WALKING IN NO-MAN'S LAND

Beyond Asimov's laws of robotics: sleepwalking toward the future?
Irakli Beridze and Ochran James McCarthy

Virtual currencies: safe for business and consumers or just for criminals?
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Securing justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence: the stigma belongs with the perpetrator
Zainab Haifa Bangura

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Walking in no-man’s land

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Nobody’s going to fix the world for us, but working together, making use of technological innovations and human communities alike, we might just be able to fix it ourselves.

Jamais Cascio
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New opportunities from globalization

Unprecedented globalization, expansion and change is irrevocably altering global dynamics. Technological evolution has brought about unparalleled levels of progress which continually restructure the fabric of our society, beginning from the very way we interface with one another. Indeed, the achievements of a fast-evolving and increasingly interconnected world with a quantum jump in technology in different sectors benefit mankind as a whole.

We live in a world where the concept of borders has changed radically: there is a growing movement of people, commodities, services and ideas between countries and regions in a common global market. Some clear discrepancies are however surfacing, particularly the gap between the expectations from the future we envisage and are striving for and the stark reality facing many people on a daily basis. New vulnerabilities are emerging, particularly the increasing risk of exploitation of new opportunities for progress by organized criminal networks. Examples of this trend is the exploitation of the benefits and opportunities of cyber-space through cyber crime and the ruthless undermining of State institutions through corruption at all levels.

The very same technology that is providing us with the tools to safeguard freedom of speech providing us the means for instantaneous global communication and free movement of ideas and knowledge is also being used by criminals who phish for individuals private information, credit card details, or who use cyber space as a platform to exchange inappropriate images or sell illegal materials. In response to this, UNICRI has been focusing on cybercrime for many years, enabling the Institute to accumulate the skills and know-how to analyze the many trends associated with online criminal activity. Through its advocacy role UNICRI has contributed to raising understanding and awareness of cyber threats, in assisting law enforcement and policy makers at the national and international levels to address and combat the growing threats to cyber security.

This issue of F3 highlights the importance of involving citizens and their governments in the process of change and to be cognizant to the potential threats to development emanating from their exploitation by organized crime networks. Care should also be taken so that new technological developments do not contribute to accentuating disparities, such as the “digital divide”, but rather contribute to a homogenous and collective growth and collective mutual benefits.
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On 16 May 2014, the first multilateral discussion of lethal autonomous systems was convened at the United Nations Office in Geneva on the margins of the Expert Meeting for the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The subject of discussion, in more colloquial terms, was the so-called ‘killer robot’ – that is, fully autonomous lethal weapons systems that can select and engage targets without human intervention. During this milestone meeting, discussions touched on the various technical, legal, operational and ethical implications of robotic weapons and, of course, a number of concerns were voiced about a future with weapons void of human control, judgment or compassion.

A particularly descriptive statement came from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the Conference on Disarmament, His Excellency Pedro Motta, who drew an analogy between killer robots and the old Jewish tale of the Golem. According to the tale, the Golem was built from clay as a tool to defend the Jewish community of Prague from those who would wish them harm or wrongdoing. At first it served the community well. One day, however, the Golem went out of control and murderously rampaged through the streets until its creator, the Rabbi, could once again regain control and return the Golem to inanimate clay. The point to be taken from this old tale, His Excellency observed, is that society should be careful when relying on technology as a solution for its challenges.

While it is commendable that the issue of robotics is finally beginning to appear on the international agenda as a matter of safety and security, the present day reality with regard to the governance of robotics leaves a lot to be desired. This brief discourse seeks to demonstrate this concern and to shed light on the need to figuratively ‘wake’ from our sleep with regard to robotics. In doing so, we will turn to two existing international instruments that have succeeded in addressing the sensitive and divisive issue of non-proliferation of chemical and nuclear weapons, with a view towards learning some useful lessons to shape a future system of governance of autonomous robotics.

**Robots of the present - Science fiction no more**
Although such fully autonomous weapons systems, or killer robots, are not currently in use, research and development in all aspects of autonomous robotics is rapidly expanding. Having left the pages of science fictions books, robots with varying degrees of autonomy have begun to penetrate our daily lives.
iRobot’s Roomba\(^2\) vacuums your floors, Robomow’\(^3\) s robot mows your lawn\(^3\) and JIBO\(^4\), the ‘World’s First Family Robot’, entertains the kids, reads you your mail and orders you pizza online. If you live in Russia, a robotic drone can even deliver the pizza to your door when it is ready.\(^5\) Looking at the fast paced expansion of robotics, it is really not beyond belief that fully autonomous robots could be in widespread use, as weapons of war, within 20 to 30 years. A 2003 report from the U.S. Joint Forces Command already envisages that “between 2015 and 2025 the joint forces could be largely robotic at the tactical level”.\(^6\) Of course, there is no widespread agreement on the above prediction and some consider this to be a greatly exaggerated future.\(^7\) The fact of the matter though is that, while we should try to remain as grounded in reality as possible and avoid whimsical speculation steeped in science fiction, the danger of being wrong about these predictions is too great a risk to take.

The present day reality with regard to the governance of robotics leaves a lot to be desired

\(^2\) http://www.irobot.com/us/learn/home/roomba.aspx  
\(^3\) http://www.robomow.com/en-USA/  
\(^4\) http://www.myjibo.com/  
\(^7\) Max Booth considers this future unlikely and suggests that “machines will only be called upon to perform work that is dull, dirty, or dangerous” - Boot, Max, War made War: Technology, Warfare, and the Course of History, 1500 to Today, Gotham Books, 2006 p.442.
Noel Sharkey, Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics at the University of Sheffield, expressed his belief that truly autonomous robotics are not realistic in the immediately near future. However, he expressed his concern that nonetheless “we are in danger of sleepwalking into a world where robots have become indispensable to service our needs, to care for us, to watch our every activity, to police us and to fight our wars for us.” For these reasons alone, it would be prudent to start paying due attention to developments in the robotics world and to start considering how to start structuring a system of governance of robotics for the future.

It is really not beyond belief that fully autonomous robots could be in wide spread use, as weapons of war, within 20 to 30 years

In the works of renowned science fiction author, Isaac Asimov, the system of governance was very straightforward as the potential dangers of robotics were famously mitigated by three laws of robotics that were programmed into Asimov’s robots:

- **Law One**: A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
- **Law Two**: A robot must obey orders given to it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
- **Law Three**: A robot must protect its own existence, as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

Although nice on paper, the laws have not materialised in reality because modern day roboticists have not been able to translate them from a fictional plot tool into the language of robotics. Even if these laws were somehow implementable in real life, there is the further problem that they are even too focused on physical harm to be able to really deal with some of the other modern concerns for robotics, such as issues of privacy stemming from data gathering or tracking by domestic robots. Nonetheless, Asimov’s Laws, limited as they may be, are all we have to show for the moment and little or no progress has been made towards a system of governance by policy makers in this particularly technical field. In this regard, society is on the edge of a ‘wild west’ of robotics, where the only laws of robotics in existence are those found in the pages of science fiction short stories.

Looking for something more concrete to guide us towards and through the coming era of robotics, many involved in the killer robot discussions under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons support an approach based on the belief that the best way to prevent the Golem’s rampage may in fact be by not creating it in the first place. To achieve this, some have proposed the adoption of an international agreement banning the development, production and use of killer robots, while others have called for a moratorium on killer robots pending a greater understanding of their nature and relationship to international humanitarian law. Shedding light on the logic behind such a stance, one researcher at Princeton University jokingly noted that “we already don’t understand Microsoft Windows, we’re cer-

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9. Asimov, Isaac, I, Robot, Dobson Books Ltd, 1967. Asimov later introduced a fourth or “Zeroth Law” stating that “A robot may not harm humanity, or, by inaction, allow humanity to come to harm.”
tainly not going to understand something as complex as a humanlike intelligence. Why should we create something like that and then arm it?” While there may be some degree of merit in this logic, those against a ban or moratorium on lethal autonomous weapons systems believe that not enough thought has been given to the possible negative implications of a ban or moratorium on killer robots may have.

Society is on the edge of a ‘wild west’ of robotics, where the only laws of robotics in existence are those found in the pages of science fiction

The reason for this is that the weapons side of robotics is but a part of the much larger and growing robotics industry. The military application of robotics is very much linked with the domestic and industrial application of robotics. Take for example, the aforementioned Roomba, which is designed by iRobot - the same company that produces PackBot, a versatile robot designed for use by military and law enforcement personnel for dangerous activities such as CBRN reconnaissance. iRobot is also partnered with Taser International, a leading manufacturer of stun guns. Similarly, Boston Dynamics and SCHAFT Inc. were recently acquired by Google as part of its 'moonshot' to create a new generation of robots. In the not so recent past though, both Boston Dynamics and SCHAFT have also had close

associations with the military application of robotics. Boston Dynamics’ LS3, for example, was recently field tested by US Marines during the Rim of the Pacific Exercise — a multinational maritime exercise — and the SCHAFT robot succeeded in winning the DARPA Robotics Challenge 2013 Trial. DARPA is the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), a technology research agency of the United States Department of Defense. Viewing domestic, industrial and military robotics thus interlinked, the response of the international community to the killer robot question, will impact on research and development of domestic and industrial robotics. How to proceed in this heated debate should therefore not be considered so straightforward. Instead, we should give due thought to the possibility that perhaps neither a ban on killer robots, under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, nor the development of a new international instrument to this end, may not be the most appropriate solution to the challenge: both will have repercussions for the budding autonomous robotics industry and the robots that are becoming increasingly important for our daily lives.

The military application of robotics is very much linked with the domestic and industrial application of robotics

Moving beyond Asimov - Lessons from the past

In attempting, therefore, to design a system of governance for robotics there are many examples of best practices in existing international instruments. These best practices would allow us to comprehensively take into account the complexities of the autonomous robotics world, while at the same time, providing enough structure to comfort those who express alarm over possible proliferation risks of killer robots. These instruments could be looked at as inspiration for equitably dealing with those with an interest in the future of robotics and in awakening us from our “sleepwalking”.

Two possibilities that deal with sensitive and divisive subject matter, and are almost universally endorsed in doing so with 190 state parties each, are: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC) and the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). While both instrument have been extremely successful in terms of achieving an almost universal level of application by countries, few international instruments have achieved the recent level of success demonstrated by CWC in the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. For this reason, while best practices can be drawn from both instruments, particular attention should be paid to the lessons learned from CWC.

The history of CWC demonstrates that reaching the objective of the complete elimination of the chemical category of weapons of mass destruction was not an easy task and that the lobby of the chemical industry — the major stakeholder of the international norm — was one not to be taken lightly. Indeed,
the opposition presented by the chemical industry resulted in a long and drawn out period of discussion and negotiation that started as early as the 1960’s. Once CWC was eventually signed in 1993, it was still a further four years before CWC finally entered into force in 1997. Even then, the initial operative years were quite slow. The reasons behind this are well described by Mr. René van Sloten — Executive Director on Industrial Policy at the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) — who underlined that the chemical industry manufactures products that “the whole world depends upon every day for health, safety, transportation, communication, agriculture, medicine - touching virtually every aspect of our lives. Chemical companies do not make chemical weapons, yet some very common chemicals can be misused as - or transformed into - chemical weapons.”19

This is the so-called dual-use nature of certain chemicals. Chlorine, for instance, is a common example of a dual-use chemical; it can be used peacefully as a substance to purify water thereby making it safe for drinking or it can be used in its gaseous form as a chemical weapon. Evidently, the chemical industry had plenty grounds for concern with a Convention that seeks the elimination of chemical weapons. At the same time though, noting the importance of having the chemical industry onboard and supporting CWC, Mr. van Sloten indicated that the “industry best practice in chemical site housekeeping and customer vetting can be used to provide a high degree of compliance and confidence in response to the non-proliferation aspects of the Convention.”20

20. Ibid.
In order to ensure, therefore, that the chemical industry was not alienated by overbearing terms and conditions, and to rely on the strengths of the industry to foster compliance, CWC was drafted with an approach that balanced the interests of the chemical industry and the need to address chemical weapons proliferation. This is largely done by accurately refining the scope of the Convention to ensure that ‘scheduled’ chemicals, as well as those chemicals that fall under the general purpose criterion, are only used for peaceful purposes and not for purposes prohibited by the Convention. By doing so, the drafters of CWC ensured that the implementation of the Convention would not hinder the chemical industry in any manner - an act that would secure the full support of the industry allowing CWC to reach an almost universal application.

At present, the Convention enjoys enormous support marked by strong cooperation between the chemical industry and CWC through the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) - the CWC implementing body. His Excellency Minoru Shibuya, Ambassador of Japan and Chairman of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, described this cooperation during the 2009 Helsinki Chemicals Forum noting that “this is a unique and mutually beneficial partnership which is essential in promoting the full implementation of the Convention’s provisions. During the negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention, the chemical industry agreed to a ‘declaration and verification process by inspection’ to provide assurances that toxic chemicals and dual use chemicals are not used for weapons production. This was a major commitment and represents the backbone of the non-proliferation provisions in the Convention.”

Indeed, the verification process is a further example of how CWC has managed to balance both sides to make a practical and effective solution. Adopting specific guidelines for verification that regulate inspection time and access to information and facilities, in a manner that respects the industry’s concern for confidentially handling sensitive commercial information, has gone a great distance to facilitate inspections by OPCW that the industry may ordinarily consider intrusive.

CWC was drafted with an approach that balanced the interests of the chemical industry and the need to address chemical weapons proliferation

Reading into this comparison, a first step for determining how to proceed with killer robots — and by implication autonomous robotics in general — could be to shift the paradigm of the discussion away from viewing robotics as purely an issue of arms control and proliferation. Instead, robotics could be considered as a resource and discussions could be focused on the purposes assigned to the use of autonomous robotics as per CWC. In doing so, initiative could then be taken to build a collaborative partnership with the robotics industry. To facilitate this transition, the moniker of “killer robots” should be dropped, in place of the broader and more industry friendly term “autonomous robotics”. The logic behind this paradigm shift stems from the fact that autonomous robotics, like chemicals, are not inherently bad. Both are tools to which a purpose is applied. Both are dual-use.

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21. Scheduled chemicals are the chemicals and their precursors that are listed in Schedules 1, 2 and 3 in the Annex to CWC. The General Purpose Criterion in essence acknowledges that the industry is not static and therefore the list of scheduled chemicals can never be truly exhaustive. As such, the criterion requires that any other chemical used for purposes prohibited by the Convention equally fall within the remit of the Convention. This criterion is considered to be a key tool that allows the Convention to continue to be applicable in spite of developments in the chemical industry.

Another best practice that could be taken from CWC is the role played by OPCW as a leading forum in the chemical field. Article IX of the Convention sets out the possibility for states party to the Convention to pursue consultation, cooperation and fact-finding missions through OPCW. This Article can be used by Member States for consultative purposes to ensure compliance and, in doing so, it adds transparency and credibility to the workings of the Convention. At the same time, Article XI acknowledges the need for economic and technical development and therefore explicitly states that the Convention should be implemented in a manner that does not hamper this or international cooperation to this effect, including “the international exchange of scientific and technical information and chemicals and equipment for the production, processing or use of chemicals for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.”

While these articles put OPCW in a pivotal position as the central hub for exchange of knowledge, best practices and lessons learned in the chemical realm, it must be admitted that they have not been exploited to the fullest extent by OPCW and the states party to CWC. That being said, the idea behind these articles could be applied to the future system for autonomous robotics and, if the immediately apparent benefits of such a system for exchange are promoted properly, it could be an ideal mechanism for building a partnership with the autonomous robotics industry. As a field of scientific research, communication amongst roboticists is an essential aspect of the scientific method and, in this regard, the establishment of a forum for consultations, cooperation and clarifications on autonomous robotics would only serve to further support all those engaged and drive innovation. Accordingly, there are grounds to believe that such an approach would be openly greeted and embraced by the robotics industry, allowing it and any associated system of governance to thrive. As was the case with CWC though, steps would be required to ensure that the industry’s commercially sensitive information is protected: a necessary precondition if this lesson learned is to work for autonomous robotics.

Evidently, the success of the CWC story has many lessons that could be of benefit to the ongoing killer robots debate. Its hallmarks of striking a balance between the needs of the industry and the needs of non-proliferation efforts, as well as fostering a continuous dialogue and collaborative relationship, have helped OPCW progress towards its mandate and even earn a Nobel Peace Prize. Sentiments expressed by OPCW Director-General, Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, in 2012 again illustrate how this has been possible - “the implementation of the Convention is sufficiently nimble and robust, not only to keep pace with developments in the industry and in science and technology, but also to stay ahead of the curve.”

Looking next at NPT, the treaty first entered into force in 1970 — with an initial duration of 25 years — to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons technology. In 1995 a review conference was convened which led to the treaty being extended indefinitely. There is little doubt that, since 1970, NPT has garnered widespread support making it the very cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and has resulted in a declining rate of nuclear weapons proliferation since its adoption. This remains the case in spite of the usual critique of the unfairness or discrimination inherent in the fact that the treaty is founded on the concept of nuclear “haves” and “have nots” and that the five states permitted to possess nuclear weapons under the treaty still maintain considerable stockpiles of nuclear weapons to the present day. In this regard, there are certainly lessons that can be gleaned from how NPT and its associated organisation, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), have developed and maintained a position of almost universal support from 190 countries over the years. One of the most important aspects of NPT is the third pillar of the Convention, which is embodied in Article IV and sets out the inalienable right of states party to the Convention to develop, research, produce

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and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Over the years, this right has facilitated more than thirty states to make nuclear energy a key component of the national power supply. At the same time, Article III of NPT envisages the development of a system of safeguards by IAEA to complement this right by preventing the diversion of nuclear material from peaceful to weapon-based uses and expressly requiring non-nuclear weapon state parties to adhere to this system. IAEA uses this safeguard mechanism to verify declarations made by states regarding their nuclear activities and to detect, in advance, any potential misuse or violation of the Convention.

Similar to the objectives behind many provisions in CWC, Article III of NPT states that the safeguards shall be implemented in a manner that complies with Article IV and avoids “hampering the economic or technological development of the Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, including the international exchange of nuclear material and equipment for the processing, use or production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes.”

Looking at these fundamentals of the nuclear non-proliferation, it is evident that the treaty was drafted in a manner so as to carefully cater to the needs and interests of both sides: those who acknowledge the inherent dangers of nuclear weapons and those who identify benefits in nuclear technology and the production of nuclear energy. This balance has facilitated both NPT and IAEA to carve out a unique position and enabled it to obtain almost universality in its application. As with CWC, the history of NPT therefore suggests that, by taking steps to build a balanced partnership with all those concerned by the subject matter, it is possible to foster widespread support for sensitive and divisive matters and to keep both sides content with the outcome. In this regard, when approaching the issue of autonomous robotics, there may be merit in carefully looking at NPT and considering a right of states to pursue scientific and technological advancements. As a means to striking a balance between those in the domestic and industrial robotics world and those against the military application of autonomous robotics, this right could be set against a mechanism for transparency and openness, akin to Article III of NPT and the IAEA safeguards. The successes of both CWC and NPT clearly indicate that, ultimately, if the system of governance is to be effective, the approach must be equitable.

Wide awake and walking towards the future

Society is on a threshold with regard to autonomous robotics and the coming years are certain to be definitive as the robotics industry refines its capacity to produce robots and these robots become increasingly integrated into mankind’s daily life. Some believe that, with the leaps and bounds being made in technology every day, we are quickly approaching the futurist theory known as the ‘Singularity’ - a period proposed by computer scientist and author Ray Kurzweil “during which the pace of technological change will be so rapid, its impact so deep that technology appears to be extending at infinite speed.” At this point in time, Kurzweil believes, artificial intelligence will surpass human intelligence. Proponents of this theory believe that these changes are inevitable and that the ‘Singularity’ will radically alter the future of society. It is of course difficult to say, with any degree of certainty, whether this will or will not be the case and, if it is, when it will occur. What we should be able to agree on at this point in time is how very much unprepared we are for whatever the future may hold. The good news is, however, that autonomous robotics — or at least killer robots for now — are finally beginning to appear on the international radar as something for consideration.

In November 2014, another round of discussions at the level of the United Nations will be held in Geneva within the scope of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. While this meeting will most probably not enter into any specific details of a ban, or a Convention setting out a ban, it is the second such high profile event on the subject matter and will be a critical venue for future discussion.

It is hoped that the present discourse will serve to prompt an earnest and comprehensive discussions of autonomous robotics, taking into account the importance of building upon the lessons learned from other international instruments. Thus far, remarkable results have been achieved under CWC and NPT facilitated by the almost universal level of support for each instrument: a fact that must be given due recognition for any future success with regard to autonomous robotics. It may yet be some time before a true system of governance of autonomous robotics is in place, but we can already start to visualise this system by fostering a comprehensive and balanced approach to the world of autonomous robotics.

Given that Asimov’s fictional laws of robotics are still all we have to show for a system on autonomous robotics, the time to stop “sleepwalking” is now. Without over-indulging in speculation, we are, as author James Barrat, observes, only one ‘9/11’ away from learning another set of excruciating lessons. The only difference with other disasters, he notes, is that with autonomous robotics “they’re not like airplane disasters, nuclear disasters, or any other kind of technology disasters with the possible exception of nanotechnology. That’s because there’s a high probability we won’t recover from the first one.”26 On the 30th anniversary of when the world first met Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Terminator, now would not only be a timely, but almost the perfect moment, to take the first steps for the future system for the governance of autonomous robots.27

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27. Terminator was released in the United States on 26 October 1984.

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DEEP WEB, GOING BENEATH THE SURFACE

by Carola Frediani

The “Deep Web” is not an easy subject to investigate. To begin with, the first rule of the Deep Web is: “You do not talk about the Deep Web”. And that holds true for the second rule. While the third rule of the Deep Web is: “You can talk about it, but just if this is related to drug lords, weapons, terrorism or other similar topics.”

Deep Web generally refers to a specific subsection of the net. Usually it covers any URL — including databases or intranets — that is not indexed by search engines and is therefore invisible to the majority of people. But the term Deep Web is often used to refer to that part of the web and those services built upon anonymous nets, also called darknets. It is about the so-called hidden services that allow access to resources without revealing the operator’s identity. Tor — the most popular software and network that lets surfing the web and communicating in an anonymous way — has offered hidden services since 2004. It allows users not only to surf websites anonymously, but also to run a server under a pseudonym. Its main purpose is to enable freedom of speech, even in situations where states or other powerful entities try to suppress it.

Systems allowing the anonymous and censorship-resistant distribution of content have been fostered by the increasing Internet censorship. Tor hidden websites include dissidents’ news, and sensitive, or otherwise controversial, documents or topics.

No question, an anonymous online environment can also be attractive for criminal activities. But in the end what can we find in the Deep Web? We can find there platforms and services promoting freedom of speech and whistleblowing, such as Wikileaks, Strongbox, and GlobaLeaks. For example, Strongbox is an anonymous service promoted by the Freedom of the Press Foundation, and originally coded by Aaron Swartz to receive tips and leaks. Today, many news organizations are deploying similar systems. GlobaLeaks is a platform designed by The Hermes Center for Transparency and Digital Human Rights1 which has been implemented by many media companies and NGOs in different countries. No doubt in the Deep Web we can also find black markets such as the old Silk Road, hacking and cryptocurrency forums, websites, services used by botnets and, above all, many political websites or websites publishing content which is considered sensitive or questionable by all or some societies.

How big is this space? Tracing onion addresses, which are hidden service addresses called as such because they end with the pseudo-top-level domain host suffix “onion”, poses several challenges. Many hidden services take measures to protect location and anonymity — including changing their addresses — not storing the entire list of onion addresses through a central entity and avoiding linking the addresses to each other.

A study conducted by the University of Luxembourg² in September 2013 tried to analyze Tor hidden services by exploiting an old Tor version’s vulnerability. Researchers collected 40 thousands unique onion addresses and tried to classify their content. What did they find? The content was in 17 different languages, including Arabic, Basque, Chinese and Bantu. Around 44% of the resources were about drugs, adult content, weapons and counterfeit products. The remaining 56% was on anonymity, politics, reporting and human rights violations, repression, corruption, freedom of speech, leaked cables, and the technical and political aspects of anonymity. Different types of services, of a more or less shady nature, were also offered. Researchers came to the conclusion that the number of hidden services related to illegal activities was equal to the number of resources focusing on legal activities. However, when the research was conducted, some of the most popular resources were the ones linked to botnets or adult content and Silk Road was among the top 20 most popular hidden services.

No question, an anonymous online environment can also be attractive for criminal activities

This picture confirms an earlier study called Project Artemis, carried out by two researchers who analyzed thousands of Deep Web addresses. “Despite the quote related to cybercrime is remarkable — wrote the researchers — the conclusion is that the Tor network contains also mostly legal content, in particular the volume of documents related to political issues is in continuous increase.”³

One of the most representative and up to date researches on Tor hidden service directories and Tor hidden service search engines is The Ahmia Project⁴, which is now part of the Hermes Center for Transparency and Digital Human Rights.⁵

Researchers working on the Ahmia project found 1500 working hidden services providing web content.

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³ http://resources.infosecinstitute.com/project-artemis-osint-activities-on-deep-web/
⁴ http://www.ahmia.fi
⁵ http://logioshermes.org/
Indubitably, the number of hidden services providing other Internet services, such as IRC, Jabber and BitTorrent is much greater. The Ahmia group detected hidden services that were running websites only. The group collected descriptive information from these services and generated a tag cloud. From this, an outline related to the types of contents that are published on hidden services was released. Many tags referred to a lot of services and tools about anonymity, Bitcoin, markets and cannabis.

**Despite the quote related to cybercrime is remarkable - wrote the researchers - the conclusion is that the Tor network contains also mostly legal content**

While estimates and classifications of the Dark Web are not easy to obtain, nonetheless, available information shows a picture that is less black and white than the one usually portrayed. The Dark Web represents a volatile environment. Many hidden services change address often, becoming inactive in a short time. The most stable sites are hacking forums and those dealing with e-commerce. For the user, using the dark web is like surfing in an unknown sea without charts, or using charts that might be wrong and constantly in a state of flux. In the end, the best way to get information is through word of mouth. Hidden services have been growing since 2004. The Deep Web exists for 10 years, which is a relatively short time compared to the rest of the internet.

The Deep Web became popular in 2011 when Silk Road was born and the media began reporting on the platform. The first to break the news on the Dark Web in the mainstream media was a journalist working for Gawker, Adrian Chen. He interviewed one of the buyers, a software programmer, who said he was a libertarian anarchist and believed that anything that is not violent should not be criminalized. The Silk Road administrators talked the same way, quoting agorism, an anarcho-libertarian philosophy. According to the prosecutors the founder of Silk Road would be Ross Ulbricht, a 30 years old, brilliant American student of physics and solar cells, interested in libertarian ideas and a former boy scout.

Philosophy aside, in 2013 Silk Road counted 13,000 listings of items, mainly drugs. In its two-and-a-half years of operation, it got revenues of more than 9.5 million Bitcoins, worth about 1.2 billion dollars. Silk Road’s rate of commission was between 8% and 15%. The system had more than 900,000 accounts from countries all around the globe.

A recent academic study claims that Silk Road was “a paradigm-shifting criminal innovation” since it was a less violent trading environment compared to offline drug markets. The researchers claim that Silk Road was not just an eBay for drugs since most of the revenues would come from business to business trade.

Silk Road was seized by the FBI in October 2013, but black markets did not disappear. Actually they proliferated. According to Deepdotweb, which is a sort of Tripadvisor for black markets, today there at least 20 well established black markets.

But to understand what is really going on in this underworld, we need to understand the type of people, ideas, and softwares that are used there. Who are we going to “meet” in the Deep Web? Looking at its

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user base we find a very varied demographic: activists of different countries and backgrounds; journalists; hackers; cybercriminals with different specializations (carders, botmasters, scammers, etc); coders and cryptographers; Bitcoin lovers and miners; Wikileakers and hacktivists. Many of them are involved in a specific area, but there are also many dabbling in a little bit of everything. Then, of course, there are also people committing crimes other than cyber crimes, such as pedophiles. But it would be a mistake to use this latter fraction of this galaxy of users to attack the entire Deep Web.

Silk Road counted **13,000 listings of items, mainly drugs. In its two-and-a-half years of operation, it got revenues of more than 9.5 million Bitcoins, worth about 1.2 billion dollars**

Tor is not the only darknet, there are also other systems, although less used, like I2P and Freenet. Originally Tor was created by the United States government, developed in particular by the Navy. Its initial purpose was to protect the communication of the military, but then they opened it up to everyone. Today, Tor is an open source project run by volunteers and supported by activists, nonprofit organizations, universities and governments. Tor has been the main hurdle facing some governments’ ambitions to surveil and monitor all digital communication.

Tor is a precious tool for many countries dissidents and users, and it became an important tool during the Arab Spring. In Iran, Tor usage went from 7,000 users in 2010 to 40,000 users two years later. In Syria, the number of Tor users grew from 600 to 15,000 in just two years. In Turkey, in 2014, after the government blocked Twitter and YouTube, Tor usage skyrocketed. Tor is also used by women’s shelters in Boston to protect those who are escaping from abusive partners who use information technology to track their victims.

The use of Tor jumped exponentially in the last year, since the revelations of the governments’ surveillance programs. Today approximately two millions people worldwide use Tor on a daily bases, but such a number accounts also for bots. According to the security researcher Runa Sandvik, excluding bots, the number of users is close to a million at worldwide level.

However, the number of Tor’s users is expected to increase very quickly. In a time of widespread state censorship and surveillance, and persecution of minorities and activists in many countries, even in democracies, the availability of such a platform for anonymous communication and publishing is considered by many essential to protect freedom of expression.

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9. A bot is a software normally used to search large amount of data (i.e. search engine).

### The author

ARE CYBER CRIMINALS COMPETING AT THE OLYMPICS?

By Alan Brill and Snezana Petreska

Mass gatherings of cyber connected people are magnets for predatory cyber criminals

Events like the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games (both of which are being held in Brazil) as well as national and regional events can draw tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of fans. Cultural events like concerts at arenas and sports stadiums can result in masses of viewers. While we think of these mass events and the joy and excitement associated with attendance at the games, concerts, conferences, or gatherings, those in the criminal justice field clearly recognize the potential of these events to have an opposite effect by attracting criminals – who may engage in petty or more violent crimes – or terrorists. Law enforcement teams would be looking at the risks of explosive...
devices as well as chemical, biological or radiological weapons of mass destruction. But there is a far more likely risk that is associated with these events, and it is a risk which can be easily overlooked – targeting of attendees by cyber criminals. The opportunities for cyber crime are endless, the technology to carry it out is readily available, the targets are often unaware of the risk, and in many cases have little or no effective defense. Major events generate an environment in which creative cyber criminals can thrive. In effect, the cyber criminals can compete in their own games for money, information and even for bragging rights on their status as a wizard among hackers.

The opportunities for cyber crime are endless, the technology to carry it out is readily available, the targets are often unaware of the risk

Why Target Mass Events? Today, most large-scale intrusions into computers and networks can be classified as looking for money or opportunities that can be turned into money – like identity information, credit card information, or proprietary information (like unreleased financial data, “insider” data or trade secrets). There are also cyber attacks that are designed to punish a company or government agency for some action they took (or didn’t take) through denial of service attacks, website defacement or the release or sensitive or embarrassing information. These may be carried out by adversaries (competitors) or by governments (or those they covertly sponsor) or even by hackers who have an ideological objective (sometimes called “hacktivists”).¹ The hacktivist’s objective is to cause some form of reputational damage to the organization. But what are the motives that would result in significant numbers of cyber criminals (and in some cases intelligence organizations) focusing their attention on large-scale sporting, cultural or political events? We have identified five key factors:

The cyber criminals can compete in their own games for money, information and even for bragging rights on their status as a wizard among hackers

• A Target-Rich Environment. It’s obvious that these events draw crowds ranging from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of attendees. But it is not simply the numbers; it is the evolution of technology that makes these gatherings such good places for hackers to insinuate themselves. We are the most “connected” generation in history. In a very few years, we have gone from using notebook computers to relying on tablets and even more on smartphones. These mobile devices have become globally ubiquitous. Look at photos of groups of people at events, and you will undoubtedly see a fair proportion of them holding or using smartphones. They may be telling people what they are doing, perhaps through text messaging or blogging. They may be taking photographs, either of the event, or of themselves and instantaneously posting them on the Internet. Indeed, the word “selfie” meaning a photograph you take of yourself (generally with a smartphone or tab-

¹ Be aware, however, that in some cases, cyber criminals or state-sponsored actors can carry out a denial of service or web defacement attack as a way of diverting attention from a simultaneous attack designed to penetrate the target’s defenses and to exfiltrate data, cause destruction or to implant a “back door” to facilitate future access. Organizations that suffer a denial of service or similar attack should recognize this issue and take steps to determine if a parallel attack is attempted or has been successfully carried out.
let) that you share on social media was named Word of the Year 2013 by the Oxford Dictionaries.² People are using their mobile devices (and more traditional laptop computers) to keep in touch via electronic mail, to communicate over social networks and to send and receive text messages, but increasingly, they are performing financial transactions and working remotely which often involves accessing valuable intellectual property. At locations around event venues, visitors are connecting to WiFi networks operated by hotels, coffee shops, fast-food restaurants and other establishments. The reality is that having lots of people connecting to lots of unfamiliar networks to conduct sensitive transactions on machines that often store highly confidential information is a dream come true for the cyber criminal, the state-sponsored actor, and the hacktivist. In Brazil, about 40% of the population is online.³ Brazil also has one of the world’s largest computer and mobile technology market, social media communities, and e-commerce platforms.⁴ It is a hot spot for cyber criminals and it also is home to some of the most notorious hacking groups. Notably, BMPoC, a Brazilian hackers group, is known for the cyber attacks against NASA.⁵ In 2011, LulzSec, another Brazilian hackers group, launched attacks against government websites, including the website of the President.⁶ The hackers of Anonymous Brasil, a self-proclaimed faction of the

⁴. According to a report from the consulting company Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield and Byers, the Brazilian market is 4th World’s biggest IT market http://www.kpcb.com/internet-trends
Anonymous hacktivist group, in 2012 launched Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks against three leading banks in Brazil, and has been openly expressing its opposition to the 2014 World Cup. In 2013 the Confederations Cup in Brazil attracted 250,000 foreign visitors and the World Cup 2014 attracted approximately 1,000,000 foreign visitors. This high concentration of potential victims was not unnoticed by cyber criminals who are likely to make the most out of the opportunity to get access to private information of the many foreigners who otherwise would be out of reach. These foreigners, in addition, were likely to return home quickly, and would be unlikely to return to Brazil to be a part of prosecuting a cyber crime. During the 2012 United Nations Conference in Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian government identified 140 attempted security breaches. During last year’s Confederations Cup in Brazil, the numbers were even higher.

We are the most “connected” generation in history. In a very few years, we have gone from using notebook computers to relying on tablets and even more on smartphones.

- A Trusting Target Audience.
When you are at a mass event, be it the Olympics or a huge concert by a rock and roll legend that you have been waiting years to see, the reality is that being a target of a cyber security attack is not top of mind. Generation Y has grown up online, and largely expects connectivity to be available where they are, when they want it, and affordable, if not free. When traveling, many people are glad to be able to connect to a WiFi signal at an airport, hotel or coffee shop. In many cases, these are open networks that do not require prior authorization or authentication. By design, many schools, universities, libraries and other facilities provide ubiquitous internet availability to all, whether guest, student, faculty, or casual visitor. And once connected to the network through a smartphone, tablet or laptop computer, many people set their devices to connect automatically in the future with no action required on the part of the user. People tend to not think of the risks associated with being on public networks. While there may be warnings, either provided on an initial screen or by the operating system of the device being used, most people simply click through to establish connectivity. Issues like site spoofing and false flagging (which will be covered below) are also not top-of-mind and this can lead to many problems. Another user-related vulnerability is that often, in spite of awareness training, users still fall for social engineering scams. They may believe that they have received an urgent email from their boss or from their company’s human resources department. They may receive an email telling them that they have won an international lottery (even though they know they never entered such a contest) or will be paid a fee (for example, by the widow of the late leader of some country) to help move huge sums into various bank accounts. In some of these cases, the recipient is being targeted for either a payment (of a required “bank fee” or “facilitation fee”) or for their banking information (which will inevitably result in their account being looted). In other cases, the target is asked to click on either an attachment or a link that will tell the person exactly what they need to do to get not only the money promised, but a bonus as well. Unfortu-

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9. The statistic provided by the Centre for Cyber Defense, an institution which is part of the Brazilian Army, was widely reported in mainstream media: [http://m.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/1043519-apos-bc-hackers-atacam-sites-de-mais-tres-bancos-nesta-sexta.html](http://m.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/1043519-apos-bc-hackers-atacam-sites-de-mais-tres-bancos-nesta-sexta.html)
nately, all that the person gets from the attachment or the hyperlinked file is infection with one or more pieces of malware. Some of the malware simply steals data. Other malware may encrypt files on the computer’s storage devices and provide a demand for ransom to be paid to get the key for decryption of the files. Even if the ransom demand is met with a payment, there is no guarantee that a code to actually decrypt the data will be forthcoming. And there is a fairly high likelihood that the so-called “ransomware” infection may well have been accompanied with automatic downloads of other malware, which may continue to run (and steal information) even if the ransomware is successfully destroyed or inactivated. It can be the gift that keeps on giving (to the bad guys!).

Fans and visitors of the World Cup and the Olympics are considered easy targets by hackers. The most common technique used by hackers to steal data or gain access to confidential information in Brazil is phishing, where seemingly innocuous electronic communications prompt victims to follow a link to a fraudulent website to enter banking credentials or download malicious software that sends out sensitive data. Kaspersky, one of the leading providers of internet security solutions for end users, claims to have been blocking 40 to 50 fraudulent websites related to the World Cup every day, in Brazil alone¹⁰. In addition to phishing emails, social media is used extensively by hackers in Brazil, given the widespread presence of Brazilians in social media. Hackers inject malicious links to posts in popular legitimate social media forums, and direct users to malicious websites. The recent statistics are alarming as well. In 2013, approximately 22 million Brazilians were victims of cybercrime. This represents approximately 10% of the population. The estimated cost of these crimes was more than R$18 million.¹¹ In the month leading to the 2014 World Cup (May 19 – June 19, 2014), Kaspersky Lab Technology reported to have blocked 87,776 attempts to launch malicious programs in Brazil, a significant jump from prior months. This number is four times higher than Russia’s, ranked second on the list.¹²

During the 2012 United Nations Conference in Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian government identified 140 attempted security breaches

• A General Low-Level of Security

If we ask typical business computer users whether malware detection software resides on an employer-provided laptop or desktop computer, it is very likely that the vast majority of them would say “of course”. Similarly, if we ask if you have similar software on your personally-owned PC or Mac computer, we think most readers would say “yes”. But if we were to ask whether you had installed anti-malware software on your tablet, or particularly on your smartphone, the answer is likely to be that you did not¹³. That is unfortunate because whether a phone uses Android, IOS or another operating system, it is vulnerable to malware. Corporations know this, and often install and maintain special software (called “mobile device management” or “MDM” software) that can protect corporate information on the device, but many individuals ignore the issue and do not know whether their device is actually protected or not. Even where we are dealing with the more traditional laptop computer, there can be issues. For example, millions of computers still run Microsoft’s Windows XP operating system, even though that operating system is no longer supported and as a result, Microsoft does not publish regu-
lar updates (patches) to deal with security issues identified after the official end-date for XP support, which was April 8, 2014. Without such updates, vulnerabilities identified by hackers affecting the XP platform will likely remain open security issues as long as XP continues to be used. What this means is that many devices that would likely be in use by those traveling to see major sporting, cultural or political events may be running systems with known weaknesses in security. There is little question that exploitation of such weaknesses are among the most important ways through which adversaries gain access to devices and through them, to networks. In Brazil, the rapid development and implementation of internet connectivity and electronic activity has not been mirrored by the implementation of cyber security legislation or security practices. Brazilians are generally not common users of internet security protection software and many internet users lack basic cyber security knowledge. Moreover, in Brazil there is widespread use of pirated software. Pirated software tends to leave users vulnerable to experienced hackers because of its inability to receive security updates to protect from the latest vulnerabilities. Internet cafes and the numerous hotspots on open systems further provide hackers with the opportunity to exploit the lax security environment making easy targets of visitors from around the world using unsafe devices.

People tend to not think of the risks associated with being on public networks

- The Availability of Technology to Support Cyber Crime
In the past, carrying out cyber crimes often required a high level of knowledge and very sophisticated equipment. This is no longer true. Simple-to-use devices that are readily available on the open market are all that is needed for this type of crime. For example, to set up a fake “hotel” WiFi system takes only a device that connects the perpetrator’s laptop to a cell phone data network and a wireless access point that generates the fake “hotel” WiFi network. The software is also immediately available. Hence, the number of potential perpetrators is immense. Add to that the fact that thefts of this type are often carried out by organized criminal enterprises that can provide their individual “workers” with precisely the hardware, software and instructions necessary to carry out these frauds. This creates a monster-sized problem that goes far beyond issues relating to travelers’ computers, tablets and smartphones. The actual work is minimal. Choose a location, establish your connection to the Internet, run the software to establish your WiFi presence in the targeted location, and the software does the rest. It can record all of the non-encrypted traffic on the network; it can, in some cases, load malware onto victim’s machines that connect to it if they have certain vulnerabilities. The information is collected and can be harvested either on the spot, or by holding the captured information for analysis and exploitation at a later date. What is perhaps more insidious is that another objective of cyber criminals is to install malware. Current malware is very dangerous and very powerful. Worse is the ease with which this can be deployed. Once, perpetrating a cyber crime actually required significant skills. This is no longer the case. Would-be cyber criminals now need only to purchase the malware kit and instructions for using it. In a recent international police action coordinated by the European Union’s Eurojust agency, law enforcement officials in 16 countries conducted raids and made 90 arrests of individuals who developed, distributed or used a particular form of malware known as BlackShades. Thousands of people bought the malware — some for as little as US$40. BlackShades is a particularly insidious piece of malware. The capabilities of this malware were described as follows by the European Police Agency, Europol:

14. While the XP operating system continues to have vulnerabilities, several government agencies are paying Microsoft to develop and distribute (to them only) security updates. In addition, some computer environments include software that will only run on an XP platform. These systems need specialized protection, such as isolating the machine from the Internet.
BlackShades has sold and distributed malicious software (malware) to thousands of individuals throughout the world. BlackShades’ flagship product was the BlackShades RAT, a sophisticated piece of malware that enables its users to remotely and surreptitiously gain complete control over a victim’s computer. Once installed on a victim’s computer, a user of the RAT is free to, among other things, access and view documents, photographs and other files, record all of the keystrokes entered and even activate the webcam on the victim’s computer - all of which could be done without the victim’s knowledge. BlackShades also makes it possible to carry out large-scale distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) cyber attacks. A particularly malicious aspect of this software is the ability to encrypt and deny access to files.16

The recent statistics are alarming as well. In 2013, approximately 22 million Brazilians were victims of cybercrime. This represents approximately 10% of the population

While there are literally thousands of persons who have purchased the malware who were not among

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those arrested, it is highly likely that the major vendors of anti-malware software will quickly devise ways to detect and deal with this software. The availability of this malware, with this range of capabilities and ease of use, at such a low price point should serve as a warning to all that the tools needed to conduct effective hacking are readily available. It should also be remembered that the risks associated with large events like Olympic Games do not end when the event ends. If a piece of malware can be inserted into a machine during the games, it may go on to infect the machine - or, perhaps any network it is plugged into back at home or at one’s office - and continue to exfiltrate data or permit unauthorized access for extended periods.

**Pirated software tends to leave users vulnerable to experienced hackers because of its inability to receive security updates to protect from the latest vulnerabilities**

- **The Low Likelihood of Immediate Arrest or Interdiction**
  The recent coordinated raids and arrests in conjunction with the development, sale and use of the BlackShades software (discussed above) is, unfortunately, the exception to the rule. Coordinating multinational police actions takes time and resources. In most cases, any action would be local or national in nature, and even there, because of a lack of resources, most malware incidents will never result in a prosecution. In fact, there are substantial statistics that show that in many cases, the cyber attack is not even noticed by the attack victim for a long time. One recent study of cyber intrusions indicated that the average time between the actual intrusion and the beginning of data theft (actual exfiltration of data) is measured in minutes or hours, while the time between the intrusion and the company noticing that it has been attacked is measured in weeks, months and sometimes years. In one of our cases, a company was notified by the FBI that their network had been compromised by state-sponsored actors, and that it had been happening (completely unnoticed by the victim company) for more than two years. All in all, the chances of being caught and punished are very limited.

**To set up a fake “hotel” WiFi system takes only a device that connects the perpetrator’s laptop to a cell phone data network and a wireless access point that generates the fake “hotel” WiFi network**

- **The Anatomy of a Mass Event Cyber Crime**
  Cyber criminals understand what traveling businesspeople do to gain connectivity in hotels, airports, restaurants, arenas and other venues. Their job is to make what they are doing part of the landscape, so that you do not even see them. Here are some of their favorite methodologies.

  > **Wireless Interception**
  When you connect to the Internet via WiFi, you have to remember that you - and everyone connected to WiFi - are actually transmitting radio signals. Unless the signal is encrypted, anyone in range can intercept those signals and read them. Since many hotel and coffee shop WiFi spots are not encrypted, this interception is easy to do.
> **False-Flagging of WiFi**

Another way to gain access to your data is to set up a WiFi site that seems to be the one your target user is looking for. For example, if you are staying in the ABC hotel, you might find a WiFi site named “ABC Free WiFi” but it might actually be run by a hacker. When you connect, you might well see a sign-on screen that asks for your name and room number to “authenticate” you, but the objective is to steal your data and, in some cases, to download malware to your computer to permit ongoing access.

> **Water Hole**

One of the favorite tricks of the hackers is to compromise a website that they know their target audience will visit. It could be one that had (or at least purported to have) inside information on the event one plans to attend or visit or other useful information. The hackers then reconfigure the site’s code to download malware into your system, enabling them to take control of your computer, or at least to harvest information from it. This is called a “watering hole” attack in that it is similar to poisoning an animal watering hole to attack all of the animals that visit for a drink. Hackers may attempt to turn legitimate or counterfeit FIFA, or Olympics-related websites, into watering holes in order to target the wider potential audience. Additionally, legitimate social media websites can also be turned into watering holes, or at least to direct the unwary to watering hole sites. Brazil is Facebook’s second largest market, and Brazilians use social media as one of the main ways of communicating. 17 Because legitimate sites can be “hijacked” by criminals who can manipulate the Internet’s Domain Name System (DNS) to direct traffic from the actual site you are trying to reach to their fake site, there is no perfect way to protect yourself. The only defense is to only visit sites that you regularly use and know to be legitimate, recognize unusual changes in those sites, have absolutely updated anti-malware protection, and to limit the sensitive information that you carry on your portable device or access through it. Even following these precautions might not provide absolute safety.

> **Compromising Wired Systems**

Many people feel that using a wired connection in a hotel eliminates the malware risk. That is just not true. Anyone who is able to plug into the same part of the network – like in a nearby room – can often compromise your computer. On the wired connection, all of the packets that make up our messages have an address which identifies the computer to which the packet is addressed. But it is easy for a hacker to read all of the packets and to re-assemble them into messages. Interestingly, a computer that is reading every packet - as opposed to one that is only reading its own packets - is referred to as operating in “promiscuous mode.” The lesson is that if your messages are not encrypted, they are at huge risk of being compromised.

> **Physical Access to Target Computers**

Traveling executives often need to leave their computers in the hotel room when they go to dinner, or to places where they do not want to carry a computer. Most understand that leaving their computer sitting in their hotel room is not very secure. So they put it in the in-room safe. Today, almost all of these safes are digital - you put in a 4 to 6 digit code to lock the safe, and the same number to open it. Of course, the hotel has to have the ability to open the safe (for example, if a guest leaves it locked or “forgot” the code). This usually requires plugging in a device (which may be a special device or an app on a smartphone) that will unlock the safe. One safeguard, according to hotels, is that the room

door lock generally records the card that opened it (so that they can tell if your door was opened by a housekeeping key, for example) and that often the halls are monitored by surveillance cameras. While all of this is true, hotel safes are regularly opened and contents stolen. Consider that if an insider at the hotel is colluded with hackers, they could open the door, open the safe, allow the hackers to copy the contents of the computer hard drive, and re-lock everything. If you do not know there had been an intrusion, there would be no complaint, the evidence would never be examined, and would eventually be discarded.

> **Theft of Computers**

Another way of gaining access to information on a computer is to simply steal the device itself. We have clients reporting thefts from hotel rooms, from offices they are visiting where the computer “disappears” overnight, and even one case involving three American consultants visiting São Paulo who were in a car stuck in a huge traffic jam on an elevated highway. They were all working on their computers while commuting to their hotel. Two motorcycles, navigating between lanes of cars, stopped on either side of their car. The motorcycle drivers produced pistols, pointed them at the consultants, and collected their computers, which they shoved into their backpacks. They then drove between the lanes of stopped vehicles and disappeared down the next exit ramp.

> **Theft of laptops and mobile devices is common around mega events.**

Especially in Brazil, theft of laptops has been prevalent. As with the example above, it commonly occurs in the form of armed robberies of passengers while they are sitting in their cars or in lobbies of hotels, or when computers are left briefly unattended. Theft of smartphones is similarly prevalent.

What is perhaps more insidious is that another objective of cyber criminals is to install malware.

**What can you do? Action Plans for Governments, Corporations and Individuals**

There are no perfect solutions. We believe that the best that can be reasonably done is to make sure that your traveling executives and employees understand the risks, have the tools to protect themselves, and know how to use them. Collectively these will reduce your risk.

> **Encrypt the Computer**

The first step you should take is to put full encryption on your portable devices. If your storage drive (whether it’s a hard disk or a diskless solid-state drive) is not encrypted, it can be copied. Putting into place any of the full-disk encryption systems will materially increase your security. Of course, you have to choose a strong password. Also, make sure you learn exactly when the encryption system is activated. With some packages, just closing the screen of the laptop will not invoke encryption. You may need to shut down the machine. Find out how the encryption package installed on your computer works. For smartphones, this encryption is often provided as part of a corporate Mobile Device Management system that may be provided by an employer. For laptops, there are a number of effective encryption packages that should be provided by an employer or the user of the device.18

18. Note that in some cases, where an employer has a mobile device security plan, there may be a prohibition against an employee installing their own encryption software (to protect the employer’s ability to access information). But where it is not present, we recommend talking to the employer about it. For personally owned and used equipment, the owner of the machine has the responsibility to protect the device and the data stored on it.
Don’t Take Data You Don’t Need
One of the simple rules that many people forget is that thieves can not steal something that is not there. Some executives keep massive amounts of sensitive company information on their portable computers, and when they travel, this information is at risk. The solution is to not carry information that you do not need when you travel. Some of our clients have “travel computers” including only the information they will need for a specific trip, and nothing else. If you decide to transfer information to another storage device (on a network, for example) do not forget that unless you use a program to overwrite the space where it was stored, hackers who can gain access to your computer and can copy the storage drive may be able to “un-erase” deleted files. When returning, have the computer analyzed to determine if it has picked up malware or any kind of unexpected file. We often recommend that the files are extracted from the machine, the machine then wiped and a standard working environment re-installed.

The risks associated with large events like Olympic Games do not end when the event ends

> Don’t Store Any Data on the Computer
A more extreme (but very do-able) version of data minimization is simply to configure your portable computer so that it has no data on it. The programs you need are there, but all data (including drafts and temporary files) are stored on an external memory stick or memory card. SD cards can store 64 gigabytes on a device about the size of a postage stamp that can easily be carried in your pocket or purse. USB memory sticks can have even greater capacities. You carry the storage device with you so that even if criminals access or steal your computer they get no data. Like hard drives, memory sticks can and should be encrypted to protect the data in the event the USB device is lost or stolen. In some cases, an alternative is to store your data as encrypted files in remote (cloud) storage systems accessible via the Internet. Accessing these remote storage systems should be done through a Virtual Private Network as an additional layer of protection, as discussed below.

> Encrypt Data That You are Going to Transmit or Receive
If you have to send or receive files, they should be transmitted as encrypted. Something as simple as an open source encryption system (which can also encrypt all or part of your hard drive) may be the right solution for you.19 File encryption systems enable you to encrypt a file and transmit it. You provide the password for the file in a separate communication to the recipient. This should be done using a means other than that used to send the file. “Out of band” transmissions are for instance considered more secure since it would be necessary to compromise both the transmission of the file and the password in order to access it.

One of the simple rules that many people forget is that thieves can not steal something that is not there

> Go Virtual Private Network - VPN - Immediately and Always
A VPN is a technology that creates an encrypted tunnel between your computer and a remote server. Many companies provide this technology to employees, but some do not.

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19. Of course, corporate/government regulations, individual hardware/software configurations and specific needs will determine which encryption solution is appropriate in any individual case.
Make no mistake about it. If you are connecting to the Internet from any kind of public network, you need to immediately start a VPN connection. Unless you have a VPN, whatever you transmit or receive that is not encrypted, there is a serious risk of compromising your data. There are many reliable VPN services available, some offering basic services at no cost; most provide good services for less than US$100 per year. Investigate these options and select one that is well reviewed and that matches your needs.

> **Password Protect Your Computer**
You should put a password on your computer so that it can not just be started and accessed. This can be bypassed (for example, by copying the entire hard drive) or, in some cases, defeated using well-known work-around. An example: it was only a matter of days between the release of the iPhone fingerprint sensor and the publication of a work-around to defeat it. Nevertheless, it is considered a basic control and should be put in place.

> **Practice Safe and Smart Computing**
In our work, we analyze computers that have been compromised. We find that in many cases, those using them have succumbed to phishing emails, or visited sites that download malware to visitors’ computers. Only visit trusted and legitimate sites using secure networks.\(^2\)

> **Assume You Will be Attacked**
The single most important thing you can do is to recognize the risk. Work with your IT staff or professionals you trust to build a layered series of protections. For example, you might combine

» Password Protection
» Full-Disk Encryption
» Keeping all data on an external device
» Immediately starting up a VPN when going on-line.

As we’ve pointed out, there is no such thing as 100% protection. Faithless executives or employees can deliberately take actions to steal data. Security advice and some security systems can be shut off or uninstalled. But taking these steps will minimize those risks. Travelling to any large scale event is going to increase risk. The various protective measures we have outlined, particularly when combined, are going to mitigate your risk and that of your company. Don’t make it easy for the hackers and cyber criminals!

**Don’t make it easy for the hackers and cyber criminals!**

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20. However, recognize that the computer of someone you trust may itself be compromised and used to transmit email to everyone on the victim’s email list urging them to visit a website that is serving as what is called a “watering hole” which will attempt to download malware to every computer that visits the site.
VIRTUAL CURRENCIES: SAFE FOR BUSINESS AND CONSUMERS OR JUST FOR CRIMINALS?

by Erik R. Barnett

Introduction
The potential societal benefits of virtual currencies include mobile banking systems in developing countries, decreased transaction costs to merchants, and elimination of fees associated with normal bank accounts - all practical benefits for most businesses and consumers.¹

However, there is significant risk of large-scale criminal use of these same virtual currencies because of a lack of universal regulation, a gap in critical industry-based checks against money laundering, decentralized administrations, and the anonymity of transactions.

Already, criminal investigators are aggressively confronting the use of virtual currencies in the online sale of illicit goods. But financial regulators and law enforcement are being challenged as they continue to observe use of virtual currencies to conceal criminal transactions and their proceeds.

Governments, and the innovators of virtual currencies themselves, could easily implement existing solutions to prevent exploitation by transnational criminal organizations or terrorist groups of this emerging technology. Concomitantly, these solutions would enhance the trust and reliability of virtual currencies as conduits of online commerce.

Background
Perhaps the most commonly known virtual currency is Bitcoin. Bitcoin has arguably become the “Xerox machine” or “Scotch tape,” of currencies operating in cyberspace.

But it would be inappropriate to single out one entity in a discussion about criminal exploitation of an emerging technology because criminals do not favor any one company in furtherance of their criminal activity.

Moreover, focusing on a single currency model could cause an underestimation of the scope of the potential criminal problem. In March 2013, the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) noted the existence of multiple virtual currencies other than Bitcoin.

However, examining Bitcoin and its development adds to the understanding of how some virtual currencies operate. Introduced in 2009, Bitcoin’s unit of currency is “an electronic coin as a chain of digital signatures.”\(^2\) A Peer-to-Peer (P2P) network verifies transmission from the sender to recipient, each of who can select a one-time address associated only with the single transaction. The P2P authentication within the virtual financial system creates a public log of the transaction, making it impossible for the owner to twice “spend” the same coin.\(^3\)

The most significant justification claimed for establishing a cryptographic currency was to reduce costs associated with a “trust based model” in which the buyer must be wary of fraud and the seller of cancelled payments. Bitcoin transactions are irreversible. So, a third-party financial institution is not needed to settle disputes because there is no remedy available in the payment system.

Because the decentralized system relies upon a P2P network, the transactions are perpetually visible to all on the system. However, to preserve the anonymity of the transactors, not all portions of the transaction are visible.\(^4\)

This paper makes no comment or conclusion about the practicality or security of virtual currencies. Widely reported has been the alleged theft of $480 million worth of bitcoins from the exchange Mt. Gox, which subsequently filed for bankruptcy protections in February 2014.\(^5\)

Perhaps foreshadowing its future difficulties, U.S. law enforcement seized financial accounts of a subsidiary company of Mt. Gox in May 2013. Bitcoins were repeatedly exchanged back and forth into U.S.

3. bitcoin.org/en/faq
dollars through the subsidiary company and Mt. Gox. However, neither company fulfilled the legal obligation of registering as a Money Services Business (MSB) as required by law.⁶

While failing to register may seem a mere technical violation, there are obligations for an MSB to implement anti-money laundering measures and file Suspicious Activity Reports as well as Cash Transaction Reports. These reports are an integral part of a well-established regulatory framework designed to identify money laundering by criminal or terrorist organizations.

We know that virtual currencies are already favored by those engaged in cyber crime. In June 2011, the online hacking group LulzSec used virtual currencies Bitcoin and Liberty Reserve, in combination, to launder funds donated by supporters.⁷ According to the FBI, LulzSec used part of these funds to purchase a botnet. French cybersecurity researchers recently proclaimed that Bitcoin “holds a privileged position” as currency among cybercriminals, who “recommend it and praise its reliability.”⁸

A 2013 academic study examined 25,000 web addresses accessible on The Onion Router (Tor). Of those 25,000, 28% were classified as hacking sites and another 23% as cybercrime sites. A majority of these 25,000 TOR sites, selected by researchers at random, engaged in illegal activity.⁹ And according to U.S. FinCEN, virtual currencies were their payment method of choice.

In 2013, criminal charges were filed in the U.S. against the administrator of the Silk Road website, with allegations that the site sold hundreds of kilograms of illegal narcotics and other illicit services, collecting over 9.5 million bitcoins.¹⁰

Importantly, when the crimes allegedly occurred, only about four million bitcoins may have been in circulation.¹¹ Therefore, it is quite likely the vast majority of available bitcoins in the world cycled through the hands of narcotics traffickers.

In January 2014, U.S. prosecutors charged two men with money laundering and operating an unlicensed money transmitting business in connection to the underground sale of bitcoins to Silk Road customers. One of the men was reportedly Vice Chairman of the Bitcoin Foundation, which is “dedicated to promoting the Bitcoin virtual currency system.”¹²

Also in January 2014, U.S. federal agents filed a criminal complaint alleging the sale of a deadly toxin, with the express knowledge it would be used to kill a human being, in exchange for bitcoins after the product was advertised on the Tor site Black Market Reloaded.

All of the above criminal enforcement occurred in less than one calendar year. There are, unfortunate-

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⁹. P. Paganini et. al. Infosec Institute, project Artemis. resources.infosecinstitute.com/project-artemis-osint-activities-on-deep-web/
ly, even more examples of criminal exploitation of virtual currencies. Based on this track record, absent changes to the business model and being brought under regulation, the public and law enforcement have good reason to believe criminal use of virtual currencies will continue.

This concern is not confined to one country. The European Central Bank has declared virtual currencies “could represent a challenge for public authorities, given the legal uncertainty surrounding these schemes, as they can be used by criminals, fraudsters and money launderers to perform their illegal activities.”

Apply existing anti-money laundering regulations and laws to virtual currencies
Robust anti-money laundering (AML) obligations and strong financial regulatory systems frustrate the ability of criminal and terrorist organizations to finance their activities or launder proceeds. This has proven to be true with traditional brick and mortar banking institutions, which have reasonably recognized the fulfillment of their AML responsibilities as enhancing their professional reputations. There is no rational reason not to apply such provisions to the virtual world.

In early 2012, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) concluded that money or value transfer services (MVTS), such as virtual currency exchanges, should be licensed and registered. The FATF also recommended that governments ensure MVTS have in place proper AML controls and that all MVTS have agents accessible to authorities.

Because of the anonymity within some virtual currency transactions, only the “cashing out” into fiat

currency allows law enforcement to link funds to a specific individual or account. This makes virtual currency exchanges relevant choke points to observe potential criminal activity and money laundering activities. But they must have AML controls in place and exercise due diligence to be effective.

In 2013, U.S. FinCEN issued guidance that regulated Money Services Businesses (MSBs) including individuals or companies engaged as businesses in the issuance of virtual currency or in the exchange of virtual currency for fiat currency. However, the largest bitcoin exchange at the time, Mt. Gox not only failed to register, but its subsidiary actually claimed it was not a business engaged in money services. Registration would be followed by implementation of AML programs, including filing of Suspicious Activity Reports (SARS).

SARS provide critical information to law enforcement about financial and banking activities seemingly not supported by a business or lawful purpose. However, SARS must be mandated globally for virtual currencies. U.S. FinCEN identified only about 70 SARS filed between 2009 and 2013 associated with virtual currencies, but this number increased to approximately 1,400 following issuance of FinCEN’s guidance that virtual currencies must comply with existing regulations.

Importantly, AML measures are not voluntary for financial institutions and they must be undertaken proactively within the virtual currency industry to strengthen the reputation of virtual currencies as legitimate tools of international commerce, while imposing a minimal burden.

**Regulation Must be Universal**

The regulation by U.S. FinCEN of virtual currencies, and aggressive law enforcement actions in the U.S., may lead to a decampment of such businesses from the United States. Therefore, as noted by the FATF, there must be a broad international regulatory scheme to control for regionalized regulation.

Further, regulatory action should be harmonized with other countries so innovative, start-up companies offering virtual currencies, or related services, are not faced with contradictory guidelines or gaps in regulatory oversight that might hamper growth. Similarly, law enforcement would benefit from reciprocal money laundering laws.

Fortunately, it seems that innovators within the virtual currency community are publicly recognizing the importance of regulation to preserve the credibility of virtual currencies as a financial system, particularly in the wake of the collapse of Mt. Gox, once the largest bitcoin exchange.

**Virtual currency innovators must end anonymity in transactions**

Tellingly, anonymity in transactions was not a claimed justification for creation of Bitcoin, but was built into the business model. Nonetheless, as virtual currencies advance, this anonymity will continue to attract criminal activity and pose a significant obstacle to law enforcement’s ability to “follow the money.” When appropriate legal process is provided to a financial institution for relevant records, the identities of those transferring funds should be readily available to investigators.

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16. “Fiat” currencies are backed by central governments and, usually, widely recognized internationally as currency.
A disturbing trend is entrepreneurial services within virtual currency communities which “auto-launder” currency units for users, advertising even greater anonymity through shell accounts. Virtual currencies must discourage these vendors by establishing systems where use of those services precludes payment transfers.

Further, virtual currencies should implement “know your customer” practices that require true identities and addresses of account holders. It is desirable to have privacy in financial transactions. But we have already determined as a society to balance privacy with transparency to prevent the use of financial institutions by criminal or terrorist organizations.

Virtual currencies must end decentralized administrations
There must be self-imposed centralized control within virtual currencies to ensure integrity of the transactions, to initiate AML monitoring, and to provide a single point of contact for regulatory and law enforcement authorities.

Bitcoin uses a P2P network to verify transactions, a function normally performed by a centralized authority in other financial institutions. The decentralized administration cannot implement AML policies, exercise due diligence, or provide relevant records of account holders to law enforcement or regulators.

While the business model and underground supporters favor decentralization, it is highly relevant that this new technology is not merely another social network or “app” to display photos. Virtual currencies are engaging in significant financial transactions that impose appropriately commensurate responsibilities on the developers and supporters. Reportedly, on November 22, 2013, bitcoins worth $147 million were transferred, without being cashed out for fiat currency. That transaction, the value of which was only 1.6% of the bitcoins in existence, may have been a bookkeeping measure by a bitcoin exchange. But the exchange reportedly refused comment, leaving commentators to claim, correctly, that the largest ever bitcoin transfer was completely anonymous.

Conclusion
Application of reasonable, industry-imposed reforms coupled with enforcement of existing regulations by government authorities would strengthen the reputation of virtual currencies as appropriate facilitators of online commerce while preserving them from exploitation by criminal organizations and terrorist groups.


The author
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The Impacts of the Crisis on Gender Equality and Women’s Wellbeing in EU Mediterranean countries

Turin, 2014
Uniting beyond borders

By Hana Abul Husn
This section of Freedom From Fear includes the opinions and analyses of young people. Young people represent the most valuable capital countries have. Their opinions have to be heard and considered while designing and planning new strategies to build better societies.
In a mountainous sanctuary where it is easy to forget the neighboring war in Syria and the threats that have become commonplace in Lebanon, the stories of the children and women affected converge.

Perched against the railing, with a mosque in the near distance, one woman describes the Borj El Barajneh refugee camp where she and her classmates live with reserved distaste. Revealing that the dirty streets and cramped housing do not speak for the well-kept homes of its inhabitants. With her thickly accented Arabic and a touch of regret, she mentions that visitors to the area are afraid of what they see. But like the surface infrastructure, the preconceptions of those living outside of the refugee camps in Lebanon falsely taint this woman and her classmates attending their English and I.T. classes on this sunny morning.

This is the “Most Outstanding Moms” program, where underprivileged Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian women come together three days a week and learn beyond the borders that so often divide them. Some had never interacted with people outside of their nationality, religion or political party before these
classes. This is a rare opportunity for education, having last entered a classroom as children or never at all. When each cycle of the program concludes, the women contribute to a potluck meal and celebrate their new friendships and achievements.

On the footpath below, a single line of bright-eyed four and five year olds make their way from the company of the baby rabbits and chicks, past the classrooms and blossoming trees and over to the other side of the campus to watch a movie. Often covered in glitter and paint, their teachers guide them away singing. Leaving big grins on the faces of people that see them, the “Healthy Alternative Program for Preschool Youth,” is as usual living up to its acronym - H.A.P.P.Y. Soon, the kindness of others will result in a freshly painted playground, alongside a recently donated swing set for them to enjoy. A place like this often inspires services and gifts of this kind.

This is a rare opportunity for education, having last entered a classroom as children or never at all.

© UN Photo/Stephanie Hollyman
The next day hosts a different batch of eager children, this time eight to eleven years old, scattered between their drama, art, music and sports classes. They start their day remembering and writing out the rules of the classroom and coloring enthusiastically.

Where many in this country may have once felt barred from real opportunities, ULYP facilitates access to what it considers the best investment for a united Lebanon: education.

One group then makes wobbly-eyed puppets out of previously used plastic spoons and scraps of leftover material from a local tailor; recycling is a common feature of their projects. A second group can be heard campus-wide relentlessly practicing rhythm combinations on all sorts of percussion instruments. And further along the pebbled paths that lead from the teaching studios to the football field are other children, playing development games and heated football matches. After a break to eat fruits picked from the campus grounds, the students move on to the next activity. This is the youngest group of Palestinian refugee students at risk of failing or dropping out of school that benefit from the “Skills4Life” program, funded by the European Union.

The Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP) hosts these programs, among many others, with a team of experts and volunteers. Founded in 2010, ULYP has since launched over ten unique programs with several more underway, always with a view to overcome the social barriers between the Lebanese host communities and refugee populations. This well-reputed local NGO promotes values that many of us may take for granted; respect, tolerance, equality, freedom of expression and an appreciation of human rights. Conflict resolution and peace-building elements are integrated into all program activities in an effort to increase understanding between Lebanon’s diverse populations.

It is this core belief in the children, youth, and the mothers that raise them that makes these initiatives a refreshing alternative for building peace in a turbulent region.

Some of ULYP’s other programs have focused on literacy, career
development, empowerment and social change among women, addressing community needs through sports, and strengthening media skills with training on short films; an endless endeavor to fill the gaps in many aspects of the lives of the marginalized.

And what a blessing it is to have the tools to make your own choices, shape your own value system and decide your own future

Where many in this country may have once felt barred from real opportunities, ULYP facilitates access to what it considers the best investment for a united Lebanon: education. Through its “Bridge” program alone, ULYP has helped secure higher education scholarships nationally and abroad for over 300 Palestinian beneficiaries, putting them on more equal footing with their Lebanese peers. Back at the office, hopeful eleventh and twelfth grade students can be seen lining the reception on a daily basis, waiting to receive college counseling, tutoring for entrance exams or support with filling out applications.

Helping to do away with much of the anger and frustration that can accompany a life in the refugee camps with few healthy role models, ULYP teaches these promising individuals that there is no limit to what they can aim for and no challenge insurmountable when it comes to planning for their future.

It is this core belief in the children, youth, and the mothers that raise them that makes these initiatives a refreshing alternative for building peace in a turbulent region. With the Syrian refugee crisis at its height, when humanitarian aid becomes insufficient or unavailable, those in need will be left to depend on their minds. And what a blessing it is to have the tools to make your own choices, shape your own value system and decide your own future.

The author

Hana Abul Husn is a Research Consultant for the International Labour Organization Regional Office for Arab States in Beirut. Prior to this she worked for the Unite Lebanon Youth Project teaching Beginner English as a Second Language classes for the “Most Outstanding Moms” program and Conflict Resolution workshops for the EU-funded “Skills4Life” program.
Parallel cities: Buenos Aires’ villas miseria

by Carlo Francardo
This section of Freedom From Fear includes the opinions and analyses of young people. Young people represent the most valuable capital countries have. Their opinions have to be heard and considered while designing and planning new strategies to build better societies.
Buenos Aires is a city with many faces, and its shantytowns, *villas de emergencia* (emergency villages) – euphemistically also called *asentamientos* (settlements) or *villas miseria* (villages of misery) – represent, for the rest of the society, the most scary and impenetrable face of them all. Collecting data, or even knowing the number of its inhabitants, is in this area very difficult. According to the census conducted in 2010, there are in Buenos Aires Capital, without considering its surrounding provinces, about 23 villas and a total of 170,000 residents. Over the last four years the number has increased to 225,000. This however seems to be an approximation, as in 2006 the inhabitants of the 796 villas in the capital and surrounding provinces were calculated to exceed one million.

According to multiple sources the villas miseria were created after 1930. Over the years they have not only survived violent evictions by the military dictatorship, but even grown, both in number and in size, thanks in part to the political agendas of the various parties. One of the greatest periods of growth of these veritable cities within the city was in the 90s, during the Menem government whose neo-liberal policies widened the gap between the rich and the poor people in the Argentine society. The recent vertical housing development further contributed to the high density of population and increased the number of people living in precarious conditions. Due to the fact that relevant infrastructures were not developed in parallel to the population growth, basic services such as electricity, gas, and water for example, are in-
sufficient, often makeshift, and thereby unsafe and insecure. In many cases these services do not cover the entire villa and many families do not even have access to them.

Villas are usually perceived as places abandoned by the state, urban areas where the state presence is minimal or non-existent, strongholds controlled by criminals and drug traffickers. They are equated to situations where violence of any kind has an easy life and state control is questionable, this despite a strong state presence. The problem lies instead in that its presence is considered ambiguous. Police corruption and political patronage are perceived as the villas’ most serious problems. Consequently they nullify the efforts aimed at improving residents’ living conditions and instead contribute to exacerbate the situation. Further, it is not uncommon to see people selling drugs in public spaces and there is a general perception that the police are involved in the business with drug traffickers. Thus, one of the main problems in the villas’ daily lives is the trafficking of paco or pasta base, a low quality drug obtained by mixing the waste product created through the synthesis of cocaine, with other substances such as amphetamines, talcum, glass powder, rat poison and kerosene. It is highly addictive and toxic, and causes devastating physical and neurological damages. Being cheap, yet producing strong and instantaneous effects, paco is heavily addictive, and heavily addicted consumers can smoke up to one hundred doses per day, to prevent the ensuing depression.

Paco has thus been defined as the poor people’s drug, as a dose costs just around 10 pesos. However, the costs add up due to the consumers of paco, in extreme cases, having to smoke constantly, resulting in the consumer spending far more than one would imagine. The deep poverty of the villas miseria often leads to consumers starting a criminal career and so there are three options for obtaining paco: stealing whatever they can get their hands on, selling drugs, or organizing thefts for drug traffickers. All of it with the purpose of obtaining paco in exchange of doses.

Paco has thus been defined as the poor people’s drug, as a dose costs just around 10 pesos

Paco is very often produced in the villas’ laboratories. This is why this drug is so strongly rooted in and commonly associated with the villas miseria and its inhabitants. Some families, the so called narcofamilias, are totally devoted to drug trafficking, to the point that each member of the family has a specifically defined role and responsibility.

Paco has devastating effects on individuals and a violent impact on the entire community

The alienation caused by paco is all-encompassing: after smoking it, consumers are no longer aware of their own bodies or actions, get short-tempered and over-excited, resulting in the entire community getting
terrorized. Today the problem of paco addiction is out of control, and with a soaring numbers of young people using it, it is a trend that appears to be on the rise. In the villas it is really common to find families with the following problems: the father who is in jail, alcoholic, affected by HIV or even dead, an underaged pregnant daughter and a son addicted to pasta base who often sells drugs. Mothers usually stay “clean”, and many of them organize themselves in order to try saving their children from drug addiction. They are called madres del paco.

Paco makes surviving difficult, so it is no coincidence that in villas 51 and 31bis, the median age of its inhabitants is 23 years, compared to the median age of Buenos Aires’ population, which is 39 years. The villa “animalize”, as it obliges many people to fight for the few belongings they have, at any cost and by any means. Given the extreme poverty, many use the only thing they have: their own bodies.

This drug has become the symbol of a crisis deeply rooted in the history of Argentina. It is not the drug of the poor people, it is the symbol of the villas miseria. Paco answers the desire of “a boy to ‘crack his own head’ as he lives in socially, culturally, politically and economically unsustainable and unacceptable conditions. The young people of the villas do not see any way out, and just look for an end. The question is: how can a child born in a villa find a meaning for his or her existence? What can they do to overcome discrimination, while living an existence of violence, and little or no resources?” For those lacking hope and any form of future prospects, paco is very often the answer.

Poverty, drug trafficking, early initiation into drug use, violence, and especially the lack of future
prospects create an explosive mixture which feeds the many thieves in Buenos Aires. Often armed and violent, the thieves consider stealing a job and a lifestyle that they can be proud of.

A study conducted in the Province of Buenos Aires shows that 60.3% of paco consumers have been involved in illegal activities in order to buy drugs. 38% smoke more than once a day, 29% smoke more than fifty doses a day, and 32.9% have problems related to paco consumption.

Poverty, drug trafficking, early initiation into drug use, violence, and especially the lack of future prospects create an explosive mixture. This drug and its implications have contributed to the negative labels given to the inhabitants of villas miseria. The villero (inhabitants of the villas’) are considered to be criminals, parasitic, inept, drug addicted, alcoholics, etc. This long list of labels, originated from the period of military dictatorship, is now consolidated into the Argentinean society. This stigma associated to the villas’ inhabitants tangibly affects their daily life. Looking for a job they very often have to lie about their place of residence out of fear of being discriminated against and being considered inadequate. Although comparable to an urban society, the difference is that the problems in the villas are more intense and concentrated.

However, just like in any metropolitan, there will be honest people as well. These often suffer from defamatory accusations and discrimination due to the villas’ more “colorful” inhabitants. One of the interviewees, a mother of Villa 31 in Retiro stated: “Living in the villa does not mean you are a villero. We must show people outside that even the boys in the villa study and work; that we are like those living outside the villa. We know how to behave. Respect generates respect. But there are many [in the villa] who do not understand, they think that because we live in the villa we have backbone and power. They think that fighting and screaming make people respect us... No, I believe that if I do the right thing people will respect me. This is what we have to prove to the people outside the villa.”

This stigma associated to the villas’ inhabitants tangibly affects their daily life

Unfortunately, for the many people who manage to find an honest job, there are many more that cannot, and so decide to turn to, or are forced into turning to, a life of crime. Moreover, some (especially the youngest) end up accepting the villas’ labels and start behaving accordingly, excluding themselves from a system that encourages them to give up.

The author

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Finding justice within climate change actions

by Brian Harding

In December 2015, government negotiators from all countries in the world will come together in Paris, and are expected to sign what will be the long anticipated agreement to follow the Kyoto Protocol. This new framework will establish a binding agreement for avoiding dangerous climate change and makes the next year of preparation one of the most important for humanity.

Climate change, “the greatest collective challenge we face as a human family”, has a cruel irony in that, the hardest hit are the least responsible for contributing to the problem. The impacts of climate change threaten the well being of communities around the world, especially vulnerable and margin-


alized women, children and elderly people. There is growing concern at how climate change is contributing to the increase of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, increasing vulnerability, affecting food sovereignty and security, livelihood diversity and fundamentally having adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights.


The hardest hit are the least responsible for contributing to the problem

As well as discussions on the responsibilities for reducing pollutants in the future, a small but vocal lobby will advocate for principles of climate justice to be considered within the new agreement. The climate justice movement views climate change as an ethical issue and considers how its causes and effects relate to concepts of justice, particularly environmental and social justice. It has offered a critical agenda to effectively infuse the climate change debate with human rights in a way that is equitable for the most climate-vulnerable people around the world.

The term ‘climate justice’ is broad and allows for detailed discussions on how issues such as equality, human rights, collective rights and historical responsibility in relation to climate change and the response to it are undertaken. Climate justice in many ways has become a unifying umbrella under which different groups, such as civil society organisations and local democracy bodies that advocate for broad issues, such as gender, indigenous rights, global justice and the historical responsibility for the vast majority of green-

house gas emissions, the rights of future generations (inter-generational justice), can find common voice. In a fractured negotiation process, many civil society organisations have used “justice” as their mobilizing narrative.

Over the past number of years, the climate justice movement has made large and impressive gains in garnering more support within the climate negotiations and beyond. In 2008 the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted Resolution 7/23 on Human Rights and Climate Change, stating climate change “poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights.”6 This has been followed by resolutions in 2009, a further in 20118,9 201210 and two more in 201411,12. Such resolutions are also a call to arms for a greater analysis of the linkages between human rights and climate change.

This high level endorsement of human rights obligations, standards, and principles are influencing international and national policy-making in the area of climate change. It also allows for climate change to be considered whilst promoting coherence and legitimacy within national legal frameworks.

Turning climate justice into action

In addressing climate change, a techno-centric approach (e.g. higher sea walls for sea level rise or drought tolerant plants for desertification) is often seen as the appropriate intervention to assist communities to adapt to a changed climate. Yet, in order to build resilient communities that are able to withstand the shocks that arise from climate change, such interventions must complement improved democracy, stronger institutions, reduced corruption, improved transparency and a greater understanding of people’s vulnerabilities, beyond simply climate.

Climate change is challenging a globalizing world to make profound shifts from unsustainable production, over-consumption, unequal distribution of resources and looks to developed countries to take the lead. These shifts will also affect how we govern our countries and how we integrate equity within our decision-making processes.

The United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability report entitled “Resilient People, Resilient Planet” stated that “while the principle of equity remains fundamental to sustainable development, disputes about how to apply it in practice mean that it has often been a stumbling block in international relations rather than a core principle for sustainable institutional design in an interdependent world”.

The idea of equity can seem difficult for practitioners of international development to implement. However, one of the more practical steps that can be employed in dealing with this at the national and local level is by using rights-based approaches, which can contribute to climate justice. Rights-based approaches focus on all people achieving minimum conditions for living with dignity, through the realisation of their human rights.

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A gender analysis is not a special focus on women, but rather an understanding on how discrimination against women and gender roles interact to shape men’s and women’s enjoyment of human dignity, rights, as well as quality of life. In the context of climate change, a gender analysis can be the first step in promoting an understanding of the ways that men and women are differently impacted by climate-related hazards through adaptation and mitigation strategies. This focus can look at root causes, rights, reparations and participatory democracy, and shape the direction of any climate change related intervention (e.g how to provide access to affordable and sustainable energy for households).

Gender analysis helps us to identify historical injustices that shape the world that we live in today. It takes time but can lead to better development outcomes before any interventions are undertaken. It can help develop concrete recommendations and identify practical tools and methods to help countries integrate gender into their climate strategies and work on a daily basis.

**Rights-based approaches focus on all people achieving minimum conditions for living with dignity, through the realisation of their human rights**

Ultimately, the climate justice movement must continue to play a key role in advocating for human rights and equity within the United Nations Climate Change negotiation process but needs to find more robust ways to ensure that concrete and practical actions can be taken at the ground level. This must also be clearly understood by governments and organisations working with the most vulnerable who face the ignominy of their livelihoods being eroded due to a climate problem not of their making.

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**The author**

**Brian Harding** is an independent Environment and Climate Change Specialist. He works on developing strategies, plans and programmes for climate vulnerable countries in Africa and Asia.

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LIGHT ON - Cross-community actions for combating the modern symbolism and languages of racism and discrimination

Symbols and words can be dangerous vehicles which lead to the dissemination of racism worldwide. Their impact is especially noteworthy nowadays as technology rapidly diffuses them through digital and social channels and amplifies the ways in which they can influence people’s lives.
A matter of justice: protecting land rights for inclusive growth in Africa

By Harold Liversage
Walk in no man’s land
A matter of justice: protecting land rights for inclusive growth in Africa

Land is fundamental to the lives of rural people. It is a source of food, shelter, income and social identity. Secure access to land reduces vulnerability to hunger and poverty. But for many rural households in developing countries, access is becoming more tenuous than ever. Protecting their land rights is a matter of basic social and economic justice.

Sub-Saharan Africa provides an overall case in point. The continent has seen remarkable growth over the past decade. The sustained boom in commodity prices, the information and communications technology revolution, rapid urbanization and the demographic shift to a younger population present exciting opportunities. But this growth also brings new challenges as a flood of national and foreign investors aim to exploit Africa’s still-untapped potential. Despite the enormous advancements that have taken place, job growth remains low and poverty high, and most Africans are not yet reaping the benefits of expansion.

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It is clear, advocates say, that ‘business as usual’ is no longer a valid response. Instead, innovative structural reforms and investments will be needed to sustain Africa’s growth while creating jobs and shared prosperity.

Structuring investments fairly
Such reforms and investments are a high priority for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations rural development agency. Through loans and grants, IFAD and its partners finance projects enabling smallholder farmers and other rural people to grow and sell more food, increase their incomes and determine the direction of their own lives. And IFAD is not alone. While rural areas still suffer from a wealth gap with urban centres, recent years have witnessed a renewed interest in agricultural investment worldwide, including investment in sub-Saharan Africa.

This new momentum has resulted in large-scale acquisitions of farmland in developing countries, said Harold Liversage, IFAD’s Regional Land Advisor for East and Southern Africa. “Partly as a result of sustained media attention” Liversage noted, “these acquisitions have triggered lively, often polarized, debates about ‘land grabbing’. Less attention has been paid, however, to ways of structuring agricultural investments that do not undermine the livelihoods or land rights, and other natural resource rights, of poor rural communities.”

IFAD recently held a workshop at its Rome headquarters focusing on just that: how to structure investments that contribute positively to the land security and natural resource rights of rural people. The event brought together a range of stakeholders from IFAD-financed projects and programmes, as well as representatives of international development organizations, research institutes, governments and the private sector.

Inclusive business models
During the workshop, IFAD project management teams from two regions — West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa — talked about what has worked and what has not in the inclusive business models currently in practice. The models under discussion, all supported by IFAD, included the following:
• **Commercial oil palm farming in Uganda.** The Vegetable Oil Development Project was designed to alleviate Uganda’s dependence on imported vegetable oils by supporting the domestic production and processing of palm oil. The project negotiated a tripartite agreement between the government, the private company Bidco Oil Refineries Ltd and smallholder farmers to establish processing plants, a nucleus estate plantation and a smallholder farmers’ outgrower scheme for vegetable oil production. Through the project, the government acquired private and public land, and leased it to the company. Public land was also allocated to landless households. With their increased income, tenant farmers have been able to buy land from owners.

• **Integrating smallholder farmers in Swaziland’s sugar industry.** The Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project is part of a large-scale irrigation infrastructure effort. It focuses on the intensification and diversification of high-value crops, and integration of smallholders into the commercial economy. The project has linked farmers growing sugar cane to the nearby Ubombo Sugar Ltd processing mill. Small growers are organized into farmer-owned companies and commit their land to crops grown for the companies. In return, they acquire a share in the business and get dividends from the profits, while the companies receive documented land-use rights.

• **Building farmers’ income and safety nets in Burkina Faso and Mali.** Mali Biocarburant SA (MBSA) produces non-polluting biodiesel from the energy crop jatropha. Its inclusive business model brings together outside investors and smallholder farmers in Burkina Faso and Mali. MBSA has set up local foundations in the two countries to help strengthen
the capacity of the farmers and their cooperatives. The farmers’ plant and harvest jatropha, and their cooperatives sell the jatropha nuts to MBSA, either in Burkina Faso or Mali, where the oil is then extracted. The product is sold exclusively to local markets. By planting the jatropha trees, farmers have been able to strengthen their user rights, as the planting of permanent crops, in general, strengthens land rights.

- **Organic and Fairtrade cocoa production in São Tomé.** The Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme has set up partnerships between the São Tomé Government, IFAD, the Agence Française de Développement and European companies - all aimed at developing entire value chains, from production to market, within an ethical framework. These partnerships enhance returns on investments in traditional cocoa value chains through the use of organic and Fairtrade certification, and by linking growers to European markets. The smallholders involved in the project benefited from the land distribution process when old state farms, originally colonial plantations, were split up and land parcels of various sizes were handed over to ex-plantation workers.

- **Smallholder tea production in Rwanda.** The now completed Smallholder Cash and Export Crops Development Project forged a partnership between two tea-producing cooperatives and private investors. Tea factories established by the private-sector partners bought tea directly from the cooperatives, which participated as equity shareholders in the factories. The same model is replicated in the new Project for Rural Income through Exports, which continues to promote investment in the rehabilitation of existing tea plantations and the establishment of new ones. At the same time, farmers have benefited from the government’s land registration programme, also supported by IFAD.

- **A responsible approach**

  Following the discussion about these business models, workshop participants further defined the key priorities and risks involved in making agricultural investments that ensure just and secure land and resource rights.

  “There is a need to invest in local community and farmer organizations, which are a critical element for these investment projects” said Pascal Liu, team leader at the International Investment in Agriculture, Trade and Markets Division, part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. “Most investments come from smallholder farmers themselves, so they need more support.”

  Liu went on to say that investors should be informed about the growing number of tools available to help manage the risks of investing in agriculture in developing countries. “We need to help investors understand that having a responsible approach to agricultural development, and choosing inclusive business models, makes good business sense for them. It is in their interest,” Liu said.

  David Norman, Senior Manager for Sustainable Development Policy at SABMiller, agreed. SABMiller is one of the world’s lead-
ing beer brewers and one of the largest bottlers of Coca-Cola products.

“There is a need to invest in local community and farmer organizations, which are a critical element for these investment projects”

“We need, as a business, to have a long-term, secure, sustainable supply of good-quality agricultural products and good quality, fresh drinking water” he said. “For us at SABMiller, the old model of seeking to do that through using financial muscle simply cannot stand the test of time.” As a large multinational company operating in developing countries, SABMiller has high visibility and exposure, Norman explained “and if we get things wrong, like the basics of being seen to suck the water table dry, we are in deep trouble in those settings” he said, “we just can’t afford to do that even if it was morally right, and it is not.”

The author

Harold Liversage is Regional Land Advisor for East and Southern Africa at the International Fund for Agricultural Development. IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to reduce poverty, increase food security, improve nutrition and strengthen resilience. Since 1978, it has provided about US$15.8 billion in grants and low-interest loans to projects that have reached some 430 million people. IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialized United Nations agency based in Rome - the UN’s food and agriculture hub.
Niños
di Antonello Zappadu
Photo Reportage

They are from the city of Buenaventura, on the Pacific Colombian side, and have escaped war and mis-ery. They are the displaced people who, with their small kids, found shelter on Rio Causa in Colombia, on the right side of the bridge Juachito located in one of the most romantic neighbors called Brisas del Cauca. Here, young boys at risk of being marginalized, are easily pray of criminal groups, of unscrupulous drug traffickers members of well known criminal syndicates. Here people attend true schools of crime to become perfect killers. In this context, a new bloodless civic battle is being waged by the community. It is a battle to stand for children’s rights and against any kind of violence and slavery.
Antonello Zappadu lives and works in Cali (Colombia). He started his career as photojournalist when he was an adolescent and following his father Mario’s path (a correspondent of the Italian national television (RAI)). Within his main achievements there are cover stories on brigandage in Sardinia; a reportage on India and on the death of Leonid Brezhnew (Moscow). He has also reported on Asia where he travelled extensively, also showing with his camera the dramatic situation of the 38th parallel (South Korea).
Frequently depicted as an almost pathological form of brutality, gangs have become popular bugbears and scapegoats across the world. This is perhaps most obvious in contemporary Central America, where gangs - known as pandillas and maras - are widely perceived as the most important security threat within a post-Cold War panorama of criminality often characterized by levels of violence that surpass those of the revolutionary conflicts that affected the region during the 1970s and 1980s. The corresponding policy response has been highly repressive, to the extent that it is no exaggeration to talk of Central American governments having declared a veritable “war on gangs” in recent years. Gangs are a global phenomenon, however, found in most societies around the world. On the one hand, this is due to a process of convergent evolution, whereby similar social contexts around the world give rise to similar social phenomena. On the other hand, processes of globalization have also enabled the spread of practices and culture from places separated by vast distances.

There is for example a worldwide enthusiasm for US gangster rap music, and we are now seeing Lat-
A gang is an interstitial group, originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict.

Subsequent studies of gangs have highlighted how they are complex and multifarious social institutions that can take a variety of forms and be associated with a whole range of different practices and behavior patterns, from the cultural to the economic via the political. At the same time, most studies tend to be national in scope, or focus on a single group, and therefore offer little in the way of an international comparative perspective, making it difficult to know to what extent particular gang practices are context-specific, determined by global social processes, or simply more universal in nature.

There moreover exists very little in the way of consensus regarding what a gang is. Even the very term “gang” is used in a highly variable manner, and there is little agreement concerning what a gang does. The most reproduced definition remains the one originally proposed by the sociologist Frederic Thrasher in his pioneering study of gang in 1920s Chicago: “A gang is an interstitial group, originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, esprit de

Not surprisingly, perhaps, gangs have become a growing concern during the past decade, but they have not always been viewed as inherently antagonistic. The first studies of gangs by scholars from the famous Chicago School of Sociology for example saw them as “interstitial” social organizations that emerged as alternative sources of order in areas — such as urban slums — where the state’s authority was deficient.
corps, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to a local territory”. Part of the continuing appeal of this definition is clearly that it is sufficiently broad to apply to a whole range of social forms.

The polysemicity of the term “gang”, and the broad gamut of social forms with which it can be associated, make it essential to think about the phenomenon in relational terms, which means adopting a comparative perspective. This is something that we have aimed to do in a new volume, “Global Gangs: Street Violence across the World”, which brings together 12 case studies of gangs from around the world that in their juxtaposition raise new questions and provide new perspectives on a range of factors that have been important to gang formation and evolution around the world. National-level studies, by their very nature, cannot consider the ways different types of socio-economic contexts impact variably upon gangs. Hence the importance of juxtaposing studies cross-nationally, moreover across radically different contexts, and even in terms of different structural processes.

It is interesting for example to note both the similarities and differences between some of the consequences for gangs of economic re-structuring in the 1970s and 1980s in France on the one hand, and political transformation in post-Soviet Russia during the 1990s. In both cases, although gangs existed previously, they came to the fore in an unprecedented manner as a result of these upheavals, which moreover fundamentally transformed gang dynamics, in particular pushing gangs towards greater involvement in criminal economic activities such as drug dealing and racketeering, for example.

Some gangs become super-gangs while others turn into outfits more akin to organized crime, and yet still others become political organizations

The fact that analogous processes can occur in different eras for different reasons, is obviously critical for coherent global policy-making. Similarly, there are also uncanny commonalities between the different countries’ social or political repressive strategies affecting gangs’ trajectory, highlighting how a “one size fits all” approach is not necessarily appropriate.

There are also revealing comparisons to be made between gangs and gang-like groups such as the Mungiki in Kenya or the Pemuda Pancasila in Indonesia.

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Ultimately, gangs are socially embedded phenomena, regardless of their location, and environmental factors can affect their origins and their transformation in different ways.

The fact that these groups are not trying to capture national power makes them analogous to gangs, yet many members do end up politicians on the national stage, something that points to potential trajectories for gang members. Conversely, while child vigilante squads in Indian slums may not appear on the surface to be gangs, they provide similar benefits to squad members as gangs, such as a sense of belonging, prestige, power, and security. Squads can also mimic many of the functions of gangs, including territorial control and defense of space and community, to the extent that it can be difficult to distinguish them clearly from gangs. Finally, there are analogous ambiguities surrounding the application of the gang label in Brazil, Mexico, and El Salvador, which often occurs in an instrumental manner for political gain.

Such juxtapositions highlight that the evolutionary trajectory of gangs is not always unidirectional or toward a certain end state. Although all gangs that last for any length of time involve some form of institutionalization that provides the basis for cross-generational longevity, some gangs institutionalize more than others - meaning they have a higher level of organization, more formalized structures, and are more embedded in the social, economic, and political activities of a community.

But this can occur in different ways. Some gangs become super-gangs while others turn into outfits more akin to organized crime, and yet still others become political organizations. Moreover, not all transformations bring gangs to a higher level of organization. Rather, what the studies in our volume suggest is
that gangs can follow a number of paths, reaching a number of end points; which path is chosen depends on a set of factors both internal (e.g. leadership, organization) and external (e.g. state response, politics, drugs), and what end state is reached may depend on an entirely different set of factors.

But the first step to engaging with them coherently is to try to draw on as wide a variety of experiences as possible from across the globe.

Ultimately, gangs are socially embedded phenomena, regardless of their location, and environmental factors can affect their origins and their transformation in different ways. Comparison across time and space not only deepens our understanding of gangs, in all their forms, but also aids in suggesting better means through which to manage these groups that are often deeply rooted in the social, political, economic, and security activities of their communities. They may not be easily separated from their environments and the conditions that drive their development, regardless of whether they are labeled a gang, a national security threat, or a rational response to their situation. But the first step to engaging with them coherently is to try to draw on as wide a variety of experiences as possible from across the globe.

Former gang member showing his tattoo and the scar of a machete wound, Barrio Luis Fanor Hernández, Managua, Nicaragua, 19 July 2007. © Dennis Rodgers.
Peace work in urban arenas faces two realities. First, gangs are a permanent feature of urban life (at least for now) in all major cities around the world. Second, while the majority of youth gangs are not involved in transnational organized crime, some gangs are becoming engaged in criminal enterprises normally associated with better organized and more sophisticated crime syndicates.

Undertaken with these ideas in mind, this article describes the transborder collaboration between large organized gangs operating in the Sister Cities of San Diego and Tijuana. Large organized gangs differ in three ways from small, loosely structured, turf oriented gangs: they (1) pursue drug trafficking for profit, (2) operate across cities and countries, and are (3) organized in sophisticated networks. The devastating war in Mexico has raised the relevancy of gangs and criminal networks for those concerned with potential increases in gang violence in the San-Diego conurbation.
A conurbation is a continuous urban and industrially developed area. It can be relatively small in size, as in the Ferghana – Kyzyl-Kiya conurbation between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (500,000 residents) or much larger – for example, the Lahore-Amritsar conurbation between Pakistan and India is home to a combined 12 million people.

While the majority of youth gangs are not involved in transnational organized crime, some gangs are becoming engaged in criminal enterprises normally associated with better organized and more sophisticated crime syndicates.

San Diego-Tijuana is the fourth largest bi-national conurbation in the world, and the largest between the US and Mexico. Tijuana and San Diego are International Sister Cities, a relationship characterized by maintaining bonds between people from different communities, celebrating or appreciating differences, and building partnerships that reduce the likelihood of conflict.

Like most definitions of sister cities, the one above invokes relationships between governments. However just as relevant is the set of relationships existing between governments and criminal organizations, and between gangs, across the international border. Seen through this lens, conflict not only exists but actually thrives on bonds and partnerships between the Sister Cities. Hispanic gangs are deeply embedded in US-Mexico border communities through generations of family members. Future trend analysis depends in part on analyzing the cohesiveness of transborder networks of gangs and criminal organizations.

Transborder gang structure
Gangs are present in almost every neighborhood in San Diego and Tijuana, but they are different entities. In San Diego, the largest, most established gangs are concentrated in the more socially disadvantaged — and among the more violent — neighborhoods of the city. Some of the largest gangs have Facebook pages and use other social media outlets to brand themselves. San Diego’s Hispanic street gangs are affiliated with the umbrella organization La Eme (the family). The La Eme prison gang, also known as the Mexican Mafia, was formed in the late 1950’s in the California Department of Corrections. La Eme is not presided over by a single leader. Leadership structure consists of a very small, tight knit group of people who have the authority to order murders. Each individual has a specific crew consisting of comandadas (officers) who carry out those orders and over-

1. Gangs cluster in disadvantaged and disorganized neighborhoods often characterized by poverty, inequality and family disruption.
see criminal activities. La Eme controls all Hispanic Gangs in California.

In Tijuana, the neighborhood gangs (or *pandillas*) have 12 members on average, and arm themselves with sticks and broken bottles. Field interviews indicate that a few pandillas are morphing into cliques in the periphery of armed Mexican gangs, becoming involved in extortion and drug trafficking, but not violent or lucrative jobs (assassination, trafficking, kidnapping, money laundering) carried out by the core. Unlike in San Diego, the larger, more organized gangs do not originate from specific neighborhoods, and they do not have Facebook pages. They are paid to carry out specific tasks by drug cartels, and their members come from different places. They are armed and often lack any sense of connection to the places they ‘police’. Some of these gangs are affiliated with the large Salvadoran gang MS-13 and M-18 (18th Street Gang), both of which are structured as loosely connected cells or cliques. Drug cartels sometimes recruit particular cliques for specific tasks: enforcement (assassinations and other forms of instrumental violence), kidnapping/ransom, or trafficking/distribution.

What gangs on both sides of the border do have in common is their participation in transborder trade alliances, a pattern of social relationships that affects how individual gangs behave.

**Inter-gang social networks**

Social network analysis is a method for visualizing relationships between people and groups and analyzing the structure of their interactions. It is based on a theoretical approach...
that studies how patterns of social relationships (i.e. alliances or rivalries) affect the behavior of individual people, groups, and organizations. Social network analysis has been used to study how individuals behave within gangs, but was used here to study the connections between gangs in San Diego–Tijuana. Types of relationship varied between degrees of rivalry versus cooperation. Using social network analysis software to perform a set of centrality measures enabled identification of just how influential particular gangs and organized criminal groups were in the San Diego–Tijuana conurbation.

The location of gangs in a transborder network can be evaluated by identifying core and peripheral actors (also called nodes), and by measuring varying levels of cohesion by looking for “relatively strong, direct, intense, frequent, or positive ties”. San Diego-Tijuana gangs differed both on frequency and type of contact/communication. For example, when a large gang is in charge of other “sets”, they tend to exert greater influence over communication between those sets.

In addition, a huge degree of direct (positive) connections between gangs highlights a greater potential for cooperation. Sex-trafficking, for example, is a gang activity that appears to engender a high degree of inter-gang cooperation. In San Diego, former rivals have called truces and worked in conjunction to run join circuit trips, share resources and information, and help “protect” and discipline each other’s victims. The potential for cooperation is heightened even further if the gangs involved are connected not just to other gangs, but to other highly connected gangs.

Structure of transborder gang partnerships
The social network analysis showed that San Diego gangs have linkages with three major Mexican drug cartels: the Arellano Felix Organization (AFO), Sinaloa, and Los Zetas. The US Mexican Mafia prison gang and AFO had the greatest number of ties (the most direct connections) and are thus considered ‘connectors’ or ‘hubs’ in this transnational network. They are the most active nodes, and thus control communication between other actors.

Unsurprisingly, La Eme has the largest number of ties to San Diego street gangs, and little direct influence over street gangs in Tijuana. But La Eme is still supremely central to the entire network because it is tied to three regional Mexican TCOs - Los Zetas, Arellano Felix Organization (AFO), and Sinaloa. This means the Mexican Mafia is a primary go-between for pairs of other actors and is in a position to broker many — potentially lucrative — connections. It is worth emphasizing that the nature of these connections is loose affiliation through discrete working relationships between core members of each organization. According to a gang expert, “One or two members of La Eme escape to Mexico and they’ll work down there for the cartels”.

The social network analysis showed that San Diego gangs have linkages with three major Mexican drug cartels: the Arellano Felix Organization (AFO), Sinaloa, and Los Zetas

Given a network of criminal organizations who must coordinate in order to smuggle drugs, arms, and persons and given that only a small number can be investigated/arrested), centrality metrics also help determine which ones should be chosen in order to maximally disrupt the network. Of the more than 200 gangs in San Diego, three were

5. In the San Diego/Tijuana border region at time of research, AFO had almost triple the number of ties than Sinaloa and Los Zetas, although this may have changed.
identified has having the greatest number of direct connections.\(^7\)

The implications for the San Diego-Tijuana conurbation are two-fold. First, taken as a total transnational network, street gangs in San Diego and Mexican organized crime, form a decentralized system of actors that is resilient to intentional disruptions (arrests, or killings). Clearly, some organizations are more important than others, but overall this means that many individual nodes and links can fail while allowing the remaining organizations to still reach each other over different network paths. There is a cultural connection to this, “the result of physical proximity and strong familial ties that many US-based Hispanic gang members retain with family and friends in Mexico”.\(^8\) Even when a particular connection between San Diego gangs and Mexican drug cartels disappeared, similar social networks have reappeared in other parts of the city.

The Hispanic street gangs do operate in conjunction with some of the Mexican cartels. The gangs are used to protect the drug shipments and to guard those who are brought to the US for human trafficking. Many of the agreements are done through the control and direction of the prison gangs.\(^9\)

A second implication is that groups at the periphery of the regional network – an Iraqi group, two white gangs, and three Somalian gangs – warrant vigilance. A peripheral location does not mean that a group is tangential to the network, even though the centrality scores are very low. Instead, peripheral nodes are often connected to networks that are not currently mapped. For example, some African Mafia Crips are sympathizers with al-Shabaab, an Islamist militant group operating in Somalia that is rumored to have ties with Al Qaeda.

**Challenges and opportunities**

Ongoing challenges for the San Diego-Tijuana conurbation are that transborder links between armed actors are flexible and resilient, and the drug-trafficking industry is virtually impossible to disrupt. San Diego-Tijuana is affected by the larger regional threat in Mexico and Central America posed by organized crime. Complex networks of transnational actors, each pursuing their own economic and political interests, are interlinked across state borders from South to North America. At both ends and in between, people suffer the cost of violence associated with giant underground economies of drug and human trafficking.

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7. Names have been withheld.
The Hispanic street gangs do operate in conjunction with some of the Mexican cartels. The gangs are used to protect the drug shipments and to guard those who are brought to the US for human trafficking.

The good news is that a variety of actors are taking, proactive and multi-faceted actions to reduce social vulnerability and boost communities’ adaptive capacities to mitigate the impact of armed actors. In addition it has been noted that “as social actors within poor communities with weak mechanisms of formal social control, gangs, militias, factions and cartels have the capacity not only to wage war, but to rein it in”.10 The toolbox of conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies is gradually being extended in cases involving gangs and transnational criminal organizations, even if their application runs into normative, legal, and practical roadblocks.

Half of all civilian casualties are children, not to mention those forcibly recruited into gangs and other armed groups.

Communities – both local and international – will have to face the fact is that the nature of armed conflict has changed dramatically, and often includes links between transnational organized crime and local armed actors. The most basic issue is protecting and improving the lives of local populations. Building community resilience to gang violence refers less to efforts at eradicating gangs themselves, but understanding and differentiating between their various types, and taking proactive and multi-faceted actions to reduce social vulnerability and boost communities’ adaptive capacities. Since half of all civilian casualties are children, not to mention those forcibly recruited into gangs and other armed groups, the urgency facing peace workers in the urban arena is most pressing.

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The author

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The inconvenient truth about gang truces in the Americas

by Robert Muggah, Ami Carpenter and Topher McDougal

After a two decade long hiatus, gang truces are back in vogue in the Americas. Very generally, truces typically consist of negotiations and pacts intended to prevent and reduce collective and interpersonal violence. They are often brokered by an eclectic cast of characters - from government officials and aid workers to faith-based groups and active and ex-gang members. And while truces are generating considerable attention in the global media, the evidence base about what they really accomplish is surprisingly thin.

During the 1980s and 1990s, US-based social scientists held a dim view of gang truces. Many believed these kinds of agreements instead legitimized gangs, reinforced the authority of leaders, deepened cohesion among their rank and file, and reproduced rather than reduced violence. In the 1990s scholars such as Kodluboy and Evenrud argued that while mediation could “sometimes be necessary to forestall immediate violence or prevent loss of life [it] increases the risk of validating the gang as a legitimate
social entity, thus buying short-term peace at the price of long-term persistence of the gang.”

Very generally, truces typically consist of negotiations and pacts intended to prevent and reduce collective and interpersonal violence.

Over the past few years gang experts from North America to Western Europe started rethinking ways of diminishing gang violence. A few enlightened practitioners know that the only way gang truces can stick is by working on the underlying conditions that give rise to gang formation. After all, gangs do not emerge in a vacuum. They are frequently cohesive groups that provide identity, meaning and security to their members. Paradoxically, young people who join gangs tend to feel safer despite being at greater statistical risk of a violent end. It is only by dealing with their marginalization, creating employment, and dealing with peer influences and other risk factors, researchers argue that gangs can be dismantled.

It is worth pointing out that gang violence is not inevitable. There are ways to alter the behavior of members, which is precisely what truces set out to do. Gang specialist John Hagedorn has shown how “gangs, militias, factions and cartels have the capacity not only to wage war, but to rein it in.” But what, really, is the experience of gang truces in the Americas and the Caribbean? The bulk of the evidence seems to show that while truces can temporarily reduce violence, gang warfare usually resumes in the absence of accompanying steps to address more fundamental political and social welfare challenges.

The truth about gang truces

The most prolific research on gang truces comes from North America. This is perhaps not altogether surprising given that there are believed to be more than 33,000 gangs in the United States with up to 1.4 million members spread across virtually every state. Studies of truces involving the most notorious gangs, notably the Bloods and Crips in Los Angeles register sharp, albeit short-term, reductions in violence. In the wake of the infamous Watts Truce, casualties arising from drive-by shootings dropped significantly after agreements were negotiated, though also reported increases several months later. Around the same time, truces negotiated in Chicago generated significant but temporary declines in gunshot injuries. In other words, short-term gains were negated by medium-term increases in violence.

More recently, a rash of gang truces have broken out across the rest of the Americas, including in Belize, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago. No one knows how many gang members there are in Latin America, with estimates varying from 50,000-85,000 MS13 and 18th Street gangsters in Central America alone. There are at least as many more in South America. And owing to the United States continued policy of deporting convicts, the problem appears to be getting worse. Confronted with spiraling violence, highly visible negotiations have been pursued across the region.

Salvadorian gang members are politically savvy and superior negotiators in contrast to their Honduran counterparts

Central American countries in particular are experimenting with gang truces. Some agreements there are being backed by regional organizations like the Organization of American States (OAS), mayors, priests and ex-gang members. At least one particular truce has generated impressive dividends in improving safety and security. After the Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) gang and rival Barrio 18 declared a truce in 2012, El Sal-
vador’s national homicide rates plummeted, although there are concerns it is creeping back up once more. Building on the optimism surrounding the process, similar processes were launched between the Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18 gangs in Honduras. After a promising start, there are some concerns that the Honduran initiative is faltering.

While tempting to group the Central American experiences together, there are major differences between them. Because they are better organized and more conscious of their power, Salvadorian gang members are politically savvy and superior negotiators in contrast to their Honduran counterparts. And with some having served as guerrillas in previous decades, El Salvador’s gang leaders exert more control over the rank and file. Meanwhile, a truce in Belize was terminated after running out of cash and Guatemalan officials are considering prospects for mediation with gangs in the capital city.

**Predictably, negotiations tend to fail when the key parties are disunited and disorganized**

The record of gang truces in the Caribbean has been similarly uneven. The refusal of some gang members to participate in gang truces in Trinidad and Tobago fatally undermined their success. According to Edward Maguire, those who elected to disarm were quickly targeted by competing factions since they were considered weak and vulnerable. Predictably, negotiations tend to fail when the key parties are disunited and disorganized. For a truce to work in Port of Spain, all major gangs would need to sign-up to the treaty. Making matters worse, politicians who helped broker the ceasefire have also come under intense political criticism for doing so, hampering their ability to act authoritatively - a crucial ingredient of mediation success. Evaluations of truces in Central America and the Caribbean show that they occasionally ratchet-up violence. Pitched battles are known to flare-up before agreements because gangs angle to improve their negotiating positions. And after truces are agreed, violence is also known to spill-over to new, previously unaffected, neighborhoods and cities. Analogous phenomena are regularly observed during and after the negotiation of ceasefires and peace
agreements in conventional war zones around the world. Without clear terms, appropriate incentives, and adequate resources, such agreements seldom hold.

Evaluations of truces in Central America and the Caribbean show that they occasionally ratchet-up violence

Gang truces in countries such as Brazil have endured for longer than expected, though show signs of strain in recent times. For example, a stop-start six-year truce between the São Paulo military police and the First Capital Command (PCC), a prison-based gang, recently came unstuck in 2012. It collapsed after the government was accused of violating an informal agreement that protected gang leaders and limited crackdowns on gang strongholds. As a result, the city witnessed a massive surge in reprisal killings of police and gang members. Comparable gang truces were brokered in Recife and Rio de Janeiro with similarly mixed results.

The record of gang truces in the Americas and the Caribbean is uneven. There is a real concern that gang truces may in fact generate conflict and solidify alliances among violence entrepreneurs. Veteran observers are pessimistic about the likelihood that gang truces will reduce violence in the medium to long-term. They cite the long legacy of gangs resorting to instrumental violence, the importance they attach to status maintenance, their weak command and control, and the unintended effects of bolstering gang cohesion as key factors influencing truce outcomes. The National Gang Crime Research Center (NGCSC) concluded in 1995 that gang truces are “rarely successful and indeed risky.” But are they really?

The recent gang truces cropping up in Central and South America are different from those of the 1990s in the United States. They are being negotiated by, and on behalf of, very different types of gangs. The “gang warfare” being waged in countries like El Salvador and Honduras is deeply influenced by transnational crime networks as well as political elites. Gangs and gang truces are not purely domestic affairs shaped by discrete neighborhood interests and localized disputes over territory. Gangs are themselves connected to corrupt actors, who often exploit their positions to profit from international drug trafficking or more local racketeering.

The spate of truces in Central and South America and the Caribbean share more in common with peace agreements negotiated in the world’s war zones than domestic mediation carried-out with Latino and African-American gangs in North America. And while some military analysts are exploring ways in which war-fighting can be adapted to tackling gangs, there is a surprising silence in academic circles about how lessons from peace negotiations could be applied in non-conflict settings. It could be that some of the traditional tools of peace-making, peace-building, negotiation and other contact-based strategies could gain traction in containing violence meted out by drug cartels, mafias, youth gangs, and militias.

Veteran observers are pessimistic about the likelihood that gang truces will reduce violence in the medium to long-term

Reflections on gang violence reduction

A limitation of gang truces can be traced to their failure to address the underlying motivations and social dynamics of gang violence to begin with. Notwithstanding their involvement in international drug trafficking or the people smuggling and trafficking, violence perpetrated by gangs is often engendered by local factors - perceived disrespect, territorial disputes, tension over status and prestige. Killings are often symbolic, undertaken as a form of retaliation,
out of revenge, or as a result of internal power struggles.

A limitation of gang truces can be traced to their failure to address the underlying motivations and social dynamics of gang violence to begin with.

Unless gangs exhibit a high degree of internal coherence, decrees from above may have little purchase below. As a result, gang truces may afford legitimacy to leaders, rather than changing dynamics among lower-ranking members.

Gang experts contend that truces may be a necessary, but insufficient, means of preventing violence over the long-term. They fear that the narrow focus on truces alone may actually be part of the problem. This is because gangs are themselves often linked to wider transnational illicit markets and systems of political patronage. The focus on mediation with leaders may also neglect the localized social and economic conditions that enable and sustain gangs to begin with. After all, most gang members themselves herald from marginalized and lower-income communities. Unless their structural conditions are improved, as some aid agencies maintain, gang wars will continue. It may be impossible to eliminate gangs, according to Irving Spergel, but reducing gang-related violence is a tenable goal.

One way to improve the record of gang truces in Latin America and the Caribbean may be to harness the power of transnational networks - including those related to gangs and civil society.
actors. This is because gang accords in places like Belize, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago all exhibit transnational characteristics, even if many of the drivers of gang violence are also local. It is true that former Salvadorian refugees and deportees in Los Angeles were instrumental to the rise of the maras. And yet Los Angeles-based priests and mothers of slain gang members living in California have joined transnational advisory groups together with former gang members to strengthen the truce in El Salvador since 2012.

The focus on mediation with leaders may also neglect the localized social and economic conditions that enable and sustain gangs to begin with

There is also some evidence of sharing of experience and expertise between gangs across borders. The most obvious examples are exchanges between governments, police departments, gangs and civil society groups in the United States and their Central American and Caribbean counterparts. Yet there are also exchanges emerging between and within countries across the region, including Mexico and neighboring countries in Central and South America. For example, mediators responsible for negotiating the gang truce in El Salvador also recently started working with leaders of Honduran maras, with support from the OAS. There are also examples of efforts to initiate dialogue between gang leaders in El Salvador and others in Guatemala.

Do gang truces have a future? There is a surprisingly wide array of experiences with gang truces across North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. While all unique in form and content, many of them share commonalities. Most of them also bare more than a passing resemblance to traditional peace agreements, ceasefires and amnesties agreed by warring parties in conventional armed conflicts.

It may also be worth noting that the record of negotiated solutions for wars is equally patchy: at least 20% of conflicts restart within a few years of ending. It is worth recalling that the study of gang truces in the Americas is still in its infancy and supporting evidence is still partial. A cursory review indicates that comparatively few gang truces have yielded enduring reductions in violence. To the contrary, many have in fact consolidated gang authority, in some cases reinforcing their authority. This raises questions about the limitations of gang truces on their own, but also the importance of undertaking mediation in combination with other strategies addressing structural causes of gang formation and persistence.

In a best case scenario, gang truces can help end violent conflict and create the necessary space for addressing underlying structural causes leading to the emergence of armed groups to begin with, but without an ongoing process, the back-slide...
into renewed violence seems almost inevitable. The same holds true in civil wars: peace agreements, which ideally include concrete steps to resolve the issues over which the conflict is being fought, fail less often than mere truces. But this is because as most negotiators know, peace agreements are the start and not the end of a process. The challenges are legion. The evidence also suggests that negotiated peace agreements are less likely to prevent conflict recurrence than outright military victories. Mediators across the Americas and Caribbean would do well to take note.

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From Naples: voices against crime and the demand for justice

By Luigi De Magistris
Those who suffer from a disease are able to develop a stronger immune system against it. That is why I strongly believe that Naples is more equipped to tackle crime-related problems compared to other cities. In fact, the South of Italy has developed an extraordinary wealth of resources and solutions to fight organized crime. The anti-mafia experience, which is predominantly southern, is one of the most important movements in Italy’s civil history. This rich past does not describe the South as a crime novel, but as a land where, above all, the people are ready to sacrifice themselves for the advancement of social justice.

The anti-mafia experience does not illustrate the South as a land of poverty, but instead demonstrates the South human capital.

It is a land of the humanity ready to fight social evils and crime where this poses the greatest challenge. There where injustice and pain proliferate, and where deprivation and marginalization are the norm. It is in this deep South, from Scampia to Zen districts, amid the superficial dust of poverty, mafia and injustice, that those who demand justice and strive for a better world, shine the brightest.

The United Nations chose Naples not because it is the land of the mafia organization Camorra, but because it is a city with a rich community and strong sense of humanity.
We are demonstrating our pride, in the city of Naples, with the United Nations on our side. The United Nations chose Naples not because it is the land of the mafia organization Camorra, but because it is a city with a rich community and strong sense of humanity. It is enriched by the intense emotional network linking together those who fight against crime, with strength and determination, often because they have experienced it first hand. It is a network of people eager to listen and resolve problems, building a South characterized by answers instead of laments; a South defined by justice instead of crime.

Thanks to the collaborating partners, and to the splendid work carried out by the Municipality of Naples, there is a longing here for justice and a desire to listen to one another: to come together as a community and overcome the challenges.

Talking about our pain and our wounds is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of power. Criminals use violence to silence those who raise their voice the highest to demand justice.


1. A new pilot initiative “Voices against crime” is being carried out by UNICRI in cooperation with the Municipality of Naples, the participation of media partners and the involvement of the academia, the law enforcement and several NGOs. Outstanding testimonials have been also involved to promote the participation of Naples’ citizens in the initiative. The initiative is based on the collection and analyses of victims of crime stories. It aims to shed light on the different type of crime, identify good practices and critical issues to be addressed with respect to victims’ support policies and practices. Victims’ experiences will be the starting for the promotion of future interventions on prevention, empowerment and assistance with view toward creating lasting change.
institutions, to build a solidarity network aimed at healing these wounds and overcoming the pain. UNICRI chose Naples because it is an energetic and colorful city that aches for justice.

It chose Italy because we are, first and foremost, the country of the magistrates Falcone and Borsellino killed by the mafia, and not because is the country of the stereotypical mafia images such as the beret and sawn-off shotgun.

As Italians, we should never forget this. We must not underestimate ourselves. We must not think that our country is solely defined by crime and corruption. Most countries, with similar or higher levels of criminal violence and corruption, do not have the same instruments for opposition. We must do so with willpower, courage and intelligence. We need to understand our strength and reverse the more superficial visions. For example, Italy was recently ranked the country with one of the highest levels of public corruption. However, this statement is not accurate: the data collected only referred to the perception of corruption and not to reality. Having said that, we should ask ourselves: do we perceive high levels of corruption because we are in fact more corrupt than others, or are we harsher with ourselves because we truly want to improve our country?

In Naples, as well as in the rest of Italy, many problems persist and the continued existence of mafia and corruption remain prominent ones. We need to talk about these issues instead of hiding from them. There is a strong common desire to take a stand and a resilient willingness to believe in the possibility of a different kind of world.

In Naples, not even a thousand guns can silence our cry for freedom.

I am sure that “Voices against crime” can provide guidelines for good practices for many other cities around the world also suffering from crime-related issues similar to those in Naples. Naples has uniquely developed a stronger immune system to defend itself against crime unwanted intrusions on our city and our livelihood.

Talking about our pain and our wounds is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of power. Criminals use violence to silence those who raise their voice the highest to demand justice.

In Naples, not even a thousand guns can silence our cry for freedom.

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Securing justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence: the stigma belongs with the perpetrator

by Zainab Hawa Bangura

Imagine that you live in a country that had experienced a brutal and devastating war, and during that war you, or someone you loved, were the victims of sexual violence in conflict. Imagine the pain and betrayal you would feel knowing that those who orchestrated wide scale and systematic rapes, sexual slavery, forced marriages and other forms of sexual violence were allowed to walk free as if nothing had happened and remain a part of the community where you live, and each day you were forced to face them in public. This is the reality for most victims of sexual violence in conflict. Years after the guns have
fallen silent they still struggle to rebuild their lives whilst their tormentors enjoy impunity. In Bosnia, only a handful of perpetrators have been prosecuted 20 years after the war, despite the fact that an estimated 50,000 women, and an unknown number of men, were raped during the conflict there.

Survivors report a combination of physical, psychological, psycho-sexual, psycho-social and economic impacts

Rape has been called the world’s oldest and least condemned crime, but the issue of conflict-related sexual violence gained visibility and traction in international policy circles relatively recently. In the 1990s, efforts to engage policy actors to both deliver justice and services to survivors of sexual violence gained particular momentum. In the wake of the wars in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, irrefutable evidence of the systemic use of rape and other forms of sexual violence marked a moment in which campaigners for women’s rights said, ‘enough is enough’. No longer, they declared, should war be waged using the bodies of women as a battlefield.

Since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, the ground broken for the Women Peace and Security agenda has been sown with further policy breakthroughs.1

1. The term “sexual violence” here refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men or children with a direct or indirect (temporal, geographical or causal) link to a conflict. This link to conflict may be evident in the profile and motivations of the perpetrator, the profile of the victim, the climate of impunity or State collapse, any cross-border dimensions or violations of the terms of a ceasefire agreement. (S/2014/181).

In 2009, a Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict was established by Security Council resolution 1888 which assists governments to address impunity by building national capacity and expertise for rule of law and justice actors.

Further notable progress was achieved in April 2013 with the signing of the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. More than 144 Member States have now signed the ‘Declaration of commitment to end sexual violence in conflict’ launched by the UK’s First Secretary of State, William Hague2 and I on the sidelines of the 68th General Assembly in September 2013. In addition, for the first time the Security Council Resolution 2106 - adopted in June 2013 - has outlined a and reporting mechanism and by providing for the sanctioning of perpetrators.

2. UNSCR 1820 (2008) made an explicit connection between sexual violence and military strategy. UNSCR 1888 (2009) called for the establishment of the position of Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Resolution 1960 (2010) provided the tools for an accountability system for addressing conflict-related sexual violence, including through the establishment of a monitoring
framework for the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence through more consistent and rigorous prosecutions; targeted measures such as sanctions; excluding sexual violence crimes from amnesties; and referring cases to the International Criminal Court. The United Nations, through my Office, is also asked to engage both state and non-state parties to conflict to obtain specific commitments to prevent sexual violence and to support front-lines efforts, including through civil society networks, to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict. As a result of the high-level advocacy work I lead, the United Nations has signed Joint Communiqués with national authorities on the prevention of sexual violence in conflict in countries such as Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The armed forces of the DRC have now committed to an Action Plan to tackle sexual Violence in Conflict as well.

**But it is not the victims who should feel shame - the stigma and humiliation should be that of the perpetrator**

These breakthroughs have been made possible through tireless campaigning and awareness-raising and as a result sexual violence is no longer seen as an unfortunate, but inevitable, consequence of war. Rather the strategic and systematic use of sexual violence as a tool to torture, demoralise and defeat the ‘enemy’ (both combatants and the civilian populations) is now recognised as an established feature of many conflicts around the world. From Syria, to South Sudan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic, experts and survivors accounts indicate that sexual violence occurs in a wide range of conflict and post-conflict settings, including at checkpoints, in torture cells, prisons and other places of detention, in military camps and in training centres, as well as in homes in towns and villages. In Syria, for example, sexual violence was reported by displaced persons as a significant factor motivating their flight. In Somalia, internally displaced persons flee armed groups known to commit rape, forced marriage and sexual slavery. During flight and while displaced, civilian populations in Myanmar, Somalia, Jordan and...
Lebanon face continued vulnerability to sexual violence.

The fight against impunity is crucial for today’s survivors to be treated better than the survivors of the 1990s and before.

In countries such as Sri Lanka, torture including sexual violence does not necessarily end with the conflict and in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone we see the legacy of conflict-related sexual violence lasts into the post-conflict period.

The effects of conflict-related sexual violence are now also better understood for women, men, girls and boys. Survivors report a combination of physical, psychological, psycho-sexual, psycho-social and economic impacts. Even where primary healthcare is available to survivors, staff may lack the capacity and the resources to provide holistic care and this hampers both data gathering and any subsequent legal action. In the long term, this can have a devastating effect on survivors. The impact of the crime can last a lifetime, putting a strain on their relationships, their family and their community. Psychological effects tend to be serious and enduring. Depression, low self-esteem, anxiety disorders and suicidal ideation are common. Where rape and other forms of sexual violence is known about in the wider community, stigma is often experienced by the survivor’s family as well, affecting their ability to support the survivor to recover and seek justice. These problems are compounded by the fact that sexual violence tends to affect the most vulnerable in society and those least able to demand their rights.

The necessary referral pathway, judicial institutions and the legislation required to prosecute sexual violence crimes are often absent in conflict and post-conflict countries. Allegations of rape are therefore often settled through more accessible and affordable informal or ‘traditional’ justice arrangements. These, however, can result in settlements that are detrimental to the survivor,
such as forced marriage to the perpetrator. These crimes are also under-reported because of the risks faced by survivors and witnesses who come forward and by the humanitarian workers, human rights defenders, journalists and others to whom they speak. These risks include severe stigmatisation, familial and social shunning and reprisals from the members of armed groups and the security forces alleged to have committed the crimes. But it is not the victims who should feel shame - the stigma and humiliation should be that of the perpetrator.

Other challenges at the national level include a lack of capacity. Access to justice for survivors can be hindered by physical access restrictions, inadequate legislation, or by financial and social costs associated with reporting and pursuing justice for crimes of sexual violence. A number of countries also lack the necessary national legislation or have failed to fully implement legislation that would offer improvements in accountability and reparations for survivors. Many countries also lack legal aid services or protocols for the protection of victims and witnesses.

The fight against impunity is crucial for today’s survivors to be treated better than the survivors of the 1990s and before. The United Nations Team of Experts provides support to engender national capacity within the areas of criminal investigation and prosecution, collection and preservation of evidence, military justice system investigation and prosecution, criminal and procedural law reform, and protection of victims, witnesses and justice officials. The Team for example supports accountability efforts in Guinea for the violations that took place in a stadium in Conakry in September 2009.

These violations included sexual violence against at least 109 women and girls. In accordance with a Joint Communiqué signed between the Government of Guinea and the United Nations in November 2011, the Team of Experts provides assistance to the Panel of Judges established to investigate and prosecute those responsible. This support has
resulted in an increase in the number of hearings of sexual violence cases, the indictment of several high level officials allegedly responsible for the events of September 2009, the indictment and detention of a gendarme on charges of rape in relation to those events, and the Government commitment to establish mechanisms for the protection of survivors. Indictments and summons have been issued against other key actors in Guinea and efforts are underway regarding suspects living outside the country.

My office, the Team of Experts and the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict will continue to engage to support national authorities in their justice response and prevention efforts, but we cannot do this alone. The work of peacekeepers, national authorities and civil society on the ground is invaluable. At the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held in London in June, Foreign, Defense and Gender Ministers from around the world, senior military experts, religious leaders, youth representatives, civil society activists, and survivors, came together to discuss the way forward, particularly with regards to ending impunity for conflict-related sexual violence.

Obtaining justice for survivors is challenging, but these combined efforts give life to the promise the international community has made to survivors: the stigma belongs with the perpetrators and together we will hold them accountable.

For more information please visit: http://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/

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4. The international community has also established the Independent International Commissions of Inquiry mandated by the Human Rights Council and the African Union. It includes Gender Advisors whose investigations are relevant to referrals to the International Criminal Court and other judicial processes.

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**My Office, the Team of Experts and the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict will continue to engage to support national authorities in their justice response and prevention efforts, but we cannot do this alone.**

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**The author**

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When rape means something more than sexual violence

by Elisabetta Mainenti

Rape as a lethal weapon of the most atrocious crimes including genocide

‘Rape, maim kill and destroy’ is the new categorical imperative that distinguishes this contemporary period, in which the violence used by the power unleashes — as the philosopher and political theorist Hanna Arendt understood — “a destructive process that stops only when there is nothing left to walk on.” The ancient practices of extermination, renewed by contemporary ideologies, soaked in the most atrocious violence and powered by a blind, irrational and inexhaustible will, which has no other purpose in life than to assert itself continuously, showed, at the gates of the third millennium and through those characteristic processes of the twentieth century — such as desecration of life and death, dehumaniza-
tion and annihilation of the enemy — their whole disruptive power. In this context even rape — transcending its semantic meaning and using the body as a means to exert ritualistically the most traumatic and symbolic violence — has taken a new and even more frightening role becoming a specific weapon of the most atrocious crimes, including genocide.

A destructive process that stops only when there is nothing left to walk on

London has recently hosted the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in conflict (June 2014) through which some main goals were established to fight and break the widespread culture of the use of rape as a weapon of war. A crime too often left unpunished. These are: to launch a new International Protocol with international standards for documenting and investigating sexual violence in conflict areas; to take practical steps to prevent the event of this atrocious crime; to support the victims and the survivors; and last but not least, trying to produce a Copernican revolution in the universe of war and violence changing once and for all the hideous attitude to apply sexual violence as a lethal arm.

Rape, as noted by the Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General (25/01/2005) — which, according to the international law, defines rape as “any physical invasion of a sexual nature perpetrated without the consent of the victim, that is by force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention or by taking advantage of a coercive environment”1 — “may be either a war crime, when committed in time of international or internal armed conflict, or a crime against humanity (whether perpetrated in time of war or peace), if it is part of a widespread or systematic attack on civilians; it may also constitute genocide.”2

As it is known, the connection between rape and genocide had been first made in 1998 by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in the Akayesu Trial Chamber Judgment; this connection, passing through the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), was clearly confirmed by the former Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Mr. Luis Moreno Ocampo, who investigated the last genocide of our history. The Prosecutor presenting the second case in relation to the situation in Darfur (Sudan) on 14 July 2008, declared that the selected weapons used to perpetrate the crime of genocide in Darfur were: “rape, hunger, fear.”3 Mr. Ocampo has classified these weapons as “the most efficient method of destruction, in the face of international scrutiny.”4

2. Ibid.
3. Prosecutor’s Statement on the Prosecutor’s Application for a warrant of Arrest under Article 58 Against the President of Sudan, Omar Hassan Ahmad AL BASHIR, p. 5. http://www.icc-cpi.int/NR/rdonlyres/A2BA9996-67C3-4A5F-9AD2-B20A7FD2D176/277757/ICCOTPST20080714ENG.pdf
4. Ibid.
The connection between rape and genocide had been first made in 1998 by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

The term genocide is a neologism, coined in 1946 by the Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin who, declaring genocide a crime under international law, fought for its international recognition. The recognition was obtained with Resolution 96 of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 11 December 1946, as noted by the same Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (adopted on 9 December 1948, the day before the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Right).

Article 2 of the Convention — which clearly defines the conduct constituting the crime of genocide — is fully reflected in Article 6 of the Statute of Rome, the treaty through which, on 17 July 1998, after a conference of 160 States in Rome, the International Criminal Court (ICC) was established. According to the article 6 of the Statute of Rome, genocide “means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of...”
life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

Genocide “means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group...”

Consequently, when rape is committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such any acts of sexual violence (and any consequence caused by them) shall be qualified as acts of the crime of genocide. Rape represents one of the possible actus reus through which — killing members of the group and causing serious bodily and or mental harm to members of a group as such (Articles 6 (a) and 6 (b) of the Statute of Rome) — the crime of genocide is perpetrated.

It is important to emphasize that the Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur “reported widespread rape and other serious forms of violence committed against women and girls in all three states of Darfur. According to these sources, the rape of individual victims was often multiple, carried out by more than one man, and accompanied by other severe forms of violence, including beating and whipping. In some cases, women were reportedly raped in public, and in some incidents, the women were further berated and called ‘slaves’ or ‘Tora Bora’.”

The International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur has confirmed that the rapes occurred always following the same ritual: “First, deliberate aggressions against women and girls, including gang rapes, occurred during the attacks on the villages. Second, women and girls were abducted, held in confinement for several days and repeatedly raped during that time. Third, rape and other forms of sexual violence continued during flight and further displacement, including when women left towns and IDP sites to collect wood or water. In certain areas, rapes also occurred inside towns. Some women and girls became pregnant as a result of rape.” As a victim testified and summarized in the above-mentioned Prosecutor’s Statement, the perpetrator of genocide “kill our males and dilute our blood with rape. They want to finish us as a people, end our history.”

As the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur reminds, “Common article 3 to the Geneva Conventions binds all parties to the conflict and, inter alia, prohibits ‘violence to life and person, in particular cruel treatment and torture’ and ‘outrages upon personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment.’ While Sudan is not a party to the Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, some of its provisions constitute customary international law binding on all parties to the conflict. This includes prohibition of ‘rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault,’ and ‘slavery’.”

Part of the changing face of war and conflict is the increasing use of sexual violence as a means to achieve economical, political and military ends. Rape is a silent, inexpensive and highly effective weapon. The sexual organ just as the oldest weapons (spear and sword) exerts its hideous action into the body of the enemy; but there is a significant difference between them: the first one is also able to produce irreversible psychological damage, both to the person who has suffered rape and to the community — for that reason many cases remain unreported due to the sensitivi-
ty of the issue and the stigma associated with rape — and it may also contribute to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such. To conclude, as it is realistically and dramatically reminded by Mr. Luis Moreno Ocampo, recalling the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in the Akayesu case in relation to the situation in Darfur, “rape is used to kill the will, the spirit, and life itself.”

12. Prosecutor’s Statement on the Prosecutor’s Application for a warrant of Arrest under Article 58 Against the President of Sudan, Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir, p. 4 (cited).

**The author**

Ms. Elisabetta Mainenti is an independent researcher who holds a second level degree in Philosophical Sciences, has just earned — with a dissertation on “Africa: Darfur Genocide” — her second Master’s Degree in International Strategic and Military Studies offered by the Joint Services Staff College at the Center of High Defence Studies in Rome, in conjunction with Rome Tre University. Here she earned her first Master’s Degree in Peacekeeping and Security Studies with a dissertation on “The deep roots of violence and conflict in the contemporary genocidal culture.” Moreover, she is a Qualified Adviser for the application of International Humanitarian Law in armed conflicts and Crisis response Operations and has a certificate as civilian listener as Legal Adviser in International Humanitarian Law and in the Law of Military Operations.
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LL.M. Master Students’ Profile

**Bernd Bertram**

**My motto: One life, live it!**
I chose this phrase because it sums up my way of living. We only have one life to live, thus we should live it to the fullest, in any sense. We shouldn’t waste our precious time on this planet but pursue our dreams and goals by all means. We should follow our own path doing what we are passionate about.

**Bertram**
Compass
Flexible, goal oriented
Exploring, steering, finding
A traveler’s best friend
Independence

**Anuja Pethia**

**My motto: Do anything, but let it produce joy - Walt Whitman**
It has been said that the most pitiful amongst men are those who turn their dreams into only that of gold and silver. I believe that the essence of life is to love what you do and to contribute, even if its by the tiniest way, in making this world a peaceful place.

**Pilgrim**
Amiable, content
Contemplating, observing, learning
Tramping a perpetual journey
Enlightenment

**Brandy Shaw**

**My motto: Fiat Lux (Let there be light)**
Fiat Lux was the motto of one of my undergrad universities. It did not fully set in with me until I attended a lecture and was told as a new lawyer I had the responsibility to help others with the knowledge I had learned and share that knowledge. It has been the underlying drive in my career since. Knowledge is light.

**Phoenix**
Wings, reborn
Flying, searching, growing
Out of the ashes anew
Hope

**Raymond Diouf**

**My motto: Knowledge to better life**
Knowledge is the key for understanding many social and cultural issues. Understanding the phenomena around us contribute to better cohesion around the world.

**Love**
Black, small
Learning, advancing, sharing
A lover of peace
Affection
15 – 16 January

Conference Room 5m UN Headquarters, New York, U.S.A.


The Global Conference on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics is organized jointly by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). The conference seeks to formulate an adequate response to the increased demand for detailed and timely data to monitor progress on the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda. These goals and targets are universal in the sense that they concern all UN member states, but they are specific at the same time in the way they are formulated at sub-national, national and regional levels. These new demands require a more efficiently functioning national statistical system. This Conference is organized as a High-Level Forum of official statisticians with the purpose to seek a broad consensus on the strategic framework for statistics for the consideration of the 46th Session of the Statistical Commission in March 2015.


26–30 January

International Conference Centre of Geneva, Switzerland

World Congress on Juvenile Justice

State and civil society representatives are invited to attend the World Congress on Juvenile Justice which will take place in Geneva, Switzerland from 26 to 30 January 2015. The aim of the Congress is to work together to take a decisive step forward in the implementation of child rights and international norms in relation to juvenile justice. The Congress is hosted by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Swiss Federal Office of Justice and the non-governmental organisation Terre des hommes.

The Congress has been acknowledged by the United Nations General Assembly and by the Human Rights Council.


9–10 February

UN Headquarters, New York, U.S.A

High-level Thematic Debate on Means of Implementation for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda

Addressing the issue of mobilizing adequate means of implementation – financial resources, technology development and transfer and capacity-building – will be critical to delivering on and implementing a truly transformative and ambitious Post-2015 Development Agenda. The main objective of the high-level thematic debate will be to provide an opportunity for participants to address key issues related to mobilizing the means of implementation. The outcome will be a President’s summary, which will be circulated to all Member States and other stakeholders.

**24 February**

UN Headquarters, New York, U.S.A  

**High-level General Assembly Thematic Debate on “Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”**

Following a proposal by the Permanent Missions of Qatar, Thailand, Italy, Mexico and Morocco, together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the President of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly will convene a High-level General Assembly Thematic Debate on “Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”.

The overarching question that will be addressed in the thematic debate is how to tackle social and economic challenges and promote sustainable development through strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice systems, norms and standards, while combating the threats that undermine them, in particular transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking and corruption.  

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**9-20 March**

UN Headquarters, New York, U.S.A  

**59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59)**

The main focus of the session will be on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including current challenges that affect its implementation and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission will undertake a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The review (Beijing+20) will also include the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, the first five-year assessment conducted after the adoption of the Platform for Action, which highlighted further actions and initiatives. The session will also address opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda.  

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**9-11 April**

University of Bath, UK  

**The Second Environmental Protection and Sustainability Forum**  
**Towards Global Agreements on Environmental Protection and Sustainability**

The Department of Economics and the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Bath are hosting a three-day international forum to discuss state-of-the-art academic research on international environmental agreements informed by the insights of key policy-makers and practitioners in the field. The first Forum was hosted by the University of Exeter in 2011. As before, the second forum will not only involve top quality academic presentations (ten academic keynote presentations and 40 academic contributed papers) but ensures engagement with stakeholders through roundtable discussions and public lectures. Thus, the forum is distinct from many other major international conferences in seeking to connect researchers with those who design and implement policy, and those who are affected by such policy.  
http://www.bath.ac.uk/economics/events/news_0003.html
David Jensen  
**Maras - A study of their origin, international impact, and the measures taken to fight them**

245 Seiten; Berlin, 2013.

The maras, once regarded as a regular street gang in Los Angeles, have increasingly gained the attention of the media and national authorities due to their rapid expansion across the United States, Mexico, and Central America. Eventually, Central American governments began considering the maras, at least in their political discourses, as a threat to national security and thus started implementing measures to specifically combat them. In Honduras, the government reformed the Penal Code and conducted raids. The Salvadoran authorities, on the other hand, passed a law against the maras that ultimately remained in effect for only a couple of months. In Guatemala, the authorities failed to pass a specific law on the maras, but they still carried out massive raids.

This book provides an explanation to the origin of the maras and their territorial expansion. It analyzes the measures adopted against them in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, and compares the results obtained in each country. The particular set of events allows the author to study what happens when three countries with similar cultural backgrounds face the same problem in three different ways: How did the authorities enforce the measures in each country? Did the measures have an impact on national crime rates? How did the maras react to the measures? The answers to these questions will provide guidance to policy makers and a reference to researchers.
Leslie, Daniel Adeoyé  
**Legal Principles for Combatting Cyberlaundering, Springer, 2014**

This study describes the problem of cyberlaundering with the chief focus to devise a legal framework to combat it by underlying innovative solutions and dynamic remedies. Cyberlaundering is a hybrid subject which traverses two distinct fields of crime: cybercrime on one hand and money laundering on the other. It also merges aspects of information technology and international law. Given that cyberlaundering is a comparatively new phenomenon which is not yet conceptualized legally, criminal justice authorities find it hard to detect, investigate and prosecute it. The book describes how the internet is used for ‘washing’ illicit proceeds of crime and explores the problematic aspects of cyberlaundering, in particular how it manifests itself in practice, whether current laws exist to deal with the problem and what laws can be introduced to surmount the problem.

Costa, Antonio Maria  
**The Checkmate Pendulum - from Fiction to Reality**

The Checkmate Pendulum is a novel weaving policy analysis, fiction and arguments into a thrilling drama where international finance, politics and security interests collide at the personal and societal levels. The journalist Pierre G Bosco investigates the links between politics, crime and finance and is forced to address big questions such as greater EU integration or will it cause Europe’s disintegration? Despite their crimes, bankers are “too big to fail or jail?” Is this impunity because finance is war – and major powers are at war right now? In the dramatic search for answers, Bosco unveils an epic conspiracy. The much-sought prize is not just hegemony over Europe: it is global supremacy. This novel anticipated many political crises and predicts that there would be more, rather than fewer crises in and around Europe – economic, financial and social.