

THE MARSHALL CENTER

transnational weekly



A CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE FROM THE MARSHALL CENTER

CONTENTS

COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

- Corruption
- Drug Trafficking
- Trafficking in Scarce or Protected Resources
- Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

- Internet Governance
- Internet Freedom
- Privacy and Security
- Cyber Statecraft Development
- Threats, Attacks and Vulnerabilities
- Combating Terrorism and Cyber Crime
- Noteworthy Podcasts
- Mass Surveillance and Intelligence Gathering

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

- ISIS and Foreign Fighters
- Terrorism Around the World
- Radicalization and Messaging
- White Nationalist Terrorism
- Irregular Warfare: Soft Power
- Irregular Warfare: Proxy Forces

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COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (CTOC)

CORRUPTION

Dubai Property: An Oasis for Nigeria's Corrupt Political Elites

Matthew Page – Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: 19 March 2020

Corrupt Nigerian political elites are taking advantages of Dubai's luxuries to hide their embezzled funds and bribes. There will be major consequences in both countries if this doesn't stop.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/03/19/dubai-property-oasis-for-nigeria-s-corrupt-political-elites-pub-81306>

Corrupt Politicians, Shady 'Charitable' Entities And The Coronavirus Crisis In Iran

Reza Haqiqatnezhad – Radio Farda: 15 March 2020

Using shell companies and fake charities, powerful politicians and leaders have taken advantage of the coronavirus pandemic to bilk citizens of their hard-earned cash.

<https://en.radiofarda.com/a/corrupt-politicians-shady-charitable-entities-and-the-coronavirus-crisis-in-iran/30488713.html>

For more on this theme:

Tunisia Prosecutes Former Businessmen, Ministers on Corruption Charges

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/2172537/tunisia-prosecutes-former-businessmen-ministers-corruption-charges>

Colombia considers blockchain to tackle transparency concerns

<https://www.contxto.com/en/colombia/colombia-blockchain-transparency/>

Iraqi Anti-terrorism Chief Turns Eyes Towards Combating Graft

<https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/11779-iraqi-anti-terrorism-chief-turns-eyes-towards-combating-graft>

Peru's anti-corruption prosecutor calls for investigation of four Imarpe officials

<https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2020/03/06/perus-anti-corruption-prosecutor-calls-for-investigation-of-four-imarpe-officials/>

European Authorities Concerned About Graft in Czech Republic

<https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/11759-european-authorities-accuse-czech-government-of-corruption>

Corruption and the Coronavirus

https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_and_the_coronavirus

Report: Corruption fuels Water Shortage in South Africa

<https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/11832-report-corruption-fuels-water-shortage-in-south-africa>

Gulnara Karimova Sentenced Again For Corruption, Financial Crimes

<https://www.rferl.org/a/gulnara-karimova-sentenced-again-for-corruption-financial-crimes/30495071.html>

Cleaning up corruption along Lebanon's longest river

<https://voices.transparency.org/cleaning-up-corruption-along-lebanons-longest-river-285f16f5fd16>

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Honduras Goes From Transit Nation to Cocaine Producer

Héctor Silva Ávalos – InSight Crime: 19 March 2020

Honduras has long been a transit hub for drug trafficking, but until recently it was unable to turn its coca leaf into cocaine. This recent change has put the country on the map as a producer instead of a transit point.

<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/honduras-transit-nation-cocaine-producer/>

Coronavirus Is Leading to Shortages of Fentanyl And Meth

Deborah Bonello – VICE: 19 March 2020

With the lack of precursor chemicals coming in from China, Mexican drug operatives are experiencing shortages. “Now we are all struggling to get the chemicals to Sinaloa from China,” one drug trafficker told VICE. “We haven’t stopped producing, but the price of meth is getting pushed up because of the scarcity of chemicals from China. Transporting them this far is also getting much more expensive,” the cartel operative said.

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/wxek4m/coronavirus-is-leading-to-shortages-of-fentanyl-and-meth

For more on this theme:

Rakhine is Myanmar’s drug export hub, military says

<https://www.mmtimes.com/news/rakhine-myanmars-drug-export-hub-military-says.html>

Drug Detection Using AI And ML On The Dark Web [Explained]

<https://techdipper.com/2020/03/08/drug-detection-using-ai-and-ml-on-the-dark-web-explained/>

Glyphosate and cocaine: Colombia’s next drug war?

<https://www.dw.com/en/glyphosate-and-cocaine-colombias-next-drug-war/a-52675515>

Report Recognizes Drug Trafficking Influence of Venezuela’s Cartel of the Suns

<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/venezuela-cartel-de-los-soles-drug-trafficking/>

Why a Measly Five Tons of Cocaine Has Costa Rica Deeply Worried

<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/costa-rica-five-tons-cocaine/>

In Colombia, Fleet Of Cartel Narco-subs Poses Challenge For Navy

<https://www.ibtimes.com/colombia-fleet-cartel-narco-subs-poses-challenge-navy-2942596>

Cambodia releases anti-drug plan

<https://www.nst.com.my/world/region/2020/03/576027/cambodia-releases-anti-drug-plan>

A snapshot of Mexico’s cartel landscape amid rising violence

<https://apnews.com/1aea8224e3f6f949026f748663a62bcd>

Inside massive DEA raid targeting drug cartel

<https://apnews.com/edeb3323fb67878d6248df2d496dd6fe>

Drug courts expanded in bid to break cycle of crime

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/victoria/drug-courts-expanded-in-bid-to-break-cycle-of-crime-20200317-p54b1t.html>

TRAFFICKING IN SCARCE OR PROTECTED RESOURCES

Vietnam considers wildlife trade ban in response to coronavirus pandemic

Michael Tatarski – Mongabay: 18 March 2020

Vietnam's prime minister has asked the country's Agriculture Ministry to draft a directive to stop illegal trading and consumption of wildlife over fears it spreads disease. Vietnam's move to ban the wildlife trade follows similar moves by the Chinese government, after the new coronavirus pandemic appeared to have emerged from a market in Wuhan.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/vietnam-considers-wildlife-trade-ban-in-response-to-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Conservationists set the record straight on COVID-19's wildlife links

Liz Kimbrough – Mongabay: 13 March 2020

Misinformation about the coronavirus has spread even faster than the disease itself. We know with certainty that the disease was not created in a lab but was transmitted through animals at a wildlife market. Given the clear risks, global wildlife conservationists are calling for a permanent ban on wildlife trafficking and live-animal markets.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/conservationists-set-the-record-straight-on-covid-19s-wildlife-links/>

For more on this theme:

The Illicit Wildlife Trade in China and the State Response Following the Coronavirus Outbreak

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-illicit-wildlife-trade-in-china-and-the-state-response-following-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>

Tech Companies Take Down 3 Million Online Listings for Trafficked Wildlife

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/03/16/tech-companies-take-down-3-million-online-listings-for-trafficked-wildlife/>

A Detective Pursued Rhino Poachers. Now He's Dead.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/world/europe/south-africa-rhino-poaching-leroy-bruwer.html>

Green Violence: 'Eco-Guards' Are Abusing Indigenous Groups in Africa

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/green-violence-eco-guards-are-abusing-indigenous-groups-in-africa>

China's revised forest law could boost efforts to fight illegal logging

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/chinas-revised-forest-law-could-boost-efforts-to-fight-illegal-logging/>

Romania's virgin forests ravaged by 'wood mafia'

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/03/13/romania-s-virgin-forests-ravaged-by-wood-mafia>

Qualified success: What's next for Peru's Operation Mercury?

<https://news.mongabay.com/2020/03/qualified-success-whats-next-for-perus-operation-mercury/>

Enough is Enough. African nations must unite against illegal fishing

<https://www.theafricareport.com/24619/enough-is-enough-african-nations-must-unite-against-illegal-fishing/>

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

FBI warns of human traffickers luring victims on dating apps

Amer Owaida – WeLiveSecurity: 17 March 2020

Human traffickers continue to recruit fresh victims via social media and online dating platforms, according to a new warning issued by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In a public service announcement, the FBI warned that human traffickers use the lure of sex, romance, and increasingly of employment to ensnare online victims, setting up fake dates and making what appear to be legitimate jobs offers.

<https://www.welivesecurity.com/2020/03/17/fbi-warns-human-traffickers-luring-victims-dating-apps/>

Migration: The bargaining power of transit states

Antje Missbach and Melissa Phillips – The Interpreter: 17 March 2020

Destination countries try to get transit countries in line with their migration policies. It doesn't always work. Such a disconnect is especially dangerous in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/migration-bargaining-power-transit-states>

For more on this theme:

D.C. start-up Collective Liberty uses technology and data to help police stop human trafficking

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/dc-start-up-collective-liberty-uses-technology-and-data-to-help-police-stop-human-trafficking/2020/03/13/72ccf670-58c4-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470_story.html

The Nigerian human trafficking mafia in Europe

<https://www.fairplanet.org/story/the-nigerian-human-trafficking-mafia-in-europe/>

Deal inked to combat human trafficking from Bangladesh

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/102727/deal-inked-to-combat-human-trafficking-from-bangladesh>

Dutch sex workers risk trafficking and abuse as coronavirus bites

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands-sexwor/dutch-sex-workers-risk-trafficking-and-abuse-as-coronavirus-bites-idUSKBN2163DI>

We've Taken Measures To End Trafficking Of Youths – Okowa

<https://leadership.ng/2020/03/19/weve-taken-measures-to-end-trafficking-of-youths-okowa/>

Serbia Restricts Movement for Migrants, Asylum-Seekers

<https://balkaninsight.com/2020/03/17/serbia-restricts-movement-for-migrants-asylum-seekers/>

Surge in migrants crossing channel as French police divert to enforcing coronavirus lockdown, says union

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/03/19/surge-migrants-crossing-channel-french-police-divert-enforcing/>

PROGRAM ON CYBER SECURITY STUDIES (PCSS)

INTERNET GOVERNANCE

Viewpoint: Geneva Conventions for Cyber Warriors Long Overdue

Steve Waugh – National Defense: 18 March 2020

Without a “Geneva Convention” for cyber warfare, cyber warriors are fighting without the protections and restrictions kinetic operators have. It’s time to revisit the concept and draft rules for conduct.

<https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2020/3/18/geneva-conventions-for-cyber-warriors-long-overdue>

For more on this theme:

(Greece) Greek Government issues ‘Ten Commandments’ for responsible internet use during pandemic

<https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/03/17/greek-government-issues-ten-commandments-for-responsible-internet-use-during-pandemic/>

(Global) The uncertain fate of .org

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpretor/uncertain-fate-org>

(Global) The answer to AI is intergovernmental Multilateralism

<https://www.neweurope.eu/article/the-answer-to-ai-is-intergovernmental-multilateralism/>

INTERNET FREEDOM

Reporters Without Borders is using Minecraft to sneak censored news to readers in restrictive countries

Tom Huddleston Jr. – CNBC: 15 March 2020

In an unconventional move, press-freedom nongovernmental organization Reporters Without Borders created “The Uncensored Library,” a virtual free library of uncensored documents within the successful computer game *Minecraft*.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/13/reporters-without-borders-uses-minecraft-to-sneak-banned-news-into-restrictive-countries.html>

For more on this theme:

(Global) How to Detect a Government’s Hand Behind Internet Shutdowns

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/tech-talk/telecom/internet/how-to-detect-a-governments-hand-behind-internet-shutdowns>

(China) Has China learned its lesson from the coronavirus tragedy? Judging by its continued censorship, no

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3075810/has-china-learned-its-lesson-coronavirus-tragedy-judging-its>

(India) India unplugged

<https://www.vantageasia.com/india-unplugged-internet-shutdowns/>

PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Why cybersecurity matters more than ever during the coronavirus pandemic

Algirdas Pipikaite and Nicholas Davis – World Economic Forum and The European Sting: 18 March 2020

With more people, even those at the highest levels of government, forced to work from home due to the COVID-19 outbreaks, they are increasingly dependent on digital tools that are likely less secure than those in the workspace. It's important to maintain good cyber hygiene in these times.

<https://europeansting.com/2020/03/18/why-cybersecurity-matters-more-than-ever-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) The Cybersecurity 202: Coronavirus pandemic makes U.S. more vulnerable to serious cyberattack, lawmakers warn

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/the-cybersecurity-202/2020/03/19/the-cybersecurity-202-coronavirus-pandemic-makes-u-s-more-vulnerable-to-serious-cyberattack-lawmakers-warn/5e72c66e602ff10d49acf5bc/>

(Global) Will privacy regulation be good or bad for business?

<https://www.information-age.com/will-privacy-regulation-be-good-or-bad-for-business-123488307/>

(Global) Cyber security protects privacy needed in digital age

<https://www.gulftoday.ae/news/2020/03/18/cyber-security-protects-privacy-needed-in-digital-age>

CYBER STATECRAFT DEVELOPMENT

UK ministers will no longer claim 'no successful examples' of Russian interference

Dan Sabbagh – The Guardian: 15 March 2020

Ministers in the United Kingdom have been told they can no longer declare that there have been “no successful examples” of Russian disinformation affecting U.K. elections. This likely signals a significant shift in how the U.K. will deal with the Russian cyber threat.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/mar/15/uk-ministers-will-no-longer-claim-no-successful-examples-of-russian-interference>

For more on this theme:

(Russia, Global) Russia using coronavirus fears to spread misinformation in Western countries

<https://thehill.com/policy/cybersecurity/488326-russia-using-coronavirus-fears-to-spread-misinformation-in-western>

(France, Global) France warns of new ransomware gang targeting local governments

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/france-warns-of-new-ransomware-gang-targeting-local-governments/>

(Africa) Technological innovations as new change-makers of democracy & governance in Africa

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/politics/936131-technological-innovations-as-new-change-makers-of-democracy-governance-in-africa>

THREATS, ATTACKS AND VULNERABILITIES

A coronavirus-tracking app locked users' phones and demanded \$100

Jeff Stone – CyberScoop: 16 March 2020

Taking advantage of the coronavirus pandemic, an app that promised to keep customers up to date on the virus instead included a malicious software.

<https://www.cyberscoop.com/coronavirus-app-locked-phones/>

For more on this theme:

(Global) Convincing Google Impersonation Opens Door to MiTM, Phishing

<https://threatpost.com/convincing-google-impersonation-opens-door-to-mitm-phishing/153745/>

(U.S.) Barr: FBI probing if foreign gov't behind HHS cyber incident

<https://www.seattlepi.com/news/crime/article/Barr-tells-AP-FBI-probing-cyber-incident-on-15138484.php?mid=1%23cid=289470>

(Global) 'Rare' stalkerware emerges with targets around the world

<https://www.cyberscoop.com/monitorminor-stalkerware-kaspersky-research/>

COMBATING TERRORISM AND CYBER CRIME

Message to Cybercriminals: Hospitals Are Off-Limits

Robert K. Knake – Council on Foreign Relations: 17 March 2020

During this time of crisis, the author argues that the U.S. needs to do everything possible to counter any cyber attacks against the U.S. health-care system.

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/message-cybercriminals-hospitals-are-limits>

For more on this theme:

(U.S.) The DHS cyber agency has a key role in a new strategy

<https://www.fifthdomain.com/congress/capitol-hill/2020/03/11/the-dhs-cyber-agency-has-a-key-role-in-a-new-strategy/>

(U.K.) COVID-19 boosts remote work, security concerns

<https://www.scmagazine.com/home/security-news/news-archive/coronavirus/covid-19-boosts-remote-work-security-concerns/>

(Europe) Banks Told to Prepare for Cybercrime Jump in Coronavirus Fallout

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-06/banks-told-to-prepare-for-cybercrime-jump-in-coronavirus-fallout>

NOTEWORTHY PODCASTS

A Healthy Respect for Ransomware

Monica Todros – Recorded Future: 16 March 2020

Ransomware continues to affect individuals and organizations of just about every shape and size. Lorne Hazlewood, a senior information security analyst at BKD accounting firm, shares his insights on ransomware, where he thinks it's headed, and what we all can do to best protect ourselves against it.

<https://www.recordedfuture.com/podcast-episode-150/>

For more on this theme:

(Global) Disinformation vs. misinformation.

<https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/hacking-humans/90/notes>

(Global) The CyberWire Daily Podcast: Ep 1045

<https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/daily-podcast/1045/notes>

(U.S., Global) Classic and new ways of improving cybersecurity

<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/cyber-chat/2020/03/classic-and-new-ways-of-improving-cybersecurity/>

(Global) Cyber Security Today – COVID-19 scams continue. Here's how to avoid them

<https://www.itworldcanada.com/article/cyber-security-today-covid-19-scams-continue-heres-how-to-avoid-them/428588>

MASS SURVEILLANCE AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

How China built facial recognition for people wearing masks

Yuan Yang – Ars Technica: 18 March 2020

Hanwang, the facial-recognition company in China, says it has reached 95% accuracy on identifying people, even while they wear a mask.

<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2020/03/how-china-built-facial-recognition-for-people-wearing-masks/>

For more on this theme:

(China) Coronavirus Outrage Spurs China's Internet Police to Action

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/business/china-coronavirus-internet-police.html>

(India) India Mulls Aadhaar-Linked National Social Registry To Monitor Citizens

<https://inc42.com/buzz/india-mulls-aadhaar-linked-national-social-registry-to-monitor-citizens/>

PROGRAM ON TERRORISM AND SECURITY STUDIES (PTSS)

ISIS AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The vigilantes trying to take down Islamic State online

Andrei Popoviciu – Middle East Eye: 16 March 2020

As transnational agencies crack down on Islamic State networks, unofficial collectives are trying to take matters into their own hands

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/hunters-vigilantes-trying-take-down-islamic-state-online>

ISIS in Their Own Words: Recruitment, Motivations, Duties and Disillusionment

Anne Speckhard and Molly Ellenberg – Homeland Security Today: 16 March 2020

In a study running from 2015 to 2019, Dr. Anne Speckhard interviewed myriad ISIS defectors, returnees and imprisoned cadres across the Middle East, Europe and Central Asia. This article reflects the results of the study.

<https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/isis-in-their-own-words-recruitment-motivations-duties-and-disillusionment/>

For more on this theme:

Afghanistan: 46 ISIS fighters surrender to ANDSF

<https://www.indiablooms.com/world-details/SA/23344/afghanistan-46-isis-fighters-surrender-to-andsf.html>

Lying to Win: The Islamic State Media Department's Role in Deception Efforts

<https://rusi.org/publication/rusi-journal/lying-win-islamic-state-media-department%E2%80%99s-role-deception-efforts>

The Emerging Triad of Islamic State Central Africa Province

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-emerging-triad-of-islamic-state-central-africa-province/>

Handling returning terrorist fighters is a big problem, monitoring their funds is another

<https://menafn.com/1099822626/Handling-returning-terrorist-fighters-is-a-big-problem-monitoring-their-funds-is-another>

US to Designate New Islamic State Leader as Global Terrorist

<https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/us-designate-new-islamic-state-leader-global-terrorist>

ISIS Coronavirus Directives: Do 'Not Enter the Land of the Epidemic,' Cover Your Sneezes

<https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/isis-coronavirus-directives-do-not-enter-the-land-of-the-epidemic-cover-your-sneezes/>

The Next Caliphate Would Emerge in West Africa, Warns U.S. General

<https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/the-next-caliphate-would-emerge-in-west-africa-warns-u-s-general/>

Alleged ISIS bride's return causes Norway's ruling coalition to collapse

<https://gruntstuff.com/alleged-isis-brides-return-causes-norways-ruling-coalition-to-collapse/13030/>

TERRORISM AROUND THE WORLD

Masked men, murder and mass displacement: how terror came to Burkina Faso

Michael Safi – The Guardian: 16 March 2020

Armed groups, many aligned with ISIS or al-Qaida, are waging a campaign of indiscriminate killing across Burkina Faso, throwing the once peaceful country into mass chaos.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/mar/16/we-dont-know-whos-in-control-900000-flee-violence-in-burkina-faso>

For more on this theme:

Somalia's Foreign Policy, Al Shabaab, ISIS: Implications for Somalia, the Horn of Africa, and Beyond

<https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/somalias-foreign-policy-al-shabaab-isis-implications-for-somalia-the-horn-of-africa-and-beyond/>

Why Is Terrorism Rising in West Africa?

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-terrorism-rising-west-africa-132612>

Al-Qaeda's bastions of power: Somalia and Yemen

<https://sofrep.com/news/al-qaedas-bastions-of-power-somalia-and-yemen/>

RADICALIZATION AND MESSAGING

Nigeria Considers National DRR Agency Amid Boko Haram Setbacks

Alvin Young – Council on Foreign Relations: 18 March 2020

Nigeria is considering adding a new agency to its programs for deradicalization – the National Agency for Deradicalization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Repentant Insurgents.

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigeria-considers-national-drr-agency-amid-boko-haram-setbacks>

The Nexus between Human Security and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism

The Soufan Center: March 2020

Programs to prevent and counter violent extremism are unlikely to succeed as currently structured. A wide variety of factors must be considered to improve the effectiveness of these approaches.

<https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Soufan-Center-Report-The-Nexus-between-Human-Security-and-Preventing-Countering-Violent-Extremism-March-2020.pdf>

For more on this theme:

Refugees on Syrian-Turkish border vulnerable to radicalization

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1640091>

Countering Violent Extremism in Nordics: A Question of Collaboration

<https://www.miragenews.com/countering-violent-extremism-in-nordics-a-question-of-collaboration/>

We must do more to combat right-wing extremism

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/we-must-do-more-to-combat-right-wing-extremism/>

WHITE NATIONALIST TERRORISM

Germany Places Part of Far-Right Party Under Surveillance

Katrin Bennhold – The New York Times: 12 March 2020

The intelligence agency labeled a wing of the Alternative for Germany extremist, warning of a “danger for democracy.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/world/europe/germany-afd.html>

For more on this theme:

Does YouTube want you to move to the right?

<https://theaggie.org/2020/03/10/does-youtube-want-you-to-move-to-the-right/>

Confronting the Mainstream Context of Germany’s Far-Right Extremism

<https://theglobepost.com/2020/03/11/germany-extremism/>

The Right-Wing Extremist Threat in Context: Internal Extremist Actors

<https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/right-wing-extremist-threat-context-internal-extremist-actors-stratfor-security-weekly-scott-stewart>

State pushes to list white supremacist group as terrorist org

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/03/09/state-department-white-supremacist-group-124500>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: SOFT POWER

How China solidified its foothold in Latin America through a space centre

Ignacio Conese – TRT World: 18 March 2020

In an Argentine desert in Patagonia, China has invested \$50 billion in developing a space center to send a rocket to the dark side of the moon. Most locals view it, and China, in a positive light.

<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/how-china-solidified-its-foothold-in-latin-america-through-a-space-centre-34644>

For more on this theme:

Swift Olympic cancellation will boost Japan’s soft power

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Swift-Olympic-cancellation-will-boost-Japan-s-soft-power>

China sends doctors and masks overseas as domestic coronavirus infections drop

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/19/china-positions-itself-as-a-leader-in-tackling-the-coronavirus>

Jack Ma is the coronavirus ambassador that China needs

<https://qz.com/1820430/jack-ma-is-the-coronavirus-ambassador-that-china-needs/>

Chinese Propagandists Used ‘Wuhan Virus’ Before Condemning It as Racist

<https://freebeacon.com/media/chinese-propagandists-used-wuhan-virus-before-condemning-it-as-racist/>

IRREGULAR WARFARE: PROXY FORCES

Top general: Iran threat 'remains very high' after US strikes on proxy militia in Iraq

Rebecca Kheel – The Hill: 13 March 2020

The top U.S. commander for the Middle East said the threat from Iran remains high even as he touted the success of retaliatory U.S. airstrikes on an Iran-backed militia in Iraq that officials blamed for killing two U.S. troops.

<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/487417-top-general-iran-threat-remains-very-high-after-us-strikes-on-proxy-militia-in>

Russia's Strategy for the Middle East: Stabilize, Revitalize, Create Chaos

Robert G. Rabil – The National Interest: 14 March 2020

Russia is attempting to have a say in the geopolitical realignment of the Middle East, provoked by instability, sectarianism and Iran-Saudi rivalry. It has been able to simultaneously support conflicted parties and project itself as a force of stability.

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/russias-strategy-middle-east-stabilize-revitalize-create-chaos-133177>

For more on this theme:

Proxy Warfare on the Roof of the World: Great Power Competition Lessons from Tibet

<http://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IAJ-11-1-2020-pg94-110.pdf>

US Keeping Two Carriers in Gulf to Deter Iran Proxy Attacks

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/03/13/us-keeping-two-carriers-gulf-deter-iran-proxy-attacks.html>

US Fears Iran Facilitating Spread of Coronavirus

<https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/voa-news-iran/us-fears-iran-facilitating-spread-coronavirus>

Russian Electronic Warfare in Donbas: Training or Preparation for a Wider Attack?

<https://jamestown.org/program/russian-electronic-warfare-in-donbas-training-or-preparation-for-a-wider-attack/>

Iran, Its Partners, and the Balance of Effective Force

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/03/iran-its-partners-and-the-balance-of-effective-force/>

IDF indicates Iran scaling back terror activity in light of coronavirus

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-indicates-iran-scaling-back-terror-activity-in-light-of-coronavirus/>

America's Opportunity to Quell Russian Meddling in Libya

<https://www.dailysignal.com/2020/03/13/americas-opportunity-to-quell-russian-meddling-in-libya/>

The Surkov Leaks The Inner Workings of Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine

https://www.academia.edu/39838740/The_Surkov_Leaks_The_Inner_Workings_of_Russias_Hybrid_War_in_Ukraine?email_work_card=title

Russian election meddling is back -- via Ghana and Nigeria -- and in your feeds

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/12/world/russia-ghana-troll-farms-2020-ward/index.html>