

France, Allies to Discuss Syrian Conflict in Paris: Quai d'Orsay

PARIS - France hosted a meeting on the Syria conflict Tuesday with European and Arab allies in addition to the United States, but without Russia and Iran, Damascus' traditional partners, the foreign ministry said. In a statement issued by the Quai d'Orsay, France's top diplomat Laurent Fabius would receive "the main partners engaged with France in dealing with the Syrian crisis: Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Qatar, Turkey, Germany, the United States, Italy and



Britain." "They will discuss the means to bring about a political transition towards a united and democratic Syria, respectful of all communities, while also reinforcing the fight against terrorism," it added. The fresh talks is a new round of negotiations to dig for a diplomatic end to the Syrian crisis after France, its western allies and Arab partners stood firm in their demand that Syrian president Bashar al-Assad leave power to draw a new era in the Arab country, which Russia, Syria refuse. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan Near to Border Deal



DUSHANBE - Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan may be close to striking a border delimitation deal that could mitigate the occasional flare-ups of unrest among communities in disputed areas. Speaking on October 27, Kyrgyz deputy prime minister Abdyrahman Mamataliyev hailed the proposed land swap as a historic turning point, CA-News reported. "This will be a mutually advantageous exchange - 12 hectares apiece. We will receive plots in the village of Kok-Tash, where a cemetery is located. They will get plots lower down from this vil-

lage," said Mamataliyev, whose ministerial brief includes border issues. Negotiations on settling land disputes have long been hindered by each side's insistence on sticking to delimitations dating back to the Soviet era, when the location of any particular border was of little real significance. Tajikistan has suggested agreeing to a delimitation established in documents dating back to 1924-27, while Kyrgyzstan insists on a 1958 border. The latter arrangement was at the time approved by the Kyrgyz government, but not Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet. (Agencies)

Top U.S. General Says could Recommend Locating U.S. Troops with Iraqis



WASHINGTON - The top U.S. military officer said on Tuesday he would consider recommending putting U.S. forces with Iraqi troops to fight Islamic State if that would improve the chances of defeating the militants. "If it had an operational or strategic impact and we could reinforce success, that would be the basic framework within which I'd make a recommendation for additional

forces to be co-located with Iraqi units," Marine General Joseph Dunford told a Senate hearing. Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, outlined four reasons it might be useful to put U.S. troops with Iraqi forces: increasing the coherence of the military campaign, ensuring logistics effectiveness, boosting intelligence awareness and improving combined arms delivery. (Reuters)

Declaration Approved to Promote Asia Pacific Space Cooperation

BEIJING - A declaration on Asia-Pacific space development was approved during a forum on Tuesday, with attendees agreeing to improve peaceful multi-lateral cooperation in outer space. The forum, held by the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) and the China National Space Administration (CNSA), focused on Asia Pacific space development, which would be boosted by the "Belt and Road" initiative. According to the declaration, APSCO member countries should further promote the comprehensive cooperative partnership to improve basic space skills, promote a community of sharing, outline quick response



strategies and improve industry-driven ability and interconnection. Space administration officials and aerospace specialists from China, Thailand, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Mongolia, Peru, Turkey and Indonesia attended the forum. XuDazhe, APSCO's chairman and also head

of the CNSA, said China had signed agreements on space cooperation with 10 countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. China will cooperate with APSCO to promote its remote-sensing satellite services across South-east Asia, and work with APSCO members to improve Asia Pacific space capacity, Xu added. The APSCO, established in 1992, is an inter-governmental organization headquartered in Beijing, that aims to improve space cooperation and promote peaceful behavior in outer space. (Xinhua)

China Warns U.S. of "Eventualities" in South China Sea

BEIJING - The Chinese navy has warned that further forays by the U.S. naval vessel into the waters claimed by China in the South China Sea may "trigger eventualities." Chinese navy spokesperson Liang Yang made the comment following a U.S. warship's entering waters near the Nansha Islands on Tuesday. The Chinese navy monitored, tracked and issued warnings to the USS Lassen, according to Liang, who said China's reaction is necessary, legitimate and

professional. "China's sovereignty over the Nansha Islands and their adjacent waters is irrefutable," he said. "The Chinese navy will resolutely perform duties and missions to unswervingly safeguard national sovereignty, maritime rights and interests, and peace and stability in the South China Sea." The spokesperson said the navy will closely monitor the situation in and above the sea for goings-on that may jeopardize China's national security. (Xinhua)

Migrants, Refugees Continue to Arrive by Boat in Yemen Despite Conflict: UN

GENEVA - Close to 70,000 refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, mainly originating from Ethiopia and Somalia, have arrived in Yemen by boat so far this year, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported on Tuesday. Despite the ongoing conflict which has seen some 2,615 civilians killed and 5,193 injured, UNHCR indicated that over half of this year's arrivals have taken place since the crisis erupted in March this year. Travel to Yemen is particularly dangerous, as shows the capsizing of a boat carrying 68 peo-



ple three weeks ago in the Arabian Sea, an incident in which only 33 of the passengers survived. UNHCR explained that most of the movements to Yemeni shores have shifted to the Arabian

Sea where people believe the situation to be calmer. Figures show that over 10,000 new arrivals were recorded in September, representing a 50-percent increase on August flows. Over 10,000 entries have also been reported so far in October, the majority of them Ethiopian migrants who transit through Yemen in search of better oppor...

Syrian Presidency Seeks end to Terrorism before Initiatives

BEIRUT - The Syrian presidency said on Tuesday political initiatives could not work in Syria before terrorism had been wiped out, sticking by its long-held position on how to end the war after its Russian allies called for new elections. The presidency said in a statement it was clarifying reports that President Bashar al-Assad had told a Russian delegation on Sunday he would be ready to hold early parliamentary and presidential elections called for by his allies in Moscow. The Russian foreign minister, in an

interview broadcast on Saturday, said Syrians needed to prepare for both parliamentary and presidential elections, part of an effort by Moscow to advance a political track towards ending the conflict. In a statement, the presidency said the Syrian state would welcome any political solution approved by the Syrian people that preserves national unity. But it added that Assad had repeatedly said that the defeat of what he called terrorism must come before any initiative. (Reuters)

Iran Expects Sanctions Scrapped by Yearend: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani says sanctions against the Islamic Republic are planned to be lifted by the end of 2015 as the country's historic nuclear agreement with world powers is close to taking effect. "Based on the plans, the unjust sanctions [imposed] against the Islamic Republic of Iran will be lifted by the end of 2015," Rouhani said in a meeting with Spain's new ambassador to Tehran Eduardo López-Busquets on Tuesday. On October 18, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini

said in a joint statement that the EU had "adopted the legislative framework for the lifting of all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions against Iran." For the decision to take effect, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must certify that Iran has met its commitments under the accord reached in July between Iran and the P5+1 countries - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany - officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The IAEA is expected to issue its report on Iran on December 15. (PressTV)

U.S. Intensifying Fight Against IS Militants: Pentagon Chief



WASHINGTON - U.S. military troops are intensifying pressure on Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq, supporting local forces with an expanded air campaign and occasional direct action on the ground, Defense Secretary Ash Carter told lawmakers on Tuesday. Carter told the Senate Armed Services Committee the campaign against the militants was evolving as the U.S. military seeks to reinforce what is working on the ground. He said U.S. forces aimed to intensify pressure on the Islamic State stronghold of Raqqa in Syria and the Iraqi city of Ramadi. Carter said he expected the coalition air campaign to intensify, with more aircraft and a higher tempo of operations. He said the United States also wouldn't hesitate to support local forces with strikes from the air or direct action on the ground. (Reuters)

Half Mln Killed in Asia-Pacific Disasters in 2005-2014: UN

BANGKOK - From 2005 to 2014, the Asia-Pacific region had 1,625 reported disaster events, leaving approximately 500,000 people dead, a United Nations report said on Tuesday. These disasters, accounting for over 40 percent of the global total, also affected around 1.4 billion people, constituting 80 percent of those affected globally, said a report launched by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Over this period, Asia and the Pacific, the most disaster prone region in the world, incurred economic damage of 523 billion U.S. dollars, accounting for 45 percent of the global total, showed the 2015 Asia-Pacific Disaster Report-Disasters without Borders: Regional Resilience for Sustainable Develop-



ment. "Even these figures are probably underestimates, since there is no standardized methodology for gathering disaster statistics, and many disasters go unreported," it stressed. Despite some already-made progress, Asia-Pacific countries still have much to do to reduce disaster risks and must remain vigilant since rapid economic growth, rising populations, and burgeoning cities are exacerbating

existing risks and creating new ones, it said. "It is a grave concern that disasters are becoming more frequent, much larger and more intense. As the report highlights, the majority of the disasters in our region are cross-border in nature," UN Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Dr. Shamsah Akhtar said at the report launch, citing Monday's earthquake that affected Afghanistan, Pakistan, as well as parts of India. (Xinhua)

Iraqi Forces Repel IS Attack in Iraq's Anbar Province

BAGHDAD - Iraqi security forces on Tuesday repelled an attack by the Islamic State (IS) militants outside the IS-held city of Ramadi, the capital of Iraq's western province of Anbar, while a suicide truck bomb struck the troops in the northern central province of Salahudin, security sources said. In Anbar province, fierce clashes erupted in the early morning hours when the security forces repelled the attack of dozens of IS militants on troops' positions in Anbar University complex just west of Ramadi, some 110 km west of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, a provincial security source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. The troops forced the attackers to withdraw after leaving at least 17 IS militants killed and five of their vehicles charred at the scene, the source said. The security forces have reached the edges of Ramadi and imposed siege on the extremist militants inside, preparing for a major battle to free the city, while the army artillery and aircraft intensified their bombardment on the IS positions in the city, the source. (More on P4)...(22)

Govt. will Announce Relief Package for Earthquake Affectees: Sharif

ISLAMABAD - The government will announce a relief package for earthquake affectees after comprehensive assessment reports are compiled by the concerned authorities, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said during a high-level meeting on Tuesday. During the meeting, the premier was briefed by National Disaster Management Chairman Major General Asghar and Director General Military

Operations Major General Sahir Shamshad-Mirza on rescue and relief efforts made after a massive 7.5 magnitude earthquake hit the Pak-Afghan region on Monday. The NDMA Chairman said relief efforts were initiated as soon as the quake hit, with the Pakistan Army taking an active part in the operation. He said the NDMA has deputed six search-and-rescue teams so far. (Agencies)