

Sexual Violence in Conflict “Legitimate Threat” to Peace: UN

UNITED NATIONS - A senior UN official on Monday said that sexual violence in conflict turns out to be a “legitimate threat” to peace and security in the world, and called for more international efforts to tackle the root causes of such violations.

Deputy UN Secretary-General Amina Mohammed told an open meeting of the UN Security Council that although global understanding of sexual violence in conflict is shifting, there remains the need to tackle the root causes of such violations that lie in fundamental inequality and discrimination against women.

“Sexual violence in conflict is no longer seen as ‘merely a women’s issue’ or as a ‘lesser evil’ in a false hierarchy of human rights violations,” she said during an open



council debate on the subject, in which some 70 speakers took the floor at UN Headquarters in New York. “It is rightly viewed as legitimate threat to security and durable peace that requires an operational security and justice response, in addition to ensuring multi-dimensional services for survivors of such crimes,” Mohammed said.

A robust legislative framework is now in place, including a series of precise Security Council resolutions with new tools to drive change and progress, she noted. Sexual violence is increasingly used as a tactic of terrorism, employed by extremist groups in places like Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria and Mali to advance their military, economic and ideological ends. (Xinhua)

Almost 85 Pct of Mediterranean Migrants in EU Reach Italy this Year: IOM

GENEVA - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported Tuesday that 45,118 migrants and refugees have reached Italy by sea this year, accounting for close to 85 percent of total Mediterranean maritime arrivals in Europe since the start of 2017. According to the Geneva-based organization, a further 6,095 individuals have landed in Greece, Spain (2,426) and Cyprus (273). Unsurprisingly, the central Mediterranean route linking north Africa with Italy remains the deadliest route for migrants

striving to reach European shores. According to IOM’s latest figures, 1,229 men, women and children have died on that route, with a further 87 drowning on western and eastern passages. While the number of arrivals by sea in Europe this year remains far below the 189,075 entries recorded last year over the same period, the number of fatalities is almost as high.

IOM reported that 1,316 individuals have died so far this year, just short of the 1,382 deaths recorded over the same period in 2016. (Xinhua)

Germany Mulls Withdrawing Troops Stationed in Turkey: Official

BERLIN - Turkey again denied German members of parliament access to the German Bundeswehr soldiers stationed at Turkey’s Incirlik air base on Monday.

The Turkish government has not granted the necessary diplomatic clearance to the politicians for their visit, despite multiple requests by the Federal Foreign Office.

The Office called the decision “absolutely unacceptable,” and is considering withdrawing its operations from Turkey.

“We have to think about

how to continue in light of the current situation,” Federal Foreign Office representative Martin Schaefer said in Berlin.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has confirmed that while the dialogue with Turkey is continuing, the German government “searches for alternatives to Incirlik.”

Since the German Bundeswehr is a parliamentary army, “it is absolutely necessary for members of parliament to have access to their soldiers,” Merkel said. The decision on ... (More on P4)... (24)

Xi Suggests Aligning B&R Initiative with European Investment Plan

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday suggested docking the Belt and Road Initiative with the European Investment Plan in order to inject new momentum into China-EU ties.

Xi made the remarks when meeting with Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni after the two-day Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation ended on Monday in Beijing.

Noting that both China and Italy boast ancient civilizations, Xi said the two countries have been connected by the historic



Silk Road.

He commended the frequent visits by leaders from both sides and close exchanges between officials at all levels, saying China is willing to work with Italy to further ad-

Tillerson Gives Nod at Arctic Meet to Climate Change Action

FAIRBANKS, Alaska - U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson signed an agreement recognizing the landmark Paris climate accord at a meeting of Arctic nations in Alaska on Thursday, but said President Donald Trump was not rushing to decide whether to leave or weaken U.S. commitments to the pact. Trump’s efforts to dilute U.S. climate policies have made the country an outlier on the issue and put Tillerson in an awkward position at a meeting of the Arctic Council.

The council meets every two years to tackle climate change and other problems facing the North. (Reuters)

Researchers Say Global Cyber Attack Similar to North Korean Hacks

SEOUL/WASHINGTON - Cybersecurity researchers have found evidence they say could link North Korea with the WannaCry cyber attack that has infected more than 300,000 computers worldwide, as global authorities scrambled to prevent hackers from spreading new versions of the virus.

A researcher from South Korea’s Hauri Labs said on Tuesday their own findings matched those of Symantec <SYMC.O> and Kaspersky Lab, who

said on Monday that some code in an earlier version of the WannaCry software had also appeared in programs used by the Lazarus Group, identified by some researchers as a North Korea-run hacking operation.

“It is similar to North Korea’s backdoor malicious codes,” said Simon Choi, a senior researcher with Hauri who has done extensive research into North Korea’s hacking capabilities and advises South Korean police and



National Intelligence Service. Both Symantec and Kaspersky said it was too early to tell whether North Korea was involved in the attacks, based on the evi-

Warring Factions Get Ready for New Round of Peace Talks in Geneva: UN Official

GENEVA - UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura told reporters here on Monday that the warring factions in Syria were ready for a new round of peace negotiations which will kick off Tuesday and most likely end before Saturday.

He said that the 18-strong Syrian government delegation was already in Geneva, showing that the Syrian government was “empowered for serious discussions” and interested in the political process.

He stressed that there was no solution to Syria’s devastating six-year civil war

without a political settlement on the horizon, saying that “the alternative is no hope, no discussion, no political horizon and just waiting for the facts on the ground to take place.”

According to De Mistura, the topic of the latest round of talks would still be those set by the previous talks, namely better governance, a new constitution, re-election, and the war on terrorism.

“We will choose some subjects to be focused on in order to get more movement,” he said. The UN official also said



he was encouraged that the new U.S. administration was showing “increasing interest and engagement” in the Syria peace process.

“Everything is connected. There are big important meetings taking place. There are discussions taking place in capitals. They do have an impact on what we discuss,” he said. (Xinhua)

Trump Stresses Strength of U.S.-Egypt Strategic Relations

CAIRO - U.S. President Donald Trump asserted in a phone call with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi late Monday the importance of strategic relations between the two countries.

Trump underlined his keenness on developing partnership in all fields, a statement from the Egyptian presidency said. Trump told al-Sisi that he wanted “to visit Cairo at the earliest opportunity to discuss ways to counter terrorism in the Middle East.”

Trump pointed out Egypt’s pivotal role in the Middle East and hailed its efforts in combating terrorism and supporting

Trump, in Tweets, Defends his Sharing of Information with Russians

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday defended his decision to disclose information to Russian officials during a White House meeting last week, saying he had an “absolute right” to share “facts pertaining to terrorism and airline flight safety.”

The president took to Twitter to counter a torrent of criticism, including from his fellow Republicans, after reports that he had revealed highly classified information about a planned Islamic State operation.

Two U.S. officials said Trump shared the intelligence, supplied by a U.S. ally in the fight against the militant group, with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Russian Ambassador Sergei Kislyak during a meeting last Wednesday.

The disclosures late on Monday roiled the administration as it ... (More on P4)... (26)

South Korea, U.S. to Hold Summit Meeting in Late June

SEOUL - South Korea and the United States have agreed to hold a summit meeting in Washington in late June, the presidential Blue House said Tuesday.

Senior presidential press secretary Yoon Young-chan told a press briefing that the summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and U.S. President Donald Trump will be held in late June in the U.S. capital.

Detailed schedule and agenda for the summit will be discussed later through diplomatic channels, Yoon said.

The agreement on the summit was reached at a meeting between Matt Pottinger, a senior director for East Asia at the National Security Council of the White House and Chung Eui-yong, a former South Korean ambassador to Geneva who now leads Moon’s security and diplomatic task force.

Pottinger who was leading a U.S. delegation arrived here Monday evening. He paid a courtesy call to President Moon and delivered Trump’s congratulations to Moon, according to the Blue House.

He is the first senior White House official visiting South Korea since President Moon was inaugurated last week. The Blue House said South Korea and the United States agreed to seek a “bold and practical” measure for a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Moon told Pottinger that he hoped to meet with President Trump soon, expressing his anticipation for a sufficient and close discussion between the two allies. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

China, ASEAN Officials to Meet on South China Sea this Week

BEIJING - China on Tuesday said that the 14th Senior Officials’ Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) will be convened on Thursday in Guiyang in southwest China’s Guizhou Province.

According to Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin and senior diplomatic officials from ASEAN countries will attend the meeting. Prior to the meeting, there will be the 21st Joint Working Group meeting on the Implementation of the DOC.

“China and ASEAN countries will continue with their discussion on implementing the DOC, pushing forward maritime practical cooperation

and issues related to the negotiation on the code of conduct in the South China Sea (COC),” said Hua.

She said that China and the Philippines will convene the first meeting of the bilateral consultation mechanism on the South China Sea issue in Guiyang on May 19, when the Chinese vice foreign minister and Philippine Ambassador to China Jose Sta. Romana will attend the meeting to discuss the South China Sea issue. China expects and believes that the two countries will consolidate consensus, enhance trust, and clarify misunderstandings through bilateral talks, while properly handling differences and promoting maritime cooperation, to create conditions for solving relevant disputes, said Hua. (Xinhua)

Pakistan, China Together for Prosperity

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said that Pakistan and China are standing together for the prosperity and well-being of their people.

He was talking to Communist Party Secretary of Chinese province of Zhejiang Che Jun in Hangzhou. Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor is the flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative. Secretary of the

Committee of the CPC of Zhejiang welcomed the prime minister and said that relations between Pakistan and China are based on history and culture.

Che Jun briefed the prime minister about Zhejiang province saying that it is an economic hub and historically part of Silk Route. He said that the cooperation between the two countries in the economic field must be enhanced. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran Calls for Collective Efforts to Fight Terrorism



TEHRAN - Iran’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bahram Qassemi underlined Iran’s firm diplomacy to fight the heinous phenomena of terrorism and extremism.

“The advocates of fighting terrorism should prove their honesty in fighting the terrorist groups,” Qassemi said.

The Iranian foreign ministry spokesman pointed to the accusations lodged by the West against Saudi Arabia in case of spreading terrorism and extremism in the region, and said that Riyadh is expected to use the opportunity and avoid playing blame game on others in support for the terrorist groups.

Asked about US President Donald Trump’s visit to Saudi Arabia, Qassemi said that Saudi Arabia’s internal problems and its interference in Yemen has forced the country to try to show a different image of itself in

the world by holding the Riyadh summit. “Such measures like holding the Riyadh summit cannot resolve Saudi Arabia’s problems and the Zionist conspiracies sow the seed of discord in the Muslim countries,” the Iranian foreign ministry spokesman said.

Qassemi said that regional countries should look for regional stability in the Middle East.

The foreign ministry spokesman advised the newly-elected US president to avoid repeating the past mistakes.

“Most part of the unrest, insecurity and poverty of the region is the outcome of the US policy over past decades,” Qassemi added. In relevant remarks on Sunday, Qassemi strongly lashed out at the Saudi officials for their allegations against Iran, and urged the Riyadh government to stop its false accusations targeting Iran. (FNA)

Hungary Says Committed to Developing Co-Op with Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - President of Hungary Janos Ader sent a letter to Turkmen counterpart Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the Turkmen government said in a message.

Thanks to the joint efforts, the past 25 years have seen deepening of the

Hungary-Turkmenistan cooperation, said the letter. Hungary reaffirms its commitment to the further development of the interstate cooperation, according to the Janos Ader’s letter. The Hungarian president also expressed confidence that the friendly relations between the countries can be expanded in new areas, interesting for both sides. (Trend)