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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Chinese firms hit bribery and tax evasion troubles amid African corruption crackdowns
Jevans Nyabiage – South China Morning Post: 4 November 2019
Chinese companies seem to be embroiled in several cases of tax evasion and bribery across Africa as leaders there try to root out corruption.
bles-amid

The Money Farmers: How Oligarchs and Populists Milk the E.U. for Millions
The EU’s Common Agricultural Policy is “deliberately opaque, grossly undermines the European Union’s environmental goals and is warped by corruption and self-dealing,” according to a report by The New York Times based on a nine-month investigation into abuses of the system in Central and Eastern Europe.
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/03/world/europe/eu-farm-subsidy-hungary.html

For more on this theme:
Protests erupt over government corruption and poor public services in Kuwait
https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/w/protests-erupt-over-government-corruption-and-poor-public-services-
in-kuwait

Anti-Corruption Regulation Survey of 42 Countries 2019

Zimbabwe minister charged with corruption costing $3.7 million
https://www.reuters.com/article/zimbabwe-corruption/zimbabwe-minister-charged-with-corruption-cost-
ing-37-million-idUSL8N27K4NI

Used to impunity, Bangladesh elite face corruption crackdown
https://apnews.com/92ec00bc54f94222b7a89ae0979f46f7

Cyprus moves to strip 26 foreign investors of citizenship
https://apnews.com/718f64bda9dd48429259132341704756

Perceived corruption levels on the rise
https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/11/05/perceived-corruption-levels-on-the-rise/

Thousands stage sit-in in Kuwait to protest corruption

Protesters block roads in Beirut, other areas of Lebanon
idUSKBN1XE0H7

PH gets failing marks on corruption, rule of law from US aid agency
https://business.inquirer.net/282573/ph-gets-failing-marks-on-corruption-rule-of-law-from-us-aid-agency
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Ex-FARC Mafia Kill Colombia Indigenous Amid Conflicts Over Illicit Crops
Lara Loaiza – InSight Crime: 7 November 2019

Colombian indigenous people are being targeted in the country’s southwestern department of Cauca as they cross ex-FARC mafia groups that control the illicit crops and trafficking in the region.

Cocaine highway: On the front line of Europe’s drug war
Colin Freeman – The Telegraph: November 2019

“Cape Verde is the World Trade Centre of cocaine, and buying drugs here is easier than buying water,” says local rapper Ga Da Lomba. The country’s police and judiciary are intimidated by the cartels, and the drug traffickers move through the country with relative impunity.

For more on this theme:
Police Links to Drug Trafficking Endemic in Paraguay

Esmeraldas: An Ecuador Province Gripped by Drug Conflict

Cheap and powerful ‘meth 2.0’ is ravaging communities and slowly killing its victims

Mexico’s drug policy is failing. That’s why the cartels are on the offensive.

Drug Addiction Rises in Myanmar’s Kachin State

How ‘narco submarine’ boom is fuelled by bumper cocaine trade

The designers and the don: How two interior decorators took the fall for the Cali Cartel

DEA: Lethal doses of fentanyl found in 27 percent of counterfeit pills made by Mexican drug cartels
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

**Indonesian team wins contest to build software to fight wildlife trafficking**

*Jason Santos – Free Malaysia Today: 3 November 2019*

Six young professionals from Indonesia won a prize by creating software, named Pangolin, during a 48-hour Zoohackathon competition. The software extracts and stores crucial data to help officials identify wildlife trafficking routes.


**Thousands of Romanians protest against illegal logging, attacks on forest workers**

*Reuters: 3 November 2019*

Some of Europe’s most important stands of old-growth and primeval forests are under attack. Thousands of Romanians marched across the country against illegal logging and the lack of a governmental response — which they blame for the murders of two forest workers earlier this year.


*For more on this theme:*

- Report: Pangolin Exports from South Africa Increasing

- Can forensics help keep endangered rosewood off the black market?

- ASEAN wildlife under threat from illegal hunting

- These Researchers Are Using AI Drones to More Safely Track Wildlife

- Your hardwood floor was probably harvested illegally

- Amid boom in Japan, ban on trading endangered otters set to take effect

- Brazilian ‘forest guardian’ killed by illegal loggers in ambush
  [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/02/brazilian-forest-guardian-killed-by-illegal-loggers-in-ambush](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/02/brazilian-forest-guardian-killed-by-illegal-loggers-in-ambush)

- ‘Fantastic day for elephants’: court rejects ivory ban challenge
  [https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/05/fantastic-day-for-elephants-court-rejects-ivory-ban-challenge](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/05/fantastic-day-for-elephants-court-rejects-ivory-ban-challenge)

- How dogs in Kenya are helping to save elephants
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Human Traffickers Are Literally Selling Slaves on Instagram
Kristin Houser – BBC: 4 November 2019

A team from BBC News Arabic uncovered human traffickers selling slaves online on apps such as Instagram. They found one instance in which traffickers tried to sell a 16-year-old girl. “This is the quintessential example of modern slavery,” said a United Nations representative.


These Nigerian students have developed a software to expose human traffickers, track, rescue and rehabilitate victims
Theodora Aidoo – Face 2 Face Africa: 6 November 2019

During a coding competition, three Nigerian students created software that can track and expose human traffickers as well as rescue and rehabilitate victims. The students developed “Let’s Fight Trafficking” to help tackle the problem in their West African nation.

https://face2faceafrica.com/article/these-nigerian-students-have-developed-a-software-to-expose-human-traffickers-track-rescue-and-rehabilitate-victims

For more on this theme:

Fighting Back Against Human Trafficking

Truckers Can Slam the Brakes on Human Trafficking

This AI can detect signs of sex trafficking

World needs to get serious about tackling human trafficking
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1579511

UNODC, NAPTIP partner aviation agencies to tackle human trafficking

Panel discussion - improving access to compensation for victims of human trafficking and gender-based violence

Despite border barriers, law enforcement warns human smuggling undeterred

Human Smuggling Demands a Human Solution
https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/human-smuggling-demands-a-human-solution-1.1339387

‘I risked my life in the back of a lorry to reach the UK from Iran’

Why Vietnam Can't Stop Risky Migration to Richer Countries
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

**India's Role in Global Cyber Policy Formulation**
*Arindrajit Basu – Lawfare: 7 November 2019*

India has been working hard on its domestic cyber policy. But India can also play a key role in global internet politics.

https://www.lawfareblog.com/indias-role-global-cyber-policy-formulation

*For more on this theme:*

(Global) Considerations on the High-Level Panel's “Internet Governance Forum Plus” Model
http://www.circleid.com/posts/20191104_considerations_on_high_level_panels_internet_governance_forum_plus/

(U.S.) Knight Foundation Gives $3.5M for Internet Policy Research

(Global) Four Steps To Help Prepare For An Increasingly Balkanized Internet

(China) Beijing’s cryptic blockchain gambit
https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/beijing-s-cryptic-blockchain-gambit

PRIVACY AND SECURITY

**Obama’s former cybersecurity adviser thinks lawmakers are right to treat TikTok as a security threat**
*Aaron Holmes – Business Insider: 7 November 2019*

Chinese-owned TikTok, a social media app, is under scrutiny by U.S. officials who believe the app’s popularity could create a national security threat.


*For more on this theme:*

(Global) Trade-Offs in the Design of Facebook’s Oversight Board: No Silver Bullet
https://www.lawfareblog.com/trade-offs-design-facebook-s-oversight-board-no-silver-bullet

(India) India’s cyber security challenge: It is time to protect the great firewall...

(Global) Paving the Way for an Even More Remarkable Decade in Information Security
INTERNET FREEDOM

The Crisis of Social Media
Adrian Shahbaz and Allie Funk – Freedom House: November 2019

The “Freedom on the Net 2019” report by bipartisan watchdog and think tank Freedom House suggests that digital platforms, including social media, have emerged as the “new battle-ground” for democracy, where governments would traditionally use censorship and site-blocking technologies. State and partisan actors have used disinformation and propaganda to distort facts and opinions during elections in dozens of countries over the past year, including the 2018 U.S. midterm elections and the 2019 European Parliament elections.


Full report:
Freedom on the Net 2019 report: The Crisis of Social Media

For more on this theme:
(Germany, Global) Germany’s Online Crackdowns Inspire the World’s Dictators

(Global) Global tech could be regulated like global banks

(Russia) How Russia’s online censorship could jeopardize internet freedom worldwide

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

National Guard beefing up cyber security teams ahead of 2020 election
Corey Dickstein – Stars and Stripes: 5 November 2019

To help ensure critical network infrastructure remained operational during the U.S. midterm elections, 27 states activated their National Guard’s cyber security cells.


For more on this theme:
(Global) The biggest myths about the next billion internet users
https://qz.com/1669754/tech-companies-misunderstand-the-next-billion-internet-users/

(Global) How Governments Use AI To Create Better Experiences For Citizens
https://www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2019/11/07/how-governments-use-ai-to-create-better-experiences-for-citizens/#7a7cea7c799c
CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Massive Web Defacement Attack in Georgia Raises New Concerns About Politically Motivated Cyber Attacks
Nicole Lindsey – CPO Magazine: 6 November 2019
In the largest cyber attack in Georgia’s history, an unknown attacker brought to a halt a majority of the internet traffic into the country in late October for most of the day.


For more on this theme:
(U.S., Global) Weathering the cyber storm

(Global) Defending against nation state ransomware

(U.S., Global) Get Ready for Hybrid Physical/Cyber Terror Attacks, Warn Researchers
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/cybersecurity/get-ready-for-hybrid-physical-cyber-terror-attacks-warn-researchers/

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

An Indian nuclear power plant suffered a cyberattack. Here’s what you need to know.
The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. has confirmed there was an attack on the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tamil Nadu, India, in September. The nuclear power plant’s administrative network was breached in the attack, but no critical damage was done.


For more on this theme:
(U.S.) State, Federal Officials Closely Monitor Election Security

(U.S., Global) How to Secure Critical Infrastructure When Patching Isn’t Possible

(Europe) Europol tests emergency response to attacks on critical infrastructure
https://portswigger.net/daily-swig/europol-tests-emergency-response-to-attacks-on-critical-infrastructure
NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

**Cyber Security Today**
Howard Solomon – IT World Canada: 6 November 2019

This episode focuses on banking security incidents and a mobile phone scam warning.
https://www.itworldcanada.com/article/cyber-security-today-banking-security-incidents-and-a-mo-
ible-phone-scam-warning/423663

For more on this theme:

(U.S., Global) Insider tips from a cybersecurity CEO | Cyber Work Podcast

(Global) Insider Threats

(Global) Usable security is a delicate balance.

MASS SURVEILLANCE AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

**Russia’s new ‘disconnect from the internet’ law is actually about surveillance**
Catalin Cimpanu – ZDNet: 1 November 2019

With Russia's new “internet sovereignty” law now in effect, the government can disconnect the entire country from the internet. This grants them the power to monitor and surveil every piece of information into and out of the nation.

https://www.zdnet.com/article/russias-new-disconnect-from-the-internet-law-is-actually-about-surveil-
lance/

For more on this theme:

(India) Privacy concerns as India readies facial recognition system
tem-191107152951428.html

(Israel, Global) Israeli Surveillance Technology Firm Used WhatsApp Hack in Spy Program
https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/israeli-surveillance-technology-firm-used-whatsapp-hack-
in-spy-program/

(Global) Spyware for Sale
http://www.soufangroup.com/intelbrief-spyware-for-sale/

(China) Beijing Increases Censorship, Surveillance Amid Blockchain Push
TRAINING AND EXERCISES

US and Taiwan hold first joint cyber-war exercise
BBC: 4 November 2019
Taiwan and the United States have partnered to hold their first-ever joint cyber warfare exercise.

For more on this theme:
(U.S., Global) How to improve cyber training for critical infrastructure employees

(U.S.) Accenture opens three “cyber ranges” to improve the security posture of industrial organizations

(Global) The financial industry just finished its annual ‘doomsday’ cybersecurity exercise — here’s what they imagined would happen
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS

After Baghdadi’s death, ISIS statements portray terrorist group as intent on exacting revenge
Soud Mekhennet and Joby Warrick – The Washington Post: 1 November 2019
ISIS’ response to the killing of their leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, was to issue a warning that the group would retaliate against Americans.

The Islamic State Will Outlive Baghdadi. Afghanistan Shows How.
Michael Kugelman – Foreign Policy: 5 November 2019
ISIS in Afghanistan highlights how flexible and adaptable the group is. ISIS has been able to create autonomous affiliates that will continue despite numerous obstacles, including the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

For more on this theme:
Captured al-Baghdadi wife revealed lots of information about ISIS, source says

The death of Baghdadi isn’t the end of ISIS
https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/11/05/death-baghdadi-isnt-end-isis/

Islamic State Prepared for Life Without its Leader

U.S. Official Says New ISIS Leader Is ‘Not Going to Enjoy His Promotion’

ISIS Fighters Attack Outpost in Tajikistan

The fate of vulnerable refugees as ISIS evolves

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Is Dead (But ISIS Is Very Much Alive)

ISIS Affiliates in Egypt, Bangladesh Pledge Support for New Leader

Key Islamic State Affiliate Appears to Back New Leader

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FOREIGN FIGHTERS

France Makes a Play to Try Foreign Fighters in Iraq
Jacob Schulz – Lawfare: 4 November 2019
France has a plan for handling European ISIS fighters – get Iraq to deal with them.
https://www.lawfareblog.com/france-makes-play-try-foreign-fighters-iraq

For more on this theme:
Africa’s responses to the threat posed by returning terrorist fighters

Islamic State wives start repatriation case in Netherlands

Morocco Worried About Return of ISIS Militants

CNN goes inside Syrian prison holding ISIS prisoners

TERRORISM AND THE INTERNET

Twitter Struggling To Shut Down Bot And Impersonation Accounts Created By ISIS
Hannah Allam – National Public Radio: 1 November 2019
ISIS launched “145 bot” and “sockpuppet” accounts across Twitter in a coordinated campaign in the wake of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s death. Twitter is trying to stamp them out but is struggling.

For more on this theme:
‘Speed of social media’: Online terrorist activity leaves little time to react

Twitter suspends accounts affiliated with Hamas and Hezbollah

Can Social Media be Considered a Cause of Terrorism?
https://intpolicydigest.org/2019/11/02/can-social-media-be-considered-a-cause-of-terrorism/

Terrorist propaganda and gruesome execution videos should be banned under new laws, London Bridge coroner recommends
How Jihadists Went ‘Glocal’ And What To Do About It – Analysis
Stephen Tankel – Observer Research Foundation: 5 November 2019
This essay explores two interrelated areas: jihadist groups’ efforts to advance alternate governance mechanisms and the ways in which new technologies have evolved to enable these organizations to pursue supporters locally and globally.

Report: Ethnic, Racial Terrorism on Rise Around the World
Masood Farivar – Voice of America: 2 November 2019
Nathan Sales, the U.S. State Department’s counterterrorism coordinator, said the “world saw a rise in racially or ethnically motivated terrorism” in 2018, calling the development a “disturbing trend.”
Full report:
Country Reports on Terrorism 2018
https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2018/

For more on this theme:
Al-Shabab Chief Partially Seen on Video for First Time
The Next Chapter of ISIS and al-Qaeda: Strategies and Attack Plans
More Than 50 Soldiers Killed in Terror Attack on Mali’s Army
https://5newsonline.com/2019/11/02/more-than-50-soldiers-killed-in-terror-attack-on-malis-army/
What does the death of IS leader al-Baghdadi mean for Boko Haram?
Beyond Baghdadi: The Next Wave of Jihadist Violence
https://www.csis.org/analysis/beyond-baghdadi-next-wave-jihadist-violence
With or without Baghdadi, Salafi-jihadis are winning the governance game
https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/with-or-without-baghdadi-salafi-jihadis-are-winning-the-governance-game
Hezbollah’s Old Tricks Won’t Work in Lebanon
If you’re worried about terrorism, worry about the Sahel
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

UNODC launches programme to support management of violent extremist prisoners in Kazakhstan
Zhanna Shayakhmetova – The Astana Times: 4 November 2019
Along with Tunisia and Uganda, Kazakhstan has joined the Global United Nations program on Supporting the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons.

For more on this theme:
How ISIS Radicalized My Son
Sri Lankan Muslims pressured to curb rise of extremism
Military hands over 86 Boko Haram child fighters to Borno govt for rehabilitation
Muslim Clergy Roped in to Counter ISIS Online Propaganda

COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

In Somalia, can al-Shabab be defeated? Here's why a nonmilitary option might succeed.
While the current military campaign against al-Shabab has had some success, a nonmilitary option, such as encouraging defections, could have even more impact on the group’s numbers.

For more on this theme:
The Role of Police and Military Special Forces in Counter-terrorism Efforts in Cities
Can Policy Catch Up to the Golden Age of Terrorism Research?
Fighting Terrorism by Restricting Freedom of Speech: Does It Work?
IRREGULAR WARFARE

Iran Has Military Advantage Over U.S. in Middle East Due to Asymmetric Forces, Report Says

David Brennan – Newsweek: 7 November 2019

Iran’s influence and strategic capabilities in the Middle East are increasing despite the reimposition of crippling U.S. sanctions and a faltering nuclear deal with world powers, a new report says.


First chapter of full report:

Iran’s Networks of Influence in the Middle East – Chapter One: Tehran’s strategic intent


For more on this theme:

State Department says Iran still biggest state sponsor of terror, spends $1B per year on proxies

https://www.foxnews.com/politics/state-department-iran-terrorism-isis-al-qaeda

Russian fighters shift balance of Libyan proxy war


Mascots: The secret weapon in Japan’s soft power arsenal

https://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2019/11/07/general/japan-mascots-soft-power/#.XcUdJ0xFz3w

Why Iran wants the Lebanon and Iraq uprisings to fade


For Russia, Even the Language Can Be a Weapon

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