

EU Naval Mission Against Migrant Smugglers Enters Second Phase

ROME - The EU's naval anti-smuggling mission entered its second phase in the southern Mediterranean Sea on Wednesday. Six military ships were deployed in international waters some 19 km off Libya to enforce search and seize operations against migrant smugglers within the EU's Sophia mission, formerly known as EUNavfor Med. The mission includes Italian Cavour aircraft carrier acting as flagship, three frigates from France, Spain and Britain respectively, and two German vessels, information officer with Operation Commander Rear Admiral Enrico Credentino told Xinhua.



Three ships from Belgium, Britain and Slovenia were expected to join the mission's forces by the end of October, the officer added. Overall, the mission would count on some 1,300 military personnel. The EU vessels would patrol the southern Mediterranean off the coasts of Libya, which is considered a main hotspot for smugglers of asylum seekers and migrants in the so-called central Mediterranean route

towards Europe. The EU-Navfor Med mission had been launched on June 22 in order to "break the business model of smugglers and traffickers of people in the Mediterranean," according to an EU Council statement. Its first phase focused on surveillance and rescue operations in order to both gather information on the smugglers' activities and try to save the thousands of people crossing the Mediterranean on board of unsafe craft. Some 564,031 refugees and migrants have made the perilous journey so far this year, according to International Organization of Migration (IOM) latest data. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

Iran's Supreme Leader Bans Negotiations with the US

DUBAI - Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Wednesday banned any further negotiations between Iran and the United States, putting the brakes on moderates hoping to end Iran's isolation after reaching a nuclear deal with world powers in July. Khamenei, the highest authority in the Islamic Republic, already said last month there would be no more talks with the United States after the nuclear deal, but has not previously declared an outright ban. His statements directly contradict those of moderate Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who says his government is ready to hold talks with the United States on how to resolve the conflict

in Syria, where the two countries back opposing sides. "Negotiations with the United States open gates to their economic, cultural, political and security influence. Even during the nuclear negotiations they tried to harm our national interests," Khamenei was quoted as saying on his website. "Our negotiators were vigilant but the Americans took advantage of a few chances," he said. Although he supported the last 18 months of negotiations, Khamenei has not publicly endorsed the nuclear agreement with the United States, Germany, France, Britain, China and Russia that settled a standoff of more than a decade. (Reuters)

EU Official to Announce 40 Mln-Euro Support for Peru in Upcoming Visit

BRUSSELS - The European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica is to announce a 40 million-euro package to support Peru, as he started a visit to Paraguay and Peru on Wednesday. According to a European Commission press release, the tour will take Mimica to Paraguay from Oct. 7 to 9, and then to Peru from Oct. 9 to 11, to discuss the implementation of the priorities for the countries' development. While in Peru, Mimica was expected to sign an agreement to disburse the 40 million euros (45 million U.S. dollars) package from a total 66 million euros being allocated to Peru between 2014 and 2017, to support Peru's National Development and Social Inclusion Strategy. This support will serve to ensure the adequate development and health of children and young adults, by providing them with access to basic services such as water, education and medical care. In Paraguay, Mimica was expected to endorse the disbursement of 5 million euros for social protection, with the aim of ensuring basic services to the most vulnerable population and to increase economic inclusion. Ahead of the visit, Mimica said that the EU looked at Paraguay and Peru as important and constructive partners in Latin America. According to the European Commission, for the period 2014-2020, the EU is financially supporting Paraguay with 168 million euros and Peru with 66 million euros. Both countries' priorities have been identified together with national governments. (Xinhua)

UN Urges Human Rights Based Migration Policy Ahead of Key EU Discussion

GENEVA - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein on Wednesday called on EU member states to ensure that all discussions of migration policy to be grounded firmly on the need to protect the human rights of all migrants. Speaking ahead of the Oct. 8 meeting of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council, Zeid expressed concerns about the continued security-driven agenda that appears to dominate the EU's response. He raised particular concerns about the nature of the "hotspot" approach, saying that they seem to be conceived not simply as a means of registering new arrivals, but also as a way of preventing them from moving further until it is decided whether they are in need of international protection or should be returned. "While we welcome the efforts of the EU to offer support to the frontline member states receiving large numbers of migrants, states must ensure that these 'hotspots' are not, in effect, detention centers in disguise," he added. The UN human rights chief also urged the EU and its individual member states to avoid the "ugly specter" of arbitrary or prolonged detention of people who are not criminals, and to ensure the adoption of human rights-based alternatives to detention. According to him, the EU and its member states should move away from the flawed view of law enforcement as the main, or sole, panacea to contemporary migration challenges, especially when so many people are fleeing their countries of origin because of serious human rights violations or decaying or collapsing economies. "Narrow exclusion-focused policies have clearly failed," Zeid said, adding that increased border control and surveillance have not reduced the number of new arrivals but only forced them to use more dangerous routes, leading to increased human rights abuses and loss of life. (Xinhua)

Houthi, Saleh's Party Accept U.N. Peace Terms, Eye Talks

SANAA - Yemen's Houthi group and the party of the former president have accepted a peace plan brokered by the United Nations in talks in Oman, paving the way for resuming negotiations to end months of conflict in the country. Both groups have said on Wednesday that they had officially on Wednesday notified U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon that they were ready to join talks on a settlement based on a seven-point peace plan proposed by the U.N. in talks in Oman last month. Aid agencies and the U.N. have raised alarm over the human cost of the war, both from fighting that has claimed over 5,000 lives and from a blockade by the Saudi-led coalition supporting



Hadi that they say has brought Yemen close to famine. Citing allegations of war crimes, the rights group Amnesty International on Wednesday called for states including the United States and United Kingdom to stop arming the Saudi-led coalition, which has been bombing Yemen for over six months.

In his letter dated on Oct. 3, Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdul-Salam confirmed that his group and others allied to it backed the seven-point plan. "The Security Council supports a political settlement for the Yemen crisis and the return to the talks with no pre... (More on P4)...(21)

Furious but Powerless, Turkey Left Smarting by Russian Action in Syria

ANKARA - Turkey may be furious about Russian incursions into its air space but beyond words of protest there is little it can do, with its dependence on Russian energy and trade keeping its hands tied, and its own Syria policy in disarray. President Tayyip Erdogan has said he is losing patience with Russian jets crossing the border after Moscow launched an air campaign in support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad last week. "An attack on Turkey means an attack on NATO," he warned. The military alliance has, rhetorically at least, leapt to Turkey's defense, describing the Russian violations as "extremely dan-



gerous", raising the prospect of direct confrontation between the former Cold War adversaries. Russia's actions are galling for Erdogan, who has lobbied in vain for Assad's removal. The Syrian army carried out what appeared to be its first

major assault backed by Russian air strikes on Wednesday, highlighting how Turkey has been left impotent as the conflict over its southern border takes on an increasingly international dimension. "Russia... (More on P4)...(22)

U.S. Welcomes Elections Delay in Eastern Ukraine

WASHINGTON - The U.S. State Department on Tuesday hailed the decision of Ukraine's independence-seeking insurgents to postpone their local elections. "The United States welcomes the reports that Russia-backed separatists postpone another round of illegal elections in eastern Ukraine," spokesman Mark Toner told reporters at a daily news conference. "People living in separatist-controlled areas deserve to pick their local officials in elections that meet international standards, are compliant with Ukrainian law and monitored by the OSCE (the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)," Toner said. Earlier in the day, representatives of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk republics said that they had agreed to delay the controversial local elections to next year. Under the Minsk peace deal, local elections in the areas controlled by rebels were due to be held on Oct. 25 alongside the vote in other Ukrainian regions. However, Kiev has cancelled the elections in eastern part of the country, citing security concerns. The militants in Donetsk and Lugansk decided to hold their own local elections Oct. 18 and... (More on P4)...(23)

China, Africa Agree on Building Resilient Public Health System

CAPE TOWN - The ministers in charge of health affairs in China and African countries on Tuesday stressed the importance of establishing a resilient public health system in Africa, especially the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention, both in the African Union, as well as in individual countries. The officials met in Cape Town for the 2nd Ministerial Forum of China-Africa Health Development. Under the theme "Promoting the access of healthcare service in Africa: Improving China-Africa's Cooperation in Public Health in post-Ebola era", China and

African countries agreed to strengthen collaboration on universal health coverage. Both Sides reviewed the current status of China-Africa health cooperation and reiterated their commitment to China-Africa health cooperation. Based on lessons learnt from the Ebola outbreak and the global response, both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in public health via construction of resilient public health system, and enhance collaboration on cross-board health issues, according to participants. The forum welcomes international partners, ... (More on P4)...(24)

Pakistan to Maintain full Spectrum Nuclear Deterrence, FO Asserts

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's nuclear policy is shaped by evolving security dynamics of South Asia, thus taking all necessary measures to maintain a full spectrum deterrence capability in order to safeguard our national security, the Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) said on Wednesday. A recent article published in The Washington Post claimed that Pakistan and US were conducting negotiations to finalise an accord which will lead to a civil nuclear deal between the two countries. Reacting to the report published in US media, the FO spokesperson stated: "Pakistan's nuclear policy is shaped by evolving security dynamics of South Asia, growing conventional

asymmetry, provocative doctrines and aggressive posturing by India, which obliges us to take all necessary measures to maintain a full spectrum deterrence capability in order to safeguard our national security, maintain strategic stability and deter any kind of aggression from India. The spokesman said "as a responsible nuclear state, Pakistan remains actively engaged with the international community, including the United States, on nuclear stability and security issues". Pakistan seeks peace and strategic stability in South Asia as corner stone of its policy and considers conflict resolution as a means to achieve this end, he added. (Agencies)

New Zealand PM Makes Secret Visit to see Security Situation in Iraq

WELLINGTON - New Zealand Prime Minister John Key has just completed a secret visit to New Zealand troops in Iraq and met with Iraqi leaders to discuss the fight against Islamic State insurgents. Key said in a statement from his office Wednesday that he had visited Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, where New Zealand forces are part of a multinational mission to train Iraqi security forces. He also met with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi and President Fuad Masum in Baghdad to discuss the campaign to defeat ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), and New Zealand's contribution to it. More than 60 countries and regions are involved in the international coalition against ISIL, with New Zealand committing up to 143 troops for two years to the Building Partner Capacity mission in Taji, alongside Australia. "More than 2,100 Iraqi soldiers have now been through the training program, learning everything from how to detect IEDs (improvised explosive devices) to leadership skills. That training is helping save lives and defeat ISIL," said Key. "The feedback from the battlefield is those soldiers we have trained have performed well and raised the standards of the soldiers around them," he said. (Xinhua)

DPRK Urges U.S. to Sign Peace Treaty on Korean Peninsula

PYONGYANG - The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Wednesday urged the United States to sign a peace treaty to replace the 1953 armistice, in a bid to build long-lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. In a statement released by state news agency KCNA, a spokesman for the DPRK Foreign Ministry said Pyongyang reaffirms its stance to replace the armistice agreement following the end of the 1950-53 Korean War with a peace treaty, in order to defuse tension and create peace on the peninsula. At the 70th U.N. General Assembly concluded late September, DPRK Foreign Minister Ri Su Yong underscored the urgent need to sign a peace treaty in place of the existing armistice. "The evil cycle of escalation of tension will repeat itself and the situation leading to the brink of a war will be unavoidable as long as



the state of armistice persists on the peninsula," the spokesman said. "A fundamental way of putting this serious situation under control is for the DPRK and the U.S. to scrap the outdated AA and sign a new peace treaty as early as possible to build durable peace-keeping mechanism," the spokesman added. The DPRK urges the United States to "part with its anachronistic policy" and "boldly make a policy switch-over," in which case the

DPRK is open for constructive dialogue and will help Washington "clear its security concerns" on the peninsula, according to the spokesman. The spokesman said a message about this proposal has been sent via an official channel to the U.S. side and that a U.S. response to it is expected. The two Koreas are still technically at war because the 1950-53 Korean War was ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty. (Xinhua)

Putin, Rahmon Agree to Maintain Level of Russian Military in Tajikistan

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon agreed not to boost the Russian military presence in Tajikistan, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Wednesday. The two leaders met in Russia's Sochi on Tuesday. "The current Russian [military] presence in Tajikistan is in compliance with international law and bilateral agreements. It is intended to ensure stability and security in this truly tense region," Peskov told reporters. "There were no agreements yesterday to increase presence there, but Putin and Rahmon agreed that what is happening in Tajikistan and the surrounding areas is a cause of concern," he added. Police offic-

ers secure an area in the capital of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, where several Interior Ministry special forces officers and a traffic policeman were reportedly shot dead earlier on Friday, Sept. 4, 2015. During a meeting at Putin's summer residence, the Tajik leader voiced concern over deteriorating security in northern Afghanistan, near the border with Tajikistan, where Afghan forces have been battling Taliban militants for control of the city of Kunduz. Both Russia and Tajikistan are participants of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a six-nation military alliance, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Belarus. (Agencies)