

# Russia Urges U.S. to Abandon Sanctions Diktat to Normalize Bilateral Relations

MOSCOW - It is important for Washington to show political will and discard attempts of sanctions diktat for the sake of improving relations between Russia and the United States, the Kremlin said Monday.

"The way out of this situation is through displaying political will to normalize relations, recovering from an aggravation of political schizophrenia, manifesting the desire to normalize these relations, and abandoning attempts of sanction diktat," said Russian presidential secretary Dmitry Peskov, according to Sputnik.

On Thursday, the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly approved a bill slapping tougher sanc-



tions on Russia, which is waiting President Donald Trump to sign into law or veto.

In response, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced Sunday that Moscow will reduce the U.S. diplomatic staff in Russia by 755 people.

Peskov said Washington will be left to decide on the name list of employees of its diplomatic missions in Russia to dismiss, which could be both U.S. and Russian nationals.

"This is up to the United States... This is both diplomats and people without the diplomatic status and those who were employed on site - Russian nationals who work there," he said. (Xinhua)

## UK PM May's Spokesman: Free Movement with EU will End in March 2019

LONDON - Free movement of people from the European Union will end in March 2019 when Britain leaves the bloc, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said on Monday, after ministers gave a range of conflicting views about the Brexit divorce.

Since May lost her parliamentary majority in a June election, divisions between her ministers over Brexit strategy have broken into the open, with an intense public debate in recent days while May has been

away on holiday. Last week, finance minister Philip Hammond said there should be no immediate change to immigration rules when Britain leaves the bloc, and interior minister Amber Rudd said there would be no 'cliff edge' on leaving the EU.

But trade minister Liam Fox said that allowing free movement after Brexit would not "keep faith" with the referendum result and that the government had not reached a consensus on keeping open EU immi-



gration for a transitional period. "Free movement will end in March 2019," May's spokesman told reporters, adding that the government had already set out some details in-

cluding proposals on EU citizens rights post-Brexit. "Other elements of the post-Brexit immigration system will be brought forward in due course. (Reuters)

## German Minister Says Planned U.S. Sanctions against Russia "Contrary to Int'l Law"

BERLIN - German Minister for Economics Brigitte Zypries has renewed her criticism of planned U.S. sanctions against Russia on Monday.

Speaking to the Funke media group, she said that the German government believed the measures recently passed by both U.S. houses of Congress "were ... quite simply contrary to international law."

The new bill, which has already been publicly approved although not yet signed into law by Donald Trump, would entail

sanctions for German and European firms which cooperate with Russian entities.

"The Americans cannot punish German firms because they are conducting business in another country," she said. The minister emphasized that Germany wanted to avoid a trade war between Europe and the United States. Berlin had therefore repeatedly encouraged Washington not to depart from the path of mutually agreed sanctions. (Xinhua)

## Turkey Protests U.S. Envoy's Remarks on Turkish Links with Terror Group

ANKARA - Turkey protested Sunday remarks of a U.S. Special Envoy that links Turkey with presence of terror groups in northern Syria. The remarks of Brett McGurk, the U.S. special envoy for the global coalition against the Islamic State (IS), were slammed by Huseyin Muftuoglu, spokesperson of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, as "provocative," according to a written statement from the spokesperson. Turkish embassy in Washington would also issue a demarche regard-

ing the issue, he added. McGurk said at a panel in the Middle East Institute in Washington on Friday that Idlib has turned into a "safe zone for al-Qaida terrorists on the Turkish border." A Turkish Foreign Ministry official source said on condition of anonymity that the remarks were considered implying Turkey's role for presence of al-Nusra group in Idlib. McGurk also said at the panel that the U.S. intended to work with Turkey to close down the northeastern border to recruited militants. (Xinhua)

## Modi Steps up Assault on Opponents, Eyes Indian Supremacy

NEW DELHI - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling alliance is stepping up its assault on the opposition Congress party as it looks to expand its national dominance and moves closer to securing a majority in the upper house of parliament. Modi won the biggest mandate in 30 years in the 2014 general election, giving him control of the lower house. But his nationalist coalition still lacks a majority in the upper house that represents India's 29 states and has proven to be a stumbling block for

its legislative agenda. His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been chipping away at that problem. It recently won the backing of some opposition lawmakers to secure the election of its candidate Ram Nath Kovind as president. The party also joined a coalition in the big northern state of Bihar, in the process demolishing an opposition alliance that had dealt it its only major election defeat since 2014. With Bihar, Modi gained 10 more upper-house seats. That brings his nationalist alliance's tally to



89 seats - still short of, but increasingly within reach of, a simple majority of 123 seats. Now, the BJP has turned its attention to a fight that could increase its strength in the upper house and

deal Congress another blow. BJP President Amit Shah and another Modi loyalist are running for re-election to the upper house from Gujarat, the prime minister's western home state. (Reuters)

## Moscow to Cut U.S. Diplomatic Personnel in Russia by 755 People: Putin

MOSCOW - Moscow will reduce diplomatic staff of the United States in Russia by 755 people in order to equal the number of Russian diplomatic personnel in the U.S., Russian President Vladimir Putin said Sunday. "The personnel of the U.S. diplomatic missions in Russia will be cut by 755 people and will now equal the number of the Russian diplomatic personnel in the United States, 455 people on each side," Putin said in an interview broadcast with Russia's Rossiya TV channel. Denouncing the latest "unlawful" move by Washington to tighten sanctions against Russia, Putin said it is time for Moscow to show that "we will not leave anything unanswered." (Xinhua)

## Russia Expulsions won't Deter US 'Commitment to Allies': Pence

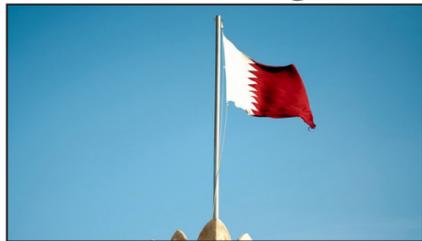
TALLINN - US Vice President Mike Pence said Monday Moscow's demand that Washington cut 755 American diplomatic staff in Russia will not lessen the US commitment to its allies. President Vladimir Putin on Sunday said the United States would have to make the diplomatic staff cuts and warned of a prolonged gridlock in ties after the US Congress backed new sanctions against the Kremlin over alleged meddling in the 2016 US election and in Ukraine. Estonia, where Pence on Sunday raised the possibility of deploying the Patriot anti-missile defence system and which currently holds the rotating EU presidency, is the first stop of a European tour also taking him to Georgia and Montenegro as he seeks to reassure allies fearing Russian expansionism. (AFP)

## Arab Quartet Reinstates 13 Demands to Talk with Qatar

MANAMA - The Saudi Arabia-led Arab alliance which severed diplomatic relations with Qatar insisted on Sunday that Doha must meet a list of 13 demands before talks to resolve the Gulf region crisis could start.

"We reiterate the importance of Qatar's compliance with the 13 demands outlined by the four states," said a joint statement released by the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt after a meeting in Manama, capital city of Bahrain.

"We are ready to have a dialogue provided the 13 conditions are met



by Qatar," said Bahrain's Foreign Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa. On Sunday, Qatar denied that the Arab quartet would allow Qatari planes to use air corridors in emergencies, the state-run Qatar News Agency quoted Qatar's transport and communications ministry and its aviation authority as say-

ing. Saudi media reports were spreading "false information," it said. The joint statement issued by the four foreign ministers also condemned Qatar's authorities for obstructing its citizens from performing Hajj while Qatar accused Saudi Arabia of refusing to guarantee the safety of Qatari pilgrims. (Xinhua)

## Qatar Says Saudi-Led Bloc's Sanctions Violate International Laws

DOHA - Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdelrahman Al-Thani dismissed the statement issued on Sunday by the anti-Qatar quartet and said the sanctions "violate international laws," Al-Jazeera TV has reported. He said that the meeting in Manama attended by the Saudi-led bloc failed to present a clear version, accusing the four Arab countries of sticking to a "stubborn policy" and refusing to admit that the sanctions against Qatar are "illegal." Foreign ministers of Saudi

Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt met in Manama of Bahrain on Sunday to discuss the Qatari crisis that has raised tensions in the Gulf region.

The foreign ministers said at a joint press conference that they were ready for dialogue with Qatar to tackle the dispute, on the conditions that Doha was willing to cooperate with their 13 demands including stopping funding terrorism and stopping interfering in other countries' foreign affairs. (Xinhua)

## French Government Ordered to Supply Water for Calais Migrants

PARIS - France's highest administrative court on Monday rejected the government's appeal against an order to provide water and sanitation facilities for hundreds of migrants sleeping rough in the northern port of Calais.

In a written decision seen by AFP, the Council of State said the state's failure to provide for the migrants' basic needs "exposed them to inhuman and degrading treatment, dealing a serious and clearly illegal blow to a basic right." The council noted that migrants, "who find themselves in a state of destitution and exhaustion, have no access to running water, showers or toilets and cannot therefore wash themselves or their clothes." The situation had caused some to develop skin diseases such as scabies and impetigo or infected wounds, "as well as serious psychological troubles," the council found.

The court upheld a June 26 order by a court in the northern city of Lille for the state to supply the migrants with running water, toilets and showers.

The Lille court also demanded that those migrants who decide to seek asylum in France be offered a place in a reception centre wherever there was space available.

Several hundred migrants are camped out in and around Calais - the main launchpad for attempts to smuggle across the Channel to Britain by truck. The case was taken by a group of migrants and NGOs, who complained that the state was violating the migrants' basic rights. (AFP)

## Neighbor News

### China's Army Day Parade Shows Military Strength, Benefits World Peace: Experts

BEIJING - China's Army Day parade on Sunday demonstrated the strength of the Chinese military, which contributes to safeguarding national security and world peace, international experts have said.

The past decades have witnessed China's rapid growth in a variety of areas. Today, China is closer to the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than any other time in history, said Jean-Marie Bossy of the Society of Chinese-Swiss Culture Exchange, adding that he strongly believes China's progress is "peaceful" and is "beneficial to the world."

Italy's Secretary General of Defense and National Armament Director Lt. Gen. Carlo Magrassi has expressed his congratulations for the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). (Xinhua)

the Swiss Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China.

Living in a complicated and changing world, "we need to build a strong people's military more than any other time in history," he added.

"We must deeply recognize the traditional and non-traditional security threats, and consolidate national defense, strengthen military power so as to achieve the China Dream and safeguard world peace," said Li Su, vice chairman of the Swiss Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China.

Italian Secretary General of Defense and National Armament Director Lt. Gen. Carlo Magrassi has expressed his congratulations for the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). (Xinhua)

### Pakistan Ruling Party's Choice for next PM, Others Seek Post

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's premier-designate and three opposition lawmakers have submitted their candidacies for the country's next head of government.

Monday's development comes ahead of Tuesday's vote in parliament that will elect a successor to three-time Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who was disqualified from office by the Supreme Court and who resigned last week.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, a longtime Sharif loyal-

ist nominated for the top slot, is almost certain to win the vote since the nation's ruling party, the Pakistan Muslim League, commands a comfortable majority in the house.

Abbasi was the party's choice until Sharif's younger brother - Shahbaz Sharif, the chief minister of Punjab province - wins a national assembly seat in a by-election. The Supreme Court disqualified Sharif following a probe that determined his family had concealed their assets. (AP)

### Top Commander: Iran Prevents US Illegal Moves in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN - Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri underlined that the Iranian naval forces block any illegal move by the US vessels in the country's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf.

"The trans-regional forces' moves in our territorial waters are illegal and we warn them based on the law and the principle of might and prevent such moves," General Baqeri said in the South-eastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan on Monday.

Asked about the recent incidents between the Iranian and US vessels in the Persian Gulf, he said that their claims about Iran's reaction are void. His remarks came after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy's fourth naval zone announced in a statement on Saturday that the US naval forces have for the second time in a week made a provocative move in the Persian Gulf.

"The USS Nimitz aircraft carrier and an accompanying cruiser flew a helicopter and approached the IRGC's vessels on Friday 4pm while they were monitored and traced by the missile-launching frigates of Zolfaqar Naval regiment of the IRGC Navy's fourth zone in Resalat oil-gas region (in the middle parts of the Persian Gulf)," the IRGC Navy said in a statement on Saturday.

It added that the incident happened a few days after another US cruiser had fired warning shots at an Iranian vessel in the Northern parts of the Persian Gulf. (FNA)

### Travel Document Security Focus of OSCE Training in Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - An OSCE-organized five-day training course on the detection of forged documents and imposters took place in Ashgabat on July 24-28, the OSCE reported. The course brought together representatives from Turkmenistan's Interior and National Security Ministries, the State Border Service, and the State Migration Service. Organized by the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat in co-operation with the OSCE Transnational Threats Department's Travel Document Security Programme, the

training course aimed to enhance the participants' practical abilities to detect forged documents and imposters by providing in-depth knowledge and conducting hands-on exercises. "Protecting the integrity of government identity documents and identifying imposters lowers the opportunities for illegal border crossings and the spread of crime and terrorism, and assists in securing state borders," said Head of the OSCE Centre Natalya Drozd, addressing the course participants. (AKI)