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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Iraq sets up top body to tackle ‘major’ corruption cases
Agence France-Presse*: 16 November 2022
The newly appointed premier makes tackling graft a priority in the oil-rich country.
https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2022/11/16/Iraq-sets-up-top-body-to-tackle-major-corruption-cases

Analyzing the use of AI tools in fighting corruption
Anjali Raja K – India AI: 11 November 2022
It is labor-intensive to detect fraud, tax evasion and bribery. However, artificial intelligence holds the promise of identifying such crimes with speed and efficiency.

For more on this theme:
Belarus Corruption Watch: How two businessmen made billions from the “solvents scheme”

Portugal “must step up fight against corruption of foreign public officials” — OECD

Albania to Set Up Anti-Corruption Register Amid Continuing Issues

Palestine: Hamas arrests journalist exposing corruption in Gaza

Russian Draftees In Tatarstan Region Shout Down Commanders Over Poor Conditions, Cold, And Corruption

Is smuggling corruption?
https://www.graphic.com.gh/features/opinion/ghana-news-is-smuggling-corruption.html

Climate change, flooding and Nigeria’s tide of corruption

Kenyan court drops $60 million corruption case against deputy president

Nigeria bags int'l award for tackling corruption at ports
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug dealing in Germany on the rise
Deutsche Welle: 10 November 2022

Germany’s National Criminal Police Office released the data, which also showed an increase in the use of certain drugs.


Fentanyl Has Become a Hidden Killer in Mexico
Sara García – InSight Crime: 10 November 2022

The growing consumption of fentanyl is behind a steep increase in bodies coming into the Forensic Medical Service in Mexicali, Baja California. The drug is so potent that users overdose in a matter of seconds, falling unconscious even before they can remove the needles from their bodies.


For more on this theme:

Why Belgium is now the cocaine capital of Europe
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsH152NE9Ak

Vietnam, Laos remain hotspot for drug traffickers

In Australia, a New Cyber Crime Trend Ropes the Elderly into Drug Trafficking

Drug war: Nigeria seeks collaboration among African countries

UNODC launches Report on “Afghan Women and the Opiate Trade”

Captagon has turned Syria into a narco-state after more than a decade of war
https://atalayar.com/en/content/captagon-has-turned-syria-narco-state-after-more-decade-war

Some Dope* on Drugs … and European Youth

Poppy love in Afghanistan
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/poppy-love-in-afghanistan-explained-8248241/

Telegram Becoming Drug Dealing Marketplace of Choice in Argentina

Methamphetamine Production in Mexico Is Toxic for the Environment
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Could Venezuelan Military Finally Bring Bolívar’s Illegal Gold Miners to Heel?
InSight Crime: 11 November 2022

The Venezuelan government has placed small-scale miners and mining gangs in its crosshairs as shown by a major military deployment.

Report shows widespread wildlife trafficking in Mexico and lax enforcement to protect species
Kendal Blust – Fronteras: November 2022

Jaguars, sloths, monkeys and lizards are being openly traded in public markets and on social media.
https://fronterasdesk.org/content/1824406/report-shows-widespread-wildlife-trafficking-mexico-and-lax-enforcement-protect

For more on this theme:

Sudan’s militias turn to illegal logging in vital forests

At climate summit, Brazil’s Lula promises new day for Amazon
https://apnews.com/article/forests-brazil-deforestation-climate-and-environment-782a100c87cb6cd83c949b2d106cc926

DR Congo’s Faltering Fight Against Illegal Cobalt Mines

At least 6% of global fishing ‘probably illegal’ as ships turn off tracking devices
https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/nov/02/at-least-6-percent-global-fishing-likely-as-ships-turn-off-tracking-devices-study

Report: West Africa Is the Global Epicenter of Illegal Fishing

South African Police Investigating Deaths of 21 Suspected Illegal Miners

Honduran forest governance agreement brings cautious hope

Wildlife Trafficking Preys on the Amazon Basin
https://insightcrime.org/investigations/wildlife-trafficking-preys-on-amazon-basin/

New research explains dramatic reduction of ivory trade in Japan

Protecting the rainforest from space
https://www.freethink.com/environment/protecting-the-rainforest-from-space
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

**China’s Cyber Capabilities ‘Pose a Serious Threat’ to US, Advisory Panel Warns**

*Edward Graham – Nextgov: 15 November 2022*

The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission’s 2022 Annual Report to Congress assessed Beijing’s cyber warfare and espionage capabilities.


Full report:

For more on this theme:

**(Global) U.S., EU plan AI road map at upcoming trade, technology council meeting**


**(Global) The international politics of data: When control trumps protection**

https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-international-politics-of-data/

**(Global) The Metaverse Needs To Have A Role In Your Strategy: Here Is How**

https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2022/11/01/the-metaverse-needs-to-have-a-role-in-your-strategy-here-is-how/?sh=49d2a0254559

INTERNET FREEDOM

**The Barents Observer makes another crack in Kremlin’s censorship wall**

*The Barents Observer: 13 November 2022*

Since the website was blocked on Russian territory in 2019, it has actively worked to find ways to circumvent the action.


For more on this theme:

**(Russia) Five investigative journalism projects, including Team Navalny, release mobile app to bypass Russia’s censors**


**(South Africa) South Africa’s ‘internet censorship’ laws are now in full effect — and legal notices are going out**


**(China) In Xi’s China, even internal reports fall prey to censorship**

CYBER STATECRAFT AND STRATEGY

A new cyber taskforce will supposedly ‘hack the hackers’ behind the Medibank breach.
It could put a target on Australia’s back
*Mamoun Alazab – The Conversation: 15 November 2022*

The first-of-its-kind collaboration between Australian Federal Police and the Australian Signals Directorate plans to eliminate cyber criminals by using the same cyber weapons and tactics used by them.


*For more on this theme:*

(India) India and Cyber Power: The Imperative of Offensive Cyber Operations
https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-and-cyber-power/

(U.S.) FBI Says It has ‘National Security Concerns’ About TikTok

(U.S.) CISA Looks to Future With First-Ever Strategic Plan

CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

Hundreds of thousands of Emotet attacks spotted daily after four-month hiatus
*Connor Jones – ITPro.: 16 November 2022*

Emotet payloads dropped off in July 2022 but reemerged in November, according to cybersecurity firm Proofpoint, and the botnet is now acting as a primary facilitator for the delivery of malware.


*For more on this theme:*

(Moldova) Igor Grosu says that the secret services of the Russian Federation are behind the cyber attacks

(Global) Researchers Discover Hundreds of Amazon RDS Instances Leaking Users’ Personal Data

(U.S.) U.S Federal Network Hacked — APT Hackers Gained Access to the Domain Controller
CYBERCRIME

U.S.-ROK Strategy for Enhancing Cooperation on Combating and Deterring Cyber-Enabled Financial Crime
Jason Bartlett – Center for a New American Security: 9 November 2022

Based on research with U.S. and Republic of Korea stakeholders, this report outlines challenges to cyber coordination, the evolution of North Korea’s cyber program and provides policy recommendations.


For more on this theme:

(China) With All Eyes on Russia, China Continues to Strike
https://securityboulevard.com/2022/10/with-all-eyes-on-russia-china-continues-to-strike/

(Global) What Is Cybercrime?
https://www.usnews.com/360-reviews/privacy/what-is-cybercrime

(Global) White House convenes dozens of countries to fight ransomware

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

“Critical Infrastructure Vulnerable To Cyber Attacks,” Says Rajnath Singh
NDTV: 10 November 2022

Addressing the convocation of the National Defence College in Delhi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expressed his concern over what he termed “nonkinetic” and “noncontact” warfare.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Cybersecurity in the energy industry: Why working together across the value chain is vital for resilience

(U.S.) DHS Announces New Cybersecurity Performance Goals for Critical Infrastructure

(U.S.) Biden now wants to toughen up chemical sector’s cybersecurity
https://www.theregister.com/2022/10/27/biden_chemical_cybersecurity_sprint/

(Global) Tackling ‘tech lag’ in the air freight industry: Rising to the challenge of cyber attacks
Program on Terrorism and Security Studies (PTSS)

ISIS and Foreign Fighters

Affiliated with ISIS: Challenges for the return and reintegration of women and children
United Nations Development Program: 24 October 2022
The U.N. study aims to better understand the plight of families associated with ISIS, including those who remain displaced or imprisoned, to identify opportunities for rehabilitation through gender-responsive recommendations.

ISIS uses fake Tinder profiles to scam South Africans, finance terrorism
The Jerusalem Post: 16 November 2022
The Islamic State group is using fake Tinder profiles to catfish and blackmail South Africans into funding the organization’s presence across Africa, British newspaper The Times reported.
https://www.jpost.com/international/article-722566

For more on this theme:
Aggressively patriarchal worldview attracted Swedish women to the Islamic State, study finds

The U.S. military plan to keep ISIS down: Infrastructure

Why the US still has not defeated ISIS in Iraq and Syria, according to a new report

Two girls aged 11 and 13 are found beheaded by ISIS fanatics at Syrian refugee camp housing tens of thousands of women and children linked to the terror group

Man Who Planned ISIS Bomb Attack on Pittsburgh Church Sentenced to 17 Years
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/man-who-plotted-isis-bomb-attack-on-pittsburgh-church-sentenced-to-17-years/

ISIS’ growing presence in South Africa a threat to security, warn experts

Maldives arrests 14 for alleged Islamic State-tied bomb plot
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

South Africa provides fertile ground for funders of terrorism. Here’s why
Hussein Solomon – The Conversation: 10 November 2022

There is a long history of concerns about the country’s deficiencies in dealing with terrorism financing within its borders. More than 15 years ago, U.S. expert John Solomon warned that lawlessness and government corruption in the country facilitated terrorist financing.


Somalia switches off media outlets allegedly used by Al-Shabaab
Abdulkadir Khalif – The East African: 10 November 2022

Somalia, in the latest clampdown on violent extremism, announced it had deactivated hundreds of media sites it said were propagating al-Shabaab narratives.


For more on this theme:

Treasury Designates Business Partners of Sanctioned al-Qaeda Financial Facilitator and External Operations Plotter

US offers $10m for information on al-Shabab leaders, finances
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/14/us-offers-10m-for-information-on-al-shabab-leaders-finances

US Imposes Sanctions on Oil Smuggling Network Backing Iran’s Quds Force, Hezbollah

How do Terrorists use Financial Technologies?

Al Qaeda and Abu Huzaifah al Sudani

A Global Terror Threat Rises in Nigeria
https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/a-global-terror-threat-rises-in-nigeria

Mali’s women mediators shape local talks with terrorists
https://issafrica.org/iss-today/malis-women-mediators-shape-local-talks-with-terrorists

Emerging Evidence of a Connection Between Climate Change and Armed Group Recruitment
CONFLICT AND CRIME

Russia’s Unlawful Transfer of Civilians a War Crime and Likely a Crime Against Humanity — New Report
Amnesty International: 10 November 2022

Russian authorities forcibly deported civilians from occupied areas of Ukraine.

For more on this theme:
Crime and terrorism thriving again in Afghanistan amid economic ruin, warns Korösi

Putin’s Atrocities In Ukraine — Crimes With A Name

Ukraine/Russia: Prisoners of war

Ukraine’s lawfare against Russia
https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/ukraines-lawfare-against-russia/

Tussle for the Amazon: New Frontiers in Brazil’s Organized Crime Landscape

From Negotiations to Sanctions, a Busy Time for Crime in Haiti

Uncovering a Pattern of ‘Strategic Violence’ by Russia in Ukraine

Zelenskyy visits recaptured Kherson as alleged war crimes emerge; landmines pose a danger to liberators

Kenya violence: 5 key drivers of the decades-long conflict in the north and what to do about them

Women in United Nations Police Play Critical Role towards Fostering Community Trust, Protecting Most Vulnerable Groups, Speakers Tell Security Council

Femicides in Tibú, Colombia: Cocaine, Gunmen, and a Never-Ending War
https://insightcrime.org/feminicides-tibu-colombia-cocaine-gunmen-never-ending-war/

Ukraine Symposium – Reparations for War: What Options for Ukraine?
https://lieber.westpoint.edu/reparations-for-war-what-options-for-ukraine/
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Ukrainian victory can deal a decisive blow to Russian imperialism
Danylo Lubkivsky – Atlantic Council: 16 November 2022

Almost nine months since his tanks first rolled across the border, it is now clear that Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine is an old-fashioned colonial war complete with illegal annexations and the denial of Ukraine’s right to exist. Until this resurgent brand of Russian imperialism is decisively defeated, it will remain one of the greatest threats to global security.


For more on this theme:

Odesa rejects Catherine the Great as Putin’s invasion makes Russia toxic

Ukraine needs urgent help to counter Putin’s energy infrastructure attacks

Battle of Kherson: Russian retreat confirms Putin is losing the war

A Conversation with Ukraine’s Special Operations Commander

Ukraine’s drone raid on Russian naval base was tactically innovative but not revolutionary
https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/ukraines-drone-raid-on-russian-naval-base-was-tactically-innovative-but-not-revolutionary/

The Russo-Ukrainian War and the Principles of Urban Operations
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/russo-ukrainian-war-and-principles-urban-operations

How the Russia-Ukraine War Can and Cannot End

With winter approaching, Ukraine prepares to fight on frozen ground
https://www.npr.org/2022/11/16/1136014801/ukraine-prepares-winter-russia-war

Ukraine will make decision on any negotiations with Russia – Blinken

U.N. General Assembly calls for Russia to make reparations in Ukraine

As Russia’s war in Ukraine drags on, Turkey’s role expands
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Zelenskyy calls liberation of Kherson ‘beginning of the end’
https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-zelenskyy-europe-business-war-crimes-037bd016533420a707250d1e8075536

Putin’s missile attacks sever power in Ukraine and Moldova
https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-ukraine-war-air-strike-g20-leader-meeting/

These charts show Europe’s reliance on gas before the war in Ukraine
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/11/europe-gas-shortage-russia/

EU launches military training mission for Ukraine’s armed forces

Ukraine Chief Prosecutor: No Negotiations With Russia to End War

Russia’s New Cyberwarfare in Ukraine Is Fast, Dirty, and Relentless
https://www.wired.com/story/russia-ukraine-cyberattacks-mandiant/

Ukraine war: Russians kept in the dark by internet search

Ukraine tells allies it may not be able to recover from more Russian attacks on energy systems

Three Fronts
https://cepa.org/article/three-fronts/

Doomed to Failure — Russia’s Efforts to Restore its Military Muscle
https://cepa.org/article/doomed-to-failure-russias-efforts-to-restore-its-military-muscle/

Few-Friends Russia Embraces Iran
https://cepa.org/article/few-friends-russia-and-iran/

Putin Runs out of Options
https://cepa.org/article/putin-runs-out-of-options/

Why Poland may have most to gain from a Russian defeat in Ukraine
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/nov/13/poland-russia-defeat-ukraine-western-europe

Ten ways Russia’s invasion of Ukraine impacts the Arctic and the world

Russia's withdrawal from Kherson is a humiliating setback. Here's what it means for the war
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Time for the West to think about how to engage with defeated Russia**
https://www.brookings.edu/articles/time-for-the-west-to-think-about-how-to-engage-with-defeated-russia/

**As Russia's war strays over Ukraine's border, NATO is tested again**

**Agent of chaos: How to read Putin's lies, U-turns and retreats**
https://www.politico.eu/article/kherson-vladimir-putin-ukraine-russia-war/

**Moldova hit by spillover of Russia's war**
https://euobserver.com/world/156429

**Filling the Geopolitical Void in Central Asia**

**Putin's Philosophers: Reading Vasily Grossman in the Kremlin**

**The West Needs a Post-War Plan for Stabilizing the Black Sea**

**A US Plan to Prevent Arms Diversion in Ukraine is Welcome But Just the First Step**

**When and How to Re-engage Russia? | A Conversation with Senior Diplomatic Fellow Michael Keays**
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/when-and-how-re-engage-russia-conversation-senior-diplomatic-fellow-michael-keays

**Minsk Triggers Joint Deployment of Troops With Russia**

**As Russian Influence Plummetts, China Capitalizes in Central Asia**

**Russia Ready to Allow Iranian Ships Access to the Volga River and Volga-Don Canal**

**Downplaying the Fall of Kherson, Moscow Aims to Freeze War**
https://jamestown.org/program/downplaying-the-fall-of-kherson-moscow-aims-to-freeze-war/