

# Trump Tells Congress Syria Attack Ordered to Protect U.S. Interest

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump told Congress that his decision to attack Syria was in the interest of the United States, adding that further actions are being considered.

"I acted in the vital national security and foreign policy interest of the United States," Trump said in a letter to both chambers of the Congress dated Saturday.

"The United States will take additional action, as necessary and appropriate, to further its important national interests," Trump said.

Trump stated that informing the Congress of the background and motives behind the decision to attack Syria was in consistent with the



War Powers Resolution.

The United States on Thursday launched 59 Tomahawk missiles at Syria to neutralize its chemical weapon arsenal, two days after reports of a chemical weapons attack emerged from the battleground in Syria, which the West said the Syrian government should be to blame.

Trump's decision raised controversy among U.S. lawmakers and foreign governments, while some supported the punitive move against the Syrian government, others questioned whether it was appropriate to commit such an action of war without authorization from the U.S. Congress and the United Nations Security Council. (Xinhua)

## Russia, Iran Army Chiefs Vow to Continue Syria Fight

TEHRAN - The army chiefs of Russia and Iran discussed the US strikes in Syria by phone on Saturday, and vowed to continue the fight against "terrorists" and their supporters, Iranian media reported. The two chiefs of staff, Major General Mohammad Bagheri and General Valery Gerasimov, "condemned the American operation against a Syrian air base which is an aggression against an independent country", state news

agency IRNA said. The American strikes "aim at slowing the victories of the Syrian army and its allies, and reinforcing terrorist groups", they said in a statement. The two army leaders vowed to continue their military cooperation in support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad "until the total defeat of the terrorists and those that support them", according to the Mehr news agency. (AFP)

## Russia Responsible 'By Proxy' for Suspected Syrian Chemical Attack: UK Minister

LONDON - British Defence Secretary Michael Fallon on Sunday accused Russia of being responsible "by proxy" for the death of 87 civilians killed last week in a suspected chemical weapons attack. "Assad's principal backer is Russia. By proxy Russia is responsible for every civilian death last week," Fallon wrote in an opinion column published in The Sunday Times.

"If Russia wants to be absolved of responsibility for future attacks,

Vladimir Putin needs to enforce commitments, to dismantle Assad's chemical weapons arsenal for good, and to get fully engaged with the UN peacekeeping progress," he added.

Fallon reiterated Britain's position that Assad should quit.

"Someone who uses barrel bombs and chemicals to kill his own people simply cannot be the future leader of Syria," he wrote. Assad's future role is a key sticking point --



the rebels and their international backers demand that he must step down. But Assad refuses to

budge. His key ally in Moscow has backed him to the hilt against the rebels. (AFP)

## Moscow to Discuss Counter-Terrorism During Tillerson's Visit: Russian FM

MOSCOW - Russia intends to discuss international counter-terrorism with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson during his upcoming visit next week, despite clouded Russian-U.S. ties, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Saturday. "We have a multitude of topics, among which international counter-terrorism is of great significance," Zakharova told Russia's Rossiya-1 TV channel. "Moscow is ready to cooperate with Washington even at the toughest moment of bilateral relations," she said.

The U.S. military fired 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles at a Syrian military airfield

in the central province of Homs Thursday, raising tensions for Russian-U.S. ties.

"We will listen to what Tillerson has to say (about the U.S. missile strike in Syria). It is necessary to make it absolutely clear that such U.S. military action is unacceptable to us," the spokeswoman added. According to a Pentagon statement, the strike was in response to the Syrian government's chemical attack on Tuesday in the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun in the country's northwestern province of Idlib.

Noting that the United States has recently ... (More on P4)... (19)

## US, China must Keep Good Relations to Benefit World: U.S. Dignitaries

HOUSTON - The United States and China, two major countries in the world today, must keep good relations and strengthen their win-win cooperation as this will not only benefit the two countries, but also the whole world, some well-known Americans has said.

Charles Foster, chairman of U.S.-China Partnership and former chairman of Asia Society Texas Center, Chase Untermeyer, former U.S. Ambassador to Qatar, and Neil Bush, the son and private representative to former U.S. President George H. W. Bush,

shared the view that the U.S.-China relations are the most important one in the world.

In their interviews with Xinhua on Friday on the sideline of the 10th National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC) in Houston, Texas, the U.S. dignitaries said such relations will have significant impacts on the two countries and the world as a whole. "Meetings between the heads of state of China and the United States have always played a critical role in defining and maintaining this important bilateral relationship, no



more so than today after a very bumpy start by President Donald Trump," Foster said. "Chinese President Xi Jinping's meeting with President Trump indicates that both recognize the critical need to support

and reinvigorate our most important bilateral relationship," he said. From his point of view, Houston has played a greater role in U.S.-China policy than one might recognize. (Xinhua)

## U.S. Aircraft Carrier Strike Group Heads toward Korean Peninsula

LOS ANGELES - The U.S. Carl Vinson Strike Group has departed from Singapore and sailed northward to the Western Pacific ocean near the Korean Peninsula, the United States Pacific Fleet Commander announced Saturday.

The deployment came amid rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea test-fired another ballistic missile recently, and was viewed as further strengthening of U.S. presence in the region, according to local media reports citing U.S. military



officials. Adm. Harry Harris, commander of U.S. Pacific Command, directed the operation, said a press release posted on the fleet's official website.

The strike group, which includes the Nimitz-class aircraft supercarrier USS Carl Vinson as well as several other missile destroyers and missile cruisers, ... (More on P4)... (20)

## Assad must Go after 'Chemical Attack': US Envoy

BEIRUT - Washington's UN ambassador said that Syria's President Bashar al-Assad cannot stay in power after a suspected chemical attack that prompted the first direct US military action against his government. Nikki Haley's comments in an interview airing Sunday came as part of an apparent shift in US policy towards Assad's government after the alleged chemical attack last week on the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun that killed 87 people, including many children.

Images of civilians suffering the apparent effects of a gas attack, including convulsions, vomiting and foaming at the mouth, provoked international outrage and prompted US President Donald Trump to order a strike on a Syrian airbase.

In the interview with CNN, Haley said peace in Syria ... (More on P4)... (21)

## Missile Attacks Fail to Achieve Goal: Assad



DAMASCUS - Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said Sunday that the U.S. attack on Syria failed to achieve its goal in supporting the rebel groups, according to state news agency SANA.

The U.S. has failed to achieve the goal behind the aggression, which was lifting the morale of the U.S.-backed terrorist groups after the victories made by the Syrian army recently, Assad said during a phone call he received from his Iranian counterpart, Hasan Rohani.

Assad said the Syrian army is determined to crush terrorism on each spot of the Syrian territories. For his part, Rohani, whose country is a main backer of the Assad government, expressed his country's vehement condemnation to the U.S. strike, stressing his Tehran's ongoing support to the Syrian government. Earlier on Friday, the United States targeted the Shayrat air base in Homs with nearly 60 Tomahawk missiles, killing six Syrian soldiers and nine civilians, including four children, and destroying nine Syrian warplanes. The U.S. government said the attack on the air base came in retaliation for the strikes by the Syrian air force on the town of Khan Sheikhoun on Tuesday. Activists accused the Syrian army of firing toxic gas on the town, killing 70 people, while the Syrian army said the strike targeted an arm depot containing toxic gas, blaming the rebels for stockpiling such materials. (Xinhua)

## Nieghbor News

### Rouhani Reaffirms Support for Assad in Call

TEHRAN - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani called Bashar al-Assad to reaffirm his support for the Syrian leader in the wake of a US missile strike, Rouhani's office said on Sunday.

"The nation of Iran will remain alongside the Syrian nation in fighting terrorism and safeguarding Syria's territorial integrity," Rouhani said in the call on Saturday evening, according to a statement on the presidency website.

He said Western allegations that Assad's regime was behind a chemical weapons attack last week were "baseless" and suggested it was carried out by rebel groups to influence global public opinion. "Terrorists must not be allowed to use such weapons to accuse others

and pave the way for actions that are contrary to international law," said Rouhani. Assad said the US missile strikes on a Syrian air base, launched in response to the chemical weapons attack, only made him more determined.

"The United States failed to achieve its goal with this aggression, which was to raise the morale of the terrorist groups it supports after the victories achieved by the Syrian army," Assad told Rouhani, according to Syrian state news agency SANA. "The Syrian people and army are determined to crush terrorism in every part of Syrian territory."

Iran and Russia have been the key backers of Assad and refer to all Syrian opposition groups as "terrorists". (AFP)

### Sharif Wants Ulema to Counter Propaganda Against Islam

ISLAMABAD - Imam-e-Kaaba Sheikh Saleh bin Muhammad Bin Talib called on Pakistani Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif on Saturday.

The PM welcomed the cleric to Pakistan and said that the Pakistanis attach great religious and spiritual attachment with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to the Kaaba. The PM said, "Although Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are geographically located apart but mutual Islamic and cultural values have kept our hearts together." He said that relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have become closer and stronger and the people of both the countries have lot of respect for

each other. The PM emphasised that Islam is the message of love, peace, patience, forgiveness and respect for humanity and it is the need of time to spread this message all over the world.

The PM said that religious leaders and scholars should unanimously counter negative propaganda being wrongly portrayed against Islam. Imam-e-Kaaba thanked Nawaz for the warm welcome accorded to him at Pakistan. Habeebullah Al-Bokhari, acting ambassador of Saudi Arabia and Religious Affairs Minister Muhammad Yousof were also present. (Daily Times)

### Int'l Press Club to Work on Permanent Basis in Tashkent

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan's Ministry of Justice has registered the International Press Club as a non-profit organization, the country's national news agency (UzA) reported.

The main purpose of the press club is to develop the Uzbek information space and bring objective information about the changes occurring in Uzbekistan's economic, social and political life to the international community. It is planned to hold meetings and panel discussions with state officials, heads of ministries

and experts, as well as media meetings with heads of delegations and international organizations coming to Uzbekistan, at the Press Club platform.

The International Press Club founders are the Uzbek National Television and Radio Company, Uzbekistan National News Agency, Jahon and Uzbekistan Today information agencies, TV channels UzReport and Zor TV, "Halk Suzi", "Narodnoye Slovo", "Business Vestnik Vostoka" newspapers, as well as daryo.uz and gazeta.uz websites. (Agencies)

### Russia to Bolster Strategic Partnership with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan: Putin

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed confidence that Russia's strategic partnership with Turkmenistan and Tajikistan will further develop as he extended congratulations to the two neighbors on the 25th anniversary of diplomatic ties on Saturday.

In two letters respectively to Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, Putin praised the fruitful cooperation and bilateral agreements in various fields that Russia and the two countries have achieved over the years, underlining that their constructive ties will keep on "contributing to peace and stability in Central Asia." "I am confident

that by working together we will further enhance our mutually beneficial partnership for the benefit of the people of Russia and Turkmenistan." Putin's letter to Berdimuhamedov read according to the Kremlin's website. In the letter to Rahmon, Putin also spoke highly of the strategic partnership between Russia and Tajikistan, calling for joint efforts in fighting international terrorism.

"I firmly believe that Russia and Tajikistan will continue to strengthen their strategic partnership in all areas, coordinate their efforts in countering international terrorism, extremism, cross-border crime and other challenges to regional security," Putin said. (Xinhua)

### Iranian President Unveils three Nuclear Projects

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has unveiled three domestic nuclear projects in the provinces of Alborz, Qazvin and Yazd through video link on the occasion of the National Nuclear Technology Day. During the ceremony, a center based in the northern province of Alborz was inaugurated for producing and developing cyclotron radiopharmaceuticals, the government's official news website reported.

The center is expected to produce fluorodeoxyglucose (FDG) which is a radiopharmaceutical used in the medical imaging modality positron ... (More on P4)... (22)

### U.S. Aircraft Carrier may Cause Pyongyang's Hasty Responses: Russian Official

MOSCOW - A Russian official expressed worries on Sunday that the deployment of a U.S. aircraft carrier strike group near the Korean Peninsula may push the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to respond hastily. The U.S. Carl Vinson Strike Group has departed from Singapore and sailed northward to the Western Pacific ocean near the Korean Peninsula, the United States Pacific Fleet Commander announced Saturday. The deployment came amid rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula after the DPRK test-fired a ballistic missile on Wednesday. If Pyongyang

sees the deployment as a threat to its security, it may rush into actions in response, said Victor Ozerov, chairman of the Russian Federation Council's Committee on Defense and Security, according to a RIA Novosti report. Ozerov said international law does not prohibit the U.S. navy forces from shipping toward the Korean Peninsula, but its military presence will not be good for maintaining dialogue with Pyongyang. It is even possible that the United States could launch sudden strikes against the DPRK just as it did to Syria, he added. (Xinhua)