyberspace behavior. ASEAN pledges to drive deeper collaboration and interoperability among member states and calls for other international communities to cooperate amid increasing cyber threats.


For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Cybersecurity needs a significant place in the emergency management matrix

(Global) Through the Years: A Broad Look at Two Decades in Cybersecurity

(Ghana) Government will continue to support national cybersecurity activities – Minister
CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

How ‘digital highways’ could boost inclusion and advance the SDGs
Robert Opp — World Economic Forum: 28 September 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic simultaneously threatened global development while accelerating the digitization of government. In the process, the United Nations Development Programme — through its work with 170 countries and territories — has witnessed the power, as well as the challenge, of using digital public infrastructure in response to a crisis.


For more on this theme:

(ASEAN) Next five years crucial for Asean digital economy

(U.S.) Air Force cyber defense taking aim at core weapon systems

(U.S.) Army Shifting Training Priorities, Investments for Multi-Domain Ops
https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2021/9/30/army-shifting-training-priorities-investments-for-multi-domain-ops

(Scotland) Industry supports plans for new cyber security innovation hub in Scotland

CYBERCRIME

NSA Cyber Chief Warns Hackers Increasingly Use Commercial Tools to Stay Hidden
Mariam Baksh — Nextgov: 29 September 2021

Advanced persistent threat actors are making it more difficult to attribute cyberattacks by using broadly available commercial tools such as virtual private networks as vectors, according to the head of the U.S. National Security Agency’s cyber directorate.


For more on this theme:

(Global) We Can't Remove Risk – But We Can Manage It
https://www.forbes.com/sites/fortinet/2021/09/21/we-cant-remove-risk--but-we-can-manage-it/?sh=403b2332389b

(U.K., Global) How Universities and Colleges Protect Against Cyber Attacks

(Global) Modern Cyber-Criminals Don't Hack in — They Log in
CYBERATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Are Ransom Bans the Answer to Cutting Down on Cyber Attacks?
Noelle Knell — Government Technology: October/November 2021

What if paying a ransom were illegal? While opinions vary widely, some policymakers think that preventing ransomware victims from making payments would remove the incentive for the crime in the first place.

https://www.govtech.com/opinion/are-ransom-bans-the-answer-to-cutting-down-on-cyber-attacks

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Cyber Risks From Technology Adopted During Pandemic Responsible for 74% Of Attacks on 94% Of Businesses in Past 12 Months

(U.S.) Hospital ransomware attack led to infant’s death, lawsuit alleges

(U.S.) Pottawatomie Co. pays hackers to restore computer systems after cyber attack

(Ireland) HSE cyber attack evidence being gathered in seven countries – gardaí

PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Protecting Critical Infrastructure in the Digital Battlefield
Roberto Valla — InfoSecurity Magazine: 4 October 2021

Modern warfare does not rely strictly on conventional weapons and defense systems; the new battlefield is digital and often cannot be seen or heard.


For more on this theme:

(U.S.) TSA Launching Cybersecurity Requirements for Rail, Aviation
https://about.bgov.com/news/tsa-launching-cybersecurity-requirements-for-rail-aviation/

(U.S.) Legislators aim to shore up critical infrastructure cyber defense

(U.S.) Cybersecurity budgets for industrial control systems and operational tech increasing: SANS Institute
https://www.zdnet.com/article/cybersecurity-budgets-for-industrial-control-systems-increasing-sans-institute/
A Canadian, the alleged voice behind ISIS videos, could face life in prison

Dustin Jones — NPR: 3 October 2021

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation recently took custody of Mohammed Khalifa, a Saudi-born Canadian citizen whose role as a combatant and propaganda producer with the Islamic State allegedly resulted in murders, according to a complaint. If convicted, he could face life in prison.

https://www.npr.org/2021/10/03/1042750462/canadian-isis-videos-propaganda-fbi

For more on this theme:

ISIS recruitment drive in overdrive mode since Kabul airport attack

International Prosecutor Says Will Focus On Taliban, Islamic State For Alleged Afghan War Crimes
https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/icc-taliban-islamic-state-war-crimes/31480890.html

Syria: Two children die every week at camp for Islamic State families, NGO says

The Long Jihad: The Islamic State’s Method of Insurgency
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/the-long-jihad-the-islamic-states-method-of-insurgency/

Mapping the contours of Jihadist groups in the Sahel

What's behind the rising violence in western Niger?

German, Danish ISIS-affiliated women and children repatriated from Syria

ISIS takes credit for killing Sikh in Pakistan

German women who joined Islamic State 'held in custody' after being repatriated with children from detention camp in Syria

Islamic state claims responsibility for Kabul blast
https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/islamic-state-claims-responsibility-kabul-blast-2021-10-04/
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

West Africa’s Jihadists Are Going to War—Against Each Other
Trevor Filseth — The National Interest: 2 October 2021

The Islamic State’s West Africa Province and Boko Haram, which were once nominally part of the same faction, have had a spectacular falling out that has resulted in more than a hundred casualties.

https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/west-africa%E2%80%99s-jihadists-are-going-war%E2%80%94against-each-other-194774

Experts: Rebuilding Lake Chad Basin Key to Staving Off Militant Resurgence
Moki Edwin Kindzeka — Voice of America: 6 October 2021

Officials from Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have agreed to work together to reconstruct the Lake Chad Basin. The region has been a hotbed of insecurity after attacks from Islamist terrorist group Boko Haram and its offshoots. The officials met in Cameroon’s capital earlier this month and said the area is gradually returning to normalcy, but unemployment is pushing young people to join militant groups.


For more on this theme:

Somalia Court Convicts Foreigners for Membership in al-Shabab

U.S., Qatar target Hezbollah financial network with sanctions
https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-issues-hezbollah-related-sanctions-treasury-website-2021-09-29/

Hezbollah threatened top judge probing Beirut port blast, source says

Lebanon: Hezbollah seeks to deflect anger through fuel patronage

How deep are divisions among the Taliban?

Taliban say forces destroy Islamic State cell hours after Kabul blast

Boko Haram moves into north-central Nigeria in apparent expansion — officials

Al-Qaeda Could Flourish With New Strategy Under Taliban Rule
https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-al-qaeda-taliban/31486256.html
RADICALIZATION

**Burak Yilmaz: No tolerance for intolerance**  
Martina Bertam — Deutsche Welle: 5 October 2021

How can we bring radicalized people back on track? Educator and author Burak Yilmaz talks about how to catch racism and antisemitism from an early stage.


*For more on this theme:*

**Is Big Tech Ready to Tackle Extremism?**  

**Organization Kicks-Off Campaign Against Radicalization**  
https://www.kenyanews.go.ke/organization-kicks-off-campaign-against-radicalization/

**How ‘speed dating’ is preventing Isis radicalisation in Belgium**  
https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/how-speed-dating-is-preventing-isis-radicalisation-in-belgium-hn8l5qzzj

**How South Asia’s Brand of Sufi Islam Become Radicalized**  

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**IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES AND PRIVATE MILITARY GROUPS**

**Drones Main Pillar of Iran’s Quds Forces Overseas Ops: Opposition**  
Agence France-Presse: 7 October 2021

The Quds Force of the Revolutionary Guards, which is responsible for Iran’s controversial operations abroad, is increasingly using drones to carry out airstrikes and supply proxies, an exiled opposition group said.

https://www.thedefensepost.com/2021/10/07/drones-irans-quds/

*For more on this theme:*

**Turkey’s Drones and Proxies are Turning the Tide of War**  
https://nationalinterest.org/feature/turkey%E2%80%99s-drones-and-proxies-are-turning-tide-war-194576

**Russia Kills OSCE’s Observer Mission on Russia-Ukraine Border**  
https://jamestown.org/program/the-curtain-falls-on-a-russian-osce-charade-in-ukraine/

**Mali’s Proposed Deal With Russia’s Wagner Group Could Light up the Sahel**  

**Libya’s warring sides, including Russian mercenaries, may be guilty of crimes – UN**  

**Iraq’s militias seek to consolidate political power in vote**  
https://apnews.com/article/hezbollah-baghdad-iran-middle-east-iraq-c30340c8ce4e98be2cf652e-9abc18470
IRREGULAR WARFARE: CYBER

New offensive cyber force will “confront aggressive behaviour”, says Foreign Secretary

Danny Palmer — ZDNet: 4 October 2021

The United Kingdom’s center for offensive cyber operations aimed at disrupting nation-state hacking groups, online criminals and other threats against national security is set for a permanent home in Samlesbury, Lancashire.


For more on this theme:

Experts say China’s low-level cyberwar is becoming severe threat


Croatia targeted by dozens of state-sponsored cyber attacks


Finnish intelligence names Russia, China as main suspects of espionage


How Should South Korea’s Next President Approach Cybersecurity?

https://thediplomat.com/2021/09/how-should-south-koreas-next-president-approach-cybersecurity/

Beijing’s Growing Influence on the Global Undersea Cable Network

https://jamestown.org/program/beijings-growing-influence-on-the-global-undersea-cable-network/

Aerospace, Telecommunications Companies Victims of Stealthy Iranian Cyber-Espionage Campaign


BlackBerry ties malware campaign targeting victims in India to Chinese cyberespionage group


Ransomware Attacks Are Another Tool in the Political Warfare Toolbox

https://news.utexas.edu/2021/09/30/ransomware-attacks-are-another-tool-in-the-political-warfare-toolbox/

ASPI’s decades: China’s cyberpower