

Moon, Hollande, Urge Commonwealth Countries to Support Paris Climate Conference

VALLETTA - UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and French President Francois Hollande called Friday on the leaders of 53 member countries of the Commonwealth to take actions against climate change.

It is mankind's duty to reach an "ambitious" accord at Paris climate conference later this month, Hollande said at the Commonwealth summit, calling on Commonwealth countries to back a UN climate deal at the upcoming Paris talks.

Hollande, as president of the country hosting the climate conference in Paris on Nov. 30-Dec. 11, was invited to the Commonwealth talks. It is the first



time for a French head of state to take part in a Commonwealth meeting. "Man is man's worst en-

emy. We have seen this with terrorism and we have seen it also with climate change," Hol-

lande said, adding that he insisted on attending the summit to press for a climate agreement in spite

of the "terrible incidents in Paris." Ban, who was also present at the summit, said

the mechanism to monitor and review climate change has been supported by most UN member states.

"I think we have a good mechanism to make sure that once this agreement is made in Paris, it will be implemented fully with confidence and trust," Ban said. "Let us agree on a universal, legally binding, ambitious climate change agreement by 2015."

Commonwealth leaders have agreed to set up a climate change hub, which will facilitate access to funds for small states, according to Commonwealth secretary-general Kamalesh Sharma. (Xinhua)

'Enough is Enough' on Guns: Obama

WASHINGTON - US President Barack Obama denounced America's epidemic of gun violence Saturday after yet another deadly shooting, saying "enough is enough." "We have to do something about the easy accessibility of weapons of war on our streets to people who have no business wielding them. Period. Enough is enough," Obama said in a statement. He revealed that the shooter in Colorado Springs who killed three people and wounded nine Friday had used a military-style assault rifle. Obama also

disclosed for the first time that the man arrested for the shooting had held hostages at the family planning center from which he opened fire at people outside in an hours long standoff with police.

Obama said it was particularly sad that one day after a holiday -- Thanksgiving -- Americans have to comfort families who suddenly lost loved ones to gun violence.

"And yet, two days after Thanksgiving, that's what we are forced to do again," Obama said. (AFP)

London Protesters Oppose UK Airstrikes in IS in Syria

LONDON - Hundreds of demonstrators in London are urging British lawmakers not to back airstrikes on the Islamic State group in Syria.

Protesters chanting "Don't bomb Syria" gathered outside Prime Minister David Cameron's 10 Downing St. office. Protests were also being held Saturday in other British cities. Britain's Royal Air Force is already part of a U.S.-led campaign against the militants in Iraq, and on Thursday

Cameron argued that the strikes should be expanded to Syria. He said, "we have to hit these terrorists in their heartlands."

The government is trying to build support among lawmakers for military action before calling a vote in Parliament, which could come next week.

The main opposition Labour Party is deeply divided. Leader Jeremy Corbyn says he will oppose airstrikes, but many Labour legislators back them. (AP)

Erdogan sees Paris Climate Summit as Chance to Mend Ties with Russia

ISTANBUL - Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday the climate change summit in Paris next week could be a chance to repair relations with Moscow after Turkey shot down a Russian jet near the Syrian border on Tuesday.

Erdogan has said Turkey would not apologize for downing the jet, which resulted in the death of one of the pilots. Because of this, Russian President Vladimir Putin has refused to contact Erdogan over the incident. But Moscow has re-

taliated with economic sanctions on Turkey and has retracted visa-free travel between the two countries. "The recent events really saddened us," Erdogan said in a televised speech in the western city of Balikesir. However, he stopped short of the apology demanded by Russia.

Erdogan has said Turkey deserves the apology because its air space was violated by the Russian aircraft.

"On Monday in Paris there will be an international climate summit, that can be a chance to



repair our relations with Russia. Confrontation will not bring anyone happiness. As much as Russia is important for Turkey, Turkey is important for Russia,"

Erdogan said. Turkish government spokesman Numan Kurtulmus said Turkey is deliberating which measures to take in light of Russia's retaliatory steps. (Reuters)

Japan to Bolster Counterterrorism Measures with Launch of New Task Force

TOKYO - The Japanese government will launch a new task force under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry on Dec. 8 that will take the lead in the country's revamped counterterrorism initiatives, local media reported Saturday.

In the wake of the deadly terror attacks in Paris, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he will discuss plans with French President Francois Hollande on the sidelines of the



U.N. climate summit in the French capital, in a show of solidarity and dedication to working

with the international community on counterterrorism initiatives.

The new task force is to

be comprised of around 40 experts from the foreign and defense ministries, as well as the National Police Agency and other relevant authorities, and will be charged with gathering information pertaining to regions spanning the Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia and South Asia, sources with knowledge of the matter said Saturday.

Under authority of the Cabinet Secretariat, the

Australia, Britain, Canada Make Pledges to Curb Climate Change

VALLETTA - Australia, Britain and Canada on Friday pledged to spend billions of dollars in curbing climate change at a special session during the Commonwealth summit.

Canada promised 2.5 billion U.S. dollars over five years to help developing countries cope with climate change, according to a statement released by the Commonwealth Secretariat on Saturday. Britain committed 21 million British pounds (about 31.5 million dollars) for disaster management and 5.5 million British pounds (about 8.2 million dollars) for the ocean-based economy. Australia pledged 1 million dollars toward the Climate Finance Access Hub, a new Common-



wealth initiative, the statement said. On the eve of the UN climate change conference in Paris, known as COP21, leaders of 53 Commonwealth countries gathered in Malta Friday for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, focusing their discussions on how to tackle climate change. Commonwealth Secretary-General Kama-

lesh Sharma said the new pledges would help some of the most vulnerable countries in the Commonwealth, according to the statement "Thirty-one of our 53 members are small states and 25 are small island developing states, which are most vulnerable to climate change," the statement quoted Sharma as saying. (Xinhua)

Merkel Urges Strict, Binding Goals to Tackle Climate Change

FRANKFURT - Germany's chancellor gave a qualified welcome on Saturday to China's pledge to tackle rising temperatures ahead of a global climate conference but she called for more ambitious goals to cut greenhouse emissions.

In her weekly internet podcast on Saturday, Angela Merkel also underscored the long-term importance of coal-fired power for Germany, a country that remains one of the globe's biggest economies and exporters.

"It is remarkable that China ... has given a timeframe for reduction of 2030," said Merkel.

"But the proposed targets for reduction will not allow us to reach the (United Nations) 2 degree goal. That means we need a follow up process and that, in my view, must be binding."

Merkel's comments come as world leaders prepare to meet for a summit that seeks to steer the global economy away from reliance on fossil fuels.

Several scientific studies project that pledges made so far will - at best - hold the world to temperature rises of anywhere from 2.7 degrees to 3 or even 3.5 above pre-industrial times by 2100. That is well above an agreed 2-degree UN limit.

China has promised its carbon dioxide emissions will peak by 2030 but has not said how high they will rise before then.

In her podcast, Merkel underscored the continued importance of coal power for Germany. "We never promised to leave coal behind us in 2020. It stays an important pillar for a longer time," she said. (Reuters)

Migrants Clash on Macedonia Border; Soldiers Build Fence

IDOMENI - Police in Macedonia fired tear gas and stun grenades at desperate migrants stranded for days at the Greek border and who are demanding passage to western Europe, as soldiers began erecting a metal fence to keep them out.

Macedonia, along with other Balkan countries on the migrant route, began turning away "economic migrants" nearly two weeks ago. Human rights groups have criticized the decision, under which only Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans are allowed through. The new restrictions triggered days of protests from Iranians, Pakistanis, Moroccans and others, stranded in squalid tent camps on the border. Some Iranians have sewn their lips shut. One man on Saturday threw himself on railway lines before ... (More on P4)... (15)

Egypt's Military Helicopter Crashes over Technical Failure, Staff Wounded: Military

CAIRO - An Egyptian military helicopter crashed on Saturday due to technical failure, over Cairo-Ismaailia road, military statement said. The helicopter dropped down while carrying on a regular inspection operation, military spokesperson, Mohamed Samir, said at the military official facebook page. "The accident took place in the farms districts of 6 October City, at Cairo-Ismaailia road, due to sudden technical failure." All the staff on-board were wounded, and have been transferred to the military Hospital for treatment, the statement added. (Xinhua)

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Turkmenistan Plans to Issue State Bonds

ASHGABAT - The ministry of finance of Turkmenistan plans to launch the release of a certain amount of bonds of the state fund starting from 2016, said the message of the government of Turkmenistan. This issue was raised at the last meeting of the cabinet of ministers of Turkmenistan, during which deputy prime minister Byashim Khojamaammadov presented his report. The bond issue is provided in accordance with the Budget Code and the laws governing the relations that arise during the issue and circulation of securities. In this regard, Turkmenistan works on preparing drafts of the relevant legal acts

regarding the issue, distribution and return of the bonds.

President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, summarizing the report, noted the importance of the development of the securities market to attract funds the budget, the inflow of capital to modernize production, ensure stability of the financial system of the country. "This will expand the range of financing sources and will become one of the key mechanisms for further economic growth and increase of welfare of the citizens of Turkmenistan," he said. In 2014, the law "On Securities Market" ... (More on P4)... (16)

Climate Change Serious Threat to Human Life: PM Nawaz

VALLETTA - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Saturday said climate change poses a serious threat to humans across the globe, reported Radio Pakistan. While addressing the Commonwealth Summit on Climate Change in Malta, he said Pakistan experienced mighty floods in 2010 and 2011 owing to changing climate in the region. He called for provision of the latest technology and other resources for implementation of decisions during the conference in letter and spirit. The premier said assistance should be provid-

ed to underdeveloped countries to overcome challenges faced due to climate change. He said Pakistan was facing the brunt of climate change, adding that the Himalayan glaciers were melting faster than those in other parts of the world. "We are adopting environment-friendly policies to overcome climate degradation." Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif also attended a banquet hosted by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II for the heads of government of Commonwealth countries and their spouses. (Agencies)

China Pledges Resolute Measures to Root out Poverty by 2020

BEIJING - China's top leadership on Saturday pledged resolute measures to help the remaining 70 million poor people shake off poverty and enjoy essential social services by 2020. Major tasks for governments over the next five years will include ensuring the poverty-stricken people to have enough to eat and wear, and to enjoy compulsory education, health service and housing, according to a two-day high-profile conference on poverty alleviation and development, which ended Saturday in Beijing. Identifying poverty alleviation still "an arduous task," President Xi Jinping told the conference that "no single poor region nor an individual living in poverty will be

left behind" when the country accomplishes the goal of "building a moderately prosperous society" by 2020. Xi urged governments at all levels to carry out more targeted and precise measures to ensure the poor people in rural areas have access to food, clothes, basic education, medical care, and safe home. Local governments and officials, particularly those of underdeveloped regions, should make poverty alleviation the top priority in the next five years' work, Xi demanded. Priority should be given to the improvement of rural infrastructure, including roads, access to water, power and Internet, Premier Li Keqiang said during the conference. (Xinhua)

Iran Unveils New Model of Oil Contracts to Attract Investments

TEHRAN - Iran's Oil Ministry unveiled a new model of oil contracts here on Saturday to attract foreign investments in oil sector in the post-sanction era. The newly developed model of oil contracts, dubbed as Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC), are designed to help the country attract finance from Asian and European investors, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said in a conference. The IPC is replacing traditional Iranian "buy-back" contracts which are no longer attractive to foreign companies. He hopes the new model

will bring in some 25 billion U.S. dollars in investment in Iran's energy sector over the next years, Zanganeh said. In the new contracts, different stages of petroleum industry, exploration, development and production, are commissioned in an integrated manner. Under the IPC, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will set up joint ventures for crude oil production with international companies which will be paid with a share of the output. The move is to encourage the foreign investment in Iran's en ... (More on P4)... (17)

French PM Calls on Gulf to Accept more Refugees

ÉVRY - French Prime Minister Manuel Valls has called on the Gulf states to accept more refugees fleeing Syria, saying that a "humanitarian disaster" could erupt in the Balkans if Europe does not control its borders. "I'll say it again, Europe cannot accept all the refugees coming from Syria. That's why we need a diplomatic, military and political solution in Syria," Valls said Friday evening. "Every country must play its part; I'm

thinking particularly of the Gulf states," the prime minister said during a discussion with residents of Evry on the outskirts of Paris, focusing on the response to the attacks which rocked the capital two weeks ago. Most of the roughly four million Syrian refugees who have fled their country since civil war broke out have travelled to neighbouring Libya, Jordan or Turkey. But Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE and ... (More on P4)... (14)