

15 May 2024

FACT SHEET FOCUSED ON MYANMAR AND THE SERIES OF CONFLICT- AND CLIMATE-RELATED ISSUES THAT FACE THE COUNTRY

On 15 May, SIPRI published this Factsheet which says that conflict has exacerbated the country's vulnerability to climate change and environmental degradation.

https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/01_sipri-nupi_fact_sheet_myanmar_may_0.pdf

US BANS CHINA CRYPTO-MINER FROM NUCLEAR BASE AREA

On 14 May, the BBC reported on the US issuing an order that a Chinese-owned cryptocurrency miner and its partners to sell land they own near a US nuclear missile base, citing spying concerns.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c03dd6g1l4zo>

BIDEN SIGNS INTO LAW BAN ON RUSSIAN NUCLEAR REACTOR FUEL IMPORTS

On 14 May, Reuters reported that the ban on imports of the fuel for nuclear power plants also allows the Department of Energy to issue waivers in case of supply concerns. Russia is the world's top supplier of enriched uranium, and about 24% of the enriched uranium used by US nuclear power plants come from the country.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/biden-signs-ban-imports-russian-nuclear-reactor-fuel-into-law-2024-05-14>

WEALTH MANAGERS FLOCK TO DUBAI AS MILLIONAIRE POPULATION GROWS

On 14 May, Zawya reported that over a dozen wealth, asset management firms established in the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) last April alone – Dubai having seen an influx of wealth managers looking to cash in on the large pools of fortune and growing population of millionaires in the UAE.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/wealth/wealth-management/wealth-managers-flock-to-dubai-as-millionaire-population-grows-coyf6w73>

UK: OPEN GENERAL EXPORT LICENCE (OGEL) EXPORT FOR EXHIBITION: MILITARY GOODS - UPDATED

On 15 May, the ECJU issued an updated OGEL, which has updated contact details for the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-to-exporters-202410-updates-to-the-open-general-licence-export-for-exhibition-military-goods/nte-202410-updates-to-the-open-general-licence-export-for-exhibition-military-goods>

HOW TURKEY BECAME PUTIN'S 'PIT STOP' FOR SELLING CAMOUFLAGED FUEL TO THE EU

On 15 May, Politico reported that according to new research, as well as independent reporting from Politico. Russian oil, it seems, is arriving *en masse* to the EU via Turkey. The scheme is possible because of a workaround in Brussels sanctions that allows “blended” fuels into the EU if they're labelled as non-Russian.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/how-turkey-become-vladimir-putin-pit-stop-sell-camouflage-fuel-eu/>

RECOGNITION OF CHINESE JUDGMENTS IN THE US

On 8 May, a post on the Transnational Litigation Blog examined the position in the US, and how the courts in New York have grappled with the problem. It explains that 38 US states (and DC) have adopted either a 1962 or a 2005 Act concerned with foreign country money judgments. The other 12 states use common law. Both of the Acts require recognition of a foreign money judgment unless one of the listed grounds for non-recognition is established.

<https://tlblog.org/chinese-judgments-and-due-process-another-new-york-decision>

IT IS HARDER THAN IT LOOKS TO SUE STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM IN THE US

On 9 May, a post on the Transnational Litigation Blog was concerned with a case in which a family sued Iran and Syria for various torts and for aiding and abetting a terrorist attack carried out by Hamas.

<https://tlblog.org/it-is-harder-than-it-looks-to-sue-state-sponsors-of-terrorism>

UN: NORTH KOREA LAUNDERED \$147.5 MILLION IN STOLEN CRYPTO IN MARCH

On 14 May, Reuters reported that North Korea laundered \$147.5 million through virtual currency platform Tornado Cash in March after stealing it last year from a cryptocurrency exchange.

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/cybersecurity/north-korea-laundered-1475-mln-stolen-crypto-march-say-un-experts-2024-05-14/>

FINNISH CUSTOMS UNCOVERS MAJOR CIGARETTE SMUGGLING RING

On 15 May, YLE reported that up to 3 million illegally imported cigarettes are believed to have been brought into the country by a smuggling ring which has been under investigation in the Helsinki region this Spring. It is suspected that the smuggling operation started in late 2023, and involved a series of shipments.

<https://yle.fi/a/74-20088754>

EU AMENDS RUSSIA SANCTIONS TARGETING MISSILE AND UAV SUPPLY CHAIN

EU Regulation 2024/1338/EU also prohibits the export, sale, transfer or supply to Iran of further components that could be used in the development and production of UAV.

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202401338

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202401336

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/05/eu-broadens-iran-restrictive-measures/>

UK: REGULATIONS AMEND VARIOUS SANCTIONS REGIMES DISQUALIFYING PERSONS FROM INVOLVEMENT IN A COMPANY

The Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments and Revocations) Regulations 2024 and the Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2024) amend the following sanctions regulations to introduce a new power to designate persons for the purpose of disqualifying those persons from being a director of a company or directly or indirectly taking part in or being concerned in the promotion, formation, or management of a company.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/644/contents/made>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/643/contents/made>

UK: CYBER SECURITY CODES OF PRACTICE AND ANALYSIS

On 15 May, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology brought together the various codes of practice for cyber security. It explains who they are aimed at and how they link together. It has also issued an analysis of the UK's cyber security industry, including figures on size, employment and revenue. In addition, a collection of government research reports on the cyber security of artificial intelligence, including surveys and literature reviews has been published.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cyber-security-codes-of-practice>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-security-sectoral-analysis-2024>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-on-the-cyber-security-of-ai>

TOP CRYPTO SCAMMERS MANAGED TO SELL DUBAI PROPERTIES AFTER BEING CHARGED

On 15 May, OCCRP reported that the so-called “CryptoQueen” Ruja Ignatova and her security adviser, Frank Schneider, liquidated Dubai assets despite being charged in the US for their alleged roles in a \$4 billion fraud.

<https://www.occrp.org/en/dubai-unlocked/top-crypto-scammers-managed-to-sell-dubai-properties-after-being-charged>

See also

“DUBAI UNLOCKED” INVESTIGATION LINKS LUXURY FLATS TO OneCoin CRYPTO SCAMMERS

<https://www.icij.org/news/2024/05/leaked-dubai-property-files-link-luxury-flats-to-onecoin-crypto-scammers>

BRIBERY ROCKS RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY AS SENIOR OFFICIALS DETAINED

On 14 May, OCCRP reported that Russian authorities had detained a senior Defence Ministry official, alleging his involvement in a large-scale bribery scheme. He is alleged to have accepted bribes from representatives of commercial entities in exchange for carrying out specific actions beneficial to them.

<https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/18720-bribery-rocks-russian-defense-ministry-senior-officials-detained>

UK: JCB BUILT AND SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT TO RUSSIA MONTHS AFTER SAYING EXPORTS HAD STOPPED

On 15 May, the Guardian reported that British digger maker JCB, owned by the billionaire Bamford family, continued to build and supply equipment for the Russian market months after saying it had stopped exports.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/article/2024/may/15/jcb-built-supplied-equipment-to-russia-months-after-saying-exports-stopped>

DESPITE 2 DECADES OF CONCERTED ACTION, WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING PERSISTS WORLDWIDE WITH MORE THAN 4,000 SPECIES AFFECTED

On 13 May, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime published its World Wildlife Crime Report, which examines trends, harms, impacts and drivers of the trafficking of protected wildlife species; evaluates the effectiveness of interventions to combat the trade; and provides policy recommendations.

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/wildlife.html>

PROFILE: LEBANESE HEZBOLLAH

On 15 May, Eurasia Review published this analysis of the Iran-backed Lebanese Shia militia and US-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/15052024-profile-lebanese-hezbollah-analysis/>

WHY ARMED GROUPS STILL DOMINATE LIBYA, 13 YEARS SINCE FALL OF QADDAFI

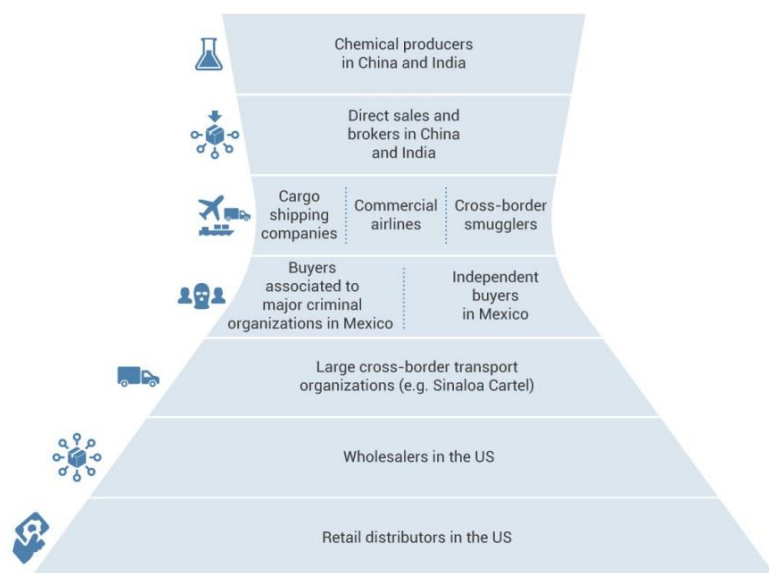
On 15 May, Eurasia Review published this analysis, as the country remains deeply insecure, divided by 2 rival administrations, and fragmented among a plethora of armed groups vying for control.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/15052024-why-armed-groups-still-dominate-libya-13-years-since-fall-of-qaddafi-analysis/>

DEA EMPHASIS ON DEFEATING CARTELS OVERSIMPLIFIES FENTANYL INDUSTRY

On 14 May, an article from Insight Crime made this argument, as it reviewed the DEA National Drug Threat Assessment 2024. The report highlights fentanyl as the “deadliest drug threat the United States has ever faced, killing nearly 38,000 Americans in the first six months of 2023 alone”.

Illicit Sourcing: the Fentanyl and Fentanyl Precursor Supply Chain



insightcrime.org

March 2023

Sources: InSight Crime interviews with law enforcement and criminal actors.

<https://insightcrime.org/news/dea-emphasis-defeating-cartels-oversimplifies-fentanyl-industry/>

SOUTH AFRICAN COURT CLARIFIES WHAT MAY BE A CORRUPT OFFER

On 15 May, an Out-Law article said that a recent ruling by the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) in South Africa has clarified what can be considered a corrupt offer. Under the South African law merely making a corrupt offer can be a crime and the parties do not have to go through with the payment of the bribe or improper conduct.

<https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/news/south-african-court-clarifies-what-may-be-a-corrupt-offer>

UK: FCA CHARGES 3 OVER CFD TRADING PENSION FRAUD

On 15 May, a release on Mondo Visione advised that the FCA has charged 3 individuals with fraud for their alleged involvement in a high-risk trading scheme, which targeted people's pension savings. They targeted victims by persuading them to invest in contracts for difference (CFD).

<https://mondovisione.com/media-and-resources/news/uk-financial-conduct-authority-three-charged-over-cfd-trading-pension-fraud/>

ANALYSIS REPORT: TACKLING THE SMUGGLING OF COUNTERFEIT GOODS AT THE EXTERNAL BORDERS OF THE EU

The EU Intellectual Property Office has published this report which focuses on the results of EMPACT Operation JAD PIRATES I, a Frontex coordinated operation, tackling the smuggling of counterfeit goods at the external borders of the EU. It says that a significant variety of counterfeit product categories were detected, including excisable commodities and non-EU-compliant goods.



<https://www.euipo.europa.eu/en/publications/operation-jad-pirates>

US IMPOSES SANCTIONS AFTER ABORTED SALE OF RUSSIAN TYCOON STAKE

On 15 May, the Global Sanctions blog reported that OFAC had designated 1 Russian individual and 3 Russia-based companies involved in an attempted sanctions evasion scheme in which a complex divestment could have unfrozen more than \$1.5 billion worth of shares belonging to US-designated Russian oligarch Oleg Vladimirovich Deripaska.

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/05/us-imposes-sanctions-after-aborted-sale-of-russian-tycoon-stake/>

EU GENERAL COURT REJECTS SANCTIONS CHALLENGE BY RUSSIAN DIRECT INVESTMENT FUND

On 15 May, the Global Sanctions blog reported that the Russian Direct Investment Fund, a Russia sovereign wealth fund, had challenged the prohibition on investing in projects financed by it.

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/05/eu-general-court-rejects-sanctions-challenge-by-russian-direct-investment-fund/>

OFAC SANCTIONS NICARAGUA-BASED RUSSIAN INSTITUTION AND GOLD COMPANIES

On 15 May, OFAC advised that it was targeting the Ortega-Murillo regime's repression of the Nicaraguan people and its ability to manipulate the gold sector and profit from corrupt operations. It is doing so by imposing sanctions on 3 Nicaragua-based entities, the Training Center of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs in Managua (RTC); Compania Minera Internacional, Sociedad Anónima (COMINTSA); and Capital Mining Investment Nicaragua, Sociedad Anónima (Capital Mining).

<https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20240515>

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2339>

RUSSIA SANCTIONS: EU COURT FINDS CHALLENGE TO EU SANCTIONS FLIGHT BAN INADMISSIBLE

On 15 May, the Global Sanctions blog reported that the General Court had rejected a challenge by the Kyrgyz company Global 8 Airlines which sought the annulment of a decision of the European Commission.

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/05/eu-court-finds-challenge-to-eu-sanctions-flight-ban-inadmissible-global-8-airlines-v-commission/>

FORCE MAJEURE & USING REASONABLE ENDEAVOURS TO OVERCOME SANCTIONS – UK SUPREME COURT OVERTURNS COURT OF APPEAL

DECISION

On 15 May, the Global Sanctions blog reported that the Supreme Court had overturned a Court of Appeal judgment interpreting a force majeure clause in a shipping contract. The Supreme Court held that "reasonable endeavours" wording in a *force majeure* clause cannot require accepting an offer of non-contractual performance by the other party. The shipping company involved was therefore entitled to require payment be made in US dollars only (which US sanctions made more difficult and would have delayed), even though the other party had offered to make payment in euros.

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/05/force-majeure-using-reasonable-endeavours-to-overcome-sanctions-uk-supreme-court-overtURNS-court-of-appeal-in-mur-shipping/>

OFAC SANCTIONS SUDANESE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES' COMMANDERS EXPANDING THE SUDAN WAR

On 15 May, OFAC advised that it had sanctioned Ali Yagoub Gibril and Osman Mohamed Hamid Mohamed for leading the Rapid Support Forces' (RSF) war campaign.

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2340>

<https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20240515>

ONTARIO'S 'CRYPTO KING' ARRESTED, CHARGED WITH FRAUD

On 15 May, Yahoo News reported a CBC story that this development comes as his investors have been trying to track down more than \$40 million that they gave him to invest in cryptocurrency and foreign exchange. A Toronto-based bankruptcy proceeding has recovered about \$3 million for roughly 160 investors.

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/ontarios-crypto-king-arrested-charged-160013051.html>

DUTCH COURT RULES LOSSES TO UNLICENSED ONLINE GAMBLERS MUST BE REPAYED

On 15 May, an article from CMS Law reported that, in 2 cases, a Dutch court ruled in favour of 2 online gamblers who filed suit against 2 online gambling companies. The online poker players sought refunds of their losses on gambling sites because the sites were not licensed under Netherlands law and were operating illegally. The article says that this is the first time that a judge has ordered online gambling companies to refund losses incurred by players. The ruling sets an important precedent.

<https://cms-lawnow.com/en/ealerts/2024/05/dutch-court-rules-losses-to-online-gamblers-must-be-repaid>

GUATEMALAN COURT HAS ORDERED THE RELEASE OF A JOURNALIST JAILED FOR NEARLY 2 YEARS ON MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES

On 15 May, ABC News reported that José Rubén Zamora, 67, founder of *El Periodico* newspaper, was sentenced to 6 years in prison last June for alleged money laundering. But that conviction and sentence were overturned by another court and a new trial ordered. For nearly 2 years, he has been kept in jail.

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/guatemalan-court-orders-release-journalist-jailed-2-years-110269505>

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