

## The Silk Road of Crime: Chinese Criminal Networks

### Description

Chinese criminal networks have built a global illicit infrastructure and the Western Hemisphere is now a key battlespace. [Economic and Legal Warfare Project](#) hosted a fireside chat to discuss how Chinese criminal groups connect chemical suppliers, Mexican cartels, Latin American corruption, diaspora associations, digital scam syndicates, and sophisticated money-laundering pipelines that move billions across borders.

The result is a converging threat: transnational organized crime fused with authoritarian influence, illicit finance, and strategic competition.

Weâ??re joined by leading experts:

**Hamlet Yousef** â?? Advisor to the Irregular Warfare Initiativeâ??s Economic and Legal Warfare Project. He is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of IronGate Capital Advisors, a leading defense tech focused VC firm. Prior to this he has extensive experience in the Federal government serving in key roles in national security and diplomacy.

**Leland Lazarus** â?? Founder & CEO, Lazarus Consulting; former U.S. Foreign Service Officer; former Special Assistant to two SOUTHCOM Commanders; leading expert on Chinaâ??Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) security; author of *The Silk Road of Crime* testimony.

**Sebastian Rotella** â?? Peabody Awardâ??winning investigative journalist at ProPublica; global expert on transnational crime, the fentanyl trade, money laundering, and the â??Flying Moneyâ?• Chinese laundering model; author of major investigations into Chinese criminal networksâ?? role in U.S.â??Mexico drug pipelines; author of four books on international organized crime (fiction and non-fiction).

---

*Views expressed in this article solely reflect those of the author(s) and do not reflect the official position of the Irregular Warfare Initiative, Princeton Universityâ??s Empirical Studies of Conflict Project, the Modern War Institute at West Point, or the United States Government.*

### Date Created

2025/12/31

---