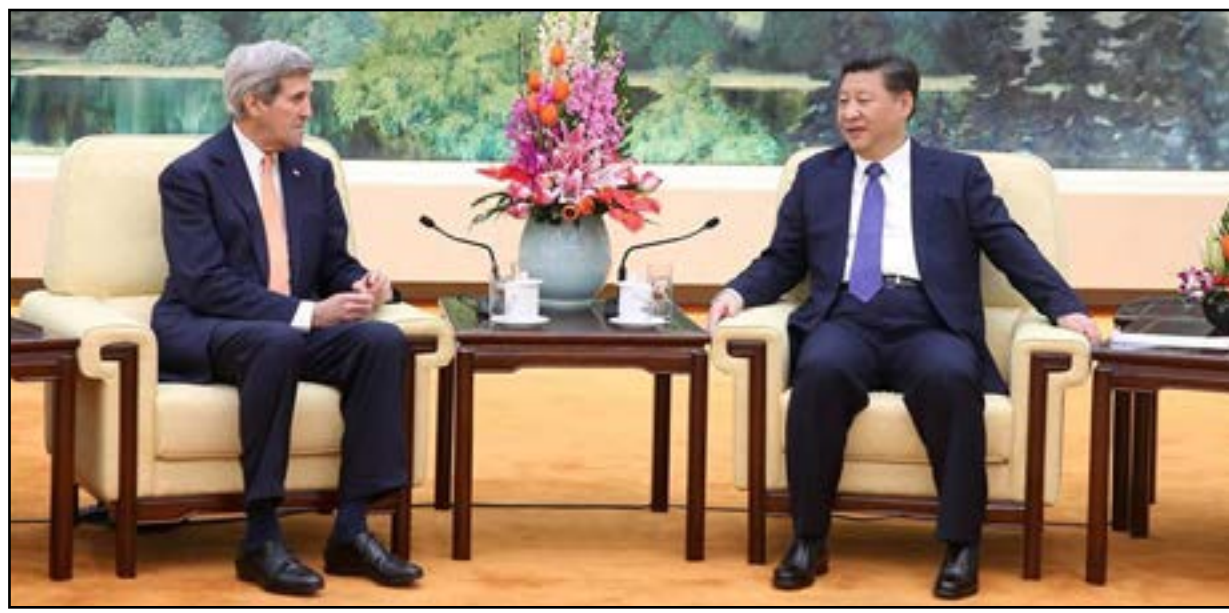


China, U.S. should Jointly Promote Solutions to more Global Issues: Xi

BEIJING - President Xi Jinping on Wednesday urged the United States to work with China to find solutions to more global issues and develop bilateral ties.

The two countries should continue to make progress on their cooperation agenda, and maintain communication and coordination on major international and regional issues, and issues of global importance, Xi said.

Xi held a meeting with visiting U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry at the Great Hall of the People on Wednesday afternoon, after Kerry's



meetings with Foreign Minister Wang Yi and State Councilor Yang

Jiechi. Kerry said they had "very productive and

in-depth conversation." Xi spoke about existing coordination and coop-

eration, spanning issues including trade, military relations, culture,

people-to-people exchange, cyber security, climate change and the Iran nuclear issue.

When China and the United States work together, they can make big things happen that is good for the world, Xi said. He urged the two sides to implement consensus reached between their leaders, adhere to the principle of "no conflict or confrontation, win-win cooperation and mutual respect," expand their cooperation at bilateral, regional and global levels, and push forward Sino-U.S. relations by a big step. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Rouhani In Paris to Revive Business Ties



PARIS - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani arrives in France on Wednesday with the bosses of oil major Total and aircraft maker Airbus among top executives he is due to meet as the two countries look to revive business ties despite diplomatic differences.

On his first trip abroad since a sanctions-ending nuclear accord took effect, Italy this week already rolled out the red carpet for the pragmatist Shi'ite president and his 120-member delegation of business leaders and cabinet ministers, signing a raft of deals.

But with France taking a hard line in nuclear negotiations, being outspoken in its condemnation of Tehran's support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and having close ties with Sunni

states, the Paris visit will be more low key.

"It's true that Iran has returned to the international community, but it doesn't mean we agree on everything, especially on Syria," Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said on Wednesday.

Nevertheless, since July, French economic and political delegations have traveled to Tehran to explore opportunities. Officials have said certain "commitments" could now be agreed, although how definitive they are is unclear.

Rouhani begins his trip to Paris by meeting some 20 company executives. He is due to deliver a speech to business leaders on Thursday at a Franco-Iranian forum, where Iranian ministers will outline their plans. (Reuters)

Only Syrians Invited to Geneva Peace Talks: UN

Geneva - Only Syrians have been invited to peace talks in Geneva, the UN said Wednesday, in an apparent contradiction to Turkey's suggestion that it would be included.

On Tuesday, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Ankara would "boycott" the talks set to open on Friday if the Syrian Kurdish group Democratic Union Party (PYD), which Ankara believes is linked to militants fighting inside Turkey, was at the negotiating table.

But Khawla Mattar, a spokeswoman for the

UN's Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura said there was "no plan to invite" non-Syrians when asked about the possible inclusion of observer delegations from Turkey, Russia, the United States or France.

She declined to comment on which parties had been given invitations, which were issued by de Mistura on Tuesday. Moscow has said the PYD's inclusion was key to the talks' success.

Turkey's objection threatens to be a major blow to the negotiations, which have already been ... (More on P4)... (24)

Opposition Demands Answers before Joining Syria Talks

BEIRUT/GENEVA/PARIS - The Syrian opposition is awaiting a response to its demands from the United Nations before deciding whether to attend peace negotiations planned for Friday. The Syrian government has already agreed to join the talks that U.N. envoy Staffan de Mistura hopes to convene in an indirect format in Geneva with the aim of ending the five-year-old war that has killed 250,000 people.

But a Saudi-backed opposition council that includes armed and political oppo-



nents of President Bashar al-Assad has yet to decide whether to go. Its presence is seen as vital if the long-awaited negotiations are to

go ahead. While it has expressed support for a political solution, the opposition reiterated demands including a halt to attacks

on civilian areas before any negotiations begin. In a letter to U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the ... (More on P4)... (25)

Israel Feels the Heat of U.S., EU and U.N. Criticism

JERUSALEM - The United States, European Union and the United Nations have issued unusually stern criticism of Israel, provoking a sharp response from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and raising Palestinians' hopes of steps against their neighbor.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday described Israel's settlements as "provocative acts" that raised questions about its commitment to a two-state solution, nearly

50 years after occupying lands the Palestinians seek for a state.

Ban also laid some of the blame for four months of stabbings and car ramplings by Palestinians at Israel's door, saying "as oppressed peoples have demonstrated throughout the ages, it is human nature to react to occupation, which often serves as a potent incubator of hate and extremism".

Netanyahu's response was quick and furious. Ban's remarks "give a



tailwind to terrorism", he said, and ignore the fact "Palestinian murderers do not want to build a state". "The U.N. lost its neutrality and moral

force a long time ago," he added, singling Ban out for personal criticism.

While terse words between Israel and the United ... (More on P4)... (26)

Refugee Integration Biggest Challenge Since German Reunification: Business Group

BERLIN - How to integrate the refugees is one of the biggest challenges faced by Germany since the country's reunification, said a leading German business group on Wednesday, expecting it would take years until the process completes. "The integration of refugees into the labor market is one of the greatest challenges since reunification," said Eric Schweitzer, president of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK). Roughly 1.1 million asylum seekers entered

Germany in 2015. A similar amount was expected to arrive this year.

Economists said the influx of refugees would benefit the German economy in the short term due to consumption and government spending on accommodating the newcomers. From a long-term perspective, however, a successful integration was necessary if Germany wanted to shift the crisis into an opportunity. "It is clear that this process of integration will certainly take five to ten ... (More on P4)... (27)

Spain Leads NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission

BRUSSELS - Spain is leading the Baltic Air Policing mission for the first four months of 2016 based at Siauliai air base in Lithuania, with 130 Spanish Air Force personnel operating four Eurofighter Typhoon Jets, NATO said Wednesday. The Spanish Air Force took lead nation responsibility on Jan. 7 and will complete their mission at the end of April. This is the second deployment for Spanish Air Force jets to Siauliai after their last mission in 2006. Spain augmented the Baltic Air Policing mission at Amari airbase in Estonia from May to August in 2015. They work to ensure the Eurofighter Typhoon Jets which provide the NATO Quick Reaction Aircraft are maintained at readiness. On their first scramble on Jan. 19, the Spanish Eurofighters were launched to intercept and escort a Russian aircraft over the ... (More on P4)... (28)

"Serious Deficiencies" Exist in Greece's External Border Management: EU Commission

BRUSSELS - The European Commission here on Wednesday discussed a draft Schengen Evaluation Report on Greece, which said Greece is seriously neglecting its obligations and that there are serious deficiencies in the carrying out of external border controls. According to the Commission, the draft report - which was not public - was based on unannounced site visits to the Greek-Turkish land border and to Chios and Samos conducted from Nov. 10-13 in 2015. The report looked at the presence of police and coast guard personnel on the in-



spected sites, the efficiency of the identification and registration process, sea border surveillance and cooperation with neighboring countries.

"Whilst acknowledging that the Greek authorities are under pressure,

the report notably finds that there is no effective identification and registration of irregular migrants and that fingerprints are not being systematically entered into the system and travel documents are ... (More on P4)... (29)

UN Mission Chief Vows to Destroy Terrorists in Somalia

MOGADISHU - The African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has vowed to crackdown on terrorist groups operating in the Horn of Africa region.

AMISOM Acting Force Commander Major-General Nakibus Lakara, who visited El-Adde base in southern Somalia which was attacked by Al-Shabaab fighters last week, said he will ensure that terrorists operating in Somalia are eliminated.

"We are here to ensure that Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups are eliminated from this great nation of Somalia," Lakara said in a statement released in Mogadishu on Wednesday.

"We shall re-strategize. Our defenses must now become offensive by nature. It is payback time, we shall win this war, and the Somali people shall be free," he added.

Lakara reiterated that the Mission will remain committed to its primary mandate of ensuring terrorist groups in Somalia, especially Al-Shabaab, are pushed out of Somalia.

He was speaking during a visit to El-Adde and other AMISOM bases in Sector 2 and 3. El-Adde was attacked by Al-Shabaab terrorists on Jan. 15, killing many Kenyan soldiers.

A suicide bomber drove a car loaded with explosives into the gate on Jan. 15. KDF troops from a nearby camp launched a counter strike with gunners and mobile artillery, but met heavy resistance in a full-blown battle involving mortars, resulting into deaths and injuries. (Xinhua)

PYD Kurds Could Join Syria Talks Later: Russia

MOSCOW - Syrian PYD Kurds may take part in a later stage of Syrian peace talks in Geneva but have not been invited to the first round of discussions, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov said on Wednesday.

United Nations special envoy to Syria Staffan de Mistura told France's foreign minister earlier on

Wednesday he would not be inviting the Syrian PYD Kurds, or Democratic Union Party, to the talks due to take place on Jan. 29 and a Riyadh-backed opposition group would lead the negotiations.

"Invitations to the first stage of the Syria talks were not sent to the Democratic Union Party, but de ... (More on P4)... (30)

Cameron to Meet EU's Juncker on Friday: Spokeswoman

LONDON - Prime Minister David Cameron will hold talks with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in Brussels on Friday on his renegotiation of Britain's ties with the bloc, his spokeswoman said, ahead of a progress update expected next week. Cameron has said he hopes to reach a deal on his renegotiation at a Feb. 18-19 summit of EU leaders, paving the way for a British member-

ship referendum as early as June. EU and British officials have said they expect European Council President Donald Tusk to circulate a letter to EU leaders early next week setting out what progress has been made so far and what needs to be done ahead of next month's meeting. Cameron had been due to travel to Sweden and Denmark on Friday ... (More on P4)... (31)

Rahmon Appoints his Daughter as Chief of Staff

BISHKEK - President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon made personnel changes in the government, the press service of the President reported.

Deputy Prime Minister of the country Marhabo Jabbori was pensioned off. Ozoda Rahmon, a daughter of Emomali Rahmon, who held the

post of the Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, was appointed as Chief of Staff for the President of the country. She has replaced Bakhtiyor Khudoyorzoda, whose candidacy was proposed for the post of the Chairman of the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda. (AKIpress)

Pakistan only SAARC Country to Improve Corruption Perceptions Index Score: TI

ISLAMABAD - The Transparency International (TI) maintained on Tuesday that Pakistan was the only country among the five Saarc countries that improved its Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score.

The other four countries scored the same or less points as compared to the score in 2014, the TI said in its report on CPI 2015, to be formally launched on Wednesday.

TI Pakistan Chairman Sohail Muzaffar said in a statement that the CPI score for Pakistan

had again increased by one point to 30, and the country's rank had improved by three.

"Pakistan should have performed better, which can be achieved by having on-ground measures for the implementation of zero tolerance to corruption," he added.

He hoped that the government would take serious steps to implement the recommendations of TI Pakistan which might result in marked reduction of corruption and much better CPI in future years. (Agencies)

Chinese, U.S. Chief Diplomats Discuss Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issue, South China Sea

BEIJING - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry discussed the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, the South China Sea situation and other hot-spot affairs during a meeting in Beijing on Wednesday.

Wang expounded on China's stance on several issues of common concern at a joint press briefing following their close-door talks lasting about four hours. KOREAN PENINSULA NUCLEAR ISSUE China agrees the United Nations Security Council should pass a new resolution on the Democratic Peo-

ple's Republic of Korea (DPRK) following its nuclear test earlier this month, Wang said.

"The new resolution should aim to bring the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue back to the negotiating table, rather than stirring up tension or causing chaos on the peninsula," he stressed.

Sanctions are not an end in themselves and it is vital to restart dialogue and negotiation, said Wang. China is willing to maintain all-round and profound consultations with all parties in a responsible way, including the U.S., said Wang. (Xinhua)