

UN General Assembly Resolution Calls for Better Nutrition for Women, Children

UNITED NATIONS - A UN General Assembly resolution adopted on Thursday called for better nutrition, particularly for women and children.

The resolution, "Global Health and Foreign Policy: a Healthier World Through Better Nutrition," urges member states to put into practice a comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition.

It encourages member states to protect and promote adequate nutrition for women, girls and infants, especially during pregnancy and lactation, when the nutritional requirements are increased, with special attention to the first 1,000 days, from the start of pregnancy to the age of two years. It asks to promote and support adequate care and feed-



ing practices, including exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months and continued breastfeeding until the age of 2 years and beyond, with appropriate complementary feeding. It calls on member states to consider ratify-

ing and implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognizes the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The resolution recalls that undernutrition hin-

ders individuals, particularly women, children and older persons, from reaching their full potential, and urges member states to take urgent action to address the unacceptably high levels of child stunting and the growing rates of undernourishment and overweight and obesity, which have a deleterious impact on social and economic development.

More broadly, the resolution calls on member states to reinforce actions toward the improvement of nutrition, health conditions and living standards of populations around the globe as a key element of strategies for the eradication of all forms of malnutrition and poverty, as well as the promotion of sustainable development. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Turkmen Delegation Attends UN Int'l Conference on Migration

ASHGABAT - The delegation of Turkmenistan took part in the Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration in Marrakech, Morocco, under the auspices of the UN with the participation of UN secretary general and representatives from more than 150 states, Trend reports referring to the State Migration Service of Turkmenistan.

Following the conference, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was approved, which will provide a historic opportunity to strengthen international cooperation in the

field of migration and strengthen the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration will be the first agreement reached as a result of intergovernmental negotiations, and concluded under the UN auspices, it will cover all aspects of international migration and will be of comprehensive nature, the report said. The migration service provides visas for foreign citizens and stateless persons, and also issues passports for Turkmen citizens. (Trend)

Direct Flight Connects Tajik and Kazakh Capital Cities

DUSHANBE - Kazakhstan's SCAT Airlines is launching direct flight connecting Astana and Dushanbe today, Trend reports referring to news.tj.

According to Dushanbe International Airport, SCAT Airlines launches the Astana-Dushanbe direct flight within the framework of activities of the Kazakh-Tajik intergovernmental commission for trade and economic cooperation and bilateral negotiations.

The flight will be operated twice a week - on Fridays and Sundays. Bombardier CRJ200LR will be used to operate this flight. Vice-President of SCAT for Commerce, Nikola

Buryakov, told reporters in Astana yesterday that ticket for the Astana-Dushanbe flight costs 44,000 tenge (equivalent to 118 U.S. dollars) and the round-trip ticket costs 86,000 tenge (equivalent to 232 U.S. dollars).

SCAT Airlines, legally PLL SCAT Air Company, is an airline with its head office on the property of Shymkent Airport in Shymkent, Kazakhstan. It operates services to all of the major cities of Kazakhstan and to neighboring countries. Its main base is Shymkent Airport, with focus cities at Aktau Airport, Astana International Airport and Almaty International Airport. (Trend)

Europe: 'Working Twenty-Four Seven' to Set up Iran Payment Channel

TEHRAN - Europe is "working twenty-four seven" to launch the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), a payment mechanism aimed at facilitating business with Iran in the face of US sanctions, an official says.

However the details of the process are confidential, former head of the European Parliament's delegation for relations with Iran Tarja Cronberg said. "The European officials in charge of the SPV are working on it twenty-four seven, trying to bring it into operation as soon as possible," she told the news website of

Iran Chamber of Commerce on her visit to Tehran.

The mechanism is a totally new experience both for Iran and the European Union, and this has resulted in some delay in the process, she said.

"A lot of education will be needed for the companies on our side and on Iran's side, so that we know how to use and take best advantage of it." Cronberg said the finance ministers of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom are working on the mechanism, but the details are secret. (Press TV)

Pakistan Receives \$1bn from Saudi Arabia to Ease Economic Crunch

ISLAMABAD - South Asia's second-largest economy is expecting its third and final \$1bn tranche from Riyadh next month.

In another boost to the nation's dwindling dollar reserves, Pakistan on Friday received \$1 billion from Saudi Arabia. South Asia's second-largest economy is expecting its third and final \$1 billion tranche from Riyadh next month to help ease Pakistan's financial crunch, Abid Qamar, a spokesman for the State Bank of Pakistan, told Bloomberg by phone.

Islamabad is looking to bridge a gap of at least \$12 billion caused by its latest balance-of-payments crisis and is currently negotiating its 13th bailout since the late 1980s with the International Monetary Fund.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has been loath to undertake reforms proposed by the IMF and since his election victory in July the former cricket star has shuttled between China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE in an effort to secure bilateral funding from those allied nations.

Pakistan said in October that Saudi Arabia would deposit \$3 billion directly and provide another one-year deferred payment facility of up to \$3 billion for oil imports. The announcement came after Khan attended the Future Investment Initiative in Riyadh. Friday's inflow will bolster Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, which fell to \$7.3 billion in the week ended Dec. 7 - the lowest in more than four and a half years. (Agencies)

Kosovo Approves New Army despite Serb Opposition, NATO Criticism

PRISTINA - Kosovo's parliament voted on Friday to create a 5,000-strong standing army, a week after Serbia's premier suggested the move could provoke military intervention by Belgrade.

The move, coming 20 years after Kosovo Albanians' uprising against Serbian rule and a decade after independence, was lauded as "historic" by the United States but NATO criticized it as unhelpful in efforts to ease tensions between Kosovo and Serbia.

Legislation to transform the lightly armed Kosovo Security Force, which was created mainly for crisis response, civil defense and removal of ordnance from the 1990s conflict, into an army was approved by 105 deputies in the 120-seat assembly. Eleven minority Serb deputies boycotted the vote. Kosovo's constitution mandates the creation of a national army but no action was taken for years while Pristina sought, in vain, to obtain the approval of Kosovo Serbs. (Reuters)

TOKYO - Japan's central government started main reclamation work Friday at a disputed U.S. military base relocation site on the southern island of Okinawa despite fierce local opposition.

Construction workers started dumping a truckload of sediment into the sea at Henoko on Okinawa's east coast to build a runway for a Marine Corps base that will be relocated from densely populated Futenma in the southern part of the

Japan Begins Reclamation at Disputed US Base despite Protest

island. The central government has reversed Okinawa's earlier ban on landfill work at the site. Opponents of the relocation say it would not only be an environmental debacle but also ignore local wishes to remove the base.

"I strongly resent the construction that is being carried out while ignoring the will of the Okinawan people," Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki told reporters. He said he had repeatedly visited Tokyo and asked top officials in



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Cabinet to postpone the landfill work and engage in dialogue. Tamaki was in Tokyo on Thursday

for talks with Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya. Dozens of people in rubber boats protested the move. (Fox News)

South Korea's Moon Urges 'Restrained' Language in Forced Labor Row with Japan



SEOUL - South Korea's President Moon Jae-in told Japanese lawmakers on Friday "cautious, restrained" language is needed when discuss-

ing wartime forced labor to avoid "inciting antagonistic emotions" between the people of the two East Asian countries. A row between

Seoul and Tokyo flared again in late October when South Korea's Supreme Court ruled that Japan's Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp must pay four South Koreans 100 million won (\$87,700) in compensation for their forced labor during World War Two. Japan denounced the ruling, which said a 1965 treaty did not remove the workers' right to reparations, as "unthinkable".

The strain in relations between the two U.S. allies could affect efforts

to rein in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, analysts say.

Moon, who met Japanese lawmakers in Seoul on Friday, said his government would take its time to seek a solution because the issue was triggered by a judicial ruling that must be respected.

"I think we need to use cautious, restrained expressions on this issue so as not to incite antagonistic emotions of the peoples of both countries," Moon said at the meeting. (Reuters)

Italy's Conte Seeks EU Leaders' Backing on Revised Budget

BRUSSELS - Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte sought to convince European Union leaders on Friday that his offer to cut Italy's deficit target for next year should make an EU disciplinary procedure unnecessary. Conte has said he is ready to cut the headline deficit to 2.04 percent of output from 2.40 percent, and hopes to reach agreement with the EU executive, the Commission, on Monday.

Conte met German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday on the

sidelines of the EU summit in Brussels, officials said, and was trying to arrange to meet Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, one of the harshest critics of Italy's expansionary budget.

The Commission insists that Italy must reduce its structural deficit, which excludes one-offs and business cycle swings, to shrink a debt burden equivalent to more than 130 percent of GDP. EU officials have said this would limit the headline deficit to 1.9 percent of output. (Reuters)

China Urges Japan to Ensure Rights of 2 in Shrine Protest

BEIJING - China has urged Japan to ensure the legal rights of two Hong Kong residents who staged a protest this week at a Tokyo shrine honoring Japan's war dead, the foreign ministry said Friday. Ministry spokesman Lu Kang did not say whether Beijing considered the protest justified, but urged Japan to take responsibility for its actions during World War II, when it invaded much of East Asia, including parts of China.

"We have expressed our concern to the Japanese side. China urges Japan to properly handle this issue and to ensure the legitimate rights and interests of the persons involved," Lu told reporters at a daily briefing. (AP)

Turkey Will Enter Syria's Manbij If U.S. Doesn't Remove YPG Fighters, Erdogan Says

ISTANBUL - Turkish forces will enter the Syrian town of Manbij if the United States does not remove YPG Kurdish fighters, and it will also target Kurdish-controlled areas further east, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday.

Erdogan said this week that Turkey would launch a new operation within days against the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish YPG militia which controls swathes of Syria's northern border region, in what will be Turkey's third military campaign in Syria in two years.

Ankara and Washington have long been at odds in Syria, where the United States has backed the YPG in the fight against Islamic State. (Reuters)

13 Young Miners Feared Dead in India's Remote Northeast

GAUHATI, India - Thirteen young miners were missing and feared dead following the collapse of a shaft and flooding of a coal mine they were digging illegally in India's remote northeast, police said Friday.

Rescuers were attempting to pump water out of the mine, which flooded Wednesday, police said. National Disaster Response Force workers joined local authorities in the rescue effort.

Police said rescuers can only reach the miners after the water is removed from the mine.

Those missing are believed to be teenage boys used by illegal mining groups to enter "rat hole" mines with small



openings. They said digging at the mine was banned four years ago, but illegal and unsafe activity by private landowners and the local community is rife. The area in Meghalaya state is about 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of Shillong, the state capital.

"It was absolutely an illegal mining activity," said Conrad Sangma,

the state's top elected official. He said authorities would crack down on illegal mining groups.

Last month, an activist, Agnes Kharshing, was assaulted by people involved in illegal mining when she visited the area to protest their activities. She remains hospitalized with life-threatening head and other injuries. (Fox News)

Russian Orthodox Church Calls on UN for Help in Ukraine

MINSK, Belarus - The Russian Orthodox Church on Friday called on the United Nations, the leaders of Germany and France, the pope and other spiritual leaders to protect believers in Ukraine in the face of pressure on Moscow-affiliated clerics.

Ukraine's Orthodox clerics will gather for a meeting Saturday that is expected to form a new,

independent Ukrainian church, and Ukrainian authorities have ramped up pressure on priests to support the move. The Ukrainian church has been part of the Russian Church for centuries, while enjoying broad autonomy, but Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has pushed for the creation of an independent church. (Fox News)