

Merkel Calls for G20 Compromise as Crunch Climate Talks Start

HAMBURG - German Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed fellow Group of 20 leaders to compromise at the start of talks on climate and trade that have pitted U.S. President Donald Trump against virtually every other country in the club of leading economies. The host of the G20 summit addressed her counterparts on Friday in a hall at the Hamburg convention center, after video footage showed Trump shaking hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the first face-to-face encounter between the two men. Merkel was shown talking casually with Putin as the leaders entered the hall,



then joining French President Emmanuel Macron in a three-way discussion with Trump, who was seated between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Britain's Theresa May. "We all know the big global challenges and we know that time is pressing," Merkel told the group. "And so solutions can only be found if we are ready for compromise and move toward each other, but without - and I stress this - bending too much, because of course we can also state clearly when there are differences." Trump later held bilateral talks with Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and Putin. (Reuters)

Trump, Putin Shake Hands ahead of Closely Watched G20 Meeting

HAMBURG - U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, a veteran businessman and a former spy, shook hands on Friday ahead of the most highly anticipated face-to-face meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit. Trump has said he wants to find ways to work with Putin, a goal made more difficult by sharp differences over Russia's actions in Syria and Ukraine, and allegations Moscow meddled in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The two men met during an

informal gathering of G20 leaders at the start of the summit, with the U.S. president reinforcing their handshake by patting the Russian leader on the arm. In a video of the encounter, Trump was later shown patting Putin on the back. Both men smiled. They are to hold a formal meeting later in the day at 3:45 p.m. local time, when every facial expression and physical gesture is likely to be analyzed. "I look forward to all meetings today with world leaders, including my meeting with Vladimir Putin. Much to discuss,"



Trump wrote in a tweet on Friday. "I will represent our country well and fight for its interests!" The meeting is slated to begin shortly after a G20 working session on climate and energy starts. Trump,

who has angered world leaders with his decision to pull the United States out of the Paris accord on climate change, will likely have to leave that session early to make the Russia meeting. (Reuters)

72nd UN General Assembly President to Visit China

BEIJING - President of the 72nd UN General Assembly Miroslav Lajcak will pay a visit to China from July 13 to 14, a Foreign Ministry spokesman announced Friday. Lajcak, who is also Slovak foreign minister, is scheduled to meet with Chinese leaders and hold talks with Foreign Minister Wang Yi, spokesman Geng Shuang said. The two sides will exchange views on the work of the UN General Assembly, international and regional issues such as implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustain-

able Development, and cooperation between China and the UN, Geng said. Noting that China places great importance on the role the UN plays in combating global threats and challenges, Geng said the country will actively support the work of the UN General Assembly and deepen cooperation with the UN in various areas. Lajcak was elected on May 31 this year to serve a one-year-term as president of the 72nd UN General Assembly. (Xinhua)

Tusk Calls on G20 Leaders to be "Ruthless" in Fight against Migrant Smugglers

HAMBURG, Germany - European Council President Donald Tusk called on leaders of the Group of 20 (G20) on Friday to be "ruthless" in the fight against migrant smugglers in Libya, the main springboard for migrants to reach Europe. Tusk made the remarks at a press conference along with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, before attending the plenary session of the G20 summit in the German port city of Hamburg. The migrant inflows via

the central Mediterranean route linking Libya to Italy remains a critical situation, he said, adding that the main task of the European Union (EU) was to effectively stop this wave at its source. "Italy can count on Europe's help in every dimension. But this cannot mean a wider opening of Europe's door towards illegal migration," Tusk said, "That is why, here at the G20, I will call on all leaders to be ruthless in the fight against smugglers." (Xinhua)

IMF, World Bank, WTO Chiefs Call for Efforts to Reinvigorate Trade

WASHINGTON - Heads of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) on Thursday called on G20 members to take actions to reinvigorate trade. "Deeper trade integration twinned with supportive domestic policies can help boost incomes and accelerate global growth. This calls for decisive actions by world leaders gathering for the G20 Summit this week," said the heads of the three international organizations

in a joint statement. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, and WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo said in the joint statement that the pace of opening for trade has largely stalled since the early 2000s, with too many existing trade barriers and other policies that favor domestic industries and new barriers being created. They called on countries to remove trade barriers and reduce subsidies and other measures to distort



trade, according to the joint statement. In regard to the workers and communities that are being negatively affected by structural economic changes, such as technol-

ogy and trade, the heads of the three organizations also called for policies to help them, such as job search assistance, retraining, and vocational training. (Xinhua)

Turkey Slams EU Parliament's Decision to Suspend Accession Talks

ANKARA - The Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said Thursday that the report calling on EU member states to suspend Turkey's accession talks was "null and void." European Parliament on Thursday voted to accept a proposal of 2016 Commission Report, which is suggesting the suspension of accession talks with Turkey if constitutional changes endorsed in an April 16 referendum go ahead. Ankara says the vote, which is not legally binding, is an attempt to "sabotage" the recent positivity surrounding talks between the EU bloc and Turkey. Turkey cared about the decisions made by EU leaders, not about those made by the members of the European Parliament, Yildirim said in Ankara, state-run Anadolu Agency reported. (Xinhua)

U.S. Taps Ex-Envoy to NATO Volker to Resolve Ukraine Crisis

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has appointed Kurt Volker, the former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, to serve as a special representative to Ukraine, the State Department said on Friday.

Volker will be responsible for advancing U.S. interests as set out in the 2015 Minsk agreement and will accompany Tillerson to Kiev on Sunday, the department said. Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea region in 2014 and Kiev accuses it of backing pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine, an allegation the Kremlin denies. (Reuters)

Arab Quartet Says Qatar Refuses to Accept Demands

DUBAI - United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt confirmed on Friday Qatar's "intransigence and rejection" to any settlement, Al Arabiya local news reported. In a joint statement issued after reception of the Arab quartet, led by Saudi Arabia, said the intransigence of Qatar "reflects their association with terrorist organizations and their continued attempts to sabotage and undermine security and stability in the Gulf and the region."



The statement added that they stress "that the Qatari government has thwarted all efforts and diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis," Emirates state news agency WAM reported. The response was handed to Kuwait, which acts as a

mediator of the crisis. The four countries also deplore Qatar's lack of tact and respect for the diplomatic principles towards the Kuwaiti efforts, as it leaked the list of demands, compromising the mediation efforts. (Xinhua)

Putin Writes Exclusive Op-Ed for German Media, Saying "We Share German Priorities"

BERLIN - Russian President Vladimir Putin has addressed the German public directly ahead of the G20 summit in Hamburg on Thursday, writing in an exclusive op-ed for the German newspaper Handelsblatt. Putin stressed his belief in common ground shared by Moscow and Berlin in the areas such as climate change, and praised the G20 as a necessary and effective forum for resolving transnational issues. The G20 had been a successful "instrument of global crisis management" during the 2008 finan-

cial crisis and was needed more than ever in light of heightened geo-political and environmental risks in 2017, the Russian president wrote. "(Russia) welcomes the widening of the G20's agenda. I hereby refer to...sustainable development, climate change, the fight against terrorism and corruption, as well as health-, migration- and refugee policy." Putin congratulated German Chancellor Angela Merkel for Germany's efforts to host a constructive summit marked by mutual respect. (Xinhua)

Hamburg G20 Protests Escalate as Summit Opens

BERLIN - Protesters in Hamburg clashed with police, set vehicles on fire, and targeted municipal infrastructure as German Chancellor Angela Merkel officially opened the two-day G20 summit on Friday. Hundreds of protesters attempted to forcibly enter areas cordoned-off by authorities, known as the "high security zone", to upset the schedule for the first day of meetings between international leaders. Cars have been set ablaze at various locations throughout the city while protesters blocked an important junction at the city's harbor. Around 19,000 police officers have been deployed to ensure the safety of the global dignitaries attending the summit. Several police helicopters are circling the skies above Hamburg and a ban on public gatherings is in place in parts of the city until the summit ends at 5:00 p.m. local time (1500 GMT) on Saturday. Federal police have reported an arson attack on one of its stations in the Altona district where protesters threw firebombs, causing damage to three police vehicles. According to police information, several junctions in the inner-city are being blocked. Police surrounded around 200 protesters from the group "Block G20 - Color the red zone" which seeks to block access roads to the summit and infiltrate the high security zone. The group has warned authorities of "mass, announced, public disobedience." Police used water cannons at a sit-in protest on one of the streets designated for U.S. President Donald Trump's journey to the summit. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

China, Germany to Harmonize Positions at G20 as Main Globalization Beneficiaries

BEIJING - China and Germany, both main beneficiaries of globalization, are likely to find common ground at the upcoming G20 Summit in Hamburg despite massive anti-globalization protesters flooding the streets of the German port city, experts told Sputnik on Friday. BALANCED GROWTH Demonstrators fighting for a wide range of causes occupied the streets of Hamburg in recent days, in anticipation of the annual gathering of leaders from 20 major economies of the world, taking place on July 7-8. Activists called on local residents to take part in a demonstration dubbed "Welcome to Hell," organized by an anti-capitalist group and aiming to express protest and resistance against leaders of capitalist regimes all over the world. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe,

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May prepare for a family photo at the G20 leaders summit in Hamburg, Germany July 7, 2017. Another group launched a protest with an artistic touch, titled "1000 Gestalten," where 1,000 zombie-like creatures covered in crusty clay flocked through the streets of Hamburg on Wednesday. The demonstration, in the form of an art performance, was a symbol for a solitary and open-minded civil society, organizers said. Local law enforcement officials said about 20,000 police officers would be deployed during the G20 meeting to ensure security in the city. Unlike the last time when the summit took place in the city of Hangzhou in eastern China, where local authorities made sure no sign of opposition would occur, Hamburg is expected to offer a completely different environment for world leaders. (Sputnik)

Nawaz Says Nation has Firm Faith in me: PM

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Thursday said the nation had given him mandate for a full five-year term, had faith in him and firmly believed in his development oriented policies. Talking to the journalists accompanying him on his two-day visit to Tajikistan, he said the people would again vote his party into power in 2018 as they were aware of his ability to deliver and bring about a sea change in their lives. When asked about the ongoing questioning by the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) of his family members, the Prime Minister said "There is nothing to fear as our hands are clean." The Prime Minister

asked "What are the allegations against me? Have I looted the national exchequer? Have I done some corruption or got kickbacks?" The Prime Minister said accountability was being held of a person who made this country a nuclear power. He regretted that his family business matters were being exploited for political gains. He said conspiracies had been hatched against his government time and again, and expressed optimism that this time too his opponents would fail miserably. "I have never accepted defeat. We faced the 2014 sit-in and another round in 2016 and will Insha Allah sail through this crisis too," he maintained. (APP)

Iran Sanctions not without Costs for US: Larijani

TEHRAN - Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani has denounced US Senate's adoption of new sanctions on Iran, saying the new restrictions against Tehran will not be without costs for Washington. Last month, US Senate voted for a bill to impose new sanctions on Iran over its ballistic missile program, alleged support for terrorism and human rights violations. The bill would become law if passed in the House of Representatives and signed by US President Donald Trump. Addressing the administrative council of Iran's northern Gilan Province on Thursday, Larijani said US officials "might suppose they could put up new roadblocks for

Iran, but it is not like that they would incur costs on us without paying anything themselves." Iranian officials say the new US restrictions violate a landmark nuclear agreement with the Islamic Republic, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), to which the US is a party. Under the JCPOA signed between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council - the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China - plus Germany, Iran undertook to put limitations on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of nuclear-related sanctions imposed against Tehran. (Presstv)

FMs of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan Discuss Ties in Dushanbe

DUSHANBE - Meeting-Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Erlan Abdylidayev and Sirodjiddin Aslov discussed bilateral ties in Dushanbe, the press service of the Tajik Foreign Ministry reported. The Foreign Ministers

reviewed cooperation issues in transport, communication and border spheres. The talks were held on the sidelines of the CASA 1000 summit, which brought together heads of states participating in the energy project. (AKI)