

# UN Security Council to Vote on New Sanctions against DPRK

UNITED NATIONS - The United Nations Security Council is expected to vote on a new draft resolution that would tighten sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in response to its ballistic missile launch last month. A Security Council meeting has been scheduled for Friday at 1:00 p.m. EST (1800 GMT). The U.S.-drafted resolution was circulated among council members on Thursday. The draft, seen by Xinhua, seeks to ban nearly 90 percent of refined petroleum product exports, including diesel and kero-



sene, to the DPRK, setting a ceiling of 500,000 barrels a year. It also caps crude oil exports to the DPRK at 4 million barrels a year. The draft also demands the repatriation of overseas DPRK workers within 12 months. In addition, the draft resolution bans DPRK exports of food products, machinery, electrical equipment, earth and stone, including magnesite and magnesia, wood and vessels. It bans the supply of industrial equipment, machinery, transportation vehicles, and industrial metals to the DPRK. (Xinhua)

## Spain PM Willing to Talk with Catalonia Leaders

BARCELONA, Spain - Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy says he expects a "new era based on dialogue" will begin in Catalonia following a regional election that exposed the sharp divisions between citizens for and against independence. Rajoy called the election held Thursday after ousting the pro-secession government in the region, hoping to stop the movement to break away from Spain. A block of separatist parties retained their majority in the Catalan parliament. Rajoy said during a news conference Friday that the election's outcome, which

also gave the pro-Spain Ciutadans (Citizens) party the most votes, showed a diversity of views in Catalonia that compel the new government to abide by the law. The prime minister says he will talk with the region's new leaders as long as they don't violate Spain's Constitution. The previous government held an independence referendum that Spanish courts said was unconstitutional. A prominent politician in Catalonia's left-wing republican ERC party says Spanish authorities need to accept election results that gave separatists a majority in the regional parliament. Rajoy said during a news conference Friday that the

election's outcome, which

## UN Denounces US Recognition of Jerusalem as Israeli Capital

UNITED NATIONS - The U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Thursday to denounce President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, largely ignoring Trump's threats to

cut off aid to any country that went against him. The nonbinding resolution declaring U.S. action on Jerusalem "null and void" was approved 128-9 — a victory for the Palestinians, but not as big as they pre-

dicted. Amid Washington's threats, 35 of the 193 U.N. member nations abstained and 21 were absent.

The resolution reaffirmed what has been the United Nations' stand on the divided holy city since 1967: that Jerusalem's final status must be decided in direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Trump administration made it clear the vote would have no effect on its plan to move the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. And Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said afterward

that he completely rejects the "preposterous" resolution.

Palestinian Ambassador Riyad Mansour called the vote a victory not only for the Palestinians but for the United Nations and international law, saying U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley "failed miserably" in persuading only seven countries aside from the U.S. and Israel to vote against the resolution. "And they used unprecedented tactics, unheard of in the diplomatic work at the U.N., including blackmail and extortion," he said. (AP)

## British PM Says IS "Has Been Crushed" but Still Posing Threat

NICOSIA - British Prime Minister Theresa May, on a short visit to an RAF base in Cyprus, said on Friday that although the Islamic State (IS) has been crushed thanks mostly to the strike by the base personnel, it still poses threat to the region and Britain. She said that British forces operating from the Akrotiri base, near the southern city of Limassol, conducted more than 1,600 strikes against Daesh targets and supported more than 1,450 personnel working with allies and partners in Jordan and Iraq to fight IS. "That so-called Caliphate has been crushed and no longer holds significant



territory in Iraq or Syria," May said. However, the British prime minister said that it is necessary to continue to deal directly with the threat they still pose in the region, but at the same time focus on training the Iraqi Security Forces so they can keep Daesh out. (Xinhua)

## Russia to Host Syria Talks in Sochi in Late January

MOSCOW - Russia, Turkey and Iran agreed Friday to hold Syria peace talks in Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi next month, a move that the U.N. Special Envoy for Syria said should be assessed based on its contribution to the mandated political process under the United Nations in Geneva. Russian news reports cited Kazakh diplomat Aidarbek Tumanov who said that during Friday's meeting in Kazakhstan's capital, Astana, the parties agreed to hold the so-called Congress for National Dialogue in Sochi on Jan. 29-30.

Earlier attempts to convene the congress were thwarted by disagreements over possible participants, primarily the involvement of the Kurds that Turkey has opposed. Russian envoy Alexander Lavrentyev told the Interfax news agency that the parties have yet to agree on the list of participants. The three countries have teamed up to help mediate a peace settlement for Syria's conflict, now in its seventh year, which has claimed the lives of 400,000 and caused the worst refugee crisis since World War II. (AP)

## Neighbor News

### Senior CPC Leader Stresses Peaceful Development of Cross-Strait Relations

BEIJING - Senior Communist Party of China (CPC) leader Wang Yang Friday called for more efforts to promote peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and achieve national reunification. Wang called on ACFTC and its local branches to study and implement the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress, adhere to peaceful development of cross-Strait ties, promote people-to-people exchanges, and strengthen its own capacity to accomplish its mission of winning over the support of Taiwan people. He called on Party committees and governments at all levels to exercise leadership and give greater support to the work of ACFTC. (Xinhua)

### Pakistan Reacts Strongly to US Vice President's Remarks

LAHORE - Pakistan has reacted to United States Vice President Mike Pence's statement, accusing Pakistan of "providing safe heavens to terrorists". "The statement is at variance with the extensive conversations we have had with the US administration," said Foreign Office spokesperson Dr Muhammad Faisal on Friday. In an unannounced trip to Afghanistan on Thursday, Pence said that US President Donald Trump "put Pakistan on notice for harbouring terrorists and providing safe heavens to them. FO spokesperson responded to the remarks saying allies do not put each other on notice, add-

### Iran Stresses UN's Important Role in Resolving Regional Crises

TEHRAN - Iran's deputy FM Hossein Jaberi Ansari and UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura met on the sidelines of the eighth round of peace talks aimed at ending the Syria conflict, which began Thursday in Kazakhstan's capital Astana. Astana is hosting another two-day meeting attended by representatives from Russia, Turkey and Iran, the guarantor states that brokered a cease-fire in Syria in December 2016, leading to the Astana peace talks running parallel to the Geneva talks. Jaberi Ansari also met with Syria's permanent representative to the United Nations and the head of the Syrian delegation Bashar al-Jaafari. (MNA)

### China, Uzbekistan Seek To Strengthen Cooperation

TASHKENT - Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev met Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan in Tashkent Wednesday, expressing willingness to improve practical cooperation in various fields. Mirziyoyev said China is a close friend and reliable partner of Uzbekistan, which adheres to the one-China policy and supports the Belt and Road Initiative. Uzbekistan is ready to cooperate with China in a comprehensive way to serve the interests of both peoples and maintain regional peace and stability, said the president. (Agencies)