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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Why there's a mismatch between funding for Nigeria’s military and its performance
Temitope Francis Abiodun – The Conversation: 18 November 2020
Why is Nigeria’s military effectiveness out of step with the country’s spending on the defense budget? The short answer is corruption, rivalry and politics getting in the way of performance.

How does corruption shape Asia?
Transparency International: 24 November 2020
Transparency International’s “Global Corruption Barometer: Asia 2020” presents the largest, most detailed set of public opinion data on peoples’ views and experiences of corruption and bribery in Asia.

Full report:
Global Corruption Barometer: Asia 2020

For more on this theme:
South African judge has refused to step down from corruption probe: this was the right call
https://theconversation.com/south-african-judge-has-refused-to-step-down-from-corruption-probe-this-was-the-right-call-150484

In corruption, Peru’s new president faces uphill battle

Corruption Fight Devolves into a New Constitutional Crisis in Ukraine

PNG passes bill to create anti-corruption body

Corruption complicates Bangladesh's fight against COVID-19

Siberian City Mayor Arrested For Corruption Live On The Internet

Chinese construction firm CICO blacklisted over corruption and fraud awarded three contracts in Uganda
DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug trafficking in Central America remains prevalent during pandemic, authorities say
Agence France-Presse: 24 November 2020

Drug trafficking to the United States, through Central America, has managed to keep pace despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Panamanian authorities warned after seizing 1.7 tons of cocaine.


Afghanistan, home to the heroin trade, moves into meth
Secunder Kermani – BBC News: 24 November 2020

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction reports that crystal meth production in Afghanistan could become just as much of a lucrative illegal industry as that of opium. Local growers are using the wild ephedra plant in the far reaches of rural Afghanistan to produce ephedrine, a component of methamphetamine.


For more on this theme:

Crackdown on drug trafficking urged
https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50783787/crackdown-on-drug-trafficking-urged/

Record Cocaine Haul at Belgium Port Uncovers Police Corruption

No increase in drug consumption: Goa Police on increased seizure of narcotics

DEA, FBI to assist India in tracking drug smuggling networks

Colombia to meet 2020 coca eradication target, defense minister says

A new, deadly synthetic opioid is circulating in the U.S.
https://www.northcentralpa.com/news/a-new-deadly-synthetic-opioid-is-circulating-in-the-u-s/article_c580b48c-2a6b-11eb-b4c1-3f0d8be6de75.html

Cannabis Farms Targeted by Police During Lockdown Crime Lull

Blind eyes and payoffs fuel Asia’s drug boom
TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Smartphone app that allows fishers to gather evidence of illegal fishing on the sea launched
Kwadwo Nyarko – My Joy Online: 17 November 2020

A new app called DASE was developed by the nonprofit Environmental Justice Foundation and allows small-catch fishermen to use a smartphone to report lawbreakers directly to Ghana’s Fisheries Commission.


Australia deploys new underwater technology to fight illegal fishing
Bernadette Carreon – SeafoodSource: 23 November 2020

“The deployment of hydrophones in the Torres Strait will bolster and complement our strong presence in the region, and allow us to deploy resources quickly, and exactly where they are needed. Our message is do not even try – we will catch you, and you will face the full force of the law when we do,” said Rear Adm. Lee Goddard, commander of Australia’s Maritime Border Command.


For more on this theme:

COVID-19 highlights risks of wildlife trade

Governor: Illegal logging caused Cagayan flooding, not quarrying
https://cnnphilippines.com/videos/2020/11/18/Governor--Illegal-logging-caused-Cagayan-flooding--not-quarrying0.html

Brazil to track illegal Amazon wood exports using isotopes, president says

Illegal Wildlife Trade: Scale, Processes, and Governance

Stop the Illegal Wildlife Trade: Dr Jane Goodall on why wildlife trafficking must end
https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/jane-goodall-wildlife-trafficking-disease-b1747186.html

Crimefighting NGO tracks Brazil wildlife trade on WhatsApp and Facebook

How Covid-19 is impacting wildlife conservation
https://www.forbesindia.com/article/forbes-lifes/how-covid19-is-impacting-wildlifes-conservation/64369/1
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Humanitarian data collection practices put migrants at risk
Sebastian Klovig Skelton – Computer Weekly: 13 November 2020
A United Nations report on smart borders warns that data collection about migrants and
refugees by humanitarian organizations risks excluding them from essential basic services like
access to food.
grants-at-risk

For more on this theme:
US ramping up pressure on China’s use of forced labor in distant-water fishing
https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-ramping-up-pressure-on-china-s-
use-of-forced-labor-in-distant-water-fishing

Harassment and other crimes added to Saudi security app
https://www.arabnews.com/node/1765196/saudi-arabia

Protecting Migrant Workers from Deceptive Recruiting Tactics
https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/modern-day-slavery/202011/protecting-migrant-workers-de-
ceptive-recruiting-tactics

Malaysia lets undocumented migrants work but hardship fears persist
https://news.trust.org/item/20201116115704-jjmuc/

Costa Rica backs U.N. treaty to combat forced labour
https://news.trust.org/item/20201116193919-l89r6/

Senegalese youth decry illegal migration after surge in deaths at sea
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-senegal-migrants-trfn-idUSKBN27T2FY

Humanitarian data collection practices put migrants at risk
grants-at-risk

Refugees must have access to COVID-19 vaccine: IOM

Thailand allows thousands of migrants to extend work permits
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-migrants-workers-trfn/thailand-allows-thousands-of-mi-
grants-to-extend-work-permits-idUSKBN27T1NT

Taiwan’s $1.3bn seafood industry hit by US ‘forced labor’ tag
https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Food-Beverage/Taiwan-s-1.3bn-seafood-industry-hit-by-US-forced-la-
bor-tag
PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET FREEDOM

Spain’s disinformation battle plan in the dock
EURACTIV.com with Agence France-Presse: 18 November 2020

A Spanish government plan to fight disinformation has sparked complaints from the media and claims that it limits free expression and seeks to establish a “ministry of truth.”

For more on this theme:
(Africa) Shutdowns, throttling and stifling dissent online: Africa’s new normal, Part I

(China) Why China (and other countries) are banning Wikipedia

(China) TikTok admits that it had censored content critical of China

(Russia) Russia proposal threatens to silence YouTube, Facebook

(Burma) Myanmar tightens censorship of internet post-election

(Vietnam) Exclusive: Vietnam threatens to shut down Facebook over censorship requests – source

(Austria, Global) A Court Ruling in Austria Could Censor the Internet Worldwide

(Pakistan) New internet rules to give Pakistan blanket powers of censorship
CYBER STATECRAFT

**Advancing digital sovereignty in northern Australia**

*Huon Curtis – The Strategist: 24 November 2020*

Northern Australia has long suffered from a digital deficit. Bridging the digital divide with the rest of the country requires significant investment in broadband and telecommunications access in remote areas.


*For more on this theme:*  
*(China, Vatican) Suspected Chinese hackers impersonate Catholic news outlets to gather intel about Vatican diplomacy*  
https://www.cyberscoop.com/chinese-hacking-catholic-church-vatican/  
*(EU) Europe Has No Strategy on Cyber Sanctions*  
https://www.lawfareblog.com/europe-has-no-strategy-cyber-sanctions  
*(Europe) Europe’s Cyber Resilience*  

**CYBER ATTACKS, THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES**

**FBI: Fake versions of our site could be used for cyberattacks, so watch out**

*Liam Tung – ZDNet: 24 November 2020*

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation warned that there are dozens of domains designed to look like its own that could be used in future disinformation campaigns and cyber attacks.


*For more on this theme:*  
*(Global) The 2020 Cyber-Espionage Report pulls seven years of data to determine threat actors, motives and actions*  
*(Russia, Canada) Cleanup from Saint John cyberattack could last months, says cyber security expert*  
*(Global) Hacker posts exploits for over 49,000 vulnerable Fortinet VPNs*  
CYBER CRIME

The Widening Security Holes in Our ‘Datasphere’

If it were measured as a country, cyber crime — which is predicted to inflict damages totaling $6 trillion globally in 2021 — would be the world’s third-largest economy after the U.S. and China. And it’s only growing worse.
https://thecrimereport.org/2020/11/24/1141333/

For more on this theme:
(Global) Cybercrime is maturing. Here are 6 ways organizations can keep up
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/how-to-protect-companies-from-cybercrime/
(Global) Partnership against Cybercrime
(Nigeria) Nigerian Police launches cybercrime reporting portal

CYBER CAPACITY BUILDING

Digital economy crucial in ASEAN’s post-pandemic recovery
Jeff Paine – The Scoop: 17 November 2020

Driving the region’s recovery post-COVID-19 must undoubtedly be at the top of ASEAN’s agenda. And the organizations member states are well positioned to leverage the potential of its digital economy to drive recovery efforts.

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) US Cyber Command advances on platform to consolidate its myriad tools and data
(Nigeria) Why Nigeria must take internet development seriously
(Pakistan) Lack of access to internet affecting education in pandemic times, say academics
(Latin America) Digitalization: key to implementing an inclusive and sustainable economic model in Latin America
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Smart City Cyber War Games
Mark Cummings and Bill Yeack – Pipeline Publishing: November 2020
Economic, social, and technological pressures are moving us to smart cities. Australia recognized the need to build security into the process and has started an interesting approach, a cooperative effort between government and industry to model and test smart cities.
https://www.pipelinepub.com/cybersecurity/cyber-war-games-Australia

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) UTSA officially launches Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Institute
(Global) Partnering on Global Cybercrime: A Group Effort
https://www.fortinet.com/blog/industry-trends/partnering-on-global-cybercrime-a-group-effort
(Malaysia) Upskilled personnel to make Malaysia Asean's digital centre

CYBER PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Canadian Centre for Cyber Security warns infrastructure at risk from cyber attacks
Nathaniel Dove – Global News: 20 November 2020
In its 2020 National Cyber Threat Assessment, the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security warns that state-sponsored cyber activity is the most sophisticated, and actors are “very likely” attempting to develop capabilities to disrupt critical systems.

For more on this theme:
(U.S.) DOE to host virtual CyberForce Competition for college students
(Global) Making finance cybersecurity to ensure an inclusive recovery
(Global) Manufacturing is becoming a major target for ransomware attacks
https://www.zdnet.com/article/manufacturing-is-becoming-a-major-target-for-ransomware-attacks/
PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Homegrown: ISIS in America
Francesco Bergoglio Enrico – European Eye on Radicalization: 23 November 2020
Compared to participation by Americans in other jihadist groups, the scale of American involvement in ISIS today is unprecedented. This is a book review of Homegrown: ISIS in America, in which the authors discuss the level of threat posed by ISIS in America, how many Americans have joined ISIS and want to return to the United States, and why ISIS was able to radicalize and recruit a new generation of jihadist sympathizers in America.
https://eeradicalization.com/homegrown-isis-in-america/

The Military-First Approach in Northern Mozambique is Bound to Fail
Nolan Quinn – Council on Foreign Relations: 23 November 2020
A military-first approach cannot cure a failing state, as evidenced by the recent successful attacks by an ISIS-affiliate in Mozambique. This article argues that the government and its partners should equally focus on restoring — or, in some areas, establishing for the first time — provision of basic services.
https://www.cfr.org/blog/military-first-approach-northern-mozambique-bound-fail

For more on this theme:
IS-Khorasan Province | Black flag in Afghanistan
https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/is-khorasan-province-black-flag-in-afghanistan/article33049142.ece

The Impact of COVID-19 on Terrorist Financing in Indonesia

Analysis: Islamic State official critiques Al Qaeda in the Sahel

Current state of the Islamic State a year after its leader was killed
https://www.cbsnews.com/video/current-state-of-isis-a-year-after-leader-was-killed-2020-11-16/

Nigeria, United States co-host global coalition to defeat ISIS, Boko Haram

Can Case of Samantha Elhassani Be a Positive Example for Repatriation of Other ISIS Wives?
https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/can-case-of-samantha-elhassani-be-a-positive-example-for-repatriation-of-other-isis-wives/

Iraq hangs 21 terrorists as battle against ISIS sleeper cells intensifies
TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Extortion, bio-warfare and terrorism: Extremists are exploiting the pandemic, says UN report

United Nations News: 18 November 2020

“Terrorist, violent extremist and organized criminal groups are trying to take advantage of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic to expand their activities and jeopardize the efficacy and credibility of response measures by governments,” Antonia Marie De Meo, director of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, wrote in the introduction to a new U.N. report.


Full report:
Stop the virus of disinformation. The malicious use of social media during COVID-19 and technology options to fight it.
http://www.unicri.it/News/COVID19-Disinformation-Malicious-Use-Social-Media-Terrorists-Organizedcrime

Al-Qaida names new North Africa leader, reports kidnap death

The Associated Press: 22 November 2020

Al-Qaida named an Algerian on the United Nations and United States terror lists as its new Maghreb chief. Abou Oubaïda Youssef al-Annabi is known more for his propaganda activities than operational experience.

https://apnews.com/article/africa-north-africa-senegal-mali-e4aed884da8a41d2a2e604c5a61cab16

For more on this theme:
State Department Designates Two Senior Al-Shabaab Leaders as Terrorists
https://www.state.gov/state-department-designates-two-senior-al-shabaab-leaders-as-terrorists/

How Ethiopia’s Civil War Emboldens Jihadis in Somalia
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/how-ethiopias-civil-war-emboldens-jihadis-somalia-172866

Where the Pomegranate Harvest Is Life, the Taliban Brought Ruin

New tool to combat terrorism

12th European Union-India Counter Terrorism Dialogue: Joint Press Release

Al-Qaeda’s threat to Jews spurred operation to kill top leader – report
RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Younger teenagers being drawn in by right-wing extremism
Press Association 2020: 18 November 2020

The coronavirus pandemic and social isolation are contributing to a “perfect storm” that is making more young people vulnerable to radicalization, British police warned.

Press release:
CT Policing launch new safeguarding website

For more on this theme:
Lockdown has increased terrorist risk to Kosovo, experts warn
https://prishtinainsight.com/lockdown-has-increased-terrorist-risk-to-kosovo-experts-warn/

UAE-US Sawab Center launches new social media campaign exposing Daesh lies

The Radicalization of the Shia Community in Italy: A Threat That Should Be Addressed

IRREGULAR WARFARE: SOFT POWER

Chinese Security Engagement in Latin America
Evan Ellis – Center for Strategic & International Studies: 19 November 2020

Security, military and economic engagement of China in Latin America serves to expand China’s influence and assist in the pursuit of its global agenda.
https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinese-security-engagement-latin-america

For more on this theme:
China’s development projects export environmental devastation
https://share.america.gov/chinas-projects-export-environmental-devastation/

Japan the Titan of Soft Power
https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/10/31/japan-the-titan-of-soft-power/

‘Unlike China, India’s soft power built through trust, credibility and democracy’
**IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES**

*India, EU condemn use of proxies for cross-border terrorism*

*Hindustan Times: 20 November 2020*

In an indirect reference to Pakistan, India and the European Union called on all nations to take immediate and irreversible action to ensure that no territory under their control is used for terrorist attacks on other countries.


*For more on this theme:

**How China’s vast and aggressive fishing fleet is kept afloat by Beijing**


**IRREGULAR WARFARE: DISINFORMATION AND MALIGN INFLUENCE**

*In race for coronavirus vaccine, Russia turns to disinformation*

*Mark Scott – Politico: 19 November 2020*

Russia-backed media outlets have criticized Western medications and vaccines while promoting Russia’s rival treatment. Since the summer, Moscow has conducted a global disinformation campaign aimed at undermining vaccines produced in the West and promoting its own rival product, particularly to countries across the developing world, according to interviews with four national and European Union disinformation experts and a review of Kremlin-backed media outlets by Politico news organization.

https://www.politico.eu/article/covid-vaccine-disinformation-russia/

*For more on this theme:

**Combating Foreign Government Influence in American Institutions**

https://capitalresearch.org/article/combating-foreign-government-influence-in-american-institutions/

**Europe sets out what are ‘safe’ research links with China**


**Pentagon research office wants innovative tools to spot influence campaigns**


**China’s new wolf warrior diplomacy is a Maoist resurrection**


**China’s promise: ‘A free market for unfree people’**

https://www.politico.eu/article/chinas-promise-a-free-market-for-unfree-people/

**The China Threat**

https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/counterintelligence/the-china-threat/chinese-talent-plans