

UN Urges Businesses to Help Combat Pollution

NAIROBI - The United Nations on Sunday urged the global business community to play a bigger role in reducing pollution. UN Environment Chief Scientist Liu Jian told a business conference in Nairobi that the private sector can tackle pollution by embracing green technologies.

"Businesses are trying their best and they are at the initial stages. What is now required is policies and support to create enabling conditions to help the private sector further reduce their amount of pollution they are responsible for," Liu told a symposium ahead of the 3rd session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA). The UN Environment and



member states have already launched a Global Business Alliance for the Environment in the hope of galvanizing more private-sector support for combating pollution.

Liu noted that businesses can help to reduce the pollution menace by turning pollutants into resources by employing innovations.

The private sector is well placed to come up with solutions to the challenges facing the world, and the UN Environment has been playing a catalytic role in facilitating efforts to reduce pollution.

Liu noted that many businesses are adopting green technologies in their business practices. (Xinhua)

Turkey Cautious on U.S. Pledge to Stop Arming Syrian Kurdish Fighters

ANKARA - Turkey is cautiously pleased on the United States pledge to stop arming Syrian Kurdish fighters, that Washington has viewed as a key player against the Islamic State (IS), an issue that has been a major source of tension between the two countries.

With anti-IS operations in Syria coming to an end, the U.S. will focus on holding territory instead of arming the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday. Turkey considers the Dem-

ocratic Union Party (PYD) and its armed wing, the YPG, to be the Syrian affiliates of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist organization listed by Turkey, the U.S. and the EU. However, the U.S. has supported the PKK and the PYD as its ally on the ground in combating IS in Syria.

MATTIS MAKES CLEAR: U.S. TO STOP ARMING YPG

"The YPG is armed, and as the coalition stops offensive (operations), then obviously you don't need that," Mattis said. (Xinhua)

BRUSSELS - The European Union (EU) member states on Monday adopted its new anti-dumping rules with "market distortion approach" at its core.

The new legal framework removes the former distinction between market and non-market economies for calculating dumping while maintaining the same level of protection for producers, an EU statement said.

The Commission will now need to prove the existence of a "significant market distortion"

between a product's sale price and its production cost.

The Commission will also draft specific reports on countries or sectors describing distortions.

In line with current practice, it will be for EU firms to file complaints, but they will be able to use the Commission's reports to support their case. In November 2016, the European Commission proposed a non-exhaustive list of examples to be used to identify significant market distortions, unlocking its campaign to replace its

EU Member States Adopt New Anti-Dumping Rules



"surrogate country" approach with "market distortion." The European Parliament on Nov. 15 endorsed the new rules by 554 votes to 48. Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said the European

Union's new anti-dumping law that grants separate treatment for imports under "significant market distortions" is not in compliance with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. (Xinhua)

S. Korea, U.S. Kick off Biggest-Ever Air Force Exercise on Korean Peninsula



SEOUL - The combined air forces of South Korea and the United States on Monday kicked off their biggest-ever joint air force exercise on the Korean Peninsula, mobilizing about 230 fighter jets,

bombers and other combat planes, Yonhap news agency reported.

The South Korean air force was quoted as saying that the Vigilant ACE air combat exercise will be jointly conducted with the U.S.

Seventh Air Force from Monday to Friday to enhance joint wartime operation capability.

It was the largest-ever air force drill between the two allies as it involved more than some 12,000 personnel. The massive air combat drill came less than a week after the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) launched Hwasong-15, which it called a newly developed intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), on Nov. 29.

It traveled some 1,000 km after being lofted as high as 4,600 km, according to

South Korea's military. It said the DPRK missile is fired at a normal angle, and it could fly as long as 13,000 km, reaching Washington D.C. in the United States. Joining the Vigilant ACE would be 24 U.S. stealth fighter jets, including six F-22 fighters from Okinawa, Japan, six F-35A combat planes and 12 F-35B stealth fighter jets from the U.S. air force base in Japan. U.S. strategic B-1B Lancer bombers reportedly planned to stage a bombing exercise during the joint air force drill. (Xinhua)

UNGA President Regrets U.S. Withdrawal from Global Migration Compact

UNITED NATIONS - UN General Assembly President Miroslav Lajcak on Sunday expressed regret over a U.S. decision to withdraw from the global migration compact, a UN-led process toward safe, orderly and regular migration.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has been informed of the decision by U.S. President Donald Trump to end participation in the process that would achieve the first inter-governmentally negotiated agreement on interna-

tional migration by 2018, said the U.S. mission to the United Nations in a press statement on Saturday.

Lajcak regretted the U.S. decision, saying no country can handle international migration alone.

"In the (2016) New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, all UN member states acknowledged that no one state can manage international migration on its own. Furthermore, they committed to strengthening global governance of migration. (Xinhua)

UK Agrees to 'Regulatory Alignment' on Both Sides of Irish Border

DUBLIN/BRUSSELS - Britain agreed on Monday to keep Northern Ireland in "regulatory alignment" with the European Union after Brexit, Irish government sources said, raising hopes Prime Minister Theresa May can strike a deal in Brussels to start free trade talks.

After intensive negotiations in recent days, Britain made what the Irish sources called a clear commitment to keep economic rules on both sides of the new UK-EU land border across the island of Ireland similar enough to allow no frontier.

That is seen as a key way to avoid customs and other infrastructure which might jeopardize the peace in Northern Ireland. How far Britain would then be permitted to change rules on the mainland as Brexit supporters want was not immediately clear.

May and her Northern Irish allies want no new regulatory barriers erected between the province and the rest of the United Kingdom.

"Agreement has been reached on an overall deal for the Irish issues," one of the Irish government sources said.

"The key phrase is a clear commitment to maintaining regulatory alignment in relation to the rules of the customs union and internal market which are required to support the Good Friday Agreement, the all-island economy and the border." Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney said he hoped to make a positive statement shortly, adding that British-EU negotiations on post-Brexit trade would start and that the Irish border would not change its physical appearance after Britain leaves the EU. (Reuters)

Qatar Accepts Kuwait's Invitation to Gulf Summit Despite Rift

DOHA - Qatar has accepted the invitation by Kuwait to attend the upcoming summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Kuwait, Qatar's English newspaper Gulf Times reported Monday.

Speaking at a forum organized by the Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies in Doha Sunday evening, Qatar's Foreign Minister, Mohamed Al Thani stated, Qatar has accepted the invitation to attend the summit, amid the region's worst political crisis in years.

"I will attend the ministerial council tomorrow and the emir will attend



the summit," Al-Thani said.

"It is important that the GCC system remains alive," he added.

Al-Thani commented on the accusations of supporting terrorism by its neighbors, saying "they are baseless. These accusations have been only claims and nobody has

submitted any proof yet." Earlier, Kuwait sent out invitations to the GCC member states, but it was not clear whether the other leaders would attend the summit.

The GCC council is a political and economic alliance of countries in the Arabian Peninsula. (Xinhua)

Tillerson's Europe Visit Barely Helpful to Patch up Cracked Ties

WASHINGTON - As Brussels has become increasingly upset with U.S. president's provocative policies on Europe, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's chance of roping in the U.S. allies during his current visit to Europe seems slimmer than ever.

Tillerson's five-day trip to Europe starting from Monday, his seventh since taking office in February, will take him to Belgium, Austria and France for a group of bilateral and multilateral events.

The purpose of this trip, a senior State

Department official requiring anonymity said on a Friday teleconference with media, was to "reiterate America's commitment to the transatlantic alliance" and commitment to the defense of Western institutions and the West as a community of shared interests and values.

ESTRANGEMENT ON VALUES

According to the official, the themes Tillerson will hit on the trip are expected to echo his earlier speech on U.S.-Europe relations, where he said an important part of the ties is about shared values. (Xinhua)

Bavarian Governor to Step Down in German Power Struggle

BERLIN - An often-awkward conservative ally of German Chancellor Angela Merkel is to step down as Bavarian governor in favor of a younger rival, attempting to end a power struggle that has been an unwelcome distraction as Merkel tries to form a new government.

Horst Seehofer has been leader of the Christian Social Union party and Bavaria's governor since 2008. The CSU is the Bavaria-only sister to Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, and one of three parties in Germany's outgoing government.

Seehofer said Monday he plans to step down as governor in next year's first quarter and be succeeded by state finance minister Markus Soeder. But the 68-year-old intends to remain party leader, saying that his decades of political experience could help with "the situation in Berlin."

Seehofer has been under pressure since the CSU performed poorly in September's German election. It took 38.8 percent of the vote in Bavaria, 10.5 percentage points fewer than in 2013, losing support to the nationalist Alternative for Germany and the pro-business Free Democrats. That jangled nerves in the party, which faces a Bavarian state election next fall. Seehofer's long-running rivalry with Soeder, 50, re-erupted - casting doubts on the CSU's stability as Merkel and Seehofer struggle to put together a new government in Berlin.

After talks on an alliance with two smaller parties collapsed, those efforts center on whether the center-left Social Democrats are willing to renew their governing coalition of the past four years with the conservatives. (AP)

Neighbor News

Chinese FM Urges All Parties to Abide by UN Resolutions on DPRK

BEIJING - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi Monday called on all parties concerned to abide by relevant UN resolutions on the Korean Peninsula issue.

Wang made the remarks when meeting the press after talks with visiting Mongolian Foreign Minister Damdin Tsogtbaatar. He was asked to comment on the U.S. decision to consider imposing more sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) after its recent missile test.

"After two months of relative quiet, tensions on the Korean Peninsula have increased again," Wang said. He added

that it was a regret that the parties involved failed to seize on China's appeals.

"China has always been open-minded to new propositions to resolve the issue, however, the stipulations and spirit of UN Security Council resolutions should be a common principle for all parties to follow," Wang said, adding that UN Security Council resolutions represent the common will of the international community.

Wang said China has fully implemented relevant UN resolutions on the issue and opposed the nuclear and missile programs of the DPRK. (Xinhua)

Pakistan Should Act against Terror Safe Havens: US Defence Secretary

ISLAMABAD - The US wants Pakistan to act in "its best interest" and take action against terror safe havens, James Mattis said today, ahead of his first visit to Islamabad as America's Defence Secretary.

Mattis embarked on a four-nation tour yesterday which will take him to Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan and Kuwait. During the tour, he will re-affirm the US' enduring commitment to partnerships in the Middle East, West Africa and South Asia.

"In Afghanistan, we have heard from Pakistan leaders that they do not support terrorism. So I expect to see that sort of action reflected in their policies," Mattis told reporters travelling with him to Egypt. "They have said that they do not support

havens for any terrorists, and Pakistan has taken significant casualties - both innocent people and their army - significant casualties from them. So we expect them to act in their own best interest, and in support of peace and regional stability," he said. Mattis will visit Pakistan on Monday where he is expected to meet Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa, the Pentagon said.

"I'm making my first trip to Pakistan as secretary of defense...The US remains committed to a pragmatic relationship that expands cooperation on shared interests while reinforcing President Trump's call for action against terrorist safe havens," he said. (Agencies)

Iran Warns US to Take Right Decision on N. Deal

TEHRAN - Iran warned Washington on Monday to take the right decision about the 2015 nuclear deal with the world powers, stressing that Tehran is able to reciprocate any US violation.

"The Americans should take the right decision as our hands are not tied and if they decide not to remain committed to their undertakings, we can also do many things," Spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Behrouz Kamalvandi said in an interview with the state TV.

He referred to the recent warning by the Russian foreign minister to the US against continued hostile approach towards the nuclear deal, and said, "The Russians, Chinese and even the Europe-

ans have underlined the necessity for all sides to comply with the nuclear deal and sent a strong message to the American side to warn that they will be isolated if they want to continue the current path."

"The Americans should take an important decision and they can't continue the sanctions with a nuclear deal underway, and therefore, they have put themselves in hard conditions," Kamalvandi said. His remarks came as Helga Schmid, the deputy of the EU Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini, rejected speculations about the possibility of the European Union's agreement with a renegotiation of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the world powers. (FNA)

Migration Service Centers to Appear in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT - A draft law on external labor migration has been developed in Uzbekistan. The document was posted on the portal on evaluation system of legislative acts in Uzbekistan.

The law will apply to citizens of Uzbekistan working abroad, as well as individuals and legal entities of all forms of ownership participating in the processes of external labor migration.

Under the document, the Agency for External Labor Migration under the Ministry of Labor, structural units of the Agency, as well as recruiting

organizations will be engaged in the employment of citizens of Uzbekistan abroad.

These structures will carry out an organized recruitment of citizens who have expressed a desire to work abroad, at the request of foreign economic entities.

The basis for sending citizens to work abroad will be employment contracts concluded by the sending organization with a foreign employer and a citizen of Uzbekistan intending to leave for work. The document also features the basic duties of the migrant. (Trend)