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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Senior Ukrainian cybersecurity officials sacked amid corruption probe
AJ Vicens – CyberScoop: 20 November 2023
Yurii Shchyhol and Victor Zhora were accused of participating in a scheme to contract software at inflated prices.
https://cyberscoop.com/zhora-shchyhol-fired-corruption/

How Far the Rot of Corruption Has Spread In Vietnam
David Hutt – The Diplomat: 17 November 2023
Nguyen Phu Trong thinks he can purge and purify the Communist Party. But what if corruption is not a quirk of the system, but its essence?

For more on this theme:
Embezzlement case shines light on Vietnamese corruption
Maldives President Frees Ex-Officials Jailed for Corruption
Azerbaijan arrests two journalists investigating political corruption
Analysis: Scandals involving Indonesia’s anti-corruption chief a test of Jokowi’s commitment to fighting graft
Turkey: Journalist Arrested Over Judicial Corruption Article
Norway Isn’t as Squeaky Clean as It Thought
Protesters in Panama Are Marching Against Corruption
Analysis: Corruption probe involving former prime minister seen as litmus test for Albania’s new justice system
https://www.tiranatimes.com/?p=154037
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Trial in Honduras Puts Spotlight on MS13 Drug Trafficking
Maria Luisa Valencia – InSight Crime: 16 November 2023

The case against a high-level trafficker may reveal the extent of the gang’s involvement in the transnational drug trade.


A balancing act: Normalizing Syrian relations amid the Captagon trade
Sarah Fares and Laura Adal – Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime: 17 November 2023

With Syria’s return to the Arab League, curbing the trade has risen to the top of the region’s political agenda. Syria must now navigate how to meet its counternarcotics commitments while maintaining its profitable status quo.

https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/syria-arab-league-captagon/

For more on this theme:

Ex-Citgo CEO helped launder Venezuelan drug money, US trial witness to testify

Inside Job: How a Hacker Helped Cocaine Traffickers Infiltrate Europe’s Biggest Ports

Why ‘Following the Money’ Isn’t Enough to Stop Organised Crime Anymore

Drug command centres to be set up
https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2680143/drug-command-centres-to-be-set-up

Guatemala Beefs Up Its Border with Mexico Against Drug Trafficking Cartels

AU Calls to Combat Drug Trafficking and Supply in Africa

On mute: Tijuana passes law banning ballads praising Mexican drug trade
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/10/tijuana-mexico-drug-ballads-narcocorridos-ban

Here’s What You Need to Know About the Panama Papers Of The Drug World
https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkax7n/narcofiles-papers

Myanmar’s military chief says a major offensive by ethnic groups was funded by the drug trade
https://apnews.com/article/kokang-shan-state-drugs-china-mdaa-414fa3ef198b0851e44f4b0cc838526
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

New wildlife crime lab to help catch traffickers in Malawi
Traffic: 20 November 2023
Wildlife forensic evidence lends a huge advantage in seeing successful prosecutions of criminals. As a relatively new field in Africa, the founding of the country’s first such laboratory is a major step forward.

Illegal mining causing high mercury levels in Colombia’s Cali River
Valentina Ruiz Leotaud – Mining.com: 19 November 2023
The Attorney General’s Office issued an alert. Illegal mining in the Farallones National Natural Park has been identified as the cause of the metal pollution.

For more on this theme:
End of impunity for Indigenous killings in sight for Brazil’s Guajajara

Illegal logging leads to 3.5% deforestation annually – Expert
https://blueprint.ng/illegal-logging-leads-to-3-5-deforestation-annually-expert/

How customary laws help an Indonesian tribe preserve a forest

South African president deploys army to tackle illegal mining

Brazil’s new leftist government attempts to crack down on illegal gold mining

‘Leave the gold in the ground’: Ecuador’s forest guardians mobilise against illegal mining in Amazon

AI as a Weapon to Defend the Seas from Illegal Fishing
https://www.akbizmag.com/industry/fisheries/illegal-fishing-ai/

Illegal Fishing Off West Africa Drives Maritime Migration

Ranger dangers: The perils facing wildlife protectors on the frontline
https://www.ifaw.org/uk/journal/ranger-dangers-wildlife-protectors-frontline
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The UK AI Safety Summit Opened a New Chapter in AI Diplomacy
Mariano-Florentino (Tino) Cuéllar – Carnegie: 9 November 2023

Driven to action by the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, summit delegates began to map the long road to balancing risk management with innovation in machine learning.


For more on this theme:

(Global) AI, AI, and More AI: A Regulatory Roundup
https://cepa.org/article/ai-ai-and-more-ai-a-regulatory-roundup/

(Global) Regulating AI continues to pose challenges for nations, Global Cybersecurity Forum hears
https://www.arabnews.com/node/2402076/business-economy

(Global) Polarized world threatens open internet: ICANN

INTERNET FREEDOM

Anti-censorship tools are quietly disappearing into thin air in China
Jagmeet Singh – TechCrunch: 21 November 2023

Clash, the popular proxy client, is the latest victim in the country’s crackdown on the open internet.


For more on this theme:

(China, Thailand) Blackpink Lisa’s Chinese social media page suspended after Paris burlesque routine

(Libya) Libya: Escalation of Internet Shutdowns and Erosion of Digital Freedom

(Global) Internet to the UN: Hands-Off
https://cepa.org/article/internet-to-the-un-hands-off/

(China) Chinese censorship following the death of Li Keqiang

(Nepal) Internet traffic grows sharply in Nepal after TikTok ban
CYBERATTACKS

Defending Logistics After Cyberattack on DP World Australia
Joao-Pierre S. Ruth – Information Week: 20 November 2023

In the wake of an incident that temporarily closed major seaports, cybersecurity measures for the supply chain may need to ramp up.


For more on this theme:

(Global) Cyber-espionage operation on embassies linked to Russia's Cozy Bear hackers
https://therecord.media/cyber-espionage-campaign-embassies-apt29-cozy-bear

(France) Greater Paris wastewater agency dealing with cyberattack
https://therecord.media/paris-wastewater-agency-hit-cyberattack

(Global) Toyota recovering from cyberattack on its financial services division
https://therecord.media/toyota-cyberattack-financial-services-division

(Isreal) Dozens of Israeli retailers hit by cyberattack
https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/1fgigj3l8

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Considering India’s Encryption Policy Dilemma
Anirudh Burman – Carnegie: 15 November 2023

The increasing ubiquity of encryption as a tool for protecting communication has led to more calls to develop technical solutions to weaken it for law enforcement and national security purposes.


For more on this theme:

(Ghana) Students sensitised to cyber security threats

(UK) Introducing the AI Safety Institute

(EU, U.S.) Injecting Security into European Tech Policy
https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/injecting-security-into-european-tech-policy/

(Global) Countering internet use for terrorist purposes focus of OSCE-led exercises in Serbia
https://www.osce.org/secretariat/558141
CYBER STRATEGY AND RISKS

What can – and should – we expect from Australia’s new cyber security strategy?
Miah Hammond-Errey and Tom Barrett – The Interpreter: 13 November 2023

International alignment and coordination will be key to countering cyberthreats that have no respect for land borders.

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) Pentagon debuts new data and AI strategy after Biden’s executive order

(Global) Global Cyber Warfare: How We All Entered the Battlefield in 2023
https://www.techopedia.com/global-cyber-warfare

(Global) The new ‘Geneva code’ for hackers on the cyber battlefield

CYBERCRIME

What is LockBit, the cybercrime gang hacking some of the world’s largest organisations?
Jennifer Medbury and Paul Haskell-Dowland – The Conversation: 16 November 2023

Although only one of many ransomware gangs operating, LockBit has been increasingly visible. Based on its website, the group doesn’t have a specific political allegiance.

For more on this theme:
(Global) Paying ransom for data stolen in cyberattack bankrolls further crime, experts caution
https://www.cbc.ca/radio/spark/cyberattacks-ransomware-paying-ransom-crime-1.7030579

(Global) ‘I employ a lot of hackers’: how a stock exchange chief deters cyber-attacks
https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/nov/18/i-employ-a-lot-of-hackers-how-a-stock-exchange-chief-deters-cyber-attacks

(Australia) Australian Cyber Security Strategy outlines how government plans to tackle cyber crime
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

RISE Action Guide: A New Approach for Disengagement from Violent Extremism
Chris Bosley – United States Institute of Peace: 15 November 2023

The guide seeks to help those disengaging from violent extremism reintegrate and reconcile with local communities.


For more on this theme:

ISIS-Khorasan adapts propaganda tactics, targets US in global ambitions

ISKP’s Shadow: Unveiling The Risks To South Asian Security – OpEd

Examining The Complex Dynamics Of ISKP’s Resilient Threat – OpEd

What to make of the Taliban’s increasing engagement with China

Taliban 2.0: Stronger or moving towards fragmentation?

Worrying trends highlight need for vigilance against homegrown terrorism

FBI Director Christopher Wray: Homegrown Violent Extremists Are the Greatest Terrorism Threat to US

Understanding Jemaah Islamiyah’s Organisational Resilience (2019-2022)

Actor Profile: Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM)

Terrorist groups and non-state actors pose a persistent and significant threat to international peace and security: UK statement at the UN Security Council
ISRAEL/HAMAS

Will the Israel-Hamas War Spread?
Comfort Ero – Project Syndicate: 16 November 2023

Few conflicts involve just two actors, and the Israel-Hamas war is no exception. From Iran and its proxies to the Palestinians’ Arab backers, as well as Turkey, governments throughout the Middle East are carefully calculating how to respond to the conflict.

https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/east-mediterranean-mena/israel-palestine/will-israel-hamas-war-spread

For more on this theme:

On Hezbollah, Lebanon, and the risk of escalation
https://www.brookings.edu/articles/on-hezbollah-lebanon-and-the-risk-of-escalation/

IntelBrief: Jordan Faces Risks from Israel-Hamas War
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-20/

IntelBrief: Differences Affect Iranian ‘Axis of Resistance’ Response to Mideast Crisis
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-21/

IntelBrief: Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic Incidents on the Rise as Gaza Conflict Continues
https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2023-november-17/

Making Sense of Casualty Counts in the Israel-Hamas War

Hamas’s Asymmetric Advantage
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/israel/hamas-asymmetric-advantage-gaza-cronin

The war in Gaza has not destroyed normalisation … for now
https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/war-gaza-has-not-destroyed-normalisation-now

Hezbollah and the Israel-Hamas War: Repercussions for Lebanon
https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/91032

Arab Peace Initiative II: How Arab Leadership Could Design a Peace Plan in Israel and Palestine

The Israel-Hamas War Is Inflaming Polarization in Latin America
https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/the-israel-hamas-war-is-inflaming-polarization-in-latin-america/

Analysis: Iran-backed Yemen rebels’ helicopter-borne attack on ship raises risks in crucial Red Sea
https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-red-sea-yemen-houthis-65b611f-f878a411900037e7c9a8ee17b
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Let’s Talk About Hamas and ‘Intelligence Failure’

How the conflict between Hamas and Israel fuels terror threats in the West

Israel won’t pick Hamas’ successors in Gaza, top official says

Israel, Hamas, and the laws of war

Ceasefire and beyond: Advancing a post-conflict plan for Gaza

Hamas had not planned to attack music festival, Israeli report says

Analysis: How bad is the humanitarian crisis in Gaza amid the Israel-Hamas war?

Why is Qatar often a mediator and what is its role in Israel-Hamas war?

How Will Southeast Asian Terror Groups Capitalize on the Israel-Hamas War?

Can a Two-State Solution Survive the Israel-Hamas Conflict?

Israel-Hamas War: Attacks on the rise in West Bank and East Jerusalem

Hostage families welcome first, precarious hopes after Israel-Hamas deal

Israel’s lack of a strategy is the strategy
https://www.npr.org/2023/11/19/1213797712/israels-lack-of-a-strategy-is-the-strategy

Regime Change in Gaza: Trajectories for a Post-Hamas Future
ISRAEL/HAMAS

For more on this theme:

Hezbollah’s Calculations in the Israel-Hamas War in Gaza

Why Israel-Hamas War In Gaza Has So Far Not Sparked Full-Scale Conflict Between Israel And Hezbollah In Lebanon – Analysis

Hamas, Gaza and ‘fighting smaller’

How the war on Gaza is harming Israel’s economy
https://www.newarab.com/analysis/how-war-gaza-harming-israels-economy

How Iran is Reshaping the Middle East
https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/how-iran-is-reshaping-the-middle-east

Azerbaijan Learns Important Lessons From Israel-Hamas War
https://jamestown.org/program/azerbaijan-learns-important-lessons-from-israel-hamas-war/

Israel and Russia: The End of a Friendship?
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/91073

Putin’s brutal war on Ukraine vanishes from news coverage amid raging conflict in Gaza

Lesson from Ukraine to Gaza: Truth demands patience

The world’s attention is on Gaza, and Ukrainians worry war fatigue will hurt their cause
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

Russians’ confidence in military dips as Ukraine war drags on – poll
Joshua Askew – Euronews: 21 November 2023

Moscow promised a quick victory in Ukraine. Nearly two years later, no end to the fighting is in sight.


For more on this theme:

Georgia’s EU Candidate Status Will Test Its Relations With Russia
https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/91045

Peace Unattainable Without Victory in Ukraine
https://jamestown.org/program/peace-unattainable-without-victory-in-ukraine/

The Kremlin Prepares for Winter in Ukraine
https://jamestown.org/program/the-kremlin-prepares-for-winter-in-ukraine/

Ukraine Uses Innovative Drone and Missile Tactics to Combat Russian Dominance in Black Sea

‘Russia is weaponizing time,’ Ukraine tells NATO

Ukraine vows to strike back if Russia resumes energy infrastructure attacks

Wartime Ukraine is making historic progress toward EU membership
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/wartime-ukraine-is-making-historic-progress-ward-eu-membership/

Russia-Ukraine cyber escalation: Ukrainian ‘hacktivists’ battle Russia online

More than 10,000 civilians killed in Ukraine since Russia invasion, UN says

EU official channels gloom over Russia’s war in Ukraine
https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/senior-eu-official-channels-increasing-gloom-over-russias-war-ukraine-2023-11-17/

Online Moscow Newspaper Latest in Russia’s List of ‘Foreign Agents’
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

Ukraine ‘Cannot Afford Any Stalemate’ in War With Russia, Zelenskyy Says

Russia says co-existence not possible with Ukraine’s current ‘regime’

Russia sends first free grain to Africa since end of Black Sea deal

Why Ukraine’s Stalemate Will Likely Last Another Year
https://time.com/6335084/ukraine-stalemate-ian-bremmer-essay/

Ukraine war: The Russians fighting for a Ukrainian passport

Amid slog of Ukraine war, NATO turns warier eye on Russia
https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2023/1116/Amid-slog-of-Ukraine-war-NATO-turns-warier-eye-on-Russia

Ukraine says it has evidence of 109,000 Russian war crimes

Ukraine aims to hold Russia accountable for heritage site attacks
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainelert/ukraine-aims-to-hold-russia-accountable-for-heritage-site-attacks/

Ukraine’s Secret Weapon – Artificial Intelligence
https://cepa.org/article/ukraines-secret-weapon-artificial-intelligence/

The Drooping of Kremlin Soft Power
https://cepa.org/article/the-drooping-of-kremlin-soft-power/

Russia’s Earthly Aggression Cripples its Celestial Plans
https://cepa.org/article/russias-earthly-aggression-cripples-its-celestial-plans/

‘Rivers of Russian Cash’ Flood Italy
https://cepa.org/article/rivers-of-russian-cash-flood-italy/

In Ukraine, Russia’s Military Has A Manpower Problem. Now It’s Becoming A Political Problem.
https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-manpower-problem-protests-politics/32694046.html

Russia May Win Due to Ukraine Weapons Delivery Woes: Lithuania
RUSSIA/UKRAINE

For more on this theme:

**Asking Ukrainians**
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/asking-ukrainians

**Vladimir Putin's anti-colonial posturing should not fool the Global South**

**Kennan Cable No. 85: Elections in Wartime Ukraine Would Test Ukraine’s Legal-Political Flexibility**

**AI Helps Uncover Russian State-Sponsored Disinformation in Hungary**

**UK estimates indicate Russia has lost 15% of its tank inventory in Ukraine**

**What makes Ukrainian refugees different from other refugees in the eyes of Europeans?**