

# Red Cross Welcomes UN Report on Migration, Urges More Actions

GENEVA - The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on Thursday welcomed the latest report by UN chief on migration and urged world leaders to act to stop death, despair and abuse along migration trails. "We are happy to see that the safety and dignity of all migrants -- of all people -- are prominent in the report," IFRC President Francesco Rocca said in a statement. "It is our hope now that governments will adopt a Global Compact on Migration that delivers tangible, time-bound and compassionate outcomes for all migrants,



regardless of their status," he said. He added that the violence, abuse and death that people face when migrating are "preventable", stressing that migrants have the same human rights as everyone else. "All people migrating should have unfettered access to essential services and humanitarian aid, as well as special protections for those most at risk, especially unaccompanied children," he highlighted. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday launched his report on migration in New York titled "Making Migration Work for All". (Xinhua)

## EU's Juncker Sees No Progress on Turkey Ties While Journalists Jailed

SOFIA - The European Union and Turkey will see no progress in their relations as long as Turkey holds journalists in prison, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Friday. "Turkey is moving away from its European ambitions of the past and we are going to have to see what kind of progress Turkey makes in the coming months. But there will not be any kind of progress while there are journalists in Turkish jails," Juncker told a joint news conference in Bulgaria. Authori-



ties in Turkey have jailed more than 50,000 people and shut down some 130 media outlets in the post-coup crackdown. Around 160 journalists have been imprisoned, according to the Turkish Journalists' Association, and rights groups say Turkey is now the world's largest jailer of journalists. (Reuters)

## German Leaders Express Confidence on Forming New Government

BERLIN - Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the center-left Social Democrats took a big step Friday toward forming a new German government, sealing a preliminary agreement in which they vowed to strengthen the European Union and keep a lid on the number of migrants entering the country. The 28-page deal reached in a marathon negotiating session that lasted more than 24 hours at the end of nearly a week of talks was enough for leaders of Merkel's two-party Union bloc

and the Social Democrats to recommend moving on to formal coalition negotiations. But Social Democrat leader Martin Schulz will have to work hard to persuade a party congress Jan. 21 to endorse that move. The agreement set out compromise positions on a wide range of issues, including taxes, education and health care. "I think we have achieved outstanding results," Schulz told reporters. He said it was a good indicator of support that his 13-member negotiating team had decided unanimously to



recommend going ahead with talks. Still, even if the negotiations then succeed, Schulz faces another challenge: a ballot of his party's entire membership on a coalition agreement. After the week of negotiations and the overnight

session, a visibly tired Merkel told reporters that she, too, was now "optimistic that things will move forward" to forming a new coalition of the same parties that have run Germany for the past four years. (AP)

## Bulgaria's EU Presidency Officially Launched in Sofia



SOFIA - Bulgaria's six-month rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) was officially launched here on Thursday evening at a special ceremony attended

by the highest local and EU officials. "Europe is too big to be monolithic but too small to be divided," Bulgarian President Rumen Radev said at the ceremony held

in the Ivan Vazov National Theatre. Therefore, the motto of Bulgaria's EU Presidency is "United We Stand Strong", Radev said. Bulgaria has taken up the Presidency in a difficult time, he said. Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, said it is a good thing that one of the priorities of the Bulgarian presidency is the future of the Western Balkans. "Who, if not you -- the descendants of Spartacus, the inheritors of the oldest European statehood, you, who never ever lost a flag in any battle --

would be better placed to rise to this important and exceptionally difficult task, that is to renew the European perspective for the whole of the region," Tusk said. Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov underlined that many questions would be asked and many answers given during the next six months on issues such as EU's cohesion policy, cyber security, common European defense, migration crisis, and providing a hope for EU membership to the peoples of the Western Balkans. (Xinhua)

## Macron Discusses Iran, DPRK with Trump over Phone

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday held talks with U.S. President Donald Trump via telephone, in which they discussed issues related to Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), according to the Elysee Palace. In his conversation with Trump, Macron reiterated "the determination of France to support the strict implementation of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement and the importance of it being respected by all signatories," the president's office said in a press release. "The proper implementation of the

agreement should be accompanied by a strengthened dialogue with Iran on its ballistic program and its regional policy, in order to guarantee improved stability in the Middle East," it quoted Macron as saying. In addition, Macron hailed the recent talks between DPRK and South Korea as "a positive signal". "The continuation of the firm policy of the United Nations Security Council will bring about a political solution and move towards the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," the French president told his U.S. counterpart. (Xinhua)

## S. Korean, U.S. Top Diplomats Discuss Outcome of Inter-Korean Dialogue

SEOUL - South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha and U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson discussed the outcome of the inter-Korean dialogue held earlier this week, South Korea's foreign ministry said Friday. Kang and Tillerson held a telephone conversation earlier in the day, talking about the recently-held high-level talks between South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and ways to strengthen cooperation between South Korea and the United States. Senior-level delegations from South Korea and the DPRK met Tuesday in the truce village of Panmunjom, agreeing to hold a separate inter-Korean dialogue on military affairs. Pyongyang also agreed to send its high-ranking delegation and athletes to the 2018 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, which are set to run from February to March in South Korea's eastern county of PyeongChang.

During the phone talks, the South Korean foreign minister explained to the U.S. secretary of state about the outcome of the inter-Korean dialogue. Kang stressed the position of South Korea that her country will push simultaneously for improved inter-Korean ties and the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. South Korean President Moon Jae-in said in his first New Year's press conference Wednesday that improved inter-Korean relations cannot be separated from the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, noting that the two issues should be pursued simultaneously to create a virtuous cycle between them. (Xinhua)

## Russian Military Warns of More Terror Attacks with Drones after Assault in Syria

MOSCOW - The Russian Armed Forces said Thursday it was concerned over the emerging threat of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) used by terrorists after recent drone attacks on Russia's military bases in Syria. On January 6, terrorists attempted to attack Russia's Hmeymim and Tartus military bases in Syria with 13 drones, seven of which were destroyed by Russian

air defense systems and six others were captured by its electronic warfare means, according to Maj. Gen. Alexander Novikov who heads the department of the UAV system of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces. "The drones used by the militants to strike the facilities of the Russian Armed Forces in Syria... were applied for the first time," he said. After a detailed assessment of the captured drones, specialists established that

homemade production of such drones is only possible when there are assembly schemes and necessary components previously tested for numerous times, and also requires specialized knowledge and practical experience in assembling and using such devices in a single system, Novikov said. "The creation of drones of this class is impossible in handcraft conditions. (Xinhua)

## UN Describes Trump's Comments on Some Immigrants as "Shameful" and "Racist"

GENEVA - The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) on Friday described as "shocking", "shameful" and "racist" comments by U.S. President Donald Trump on immigrants from countries like Haiti and Africa. Trump was quoted in a UN briefing as asking on Thursday why the United States would accept more immigrants from Haiti and "shithole countries" in Africa rather than places like Norway. He was speaking while he was rejecting an immigration deal by the two main parties in the U.S. Congress, according to reports. "These are shocking and shameful," UN-

HCHR spokesperson Rupert Colville said. "Sorry but there is no other word that one can use but 'racist'. You cannot dismiss entire countries and continents as 'shitholes' whose entire populations are not white, are therefore not welcome." Colville said Trump's comments on Norway made the underlying comments very clear. "This is not just a story about vulgar language, it's about opening the door wider to humanity's worst side, about validating and encouraging racism and xenophobia that will potentially disrupt and destroy the lives of many people," said the UNHCHR spokesperson. (Xinhua)

## Atlantic Council President Lauds UAE Renewable Energy Policy

DUBAI - The Gulf state United Arab Emirates (UAE), a major oil supplier, is the "most visionary of the fossil fuel producing countries, thinking about renewables and planning for the future," said Frederick Kempe, President of the Atlantic Council on Friday, UAE state news agency WAM reported. Kempe told WAM at the second annual Global Energy Forum in Abu Dhabi "I'm not sure there's another country in the world that's a global leader in fossil fuel production and renewable energy."

He added "We chose to base the forum here because, in some respects, the UAE is the 'model' of how to think about the energy mix while still having time to plan for it." The summit seeks to draw global attention to the UAE's journey of progress in this field, "which in many ways embodies some of the smartest directions in dealing with the energy transition," said Kempe. The UAE Energy Plan 2050 aims to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 70 percent, increase clean energy use by 50 percent and improve energy efficiency by 40 percent. The UAE sheikhdom of Dubai announced in September 2017 it will implement the world's largest Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) project valued at 14.2 billion dirham (3.87 billion U.S. dollars). The CSP project as the planned largest single-site project will generate 700 megawatts (MW) of power when it is completed in the last quarter of 2020, parallel to the World Expo 2020 in Dubai. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### Xi Calls for Fundamental Improvement of CPC Political Ecosystem

BEIJING - Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, on Thursday called for more anti-corruption efforts to "fundamentally improve the political ecosystem of the Party." Xi, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at the second plenary session of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) of the

CPC. "All-round efforts should see the Party's political building enhanced, its theory strengthened, its organizations consolidated, its conduct improved, and its discipline enforced, with institution building incorporated into every aspect of Party building," Xi said. "Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and the CPC's leadership is a must for the country to advance its great cause." (Xinhua)

### No More Terrorist Sanctuaries in Pakistan: PM

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Friday said Pakistan had achieved remarkable success against terrorism and there existed no more "so-called sanctuaries" for them on the soil. Addressing the participants of National Security and War Course here at the National Defence University (NDU), the Prime Minister said the tide had turned against terrorists and their capacity to conduct activities had been immensely curtailed.

The Prime Minister said the State was fully conscious of the challenges relating to national security as it was tackling both internal and external problems. He mentioned that Operation "Raddul Fasaad" against terrorists was underway to purge the society from sleeper cells and sympathizers of ex-

remists. He said there had been a paradigm shift not only from state-centric focus to societal security concerns, but also in the concept and understanding of national security. He said the current security environment was increasingly fluid and was shaped by a dynamic mix of continuing and emerging challenges and opportunities. Congratulating the course graduates, the Prime Minister called upon them to take steps in complementing the national response against the threats faced by the country. He also appreciated the contribution of NDU in refining and defining national security concepts of the participants and enabling civilian policy-makers to acquire a better understanding of issues concerning national security. (Monitoring Desk)

### Iran Urges U.S. to Remain Committed to Nuclear Deal

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif urged the United States to remain committed to the 2015 international nuclear agreement, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday. Zarif also hailed his recent talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, in Moscow and a meeting he had with the European Union's diplomatic chief and the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany on Thursday. "What was clear at the meetings ... was that the international consensus was based on (the fact that) any move leading to the destruction of the JCPOA (nuclear deal) or a change in it would be unacceptable and would be confronted by the international community," he was quoted as saying. In the talks, Iran emphasized that all parties, including the United States,

should remain committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and implement the deal completely so that Iran does the same, he added. In July 2015, after a decade of strenuous negotiations, Iran and six major countries, namely, China, Russia, Britain, France, the United States and Germany, struck a final agreement on Iran's controversial nuclear program, in which the West promised to relieve sanctions on Tehran in exchange for a halt in Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear weapon. However, as one of the most significant diplomatic legacies of U.S. President Donald Trump's predecessor Barack Obama, the hard-won nuclear deal has been running the gauntlet of Trump on his campaign trail and since he became president. (Xinhua)

### Kazakh President Okes Law on Strategic Partnership with Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev has signed Laws on strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and demarcation of the border between the two countries, the press service of the president said in a message on Jan.11. "The Head of State signed the Law "On ratification of the Strategic Partnership Agreement between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan," the message reads. The aim of the treaty is to consolidate bilateral

relations at the level of strategic partnership and close cooperation. The document envisages the improvement of political dialogue at the highest level, and the development of cooperation within the framework of international organizations. Under the treaty, the parties will expand and strengthen cooperation in the fight against international terrorism and religious extremism, as well as other manifestations of these issues and security challenges. (Trend)