

# Fighting Islamist Terrorism 1st Priority French Foreign Policy: Macron

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday presented the keystones of his foreign policy to the annual Ambassadors' Conference, with combating Islamist terrorism topping the list. "The fight against Islamist terrorism is the first priority of France's foreign policy; the security of the French people is the main purpose of our diplomacy," he said in a speech to 170 foreign ambassadors to France.

Macron said he wanted France to play a bigger role in resolving conflicts in the Middle East.

"The Islamic State is our



enemy. Restoring peace and stability in Iraq and Syria is our priority," he stressed. He also revealed the plan to host an international conference on combating terrorist financing in France at the beginning of next year.

"If we want to achieve results in fighting terrorism and its financing, we need to maintain ties with everyone and have a clear timetable and clearly defined priorities," he said.

Domestically, Macron said he plans to lift the state of emergency in France, which has been in place since the Paris terrorist attacks in 2015, which killed 130 people. (Xinhua)

## Europe Still 'Hasn't Done Homework' on Refugees: Merkel

BERLIN - Chancellor Angela Merkel said Tuesday that she did the right thing by allowing large numbers of migrants into Germany two years ago, but said Europe hasn't done enough to resolve the refugee problem properly since then.

At a wide-ranging news conference a day after she discussed the continuing influx of migrants from Africa with other European leaders, Merkel tackled head-on an issue that once looked likely to be a liability in

Germany's Sept. 24 election but so far has failed to hurt her.

Recent polls suggest the chancellor's popularity has returned to levels from before 2015, when the refugee crisis reached its peak. They show Merkel's conservative bloc leading 13-17 percentage points over her main challenger, Martin Schulz of the center-left Social Democrats. There's little sign of widespread desire for a change at the top after 12 years. (AP)

## China, ASEAN to Hold Joint Meeting on DOC Implementation

BEIJING - China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will hold the 22nd Joint Working Group meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) on Aug. 30 in Manila, the Philippines.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a routine press briefing on Tuesday that involved parties will exchange views on implementing the DOC, boosting maritime cooperation as well as consultation on

the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea.

Currently the situation in the South China Sea has been stabilized and cooled down due to the joint efforts of China and regional countries, Hua said.

"Parties concerned have returned to the track of dialogue and negotiation, and are committed to implementing the DOC in a comprehensive and efficient way, and safeguarding peace and stability in the South



China Sea by controlling disputes, building mutual trust and boosting cooperation," Hua said. She said parties concerned will continue the

momentum of dialogue and cooperation, strive for more progress, and pave way for further consultation on the COC. (Xinhua)

## Trump Says 'All Options' on Table after North Korea Fires Missile over Japan



WASHINGTON / SEOUL - President Donald Trump warned on Tuesday that "all options are on the table" as the United States considers its response to North

Korea's firing of a ballistic missile over northern Japan's Hokkaido island into the sea.

The test, one of the most provocative ever from the reclusive state, came

as U.S. and South Korean forces conduct annual military exercises on the peninsula, angering North Korea which sees them as a preparation for invasion.

North Korea has conducted dozens of ballistic missile tests under its young leader, Kim Jong Un, the most recent on Saturday, in defiance of U.N. sanctions, but firing projectiles over mainland Japan is rare.

Trump, who has vowed not to let North Korea develop nuclear missiles that can hit the main-

land United States, said the world had received North Korea's latest message "loud and clear."

"This regime has signaled its contempt for its neighbors, for all members of the United Nations, and for minimum standards of acceptable international behavior," Trump said in a statement.

"Threatening and destabilizing actions only increase the North Korean regime's isolation in the region and among all nations of the world. All options are on the table," he said. (Reuters)

## Turkey Pulls out of Europe as EU Accession Talks Break Down

ANKARA - European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on Tuesday warned Ankara was fast withdrawing from Europe and blamed Turkey for the breakdown of its EU accession talks, local media reported.

Juncker told an annual conference of EU ambassadors that "Turkey is withdrawing from Europe by giant steps," the report said.

Relations between Ankara and Berlin have hit rock bottom in recent months, stoking calls

for Ankara's EU accession talks to be suspended.

Turkey began formal membership talks in 2005 after years of foot-dragging by some EU member states such as France who were wary of admitting such a large Muslim country.

But progress has been slow and the negotiations came to a virtual halt last year after Erdogan began a massive crackdown following an attempted coup in July, sending ties plunging to a new low. (Xinhua)

## Water Scarcity Hampers Peace in Mideast: WB

GAZA - The fragility and conflicts in the Middle East region can be blamed on the failure of governments to address water scarcity, local media cited a World Bank report as saying Tuesday.

More than 60 percent of the region's population live in areas under high or very high water stress compared to just 35 percent worldwide, the report said.

Currently, more than half of waste water in the region is dumped into the environment untreated, resulting in waste and health risks, the report said. It added that political stability and economic growth in the Middle East could hinge on better management of scarce water resources. With poor access to water and poor sanitation, the region is suffering annual economic losses of as much as 21 billion U.S. dollars, according to the report. (Xinhua)

## Erdogan Blames World 'Blind and Deaf' to Muslim Rohingya Plight

ANKARA - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged the international community to step up efforts to help Myanmar's Muslim Rohingya minority, blaming the world was "blind and deaf" to their plight, local TV station reported Tuesday.

The Rohingya, one of the world's largest stateless communities, are fleeing in droves towards Bangladesh, trying to escape the latest surge in violence in Rakhine state between a shadowy militant group and Myanmar's military.

The UN refugee agency said over 3,000 had arrived in the past three days, as people told of how they fled for their lives from Myanmar's army. (Xinhua)

## APEC Senior Officials Discuss Trade, Investment, Economic Issues

HO CHI MINH CITY - The third Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM 3) of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) opened here Tuesday, touching upon trade, investment and economic issues among others.

The two-day SOM 3 in Ho Chi Minh City was attended by 21 APEC senior officials and nearly 200 delegates from APEC members and international organizations.

Addressing the meeting, Vietnamese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bui Thanh Son, Chair of SOM APEC 2017, said economies in the Asia-



Pacific region are accelerating trade liberalization, investment and inclusive growth, and the meeting would review regional cooperation and make preparation for APEC Economic Leaders' Week in November in the central Da Nang city.

At the meeting, the APEC Business Advisory Council and APEC committees on economy, trade, investment, budget management, and economic and technical cooperation presented outcomes of cooperation in the region in specific spheres. (Xinhua)

## France to Host Int'l Climate Summit in December: Macron

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron announced Tuesday that France will host an international summit on Dec. 12 to ensure the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The summit is scheduled to take place two years to the date when the historic agreement was reached at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21) in Paris.

The summit is expected to "make a key progress" and "mobilize the necessary funding" for the implementation of the agreement, Macron said in

a speech on foreign policy to ambassadors. The event will be organized in cooperation with the World Bank, and "all our partners who wish to be associated," Macron said.

Recalling the success of hosting the COP 21, the president said he would do everything to "preserve this agreement and ensure its best possible implementation."

"It is important to develop a close dialogue on this subject with partners who have decided to carry out an ambitious action in this area," he added. (Xinhua)

## Merkel, Macron Eye Deeper Eurozone Integration after German Election

BERLIN/PARIS - The leaders of Germany and France said on Tuesday they are ready to press ahead with deeper European integration, promising a tighter euro zone at the core of the European Union shaken by Britain's vote to leave.

French President Emmanuel Macron, elected in May on a pro-EU platform, said he wanted to strengthen Europe's single currency union in light of Brexit and pledged to announce proposals after Germany's election on Sept. 24.

"This is a revamp that we need," he told an annual assembly of French ambassadors in Paris, promising "concrete steps in around 10 areas" and adding that the EU could not afford to "get stuck in routine or technocratic quarrels".

"Brexit should not take up all our energy," he added as British and European Commission officials hold a third round of talks this week on Britain's departure from the EU.

In Berlin, Chancellor Angela Merkel, who met Macron on Monday, endorsed the idea of a European Monetary Fund and said she could imagine creating a combined European finance and economy minister.

Describing a European Monetary Fund as a "very good idea", Merkel told reporters: "It could make us even more stable and allow us to show the world that we have all the mechanisms in our own portfolio of the euro zone to be able to react well to unexpected situations." (Reuters)

## Neighbor News

### Chinese Premier Stresses Collaboration, Targeted Works in Poverty Reduction

BEIJING - Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has asked for an improved poverty reduction campaign through regional collaboration.

In a written message to a meeting on east-west collaboration for poverty reduction, the premier said China's poverty relief campaign is going through a critical stage and government agencies should keep up the fight for progress.

In the past year, results have been seen as the government increased help for developed eastern regions and underdeveloped western ones to cooperate by providing support in funding, personnel, technology and industrial development, he said. Li demanded

more works to bring growth to poor region.

Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang, who attended the meeting Tuesday, said east-west collaboration needs to be strengthened in accordance with the poverty reduction target. The two sides should expand cooperation to more sectors with more innovative measures, he said.

Eastern regions will make more room for industrial development while the western regions can quicken pace of poverty eradication, said Wang. China has set 2020 as the target year to complete the building of a "moderately prosperous society," which requires the eradication of poverty. (Xinhua)

### Iran Dismisses U.S. Demand for Inspection of Military Sites

TEHRAN - Iran's government spokesman said here Tuesday that the country's military sites are by no means accessible for inspections.

"Iran's military sites are restricted places, and not everybody can gain access to them," Mohammad Baqer Nobakht said at his weekly press briefing. Inspections into Iran's military bases are only the U.S. "illusions,"

Nobakht said, adding that the recent remarks by a U.S. official in this regard are unacceptable. In her recent visit to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) headquarters in Vienna, Nikki Haley, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, urged the IAEA to expand its inspections to

Iran's military sites under the 2015 international nuclear deal.

Iran struck a deal with the six world powers of Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States in July 2015 on a comprehensive deal, under which Iran agreed to limit its uranium-enrichment activities in return for the lifting of western and international sanctions.

The IAEA is responsible for the verification of Iran's compliance with the agreement through regular access to all Iranian nuclear facilities.

The international agreement is facing serious threats of collapse as tensions mounted between Washington and Tehran recently. (Xinhua)

### Pakistan, Tajikistan Reiterate Resolve to Step up Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon have reiterated their resolve to step-up bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation between the two countries.

The military's media wing said that General Bajwa called on Rahmon in Dushanbe on Monday, The Express Tribune reported.

The two discussed the security issues and pitched for dialogue in regional cooperation and support to Afghan-led and Afghan-owned initiatives.

President Rahmon also appreciated Pakistan for its efforts towards fighting against terrorism and peace.

Both countries have

pledged to enhance and expand Pakistan-Tajikistan cooperation in the fields of defence and security.

Meanwhile, China's Special Envoy on Afghanistan Affairs Ambassador Deng Xijun has said there is a need for a politically-negotiated settlement through an Afghan-led peace process in Afghanistan. Xijun was called on by Pakistan Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua on Monday afternoon to discuss "regional and international efforts for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan".

The envoy said their efforts towards eliminating terrorism should be recognised by the international community. (Agencies)

### Uzbekistan - Most Attractive Country for Russian Non-Primary Exports

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan became the most attractive country for Russian non-primary and non-energy export products.

The Russian Export Center presented an updated ranking of prospective importing countries on Tuesday, according to the information published on the center's official website.

In the updated ranking, Uzbekistan took over the first spot, while Poland was moved to second place. The top five

also included Germany, Turkey and India.

Analysts of the Russian Export Center made a ranking on the basis of 14 unique indicators, reflecting the prospects of non-primary exports of Russia to a particular country.

Imports from Russia, trade complementarity, transport accessibility, import growth rates, GDP growth are among these indicators.

Ranking is compiled of the data from 2015-2017. (Trend)