

Russia and China Tell North Korea, U.S. and South Korea to Embrace De-Escalation Plan

MOSCOW - Russia and China joined diplomatic forces on Tuesday and called on North Korea, South Korea and the United States to sign up to a Chinese de-escalation plan designed to defuse tensions around Pyongyang's missile program. The plan would see North Korea suspend its ballistic missile program and the United States and South Korea simultaneously call a moratorium on large-scale missile exercises, both moves aimed at paving the way for multilateral talks. The initiative was set out in a joint statement from the Russian and Chinese foreign ministries issued



shortly after President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping held wide-ranging talks in the Kremlin. "The situation in the region affects the national interests of both countries," the joint statement said. "Russia and China will work in close coordination to advance a solution to the complex problem of the Korean Peninsula in every possible way." North Korea said on Tuesday it had successfully test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time, which flew a trajectory that experts said could allow a weapon to hit the U.S. state of Alaska. (Reuters)

Nieghbor News

Xi Urges G20 to Continue Championing Open World Economy

BERLIN - Chinese President Xi Jinping said his country hopes that the Group of 20 (G20) major economies will continue to champion the building of an open world economy. Xi made the appeal in a signed article published Tuesday on mainstream German media before he travels to the European country for a state visit and the upcoming G20 Hamburg summit. Recalling the achievements of last year's G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, Xi said the world economy still faces daunting challenges despite "further consolidation of growth momentum and the upbeat economic outlook in both the developed and emerging economies."

He urged the group, the premier forum for international economic cooperation, to continue "to follow through on the consensus reached at Hangzhou and all its previous summits and lead the way forward for the world economy." "This serves the interest of all parties," he said in the piece, titled "To Make the World a Better Place." China has great expectations for the Hamburg summit and supports Germany in hosting a successful meeting, he added. In the signed article, the Chinese leader laid out his expectations for the G20, a group that gathers world's largest developed economies and leading emerging economies. (Xinhua)

In Europe, Trump Gets 2nd Chance to Make 1st Impression

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump will learn this week whether he gets a second chance to make a first impression as he returns to Europe and has his first encounter with Russia's Vladimir Putin. Trump's first visit to the continent in May stirred anxieties among European allies when he declined to endorse NATO's common defense treaty explicitly and scolded world leaders for not spending more on their armed forces.

This time, Trump will use stops in Poland and Germany to try to pull off the tricky balancing act of improving ties with Moscow at a time of particularly fraught relations while also presenting the U.S. as a check against Russian aggression. Trump is leaving Washington for Europe on Wednesday. In what may be the most-watched event of the four-day trip, the president will meet Putin on Friday on the sidelines of an international sum-



mit in Hamburg, Germany. Every aspect of the bilateral meeting between the two unpredictable leaders is sure to be closely scrutinized as investigations press into alleged Moscow meddling in the 2016 election and potential Trump campaign collusion. (AP)

German FM Bids to Mediate Qatar Diplomatic Crisis

ABU DHABI - Visiting German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said Tuesday that he sees "good chances" for the diplomatic row between Qatar and Saudi-led Arab countries not to escalate further, local and German media reported. Gabriel made the remarks at a joint press conference with his United Arab Emirates (UAE) counterpart Abdullah Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan during his visit to the country. Despite a "real danger" for the conflict to escalate, "I think there are sufficient possibilities in order

to defuse the situation," he said, as there was new "room to maneuver" to achieve "common results." The German official also pressed for joint regional efforts against terror financing. "Financing of terror must stop! The UAE is already following a comprehensive approach," he urged. Gabriel is on a second day of his three-day mediation tour in the Gulf Arab region to help seek a political solution to the Doha diplomatic crisis. He will head to Qatar later today and visit Kuwait on Wednesday. (Xinhua)

Pakistan Now Enjoys Status of Fast Developing Country: PM

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Tuesday expressed his pleasure over Pakistan cricket team's marvels during the ICC Champions Trophy, said due to the policies of PML-N government, Pakistan now enjoyed the status of a fast developing country among the comity of nations. He said when the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) came to power in 2013, the country was at the brink of default, with power shortage and terrorism plaguing the people. But Pakistan embarked upon a journey of progress and prosperity with several development initiatives taken by his government, boosting its power, energy and infrastructure sectors, he added. The prime minister was addressing a

reception held here to welcome the ICC Champions Trophy triumphant Pakistan cricket team. He assured that his government would continue patronage of sports in the country. Earlier, the Pakistan team led by skipper Sarfraz Ahmed were introduced to the prime minister. The team was warmly received by ministers Marriyum Aurangzeb, Abid Sher Ali, Ahsan Iqbal, Ishaq Dar and Khawaja Muhammad Asif, advisor Irfan Siddiqui and others. Leader of the House in Senate Raja Zafarul Haq, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique, federal cabinet members and a number of parliamentarians were also present on the occasion. (APP)

UK Government Says to Introduce EU 'Repeal Bill' to Parliament Next Week

LONDON - Legislation to begin the process of transferring European Union law into British law will be presented to parliament next week, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said on Tuesday. The spokesman said Brexit minister David Davis had given colleagues an update on the "Repeal Bill", which will shift EU legislation into British law as part of the Brexit process, at a weekly meeting of May's top team of ministers. "He said the legislation, which is the start of the legislative process for Brexit, is

expected to be tabled next week," the spokesman told reporters. Tens of thousands of EU-related laws have made their way onto the British statute book during more than 40 years of membership of the bloc and unpicking that complex legislative web is likely to take many years. The repeal bill, which the government says will help achieve a smooth transition as Britain leaves the EU, will transpose EU law and repeal the 1972 European Communities Act which formalizes Britain's EU membership. (Reuters)

Putin, Trump May Discuss Arms Control during Upcoming Meeting

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin and his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump may discuss arms control during their upcoming meeting later this week in Germany, Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov said on Monday. At a news briefing ahead of Putin's trip to Germany, Ushakov confirmed that the Russian and U.S. presidents will meet on the sidelines of the G20 summit to be held in Hamburg on July 7-8. He said the long-antic-

ipated meeting was very important for maintaining global stability and security. Ushakov added that Putin and Trump may also discuss the return of Russian diplomatic properties in New York City and Washington D.C. seized by the U.S. government last December in retaliation for the alleged Russian interference in the 2016 U.S.



presidential elections. In addition, Putin will also hold talks with about 10 foreign leaders during the G20 summit, including French, South Korean, Turkish presidents and Japanese prime minister, said Ushakov. (Xinhua)

EU Chief to EU Parliament Leader: 'You are Ridiculous'

BRUSSELS - The head of the European Union's executive body denounced the bloc's parliament as "totally ridiculous" during a spat over the meager attendance at Tuesday's plenary session. After EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker thanked the few dozens of the 700-plus legislators in the huge atrium for showing up, he insisted that "parliament is not serious" for failing to show up in large numbers for the keynote debate of the day. EU Parliament President Antonio Tajani chided Juncker and asked for "a more respectful attitude." Tajani added: "The Commission does not control the parliament. It is the parliament that should be controlling the Commission." (AP)

EU Offers Plan, Cash to Stem Libya Migrant Flow to Italy

STRASBOURG - The EU executive offered Italy more funding on Tuesday to help control migration across the Mediterranean from Libya among a set of proposals responding to complaints from Rome that Europe was failing to help it out. The plan agreed at the European Commissioners' weekly meeting will be put to national interior ministers on Thursday in Tallinn, where Italian officials want the other 27 EU governments to do more to help them deal with thousands of people arriving weekly. More than 85,000 have come this year. The Commission plan calls for beefing up the Libya's coastal rescue services - something Europeans hope may curb the number of people picked up close to shore by international charities. (Reuters)

French PM: Progress in Brexit Talks are Pre-Requisite to Future EU-UK Deals

PARIS - French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said on Tuesday that any talks with Britain over its future relationship with the European Union would come only after "orderly" talks over its exit from the bloc have been conducted. "Conducting orderly negotiations over the United Kingdom's exit will be a pre-requisite for the future relationship's framework," Philippe told lawmakers. The EU's negotiating



guidelines prevent its chief negotiator Michel Barnier from opening any talks on the free trade agreement, which British Prime Minister Theresa May wants, until EU leaders decide "significant progress" has been made on a deal to settle key issues in the divorce. (Reuters)

UAE Says Qatar "Reluctant" to End Support of "Terrorism"

DUBAI - United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed said on Tuesday that fellow Gulf state Qatar is "reluctant to change its policy towards supporting terrorism." The UAE's top diplomat made the remarks at a press conference in the country's capital Abu Dhabi, UAE daily The National reported. Sheikh Abdullah said the Saudi-led quartet, including UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt, wait for Doha to respond to their 13 demands, the report said. Kuwait, which is playing a mediatory role in the crisis, reached on Monday an extension of the deadline

by 48 hours. The four Arab countries have issued 13 demands to Qatar over its alleged support of extremism which they say Doha must meet or face further sanctions. The quartet demand from gas-rich Qatar to expel "terrorists," sever ties with Iran, terminate the presence of a Turkish military base in the country and to close the government-controlled news channel Al Jazeera. The quartet cut diplomatic ties with Qatar on June 5 and imposed a transport boycott to and from the Gulf state by closing their land, sea and air borders for Qatari vehicles, ships and planes. (Xinhua)

Merkel and Xi Pushed into Awkward Embrace before G20

BERLIN - When President Xi Jinping took the stage in Davos in January and painted China as a champion of free markets ready to fill the global leadership role vacated by the United States, German officials couldn't help but chuckle. Their expectation was that Donald Trump, due to be inaugurated as U.S. president days later, would quickly temper his protectionist campaign rhetoric and patch up ties with Western allies, leaving little space for Beijing. Six months later, as Xi arrives in Berlin for a highly symbolic visit with German Chancellor Angela Merkel before a Group of 20 summit in Hamburg, what seemed laughable in the thin mountain air of the Swiss Alps is not so absurd any more. Despite concerns about human rights in China, frustrations over market access and worries about a wave of corporate takeovers in Europe by state-run Chinese firms, Germany is being pushed into an awkward embrace with Beijing as Trump doubles down on his promise to put "America First". For Merkel, the G20 host, Xi is an ally and Trump a troublesome rival on some of the most important issues on the agenda in Hamburg - from trade and climate change to economic development in Africa. And so, Merkel will dine with Xi on Tuesday and plot G20 strategy with him over lunch on Wednesday. After that, the two leaders will indulge in classic "panda diplomacy", opening a \$10 million Chinese compound in Berlin Zoo for Meng Meng and Jiao Qing - two giant pandas that China is lending to Germany as a token of friendship. (Reuters)

Iran Urges UN Technical Aid for Syria De-Escalation Zones

TEHRAN - Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Jabari Ansari has called for the United Nations' technical aid for the establishment of de-escalation zones in Syria. Jabari Ansari, who is in the Kazakh capital city, Astana, to attend a new round of peace talks on the Syrian crisis, held talks with UN special envoy on Syria Staffan de Mistura on Tuesday. He said the UN must assist the intra-Syrian talks for the national reconciliation process to start. Astana hosts the fifth round of talks between the Syrian government and opposition, with Iran, Russia, and Turkey as mediators. (Presstv)

In the last round of Astana talks in May, Iran, Russia and Turkey agreed on the creation of four de-escalation zones in Syria. De Mistura, for his part, said the UN supported joint efforts by Iran, Russia and Turkey within the framework of the Astana talks on Syria and called on the Islamic Republic to help the UN-brokered Syria peace talks in Geneva. Six rounds of the Syrian peace talks have been held in the Swiss city of Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations as part of efforts to facilitate a political resolution for the deadly conflict in the Arab country. (Presstv)

Turkmenistan a Strategic Partner for Belarus - Envoy

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan is a strategic partner for Belarus in Central Asia, said the article of Belarus' Ambassador Oleg Tabanyukhov, published by the Turkmen media outlets. "The Belarus-Turkmenistan friendship is time-tested and not subject to any influence of the global political situation. Constructive cooperation between Belarus and Turkmenistan on major international platforms may serve as an example for other countries," reads the article. Mutual support of international initiatives,

aimed at strengthening peace, stability and expansion of efficient economic development, is confirmation of unified approaches in implementation of the basic principles of the Belarus' and Turkmen foreign policy, according to Tabanyukhov. "Two historically important events for Belarus and Turkmenistan took place this year - this is the commissioning of the Garlyk mining and processing plant, and opening of a new complex of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in Ashgabat. (Trend)