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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Bolsonaro Says Brazil Is Corruption-Free, Ends Carwash Probe
Murilo Fagundes – Bloomberg: 7 October 2020

Under the so-called Car Wash operation, dozens of company executives and politicians were jailed, including Brazilian left-wing ex-President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, for taking bribes. Last week, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro said he ended the corruption probe, saying there is “no more corruption in the government.”


MEPs say the EU must not turn a blind eye and must fight corruption in Bulgaria
EU Reporter: 8 October 2020

Members of the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the rule of law in Bulgaria. The resolution expresses concern about a “significant deterioration of respect for the principles of the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, including the independence of the judiciary, separation of powers, the fight against corruption and freedom of the media.”


For more on this theme:

Investing Overseas: How Multinational Firms Can Manage Corruption
https://www2.lehigh.edu/news/investing-overseas-how-multinational-firms-can-manage-corruption

Mexico and the Gods of Corruption

How to make progress in the fight against corruption

What Went Right (and Wrong) in Latin America’s Anti-Corruption Fight

The EU’s Ambiguous Fight for the Rule of Law
https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/82886

As Southern Africa grapples with corruption and COVID-19, journalists and civil society suffer retaliation for exposing corruption

Maldives ex-vice president sentenced to 20 years for corruption
https://www.reuters.com/article/maldives-trial/maldives-ex-vice-president-sentenced-to-20-years-for-corruption-idINKBN26R05Z
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Mexico’s military to take control of ports in the war against cartels
Andreas Knobloch – Deutsche Welle: 7 October 2020

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has promised to curb corruption and the influence of drug cartels by giving the military more powers. But a new plan to hand over the administration of ports to the generals is controversial. Lopez Obrador believes that the Armed Forces are “less corrupt and can fight organized crime more effectively.”


Illicit drug trade at Belgian port fuels crime wave
Matthieu Demeestere – Agence France-Presse: 5 October 2020

Antwerp, Belgium, is Europe’s second largest goods port after Rotterdam, the Netherlands, but is the No. 1 gateway for cocaine to the continent because of closer trade links with South America.


For more on this theme:

Why Brutal Massacres Are Rocking Colombia Years After it Signed a Peace Deal With Rebels

Cocaine, meth and weed prices have skyrocketed in Miami. Here’s why

Sweeping Dark Web Takedown by International Law Enforcement Puts 179 Vendors Out of Business

Al-Azhar coordinates with army to fight drugs in South Sinai

Salvatore Ponzo and the Italian Mafia’s Infiltration of Costa Rica

Ex-Mexico security chief linked to El Chapo pleads not guilty to U.S. drug charges

Costa Rica strengthens laws to combat drug trafficking

Pakistan’s Drug Habit Is Endangering the Region
https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/pakistans-drug-habit-is-endangering-the-region/
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

**Destroy, Rinse, Repeat – Peru’s Illegal Mining Struggles in Áncash**
*Katie Jones – InSight Crime: 8 October 2020*

In Peru’s relatively lawless department of Madre de Dios, authorities have repeatedly targeted illegal gold miners, loggers and human traffickers. Not long after the raids, the region typically suffers the return of the illicit activities.


**Here’s How Fake Turtle Eggs Are Helping Scientists Fight Crime in Costa Rica**
*Michelle Starr – Science Alert: 6 October 2020*

Conservationists are using decoy turtle eggs fitted with a GPS tracker to catch criminals involved in the illegal wildlife trade. Researchers from the University of Kent in the United Kingdom worked with conservationists in Central America to develop a 3D-printed turtle egg that can be placed undetected into a live nest.


*For more on this theme:*

**United States Coast Guard Report Calls Out China for Unregulated Fishing**

**Iranian ships conduct illegal fishing off Yemen coast**

**Joint boat patrols target illegal fishing**

**300 Chinese Fishing Ships Off South America Coast Raise Food Security Worries**

**Chile Museum Heist Reveals Black Market in Cultural Objects**

**Zoos to be investigated for possible involvement in black market animal trade**

**Vietnam conservation regulations improving, but much work remains**

**In the Horn of Africa, conflict and illegal trade create a ‘cheetah hell’**
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

**UN authorizes inspection of vessels for migrants from Libya**
*Edith M. Lederer – The Associated Press: 2 October 2020*

The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted for another year a resolution authorizing member nations to inspect vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya suspected of smuggling migrants or engaging in human trafficking from the North African nation.

https://apnews.com/article/africa-libya-smuggling-north-africa-united-nations-af58cb741a388c-d970ad620c541cb75

**Report reveals linkages between human trafficking and forced marriage**
*United Nations News: 7 October 2020*

A new United Nations report documents the links between human trafficking and marriage and specifies steps for governments and other authorities to strike back. Published by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the report notes that girls as young as 12 are being forced or tricked into marrying men who exploit them for sex and domestic work, in what the UNODC has called an “under-reported, global form of human trafficking.”


For more on this theme:

- **Lifting the veil on the Venezuelan migrant crisis**

- **Fearing loan sharks and slavery, Indian workers ask government for cash aid**

- **Crackdown on Organized Crime Groups Smuggling Migrants into Europe and Across the English Channel**

- **Dignity And Rights Project Concludes In Kazakhstan, Helping Combat Trafficking In Persons**

- **Poverty, Official Complicity Hampers Human Trafficking Fight in Malawi**

- **Almost half of UK bank specialists can’t spot signs of human trafficking among transactions**
  https://www.independent.co.uk/money/almost-half-uk-bank-specialists-can-t-spot-signs-human-trafficking-among-transactions-b830572.html

- **UNODC Donates 14 Motorbikes to Combat Human Trafficking**
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE
The politics of internet security: Private industry and the future of the web
Justin Sherman – Atlantic Council: 5 October 2020

Internet governance is now largely privatized. This report argues that the U.S. private sector’s unique influence on global internet infrastructure gives it an opportunity and responsibility to improve internet security, and that the U.S. government should collaborate better with those actors and leverage that influence.


For more on this theme:
(Africa) Digital rights in Africa is still far from the internet freedom we desire

(Global) The Digital Archipelago: How to Build an Internet Where Communities Thrive
https://www.coindesk.com/how-to-build-an-internet-where-communities-thrive

(China, Global) What Huawei and China’s New IP proposal is all about

INTERNET FREEDOM
User safety or censorship? Turkey targets social media platforms
Daniel Heinrich – Deutsche Welle: 4 October 2020

Critics say new rules targeting Facebook and Twitter in Turkey amount to censorship. The government claims it’s trying to prevent online abuse. Which side is correct?


For more on this theme:
(Belarus) Belarus News Media Are Testing Decentralized Tech to Resist Censorship

(Africa) Digital rights in Africa is still far from the internet freedom we desire

(Thailand) Tinder Is the Latest Social Media Battleground in Thai Protests
PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Ukraine plan to tackle hackers sparks privacy fears
*Umberto Bacchi – Reuters: 7 October 2020*

Last month, lawmakers in Ukraine proposed a set of laws that would, among other things, boost police search powers and require internet firms to store and provide access to reams of user data. “If these draft laws are passed, then the state may have much easier access to the personal data of persons and their communications,” said Maksym Dvorovyi, a lawyer at the Digital Security Lab, a Ukrainian digital rights group.


*For more on this theme:*

*(Global)* Reconciling privacy and surveillance in democracies

*(Europe)* EU’s top court limits government spying on citizens’ mobile and internet data

*(U.S.)* Americans Want Facebook and TikTok Banned Over Privacy Concerns

CYBER STATECRAFT

NATO Chief Calls for New Strategy on Cyber, China
*The Defense Post: 8 October 2020*

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg urged member states to “develop common principles and standards for new technologies.” He dubbed the initiative “NATO 2030.”


*For more on this theme:*

*(Australia)* Mitigating diffused security risks in Australia’s north: a case for digital inclusion

*(Global)* Technologies changing diplomatic practices: Pre and post-Covid19 reality

*(Belarus)* Belarus protest crackdown sparks IT industry exodus
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/belarus-protest-crackdown-sparks-it-industry-exodus/
CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

UN Shipping Agency Forced Offline After Cyber-Attack
Phil Muncaster – Infosecurity Magazine: 5 October 2020

The United Nations International Maritime Organization faced severe disruptions in its web-based services following a cyber attack. It took the agency a couple of days to have the website back up and running.


For more on this theme:

(Canada) Canada Bombarded with COVID-19-Themed Cyber-attacks


(Global) Clinical Trials Hit by Ransomware Attack on Health Tech Firm

CYBER CRIME

European Union police agency warns of increase in cybercrime due to pandemic
Maggie Miller – The Hill: 5 October 2020

As the coronavirus pandemic forced many to work from home, criminals seem to have adapted to the new situation. All this remote working is fueling an increase in cyber crime, according to Europol’s Internet Organized Crime Threat Assessment for 2020.


For more on this theme:

(U.K.) 21% of UK Workers Feel More Vulnerable to Cybercrime During COVID-19

(Global) This is the partnership we need to fight global cybercrime
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/the-partnership-we-need-to-fight-global-cybercrime/

(Global) Disrupting the Economics of Cybercrime
Like other increasingly digitized critical infrastructure, satellites and space-based assets are vulnerable to cyber attacks. Much of the world’s critical infrastructure depends on space, specifically space-based assets, for its daily functioning. This dependence poses a serious, and yet frequently underrecognized, security dilemma for critical infrastructure providers and policymakers.


For more on this theme:

(India, Japan) Critical Infrastructure To Have A New Wave With A New Indian-Japan Landmark Pact

(Australia, Global) Report: Power utilities increasingly at risk of devastating cyber-attacks

(U.S.) DHS Works to Protect National Critical Infrastructure

(U.S.) Security pros: Cyber threats to industrial enterprises increase due to pandemic
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Indians and Central Asians Are the New Face of the Islamic State
Raffaello Pantucci – Foreign Policy: 8 October 2020

Extremist ideas are not new to Central Asia or India. But neither area has historically produced many international terrorists. That is changing.


For more on this theme:

Terrorism on a budget: Americans who joined ISIS or planned attacks did so with little money
https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/terrorism-budget-americans-who-joined-isis-or-planned-attacks-did-n1241247

U.S. Repatriates Last of Islamic State Suspects Believed Captured in Syria

British ISIS Militants Charged In Killings Of American Hostages

Dollars for Daesh: Analyzing the Finances of American ISIS Supporters
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/dollars-for-daesh-analyzing-the-finances-of-american-isis-supporters/

At the very least, families of ISIS victims deserve answers
https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/at-the-very-least-families-of-isis-victims-deserve-answers-1.1088881

US to prosecute dozens of repatriated ISIS ‘foreign fighters’
https://thearabweekly.com/us-prosecute-dozens-repatriated-isis-foreign-fighters

Islamic State group Al-Hind plotted to build province in jungles of South India: NIA charge sheet
https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/is-group-planned-province-in-south-india-nia-charge-sheet/story-PqPdkxdOdt7ormixfD95h0.html
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Hundreds of pieces of online terrorist propaganda uncovered in the Balkans
Nicky Harley – The National: 8 October 2020
ISIS and al-Qaida published material in Eastern European languages in a bid to target new audiences.
https://www.thenational.ae/world/hundreds-of-pieces-of-online-terrorist-propaganda-uncovered-in-the-balkans-1.1090507

Violent extremists find fertile ground in Kenya’s Isiolo County
Guyo Chepe Turi – Institute for Security Studies: 8 October 2020
Why have deployments of anti-terrorism police and community-police partnerships failed to stop recruitment by al-Shabaab in Africa?
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/violent-extremists-find-fertile-ground-in-kenyas-isiolo-county

For more on this theme:
The Secret to the Northern Mozambique Insurgency’s Success

With Little Hope for Reform, Lebanon Continues Down the Road to Ruin
https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/29109/without-defanging-hezbollah-lebanon-can-have-little-hope-for-the-future

Exclusive: Taliban, Afghan negotiators set ground rules to safeguard peace talks – sources
https://www.reuters.com/article/afghanistan-taliban-talks-exclusive-int-idUSKBN26R1DJ

Al-Shabaab ranked as most “capable” terrorist group in Africa

Measures to eliminate international terrorism
https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/measures-to-eliminate-international-terrorism

COVID-19 and the Increasing Risk of Terrorism

Are Sinai-based terrorists shifting to Cairo?
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Opinion: With Armed Groups on the Rise, Youth Engagement is More Important than Ever
Siobhan O’Neil and Kato Van Broeckhoven – Inter Press Service: 7 October 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic – and resulting economic fallout – has created fresh opportunities for gangs, criminal syndicates and armed groups to instrumentalize the pandemic and grow their ranks.

http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/10/armed-groups-rise-youth-engagement-important-ever/

For more on this theme:
How Southeast Asian Terror Networks Exploit Family Ties
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/10/08/southeast-asia-terror-families/

David Haines’ brother fears youth radicalisation during lockdown

Concerns anti-extremism programmes can radicalise Muslim youths
https://www.thenational.ae/world/concerns-anti-extremism-programmes-can-radicalise-muslim-youths-1.1087252

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES

The Maduro-Hezbollah Nexus: How Iran-backed Networks Prop up the Venezuelan Regime
Joseph M. Humire – Atlantic Council: 7 October 2020

A network of Iranian terror proxy groups operating in Latin America, including Hezbollah, is providing resources to keep dictator Nicolas Maduro in power in Venezuela, according to a new investigation.

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/the-maduro-hezbollah-nexus-how-iran-backed-networks-prop-up-the-venezuelan-regime/

For more on this theme:
U.S. launches new terrorism review of Iran-backed rebels in Yemen

Turkey and Russia preside over a new age of mercenary wars

The Still-Growing Threat of Iran’s Chosen Proxy in Iraq

The Role of Foreign Fighters in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict
https://www.ispionline.it/en/pubblicazione/role-foreign-fighters-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-27764
IRREGULAR WARFARE: DISINFORMATION AND MALIGN INFLUENCE

Chinese Discourse Power
Alicia Fawcett – Atlantic Council: 6 October 2020

By its own estimation, China’s “peaceful” ascent with the use of discourse power will succeed when the nation has rewritten international norms, values and ethics, as well as changed the structure of the global political system, forcing other countries to accept and adjust to China’s authoritarian disposition.

https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/chinese-discourse-power/

For more on this theme:

U.S. universities move to protect students from China’s authoritarian reach

Russian Disinformation Shadows Ukrainian-British-US Joint Endeavor 2020 Exercise

China’s Disinformation Campaign in the Philippines
CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

CORONAVIRUS AROUND THE WORLD

The Coronavirus Crisis Undercuts Russia's Geopolitical Ambitions
Pavel K. Baev – The Jamestown Foundation: 5 October 2020
The unfolding coronavirus recession and growing public grievances are undermining Russia’s ambitions for playing a major global role.

For more on this theme:


The Impact of Covid-19 on African Economies

Senegal Pilgrimage Tests Resistance to COVID-19
https://www.cfr.org/blog/senegal-pilgrimage-tests-resistance-covid-19-0

Coming Out Stronger from COVID-19: Policy Options on Migrant Health and Immigration