

Trump Withdraws U.S. from Paris Agreement on Climate Amid Opposition at Home

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday that he had decided to pull the United States out of the Paris Agreement, a landmark global pact to fight climate change.

Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement fulfilled a campaign promise, but was soon met with widespread opposition at home.

The U.S. will cease honoring the nonbinding deal "as of today," Trump said at a press conference in the White House Rose Garden, adding that his administration would also cease implementation of the "draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country."



Calling the Paris Agreement "hamstrings" the United States while "empowers" other countries, Trump said the U.S. would begin negotiations to re-enter the agreement.

However, Trump indicated that re-entry may not be a top priority for his administration. "If we can, great. If we can't, that's fine," said Trump, adding that the new agreement must ensure "fair" treatment to the United States, its business, its workers, and its taxpayers.

Governor of California Jerry Brown vowed to resist withdrawal from the Paris accord. "California will resist this misguided and insane course of action," said Brown in a statement released before Trump finished his speech. (Xinhua)

UN Security Council to Take up Water Disputes, Terrorism in June

UNITED NATIONS - Bolivia took over the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council on Thursday, with its envoy promising "to respond to any emergency situations that might arise," such as in the Middle East and on the Korean peninsula.

Peninsula, in Syria and Libya, to mention a few. So there is flexibility built into the program of work to respond to all of that."

The ambassador said the session was designed "to avoid any kind of conflict. It's a situation which on various continents it is very much an issue that needs to be addressed. We know there have been good practices around the world so it gives us a good opportunity to exchange opinions on this important issue." On June 8, the Security Council will be updated



on threats posed by terrorist acts, and on June 13 the members will be briefed by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix on a "Comprehensive Approach to Mine Action and Explosive Hazard Threat Mitigation." (Xinhua)

Putin Says to Advance Russia-China Cooperation under Belt & Road Initiative

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia - Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday his country is ready to expand cooperation with China under its Belt and Road Initiative. Putin made the remarks when answering questions raised by Zhang Sutang, vice president of Xinhua News Agency, during a meeting with heads of the world's major news agencies on the sideline of the annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). Speak-

ing to Zhang, Putin reiterated his readiness to unite efforts within the framework of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). "Our position is precisely this. It is not only mine but also of the leaders of other EAEU countries. We are interested in developing relations with China, one of the world's largest economies with colossal potential," said Putin. (Xinhua)

European Climate Experts Slam U.S. Withdrawal from Paris Agreement

BRUSSELS - Leading climate experts and advocates in Europe reacted in outrage, following the announcement on Thursday by U.S. President Donald Trump to withdraw the country from the Paris climate accord.

"The world's biggest historic emitter walking away from its climate change commitments is gravely unjust, but we must respond by redoubling our efforts. Those on the frontlines of climate change demand

nothing less," said Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Oxfam International, a UK-based confederation of charitable organizations.

Jonathan Church, lawyer with Europe-based environment law organization ClientEarth, called the decision of the Trump administration "an act of global environmental vandalism that has the potential to do great harm to current and future generations." (Xinhua)

Putin Says Russia Mulling Countermeasures Against U.S. Military Expansion

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia - Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that his country is considering countermeasures against U.S. military threats to its Far Eastern territories, including the disputed islands with Japan. The United States has deployed missile defense systems in Alaska and now in South Korea, and Russia will not stand by without taking action, Putin said at a meeting with heads of Russian and foreign news agencies on the sideline of the annual St. Petersburg International Economic

Forum. "The U.S. missile defense systems destroy the strategic balance in the world ... we are thinking about how to counter these challenges," he said.

Putin added that in his view, even if Pyongyang drops its nuclear and missile programs someday, Washington will still continue to deploy missile shields in the region under certain pretexts. Therefore, Russia's military buildup in the Far East, particularly on the four disputed Pacific islands off Japan's northern prefecture of Hokkaido, is a forced re-



sponse, Putin said. The island group, called the Northern Territories in Japan and the Southern Kurils in Russia, is quite a convenient location for Russia to carry out a military deployment against the U.S. threats, he noted. "If we assume that the four islands fall under the sovereignty of Japan one day, theoretically the United States could send troops there," said the Russian president. (Xinhua)

Merkel Calls U.S. Withdrawal from Paris Agreement "Very Regrettable"

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Friday the U.S. decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement was "very regrettable."

In a statement, Merkel said the Paris Agreement is essential to "preserve our creation" and that Germany will abide by its responsibilities.

The German chancellor said she is "touched and encouraged" by the states and businesses in the United States that "will go together with us in this irreversible way." Merkel pledged her country's support to Fiji in November's UN climate conference to be held in Germany's Bonn, which is a further step to the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The conference will be presided over by Fiji. (Xinhua)

UK PM Tells Trump of her Disappointment at his Climate Change Move

LONDON - British Prime Minister Theresa May spoke with U.S. President Donald Trump Thursday night after his announcement the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate change agreement. May expressed her disappointment to Trump during a phone conversation, 10 Downing Street said in a statement. According to May's official spokesperson, Trump called May Thursday evening to discuss his decision to pull the United States out of the Paris agreement. (Xinhua)

U.S. Committed to Asia-Pacific as Allies Seek Clear Policy: Mattis

SINGAPORE - U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said on Friday the United States remains committed to its Asia-Pacific allies, as he arrived in Singapore for the region's premier security forum.

Mattis, who is making his second visit to the region since he took charge of the Pentagon on Jan. 20, will be looking to articulate a clear U.S. policy for allies in the region and reassuring them at the annual Shangri-La dialogue in Singapore. Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who spoke at the opening of the forum on Friday evening, said there was concern in the region



that the U.S. withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris climate accord would lead to Washington retreating from global leadership.

"While these decisions are disappointing, we should take care not to rush to interpret an intent to engage on different terms as one not to engage at all," Turn-

bull said. Authorities in Singapore stepped up security as Turnbull, Mattis and other leaders arrived for the meeting. They have said the terrorism threat to the city-state remains at the highest level in years, although there was no credible intelligence of an imminent attack. (Reuters)

China, EU Confronting Growing Uncertainties with Stability of Relations: Chinese Premier

BRUSSELS - China and the European Union (EU) are confronting growing global "uncertainties" with a stable relationship, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said here Friday. Li made the remarks in a keynote speech at the 12th EU-China Business Summit, in response to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's worry about global uncertainties. China and the EU hold extensive common ground on ideas in dealing with

important international relations, he said. Both sides believe that China and the EU should go with the tide of globalization and push forward globalization to make it fairer and more inclusive, he added. It is clear that globalization has brought tremendous benefits to China, the EU and the world, Li said, noting that globalization should not be blamed for the negative influence emerging along with it. (Xinhua)

Russian Airstrikes Kill 300 IS Militants near Syria's Raqqa

DAMASCUS - Russian warplanes struck positions of the Islamic State (IS) group in the northern city of Raqqa, killing over 300 IS militants, the Syrian military media said Thursday. The Russian airstrikes targeted IS positions in the Rasafeh area southwest of Raqqa, the de-facto capital of IS. The airstrikes destroyed a convoy of fuel tankers in the area, according to the report, without giving more details. The Russian airstrikes have been increased against the IS militants, particularly those leaving Raqqa and moving toward Palmyra in central Syria.

A day earlier, Syria's military media said that Russian warships positioned in the Mediterranean Sea fired four cruise missiles at the IS posts in the ancient city of Palmyra's countryside.

It said that frigate Admiral Essen and submarine Krasnodar from the Russian Navy Fleet fired four Kalibr cruise missiles on Tuesday at IS posts near Palmyra, hitting them all, with the submarine firing missiles from the seabed.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the Russian missile attack targeted an IS convoy moving from Raqqa toward Palmyra. The London-based watchdog said the Russians wanted to prove they are also fighting IS and to draw attention to the fact that deals exist between IS and Kurdish groups concerning withdrawal from areas in Raqqa toward Palmyra. The London-based watchdog said the Russians wanted to prove they are also fighting IS and to draw attention to the fact that deals exist between IS and Kurdish groups concerning withdrawal from areas in Raqqa toward Palmyra. (Xinhua)

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China, Germany Seek Innovation Cooperation to Strengthen Economic Ties

BEIJING - The world's leading manufacturing powers, China and Germany, will increase innovative cooperation in the latest effort to strengthen bilateral trade and investment amid setbacks in globalization.

During his official visit to Germany, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang described the two countries as a golden pair in the manufacturing industry. China is willing to promote "the alignment between 'Made in China 2025' plan and Germany's 'Industry 4.0' concept," Li said, stressing collaboration in manufacturing, energy, aviation, innovation, and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Unveiled in 2015, the Made in China 2025 plan aims to transform China into an innovative manufacturing country. The German Industry 4.0 concept, coined in 2011, is designed to facilitate

automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies, including cyber-physical systems, the Internet of things and cloud computing.

Li's words were echoed by his German counterpart Angela Merkel who said Germany is ready to work with China to build a platform to synergize innovation and high-tech development strategies.

The meeting marked the next step in the world's second and fourth largest economies jointly exploring innovation as a means to stimulate flagging global growth.

"The two countries, although in different stages of development, can create mutual benefits via cooperation in the manufacturing industry and industrial digitalization," said Yao Ling, a research fellow with the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Ministry of Commerce. (Xinhua)

CPEC Helps Pakistan's Economy Leap Forward: Lodhi

ISLAMABAD - Terming the "One Belt and One Road" a great initiative for development, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi has said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) helped Pakistan's economy leap forward.

"One Belt and One Road" initiative had been written into resolutions of both UN Security Council and General Assembly and it had gained international community's widely acceptance, as the initiative would not only help promote the development of world economy, but also unite peo-

ples of different countries and regions for realizing common prosperity, she said in an interview with Chinese newspaper "People's Daily".

Ambassador Lodhi said that Pakistan welcomed this initiative and participated positively in it.

She said China helped develop the under-developed areas in Pakistan; this was a historic undertaking not only for China and Pakistan, but also for the whole region.

"One Belt and One Road" initiative not only had its economic significance, but also benefited the peace and stability of the whole region, she added. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran, Turkmenistan Opt for Broadening of Mutual Cooperation

TEHRAN - Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ebrahim Rahimpour and Turkmen Foreign Minister Rashid Meredow in a meeting in Ashgabat underlined the need for boosting mutual cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting in the Turkmen capital on Thursday, Rahimpour and his Turkmen counterpart explored avenues for bolstering and reinvigorating bilateral relations.

Rahimpour is in Turkmenistan to attend the 49th meeting of the Special Working Group on the legal status of the Caspian Sea

"We are interested in ex-

panding relations with Turkmenistan in all areas such as economy, energy, and gas swap in the coming years," Rahimpour said during the meeting.

Rahimpour, meantime, pointed to Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif's recent visit to Turkmenistan and the fruitful exchanges of views between the two countries' senior officials, and said, "Following the visit and under the prisoner transfer agreement, a number of Iranian prisoners detained in Turkmenistan were transferred back to our country. We are hoping that the next stage of prisoner transfer will soon take place." (FNA)

Moscow Tests Iskander Ballistic Missile in Tajikistan Drills

DUSHANBEH - Moscow has for the first time test-fired its Iskander-M tactical ballistic missile outside the Russian soil during a drill in Tajikistan, targeting a simulated terrorist camp located 15 kilometers from the Tajik-Afghan border.

(Press tv) - Colonel Yaroslav Roshchupkin, an aide to the commander of Russia's Central Military District, made the announcement on Thursday in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg in the administrative center of Sverdlovsk Oblast.

Roshchupkin added that Uragan (Hurricane) rockets were also used in the joint military exercise named Dushanbe-Anti-terror 2017 from May 30 to June 1 in Tajikistan.

Russia's show of missile readiness took place amid mounting concerns over the deployment by the US Air Force of long-range nuclear-capable B-52 Stratofortress bombers and 800 airmen to the UK in support of joint exercises with NATO allies and partners taking place across Europe in June. (Agencies)