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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Indonesia: Corruption scandals escalate as election nears
Arti Ekawati – Deutsche Welle: 18 October 2023

Corruption continues to blight Indonesia as President Jokowi nears the end of his second term. Four political figures related to his regime have recently been sentenced for wrongdoing.

The Nexus of Human Trafficking, Democracy, and Corruption
Ann Norris – Council on Foreign Relations: 12 October 2023

The fight against human trafficking in Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras requires a comprehensive approach that acknowledges the profound impact of weak or nonexistent democratic institutions.

For more on this theme:

Former Bank of China boss arrested on corruption charges

Ukrainian Corruption, Russian Corruption
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/ukrainian-corruption-russian-corruption

EU advises Ukraine to strengthen combating corruption and arms smuggling

Experts Say Tackling Corruption Key to Stopping Nigerian Crude Theft

Austerity, corruption, and neglect: How the Greek railway became Europe’s deadliest

Value of experienced CEO fades when working in regions vulnerable to corruption, political instability

Iran’s Economic Corruption: A Stranglehold on the Iranian People

Bangladesh’s Anti-corruption Commission Questions Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Crossroads: Kazakhstan’s changing illicit drug economy
Yulia Vorobyeva – Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime: 12 October 2023

Kazakhstan has long been an important transit corridor for drugs, being strategically situated between production areas in South Asia — mainly Afghanistan — and drug consumption markets in Russia and Europe.
https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/kazakhstans-illicit-drug-economy/

European Commission Seeks to Support Ports in Fight Against Drug Smuggling
The Maritime Executive: 15 October 2023

The commission has mapped out an aggressive plan designed to step up the fight against trafficking across member states.

For more on this theme:

Ecuador: from Darwin to drug trafficking

US offers $5 million reward for information on killing of Ecuadorean presidential candidate

Fentanyl frenzy driving up cartel employment in Mexico

Tackling drug abuse: Kingdom reveals strategy

Narco Taliban: Why Afghan meth is India’s big headache

Ecuador presidential hopefuls pledge action on ports, where bananas hide cocaine

Chile Ups Efforts Against ‘Narco’ Mausoleums and Funerals

Morocco Pledges to Intensify Crackdown on ‘l’Poufa’ Drug

Why the U.S. is pressuring China amid a crackdown on the global fentanyl trade
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-the-u-s-is-pressuring-china-amid-a-crackdown-on-the-global-fentanyl-trade
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Cocaine Codfish: How the War on Drugs Can Inform the Fight against Illegal Fishing
Aaron Delano-Johnson – War on the Rocks: 16 October 2023

Up to 1 in 5 fish caught worldwide is the product of predatory practices, which continue to destabilize coastal nations around the world.
https://warontherocks.com/2023/10/cocaine-codfish-how-the-war-on-drugs-can-inform-the-fight-against-illegal-fishing/

US Launches International Initiative Against Environmental Crimes and Criminal Networks
Julieta Pelcastre – Diálogo: 17 October 2023

The United States, Gabon, Norway and several environmental organizations have launched the Nature Crime Alliance.

For more on this theme:
Legal Impunity for Loggers Behind the Brutal Murders of Four Indigenous Earth Defenders in Saweto

Cut down once again: Uncontrolled logging puts new Sahel reforestation projects at risk

Gabon takes major step to fight corruption and promote sustainable forestry

Brazil strikes intruders of Amazon’s most deforested Indigenous land

Operation Mercury vs. Gold Fever: Peru’s Tug-of-War in the Amazon With a Pandemic Twist

Kachin rebels press villagers to move to make way for jade mining

From Bait to Plate — How Forced Labor in China Taints America’s Seafood Supply Chain
https://www.cecc.gov/events/hearings/from-bait-to-plate%E2%80%94how-forced-labor-in-china-taints-the-american-seafood-industry
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Bridging the Digital Divides
UNESCO: 17 October 2023
The ROAM-X session explores internet access and governance in Africa.

For more on this theme:
(G7) G7 to draw up AI code of conduct this autumn: Kishida

(Global) Is There a Role for ICANN in Satellite Internet Governance?
https://circleid.com/posts/20231014-is-there-a-role-for-icann-in-satellite-internet-governance

(Global) The Evolving Internet: Navigating Risks Amidst Immersion, Decentralization, And Generative AI

INTERNET FREEDOM

Turkish court censors online content on judicial bribery allegations
Stockholm Center for Freedom: 17 October 2023
The ruling blocks news articles, columns, social media posts and videos covering allegations implicating prominent judges, Free Web Turkey reported.
https://stockholmcf.org/turkish-court-censors-online-content-on-judicial-bribery-allegations/

For more on this theme:
(Iran) Iran’s Internet Freedom Under Siege: A Global Perspective

(Global) How to fight for internet freedom

(Russia) Russia wants to isolate its internet, but experts warn it won’t be easy
https://therecord.media/russia-internet-isolation-challenges
CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

Shields beyond the horizon: landing Australia’s 2023 cybersecurity strategy
Mike Bareja – The Strategist: 18 October 2023

Home Affairs Minister Clare O’Neil and National Cyber Security Coordinator Darren Goldie have familiarized the government and industry with the strategy’s six “cyber shields” and timeline of two-year “horizons” out to 2030.


For more on this theme:

(Global) The Future of Cyberwar is being Shaped in Ukraine

(Taiwan, China) Taiwan Bracing for Cyberwar With China: US Official
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/10/04/taiwan-bracing-cyberwar-china/?expand_article=1

(Global) Limitations on the Strategic Use of Ransomware in Armed Conflicts
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/limitations-strategic-use-ransomware-armed-conflicts/

CYBERATTACKS

Lloyd’s of London finds hypothetical cyberattack could cost world economy $3.5 trillion
Alexander Martin – The Record: 18 October 2023

The insurance giant has warned that the global economy could lose $3.5 trillion as a result of a major cyberattack targeting payment systems.

https://therecord.media/lloyds-finds-cyberattack-would-cost-trillions

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) Clorox and MGM Resorts aren’t the only companies dealing with cyberattack damage

(U.K.) Manufacturing services tech giant hit with cyberattack

(U.S.) US construction giant unearths concrete evidence of cyberattack
https://www.theregister.com/2023/10/12/simpson_manufacturing_security_incident/

(Australia, Global) Australian Scholars Develop Cyberattack Protection for Military Robots
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/10/12/cyberattack-protection-military-robots/
CYBERCRIME

Urgent global response needed for “insidious” cybercrime
Interpol: 16 October 2023

New types of cybercrime are emerging. Well-organized criminals are exploiting digital technologies to tailor their attacks and target weaknesses in online systems, networks and infrastructures.

https://www.interpol.int/fr/Actualites-et-evenements/Actualites/2023/Urgent-global-response-needed-for-insidious-cybercrime

For more on this theme:
(Global) UN cybercrime treaty: A menace in the making

(Global) Data weaponisation: A new era of cybercrime

(Global) Report: Shipping is an Easy and Lucrative Cybercrime Target

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

Protecting the EU’s critical infrastructure from cyberattacks in a changing environment
Juan C. Asenjo – Security Boulevard: 16 October 2023

In today’s interconnected high-technology world, protecting the critical infrastructure has gained growing attention. Increasing threats and a changing geopolitical environment are giving us reasons to reconsider how we define and protect these vital systems.


For more on this theme:
(Canada) Hackers are coming for Canada’s critical infrastructure. Are we ready?

(Global) Perspective: It’s Time to Treat Satellites as Critical Infrastructure

(South Africa) Growing threats to SA’s critical infrastructure
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

What Will Happen To The Evidence Of Daesh Atrocities Against The Yazidis?
Ewelina U. Ochab – Forbes: 10 October 2023

News reports suggest there are plans to close the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh/ISIL, which collects and preserves evidence of atrocities perpetrated by the Islamic State group.


Analysis: Islamic State strikes in western Uganda
Caleb Weiss & Ryan O’Farrell – Long War Journal: 18 October 2023

The Islamic State group, through its Central Africa Province – known locally as the Allied Democratic Forces – has conducted and officially claimed two ambushes recently against civilians.


For more on this theme:

Revelation of Terror Collaboration: HuT, ISIS Joined Hands For Operations in India
https://www.freepressjournal.in/india/revelation-of-terror-collaboration-hut-isis-joined-hands-for-operations-in-india

Canadian Woman Repatriated From Syria Charged With Terrorism

Killer of French school teacher claims attack for Islamic State group

Alleged Islamic State ‘Beatle’ pleads guilty to terrorism offences

Islamic State claims responsibility for attack on Afghan Shi'ite mosque

Former Brooklyn Resident Sentenced to Life in Prison for Aiding Islamic State Group as Sniper

Islamic state claims responsibility for Brussels attack – group’s channel on Telegram
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/islamic-state-claims-responsibility-brussels-attack-groups-channel-telegram-2023-10-17/
ISRAEL/HAMAS

Middle East on ‘verge of the abyss’ UN warns, as Israel-Hamas conflict deepens

Gaza crisis
United Nations: 15 October 2023

The U.N. secretary-general appealed to Hamas to immediately release all hostages and to Israel to grant “unimpeded access for humanitarian aid” into the Gaza Strip.


For more on this theme:

The Israel-Hamas War: The Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza

The how and what of the latest Israel-Hamas war
https://www.colorado.edu/today/2023/10/13/how-and-what-latest-israel-hamas-war

In claiming neutrality, China picks a side in Israel-Hamas war
https://www.axios.com/2023/10/15/china-israel-hamas-war

Iran-backed Hezbollah joining Israel-Hamas conflict would be a ‘game changer,’ Middle East expert says

The Rules of War and Human Rights in the Israel-Hamas War

Expert Guidance: Law of Armed Conflict in the Israel-Hamas War

Disinformation surge threatens to fuel Israel-Hamas conflict

Israel-Hamas war risks further deglobalization and inflation

How does Iran fit into the war between Israel and Hamas?
https://www.vox.com/world-politics/2023/10/14/23917078/israel-hamas-war-gaza-iran-hezbollah-khamenei-lebanon

Israel-Hamas war is changing the political landscape in France
https://www.politico.eu/article/israel-hamas-war-change-political-landscape-france/

Israel-Hamas 2023 Symposium — The Evacuation of Northern Gaza: Practical and Legal Aspects
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/evacuation-northern-gaza-practical-legal-aspects/

Israel-Hamas conflict divides opinion in Africa
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

How hackers piled onto the Israeli-Hamas conflict

A Dangerous New Phase in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Hamas-Israel War and Regional Security in MENA

Israel-Hamas 2023 Symposium — A “Complete Siege” of Gaza in accordance with International Humanitarian Law
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/complete-siege-gaza-in-accordance-international-humanitarian-law/

China Exploits Israel-Hamas Conflict To Diminish US Global Influence – Analysis

Will Egypt Play a Role in Easing the Gaza War?
https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/will-egypt-play-role-easing-gaza-war

Deterring Escalation and Expansion of the Gaza War by Iran’s “Axis of Resistance”

Russia-Iran-China: Geopolitical Shadows On Hamas-Israel War – Analysis
https://www.eurasiareview.com/16102023-russia-iran-china-geopolitical-shadows-on-hamas-israel-war-analysis/

Ukraine-Russia And Hamas-Israel Wars: Adaptation Is Key – Analysis

Israel-Gaza conflict: when social media fakes are rampant, news verification is vital
https://theconversation.com/israel-gaza-conflict-when-social-media-fakes-are-rampant-news-verification-is-vital-215496

Israel: Hamas And Islamic Jihad Attack – Analysis

Israel-Hamas 2023 Symposium — Siege Law and Military Necessity
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/siege-law-military-necessity/

Normalizing Saudi-Israeli Ties is the Best Response to the Hamas Attack

Taiwan Monitors Israel-Hamas Conflict Amid China Concerns
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Israel-Hamas War Creates Prospects, Problems For Russia As It Invades Ukraine And Seeks Clout In Mideast

The new war may help the Kremlin by drawing attention away from the carnage it is causing in Ukraine, but a widening of the conflict could strain Moscow’s carefully cultivated Middle East ties and jeopardize its clout in the region.

https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-israel-hamas-war-prospects-problems/32643160.html

For more on this theme:

Prigozhin Is Gone, But Wagner’s Power in Africa Is Only Growing
https://newlinesinstitute.org/state-resilience-fragility/prigozhin-is-gone-but-wagners-power-in-africa-is-only-growing/

Political-Military-Mercenary Triangulation: A Look At The Wagner Group – Analysis

‘Without Leaving Home, We Became Foreigners’: Ukrainians Escape Russian Occupation Through The Only Open Border Crossing

The Russians Fighting for Ukraine
https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/ukraine/russians-fighting-ukraine

Putin Is Not “Protecting” Ethnic Russians in Ukraine or Elsewhere
https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/putin-is-not-protecting-ethnic-russians-in-ukraine-or-elsewhere/

Russia attempts to seize military, diplomatic initiative against Ukraine

Putin hammers Ukraine with West distracted by Middle East crisis

Russia’s Ukraine invasion highlights the need for fundamental UN reform

What to look for as Putin and Xi meet at the Belt and Road Forum

Russia’s Potential Withdrawal From Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Underlines Urgent Arms Control Problem – Analysis
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Russian Nuclear Threats — A Cry for Attention, Not Armageddon's Dawn**
https://cepa.org/article/russian-nuclear-threats-a-cry-for-attention-not-armageddons-dawn/

**Behind the Lines: Russia's Brainwashing of Teenagers in Occupied Ukraine**

**The Wagner Group Evolves After The Death Of Prigozhin — Analysis**

**The role of AI in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine: Interview with expert Anton Tarasyuk**

**Russia can gain from Middle East turmoil — but it could backfire if the war spirals out of control**

**Snubbed by Russia, Israel and Ukraine draw closer after Hamas attack**

**Russia's foreign minister thanks North Korea for 'unwavering' support of its war in Ukraine**

**The state of Russia's war on Ukraine as it nears 2024**

**UK explores using frozen Russian assets to fund Ukraine defence**

**Russia Will Survive a Defeat in Ukraine. It’s Time to Prepare for What Comes Next.**

**Ukraine finance minister says donor 'tiredness' growing as war drags on**

**Russia recruits Serbs in drive to replenish military forces in Ukraine**

**Ukraine: Russia's losses mount — but self-sacrifice in war is part of the country’s mythology**
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Rebuilding Ukraine’s Economy Starts Now
https://warontherocks.com/2023/10/rebuilding-ukraines-economy-starts-now/

‘Creating Chaos Wherever He Can’: Khodorkovsky Argues Ukraine War Is Taxing Putin’s Hold On Power
https://www.rferl.org/a/khodorkovsky-interview-russia-putin-ukraine-war/32639952.html

Ukraine’s neglected Danube region is a crucial front in the war with Russia