

BRICS Enters Second Golden Decade under China's Presidency: Russian Deputy FM

MOSCOW - The BRICS mechanism under China's chairmanship this year has entered the second golden decade following 10 years of prosperity, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has said. "We do not see a deceleration in BRICS development nor a fading interest of any partner in this format. We note with great satisfaction that BRICS continues to consolidate and be approved in the international arena and it has become an indispensable factor in influencing international affairs," he told Xinhua Tuesday in an interview.

Meanwhile, BRICS retains its character of an informal association, where there is very little bureaucracy but much



dialogue and search for compromises, according to Ryabkov. Leaders of the five BRICS countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - will meet in China's southeastern coastal city of Xiamen early next month for their ninth annual summit. Since the first foreign ministers' meeting in 2006, BRICS countries have seen 10 years of rapid expansion in trade and economy. They currently account for nearly a quarter of the world economy and contributed more than half of global economic growth in 2016. The upcoming Xiamen summit will serve as an opportunity for BRICS leaders to meet and map out for the future. (Xinhua)

S.Korean President Emphasizes Improved Ties with DPRK for Denuclearized Peninsula

SEOUL - South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Wednesday emphasized the improved relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for the denuclearized Korean Peninsula. Moon made the remarks during a meeting with officials from the foreign and unification ministries, according to the presidential Blue House. The meeting was arranged to hear the opinions of the working-level officials about security and foreign affairs. Attending the discus-

sion session were senior presidential secretaries, including chief of staff and top security advisor, as well as foreign and unification ministers, director general-level officials and lawmakers of the ruling Democratic Party. When the S.Korea-DPRK relations were good, the Korean Peninsula's nuclear issue showed a hope of resolution and the peninsula's situations were stably managed, Moon said, adding that "(we) need to look back on that experience." (Xinhua)

Britain to Draft Guidelines for Leaving European Court Jurisdiction

LONDON - One of the most important of the five British government Brexit position papers will on Wednesday reinforce Britain's message that it will leave the European Court of Justice (CJEU).

The latest position paper on a future partnership with the European Union (EU) will emphasize that it is not necessary or appropriate for the CJEU to have direct jurisdiction over a non-member state, and will say that such an arrangement would be unprecedented.

The paper will specifically explore enforcement of rights and obligations, and look at both judicial and political dispute resolutions in a post-Brexit Britain. As Britain is a member of the 28-state European Union, the CJEU has been the top court in the British legal system.

A British government spokesperson said on Tuesday: "We have long been clear that in leaving the EU we will bring an end to the direct



jurisdiction of the CJEU in the UK."

The government paper will provide examples of existing ways of re-

solving disputes in international agreements, without the CJEU having direct jurisdiction in Britain. (Xinhua)

Turkish FM Says Iraqi Kurdish Referendum "Wrong Decision"



BAGHDAD - Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on Wednesday arrived here to hold talks with Iraqi leaders and to demand that the Iraqi Kurds cancel their

referendum for independence. "We have said, several times, that the referendum of Kurdistan is a wrong decision, and today when I will visit Arbil (capital of

the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan), I will repeat what I said that the referendum is wrong decision which will create problems and a new crisis," Cavusoglu said at a joint news conference with his Iraqi counterpart Ibrahim al-Jaafari. "We hope that Arbil would retreat and cancel the referendum, as it is for the interest of the Kurds to preserve Iraq's unity," Cavusoglu said. "We wish that all the problems between Baghdad and Arbil be solved to preserve the integrity

of Iraq. We (Turkey) are ready to play a role to help solving the problems if the two sides asked us," he said. The Turkish minister said that he discussed with Jaafari the bilateral relations and the battles against terrorist Islamic State (IS) group in Tal Afar in northern Iraq. "Turkey will support Iraq in the reconstruction of the devastated areas, as we supported Iraq in its war with the terrorist Daesh (IS group)," Cavusoglu said. (Xinhua)

Russia's Anti-Terrorism Agency Says Armed Group Neutralized

MOSCOW - A group of suspected militants in the North Caucasus region has been eliminated, Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAC) said Wednesday.

According to preliminary information, members of the group in the Republic of Ingushetia were on the federal wanted list for attacks against a Federal Security Service building and a police post, as well as the murder of two traffic policemen, the NAC said in a statement.

Special forces blocked the area around a country house in which the suspects were discovered, and evacuated nearby residents.

The group declined to surrender, and opened fire. The house was completely destroyed by a powerful explosion during the shootout. No casualties among law enforcement officers or civilians were reported. The statement did not name the source of the explosion, nor did it give the number of the suspects. (Xinhua)

Germany's Merkel Says "America First" Attitude will Hurt US

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel says she understands the support in the United States for the "America first" attitude that got President Donald Trump elected, but that in the end it will only hurt the country.

Speaking at a forum Wednesday organized by Germany's Handelsblatt newspaper, Merkel said many in the U.S. see globalization as a situation in which one country profits at the expense of others. But she says her view is that everyone can win. She says "an America that doesn't bother with anything in the world but only with itself will not be a great America." She added that though she has differences of opinion with Trump, he fought a "hard campaign" to become the Republican candidate and then win the election, and "that deserves the necessary respect." (AP)

France's Macron calls labor rules a betrayal of EU principles

SALZBURG, Austria - French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday described European Union labor rules over 'posted workers' as a betrayal of the bloc's fundamental principles as he embarked on a three-day trip to central and eastern Europe. "The single European market and the free movement of workers is not meant to create a race to the bottom in terms of social regulations," Macron said in remarks alongside Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern. "It is exactly this that is fueling populism and eroding confidence in the European project," said Macron, urging reform that better protect European citizens from globalization. (Reuters)

Trump Considers Terminating NAFTA, Reaffirms Building of Southern Border Wall

PHOENIX, United States - U.S. President Donald Trump said Tuesday that the United States would probably terminate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and reaffirmed the building of a southern border wall with Mexico. "Personally, I don't think we can make a deal ... I think we'll end up probably terminating NAFTA at some point," Trump told the crowd in a prime-time address on Tuesday evening at the "Make



America Great Again" rally in Phoenix, Arizona.

On Sunday, the three parties wrapped up the first round of renegotiations on the trilateral

trading bloc in Washington D.C., pledging to continue a rapid pace of talks in the coming months to update the 23-year-old trade deal. (Xinhua)

UN Chief Urges Related Parties to Keep Iran Nuclear Deal

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday asked the parties concerned to keep the Iran nuclear deal, which risks falling apart amid mounting hostility between Washington and Tehran.

"For the secretary-general, the Iran nuclear deal is one of the most important diplomatic achievements in our search for peace and stability," Guterres' spokesman Stephane Dujarric told a news briefing at UN Headquarters on Tuesday. "Everyone involved needs to do its utmost to support that agreement." The UN response came

at a critical time when the agreement between Iran and the five world powers of Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States faces a serious threat of collapse.

Iran's atomic chief Ali Akbar Salehi warned earlier Tuesday that his country could resume production of highly enriched uranium within five days if the 2015 deal is revoked. "If we decide, we can reach 20 percent (uranium) enrichment within five days," he was quoted by state media as saying. But he added that Iran's priority was to preserve the nuclear deal. (Xinhua)

UN Committee Urges U.S. to "Unequivocally" Reject and Condemn Racist Events

GENEVA - The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on Wednesday issued a statement, calling on the United States and its high-level politicians to "unequivocally and unconditionally" reject and condemn racist hate speech and crimes in Charlottesville and throughout the country. "There should be no place in the world for racist white supremacist ideas or any similar ideologies that reject the core human rights principles of human dignity and equality," the statement said. "We are alarmed by the racist demonstrations, with overtly racist slogans, chants and salutes by white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and the Ku Klux Klan, promoting white supremacy and inciting racial discrimination and hatred," said CERD Chairperson Anastasia Crickley.

In addition to the criminal investigation of the individual who ploughed his car into a crowd of peaceful protesters and killed a woman, the UN Committee asked the U.S. authorities to undertake concrete measures "to address the root causes of the proliferation of such racist manifestations."

The UN Committee, supposed to monitor implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, also called on the U.S. to ensure that the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly are not exercised with the aim of destroying or denying the rights and freedoms of others. (Xinhua)

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Pak Foreign Secretary Holds Bilateral Talks with Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister

ISLAMABAD - On third and final day of her visit to China, Pakistani Foreign Secretary Ms. Tehmina Janjua held bilateral talks with Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Kong Xuanguo. The consultations were wide-ranging and covered all aspects of bilateral relations between Pakistan and China including defence & security cooperation, bilateral trade and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The two sides agreed to maintain the momentum of high-level bilateral exchanges and visits. They agreed on the need to hold various bilateral consultative mechanisms including the strategic dialogue at

an early date. Regional and international issues including the situation in South Asia and Afghanistan were also discussed. Foreign Secretary and Assistant Minister agreed to enhance policy communication and coordination in the emerging global and regional situation.

They shared the commitment to continue close coordination in multilateral forums including the United Nations and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The Foreign Secretary offered Pakistan's full cooperation during China's chairmanship of SCO including for the SCO Summit to be held in Beijing next year. (PR)

Iran, Saudi Arabia to Exchange Diplomatic Visits: Iranian FM

BEIRUT - Iran and Saudi Arabia will exchange diplomatic visits soon, Tehran said on Wednesday, indicating a possible thaw in relations between the regional rivals since they severed diplomatic ties last year.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told the Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA) that the visits could take place after the haj pilgrimage ends in the first week of September.

"The visas have been issued for both sides to make this trip," Zarif said, according to ISNA. "We are waiting for the final steps to be completed so diplomats from

the two countries can inspect their embassies and consulates." Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia are at their worst in years, with each accusing the other of subverting regional security and supporting opposite sides in conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Iranian protesters stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran in Jan. 2016 after a prominent Saudi Shi'ite cleric was executed, prompting Riyadh to close the embassy. Saudi Arabia and several other Arab governments have severed ties with Qatar, citing its support of Iran as one of the main reasons. (Reuters)

Pakistan, Tajikistan Agree to Boost Trade Cooperation

ISLAMABAD - In order to embrace a sustainable development model, Pakistan and Tajikistan have agreed on extending their bilateral relations in different sectors, particularly trade, tourism and aviation.

Different matters related to mutual cooperation were discussed in a meeting between Advisor to Prime Minister on Aviation Sardar Mehtab Ahmad Khan and Ambassador of Tajikistan in Pakistan Serali Jononov on Tuesday.

The Tajik ambassador not only appreciated the endeavours of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif but also acknowledged his contribution towards enhancing and accelerating the relations with Tajikistan.

He admired the significant and protagonist contribution made by Sardar Mehtab Ahmad Khan in order to restructuring Pakistan International Airlines and the aviation

sector. Sardar Mehtab said that the incumbent government has always focused on strengthening bilateral relations and "we will always strive for accomplishing the dreams and vision of Nawaz Sharif to ensure the prosperity and sustainable peace not only in Pakistan but in the whole region."

The advisor said that Pakistan and Tajikistan were close friends and that their friendship will last forever. "We are eager to collaborate on different projects with Tajikistan to nourish this relationship and to collaborate in energy, aviation and tourism sector," he said. The advisor said that being democratic countries, Pakistan and Tajikistan have very strong bond. In order to ripen the mutual understanding, Pakistan and Tajikistan should go hand in hand by supporting each other. (Monitoring Desk)

Uzbekistan, China Discuss Cooperation within SCO Framework

TASHKENT - The delegation of Uzbek Foreign Ministry held a meeting with Chinese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Li Huilai on Wednesday, according to the information published on the Uzbekistan's government portal. The delegation is participating in the regular meeting of the Council of National Coordinators of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Yangzhou. The sides discussed the state and prospects of bilateral

cooperation within the SCO framework and other issues of the current Chinese chairmanship in the organization. Special attention was paid to the practical implementation of the initiatives of the Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, voiced at the SCO summit in Astana in June 2017. The exchange of views on a number of aspects of Uzbek-Chinese cooperation, international and regional issues also took place at the meeting. (Trend)