

Trump Warns Davos on Unfair Trade, Says U.S. 'Open for Business'

DAVOS, Switzerland - U.S. President Donald Trump took his "America First" message to the world's elite on Friday, telling a summit of business and political leaders that the United States would "no longer turn a blind eye" to what he described as unfair trade practices.

Trump became the first sitting U.S. President in 18 years to address the annual conclave of the rich and powerful at the Swiss ski resort of Davos, closing the summit with a speech in which he declared the United States "open for business".

"Now is the best time to bring your money, your jobs, your businesses to America," he said, singling out tax cuts and curbs to regulation as boosting the in-



vestment climate.

"After years of stagnation, the United States is once again experiencing strong economic growth," he said. "The world is witnessing the resurgence of a strong and prosperous America." He said he would always promote "America First", as he expected other world leaders to do on behalf of their own countries. "America First does not mean America alone. When the United States grows so does the world," he said. But he swiftly turned to a theme of demanding tougher enforcement of trade rules, accusing unidentified countries of unfair practices, including stealing intellectual property and providing state aid to industry. (Reuters)

ASEAN, India Leaders Vow to Pushforward Economic Partnership

NEW DELHI - India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders vowed Thursday to push forward the regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP).

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral meetings with six ASEAN leaders from Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Brunei who have congregated in New Delhi for the ongoing ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit.

Modi reiterated his com-

mitment to RCEP for an outcome for mutual benefit," said India's Secretary (East) Preeti Saran while briefing media persons. All the 10 ASEAN leaders met Indian President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu and Modi at the "Retreat" function held at the President's House, where the leaders discussed issues such as maritime cooperation, traditional and non-traditional challenges that all participating countries face, India's official sources said. (Xinhua)

European UN Envoys Stress Two-State Solution to Palestinian Issue

UNITED NATIONS - Ambassadors of European countries to the United Nations on Thursday stressed that the two-state solution is the only viable path for the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and underscored the stabilizing role of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA).

"Let me first reiterate Sweden's long-standing and firm commitment to the two-state solution. There is simply no alternative," Swedish ambassador to the United Nations Olof Skoog told the Security Council in a debate on Middle East peace.

"Only a two-state solution, based on known parameters, international law and relevant resolutions of this council, can fulfil the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians and achieve the security and just peace that both peoples deserve." He expressed concern over the financial restraints of UNRWA as a result of a severe cut by the United States in its contributions. The United States donated 363 million U.S. dollars in 2017 to the agency. The U.S. gov-



ernment has just decided to allocate only 60 million dollars for 2018, creating an unprecedented crisis for the agency. "UNRWA delivers critical services for the human development of Palestinian refugees and plays a crucial role to en-

sure stability in a region seriously affected by conflict, terrorism and turmoil. Given the extreme conditions facing many refugees, UNRWA's stabilizing role in providing basic services is imperative," Skoog said. (Xinhua)

World Sees Shared Future a New Goal of Economic Development



BEIJING - With dignitaries flocking to the Swiss resort of Davos from every corner of the globe, the World Economic Fo-

rum (WEF) offers a once-a-year opportunity for the international community to debate on how to forge ahead with plans to revive

global economy. The theme of this year's economic jamboree - "Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World" - echoes Chinese President Xi Jinping's vision of "Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind." Scholars and political figures consider the vision as a guide for the world to pursue future economic development to achieve common prosperity. A NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT

Michael Moller, director general of the UN Office at Geneva, said this year's WEF theme has "an organic" link to what Xi said. "It was a new movement and new positioning of China that was extremely welcome at the time when the world was fragmented, when we had many problems of different kinds," he said. "The rest of the world is coming to follow the president's words last year," he said. "We are seeing more and more renewed international solidarity." (Xinhua)

Seattle Mayor Vows to Fight against U.S. Federal Gov't on Immigration Dispute

SAN FRANCISCO - Mayor Jenny Durkan of Seattle in Washington state on the U.S. west coast reaffirmed Thursday her resolve to face up to a possible combat with the federal government over an immigration dispute. Durkan joined several other mayors across the United States in a defiant fight with the Justice Department, which threatened Wednesday to deny an important public safety grant worth millions of U.S. dollars from the federal government. "I think this fight is not one we

picked, but it is one we are willing to wage and in the end it is one we will win because we are right on the law, and we are right on the principles," Durkan told a local TV station KING 5 News on Thursday. However, Durkan refused to back off and pledged to protect her people in the community. "As Mayor of Seattle I can tell you I don't need them to spend their resources on doing ICE sweeps of people who present no danger to my community," Durkan said. (Xinhua)

China Actively Meets Challenges of Climate Change in the Arctic

BEIJING - China takes an active part in addressing the challenges of environmental and climate change in the Arctic, a white paper said on Friday.

China follows international law in the protection of ecosystem of the Arctic and conservation of its biological resources, according to the document titled "China's Arctic Policy," issued by the State Council Information Office.

The Arctic is home to several endangered species of wild fauna and flora and China attaches importance to the sustainable development and biodiversity protection of the Arctic, it said.

China conducts scientific evaluation of the impact on the Arctic ecological system caused by global climate change and human activities, and advances international cooperation in the protection of Arctic species of fauna and flora, according to the white paper. Addressing climate change, the document said that China consistently takes the issue of climate change seriously and has included measures to deal with climate change such as Nationally Determined Contributions in its overall national development agenda and planning. China has made significant contributions to the conclusion of the Paris Agreement and China's emission reduction measures have a positive impact on the climatic and ecological environment of the Arctic, the white paper said. China also strengthens publicity and education on addressing climate change to raise the public's awareness of the issue, and promotes international cooperation in addressing climate change in the Arctic, it said. (Xinhua)

Russia Says Terrorists in Syria Using European-Made Electronic Equipment

MOSCOW - Terrorists in Syria were found to be in possession of radio-electronic equipment made in Europe, the Russian military said in a statement on Friday.

"After killing five terrorists in Syria's al-Tanf Area, during examination of the place where the terrorists had been killed, the Syrian forces found a modern electronic warfare package made in Europe," the statement read. In addition, the forces found a large amount of ammunition for small arms and Islamic State literature, according to the statement



by the Russian Reconciliation Center for Syria, set up by the Russian Defense Ministry to oversee the implementation of deals between the rebels and the Syrian government. Citing refugees who had managed to flee the U.S.-controlled al-Tanf close to Iraq and Jordan, the

statement said that the militants were planning to break through the area "in the nearest future." The facts showed that the U.S. trained and established groups of opposition militants, with the aim of undermining the peace process in Syria, the statement added. (Xinhua)

Germany Drops Demand for EU Refugee Quota

BERLIN - The German government surprisingly announced on Thursday that it would drop its demand to establish a binding refugee quota for each member state in discussions over a reform of the European Union's (EU) asylum regime.

It was sensible to focus on other topics in light of the EU's need to achieve progress on joint asylum policy, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere (CDU) told press. De Maiziere argued that it would be "good for the negotia-

tion process to first agree on the points where agreement can be more easily reached." This included fields such as shared standards for asylum proceedings and conditions of admission. The minister also pointed to clarifying the responsibility of member states for the registry and processing of refugees under the EU Dublin regime (which mandates that refugees must file for asylum in the first EU member state they enter) as a more urgent priority than quotas. (Xinhua)

Security Council Lauds Efforts of UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

UNITED NATIONS - The Security Council on Thursday lauded the work of the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA).

The Security Council welcomed the briefing on Monday by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of UNRCCA, Natalia Gherman, and "expressed their support for the work of UNRCCA, which marked its 10th anniversary in December 2017," a Security Council press statement said.

"The members of the Security Council reaffirmed the importance of preventive diplomacy in supporting United Nations efforts to assist in the peaceful settlement of disputes," the statement said. The Security Council acknowledged the role of the Regional Center in assisting the Central Asian States to respond to transnational threats to peace and to support sustainable development in the region, it said.

They expressed their support for UNRCCA's role in regional counter-terrorism activities, it said. The statement noted that "the members of the Security Council agreed that developments in Afghanistan directly impact the stability, security and economies of Central Asia." They emphasized "the importance of close coordination between the Central Asian states and Afghanistan in combating drug trafficking," said the statement. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

China Publishes Arctic Policy, Eyeing Vision of "Polar Silk Road"

BEIJING - China published a white paper on its Arctic policy Friday, pledging cooperative governance and elaborating its vision for a "Polar Silk Road." "China, as a responsible major country, is ready to cooperate with all relevant parties to seize the historic opportunity in the development of the Arctic, to address the challenges brought by the changes in the region," said the white paper issued by the State Council Information Office. The country would like to "jointly understand, protect, develop and participate in the governance of the Arctic, and advance Arc-

tic-related cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative," according to the white paper. The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road (Belt and Road Initiative), an important cooperation initiative of China, will bring opportunities for parties concerned to jointly build a "Polar Silk Road," and facilitate connectivity and sustainable economic and social development of the Arctic, the white paper noted. China vowed to participate in Arctic affairs in accordance with the basic principles of "respect, cooperation, win-win results and sustainability." (Xinhua)

Europe Strongly Supports Iran's Nuclear Deal: EU Lawmaker

TEHRAN - A senior member of the European Parliament says the EU strongly supports the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, calling for closer ties with Tehran within the framework of the landmark accord.

David McAllister, who heads the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, made the remarks in a meeting with Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy Alaeddin Boroujerdi in Brussels on Wednesday.

The MEP further described the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a "credible international agreement," noting that the European

Union should enhance its relations with Tehran within the framework of the pact.

The comments come amid US President Donald Trump's attempts to weaken the agreement. Earlier this month, he extended waivers of economic sanctions on Iran for another 120 days but said he was doing so "for the last time." Although the US president declined to withdraw from the Iran deal - which he has long railed against and formerly promised to "rip up" - he gave a four-month deadline to the US Congress and America's main European allies to address what he called the "disastrous flaws" of the deal. (Presstv)

Democracy Biggest Bulwark against Terrorism: Dastgir

ISLAMABAD - Federal Minister for Defence Khurram Dastgir Khan who is currently visiting Brussels as the head of four member parliamentary delegation of Pakistan-EU Friendship Group briefed the experts on 'Pakistan's Contribution to War against Terrorism' at the highly prestigious Egmont Institute, the Royal Institute of International Relations of Belgian Foreign Office, on Thursday.

The Minister explained to the group of experts from the Belgian Foreign Office, Ministry of Defence, Counter Terrorism Department and academics, that how Pakistan was bearing the burden of war against terrorism not only in terms of financial resources but also the sacrifices of nearly 70,000

lives of civilians and army personnel, said a message received here from the Embassy of Brussels. The Minister said that the best protection against terrorism is strong democracy.

He stated that with the consolidation of democracy in Pakistan, incidents of terrorism have been controlled and with improvement of internal peace and security situation the economy has also seen an upward trend in the past few years.

He said that the peace in Afghanistan was imperative for the peace in Pakistan and vice-versa stating that involvement of Pakistan in any kind of peace process was necessary for attaining peaceful settlement of situation in Afghanistan. (Monitoring Desk)

Uzbekistan Oks Deal with Russia on Co-Op in Nuclear Energy Sector

TASHKENT - Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has approved an intergovernmental agreement signed between Uzbekistan and Russia on cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The deal was signed by Director General of Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation Alexei Likhachev, and from the Uzbek side - by Deputy Prime Minister Nodir Otazhonov in December 2017. The agreement creates a legal basis for bilateral cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan regarding the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Promising directions include: creation of a national infrastructure and training of personnel for the nuclear energy of Uzbekistan, construction of nuclear power plants and research reactors in the country, as well as provision of support throughout the life cycle. The agreement also covers the exploration and development of uranium deposits in Uzbekistan, reclamation of uranium mill tailings, production of radioisotopes and their application in industry, medicine and agriculture, and scientific and basic research. (Trend)