**EU Discusses Arctic Issues in Northern Finland**

**HELSINKI** - The EU Commission responsible for Arctic policy, Karmenu Vella, on Thursday underlined the impact of climate change on the Arctic region. The EU's new president, Jean-Claude Juncker, said the Arctic region was one of the most sensitive to global warming and that the European Commission was committed to protect the Arctic.

**Finnish Foreign Minister Tuomo Siltari said the Arctic region needs growth, but also a responsible approach.** Both Vella and Siltari defended the decision of the U.S. President Donald Trump to withdraw from the Paris climate accord, and that he would like to appeal to the U.S. to stay in the process.

Vella told the opening of the 3rd EU-Arctic Forum in Helsinki, Northern Finland. Vella noted that the Arctic region needs ways to counteract climate change, and that he is ready to negotiate climate issues with the U.S.

"For the Arctic region the climate change is a huge challenge, but we also have a responsibility to balance between protecting the environment and using the resources of the Arctic region," Vella added.

**Macron Meets with Other European Leaders in Paris**

**PARIS** - French President Emmanuel Macron's schedule for this week is being held in Paris. Today, he will hold meetings with Swiss President and U.S. President and is expected to discuss climate change and the crisis in the Middle East. The talks will be held at the Elysee Palace. The two leaders are set to meet on Friday, and Mayors will also meet in the region.

**UN Says Aid to 9 Million Syrian Children is in Peril**

**BEIRUT** - The U.N. children's agency warned Friday that a critical funding shortfall is threatening aid to 9 million Syrian children, both in the country and among refugees in neighboring states. UNICEF said $217 million budget gap in Syria relief programs could be a severe challenge and that a rapid humanitarian crisis is unfolding in the area. The UN agency said it had managed to provide food and education to children in the affected regions.

**Airstrike may have killed IS Leader in Syria: Russia**

**MOSCOW** - A Russian airstrike may have killed the Islamic State group's leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in northern Syria on May 28, the country's defense ministry said. It said in a statement that Russia's Syr- ian airbase, known as Hmeimim, launched an air strike against a location in a Raqqa sub- urban district and that a Russian F-22 fighter jet was used.

"According to information, which is be- ing checked through various channels, IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was killed in a Russian airstrike in al-Raq gas city, near Raqqa city, on May 28, 2017," the ministry said in a statement.

"On May 28, 2017, a Russian fighter jet, a Su-34, attacked a target in the city of Raqqa in Syria, killing IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi," the ministry said in a statement.

"Some 150 Russian service members died in the air strike," the ministry said.

**A Double-Edged Sword**

**WASHINGTON** - President Donald Trump appears to confirm Friday that he fired FBI Director James Comey by the man who told him to do it.

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