Newsletter May 2021

Center for Cyber Security and International Relations Studies

Cyber Policy, Diplomacy & Legal Framework

- New Data Protection Rules From Chinese Government Targeted Squarely at Limiting Power of Tech Giants
  The new Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) creates the country's first comprehensive set of data protection rules. The move follows the issuance of new antitrust rules also seemingly aimed specifically at tech giants.
- Current International Law Is Not an Adequate Regime for Cyberspace
  States increasingly agree that international law, specifically the U.N. Charter and rules of customary international law (CIL) derived from the charter's principles, applies to cyberspace. Yet both are a poor fit for cyber activities.
- UN cybercrime proposal could help autocrats stifle free speech, rights group says
  Human rights advocates are warning that a controversial proposal at the United Nations to counter cybercrime could validate tactics that autocratic governments around the world have used to criminalize free speech and security research.
- $2 trillion can build a lot of infrastructure. But can the U.S. secure it?
  President Joe Biden wants to pour trillions of dollars into upgrading America's roads, ports and schools, but his infrastructure plan has a missing piece: protecting the technology in those shiny new projects from a growing legion of hackers.

Cyber Security

- Ransomware: How the NHS learned the lessons of WannaCry to protect hospitals from attack
  WannaCry happened before ransomware rose to become the significant cybersecurity issue it is today and the NHS and National Cyber Security Centre know that if another ransomware campaign infiltrated the network, the impact could be devastating – particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Employee training is key to keeping your enterprise safe

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Enterprises invest enormous resources in cybersecurity, hiring experienced CISOs, and implementing cutting-edge technologies. They spend so much on cybersecurity that the global cybersecurity market is expected to reach close to $420 billion by 2028.

- The Colonial Pipeline Hack Is a New Extreme for Ransomware
  For years, the cybersecurity industry has warned that state-sponsored hackers could shut down large swathes of US energy infrastructure in a geopolitically motivated act of cyberwar. But now apparently profit-focused cybercriminal hackers have inflicted a disruption that military and intelligence agency hackers have never dared to, shutting down a pipeline that carries nearly half the fuel consumed on the East Coast of the United States.
- Apple supplier Quanta hit with $50 million ransomware attack from REvil
  Quanta Computer Inc. acknowledged the attack in a statement made to Bloomberg, stating that the company's information security team worked with external experts to deal with cyber attacks on a small number of servers. The company also told Bloomberg that there has been no material impact on business operations.

Cyber Warfare, Intelligence and Terrorism

- Ransomware: 'We won't pay ransom,' says Ireland after attack on health service
  Ireland's Health Service Executive (HSE) has ruled out giving in to hackers' demands as the country's healthcare and social services continue to deal with the disruption caused by a significant ransomware attack that occurred a few days ago.

- Intelligence community creating hub to gird against foreign influence
  The nation's top spy agency has begun work to establish a hub to combat hostile foreign meddling in U.S. affairs, following multiple assessments that Russia and other countries have sought to sway elections and sow chaos among the American people.
- Foreign Secretary issues warning to Russia on ransomware
  The UK foreign secretary Dominic Raab has issued a warning to Russia about sheltering those behind ransomware attacks. Russia "can't just wave their hands and say it's nothing to do with them", he said. "Even if it is not directly linked to the state they have a responsibility to prosecute those gangs and individuals."
- Beyond Lazarus: North Korean cyber-threat groups become top-tier, 'reckless' adversaries
  Crippled by economic sanctions and isolated from the rest of the world bar China, North Korea is increasingly relying on cybercrime to keep its economy running. Over recent years, the North Korea has evolved from a nuisance to its neighbor and rival South Korea and purveyor of ransomware and DDoS attacks to become the scourge of banks and cryptocurrency exchanges.

Emerging Technologies

- Crypto and blockchain must accept they have a problem, then lead in sustainability

As the price of bitcoin hits record highs and cryptocurrencies become increasingly mainstream, the industry's expanding carbon footprint becomes harder to ignore.

- Artificial Intelligence without bias: Why it is needed and how we can ensure a fairer future

Organisations working on developing unbiased data-driven AI solutions need to do so without any link to race, gender, or any other prejudice of humankind. Some have suggested removing the labels that make the algorithm biased in the first place

- Quantum Computing: Is IonQ Worth The Leap?

Quantum computing is to artificial intelligence what nuclear weapons are to bombs. Corporates, institutions and other entities are thus racing to build such a new type of computer, a quantum computer, that will bring the computational hardware required to match and exceed the human brain.

Italian Focus

- Cyber and Intelligence, a new agency is coming

A governance reform designed by the delegated authority Franco Gabrielli which envisages the birth of a cyber agency outside the intelligence sector and the return of the cyber "operations" of the 007s.

- Italy fines Google €102 million for abuse of dominant position

Italy's antitrust authority on Thursday slapped a €102.8 million fine on Google for the competition law charge of 'abuse of dominant position'. The Competition and Market Authority (AGCM) said the fine was due to Google refusing to allow Enel X Italia to develop a version of its JuicePass app compatible with Android Auto.

- Cybersecurity in the PNRR and Italia Digitale 2026 Strategy: resources and goals

Italia Digitale 2026 provides for measures to counter the increase in vulnerabilities and cyber threats starting with the implementation of the National Cyber Security Perimeter and the strengthening of defense.

European Focus

- A European approach to Artificial intelligence

A resilient Europe fit for the Digital Decade is one where people and businesses benefit from artificial intelligence-generated improvements in industry and day-to-day life. For example, artificial intelligence (AI) can help

to treat diseases and minimise the environmental impact of farming.

- EU and French cybersecurity heads call for greater cooperation, extra resources
  The heads of the European and French cybersecurity agencies, who spoke to French senators on Thursday morning (6 May), called for more cooperation between EU countries and additional resources, pointing to much higher spending on cybersecurity in the United States.
- Germany to invest €2bn in building first quantum computer
  The German Aerospace Centre (DLR), the national aeronautics and space research centre, will receive the largest share of the funds (€720m). The funds will help it team up with industry – ranging from large companies to start-ups – in order to form two consortia for quantum computing.
- Facebook faces prospect of 'devastating' data transfer ban after Irish ruling
  Ireland's data regulator can resume a probe that may trigger a ban on Facebook's transatlantic data transfers, the High Court ruled on Friday (14 May), raising the prospect of a stoppage that the company warns would have a devastating impact on its business. The case stems from EU concerns that US government surveillance may not respect the privacy rights of EU citizens when their personal data is sent to the United States for commercial use.