Obama, European Leaders to Discuss Ukraine, Global Security: WH

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Barack Obama will hold talks on Tuesday with European leaders in Brussels on issues including the standoff between Ukraine and Russia, his administration said on Monday.

"We agreed to send observers to eastern Ukraine as soon as possible to help separate groups and work toward a peaceful resolution," the White House (WH) said. The meeting comes amid ongoing violence in Ukraine following a fragile 2-week-old ceasefire agreement.

Ukraine and Western governments have accused Russia of sending arms groups and separatists to support in eastern Ukraine, despite the peace deal agreed on Feb. 12. Moscow has denied providing such support.

On Tuesday, Kiev announced it had seized control of the town of Debaltseve and that pro-Russian separatists had attacked a Ukrainian unit in the town of Konstantinovka.

Russia, Ukraine Agree on Gas Delivery: EU

BRUSSELS — Moscow and Kiev have agreed on the delivery of gas to Ukraine, effective from March 1, with Ukraine guaranteeing an uninterrupted transit of gas through its territory to the EU, EU officials said on Monday.

"I am satisfied that we managed to negotiate and sign a natural gas framework agreement of the Winter Package," said Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, who met with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Minsk on Sunday. "This is a very important step towards further cooperation."

The leaders also agreed to resume talks on gas supplies, which have been suspended since early February, and to establish a joint working group to discuss future gas supplies to Ukraine.

The deal was hailed as a positive development by European Union leaders, who have been pushing for a resolution to the gas crisis.

China Responds to U.S. Concern over Coral Reef

BEIJING — China’s draft law to protect the reefs is a do
leisure fishing crackdown, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday in response to a complaint from the United States.

"The Chinese government will strictly enforce the law on coral reef protection," said Lu Kang, a foreign ministry spokesperson, in a statement on Tuesday.

The U.S. has expressed concern about the mining of coral reefs in China, where authorities say the practice has been banned.

Egypt Court Formally Delays Parliamentary Elections

CAIRO — Egypt’s administrative court formally delayed Tuesday the elections for Egypt’s 590-member parliament, the elections commission announced.

The court ordered delays to be held on time due to a legal challenge by a rival political party.

The court ruled that part of the electoral law was unconstitutional and that the election commission was not qualified to conduct the polls.

Assad Accuses Turkish Ergenekon of Supporting Extremist Groups

DAMASCUS — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said on Tuesday accused Turkey of supporting extremist groups in Syria, according to the state news agency news agency.

Assad said that Erzincan and Siirt provinces in eastern Turkey are being used by the Ergenekon as a "transit point" for arms and supplies.

The Ergenekon is a shadowy group with links to the Islamic State and al-Qaeda, and was accused of plots to bomb the Turkish parliament.

"The Ergenekon is causing a problem and suffering from fears of being eliminated," Assad said.

Turkey and Iran are both sending arms to the Syrian opposition.

IRF IRP Does Not Recognize the Election Results: IRP Leader

KHARTOUM — The Sudanese National Congress Party (SRC) leader, Masalit Dajani, said on Tuesday that the IRP does not recognize the results of the presidential election.

"We are not recognizing the election results," Dajani said.

Mr. Dajani, leader of the SRC, a party that was formed in 1997, said the party has not recognized the results of the presidential election.

The SRC is an opposition party in Sudan, and its leader, Mr. Dajani, has been a vocal critic of President Omar al-Bashir's regime.

EU Report Calls for More Effort to Meet Environmental Goals

BRUSSELS — The European Parliament’s environment body says the 2020 members need to do more to meet long-term environmental goals for greenhouse gas emissions.

"The European Union’s environment body says the 2020 members need to do more to meet long-term environmental goals for greenhouse gas emissions. The report said greenhouse gas emissions are "inevitable" to be achieved in the EU by 2020. The report said that the EU needs to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050."

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