VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. Hello, I'm Steve Miller.

Jailed Catalonia leader Santi Vila, who was among the nine Catalan leaders ordered to be held into custody on Thursday, left jail Friday after paying bail.

"My colleagues and I are fine. We are calm. It's a desolate and terrible situation."

A Spanish judge has also issued an international arrest warrant for former members of the Catalan cabinet who were last seen in Brussels including ousted separatist leader Carles Puigdemont.

A U.S. federal judge has proposed a May trial date for President Donald Trump's former campaign manager Paul Manafort, who was recently indicted on a string of charges including money laundering. Marissa Melton has more.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson set a Monday hearing to consider the proposed trial date of May 7 for both Manafort and his right-hand man and former Trump campaign adviser, Rick Gates.

Both men were indicted as part of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into whether Russia interfered in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

The judge also ordered Manafort and Gates to remain under house arrest, rejecting their arguments for less stringent bail conditions.

In addition, Judge Jackson issued a warning to the lawyers of the two indicted men not to speak about the case outside court.

Marissa Melton, VOA news.

Four North Korean defectors have told VOA in video messages intended for U.S. President Donald Trump what they want him to do and say during his visit to South Korea.

The messages were delivered ahead of Trump's departure Friday for a 12-day, five-nation tour which is expected to focus on tensions with North Korea. He is scheduled to meet with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in Seoul November 7.

This is VOA news.

A spokesman for Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi says proposed U.S. sanctions targeting Myanmar's military for its treatment of Rohingya Muslims would hinder the fledgling civilian government power-sharing agreement with generals. ??? reports.

The bill was introduced by members of the U.S. Senate on the eve of Donald Trump's departure on his first trip to Asia.

The measure would impose targeted sanctions and travel curbs on Myanmar military officials and bar the United States from supplying most assistance to the military until perpetrators of atrocities against the Rohingyas are held accountable.

Myanmar officials will explain the government's efforts on the Rohingya and Rakhine crisis during a visit by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson that's scheduled on November 15.

Myanmar was previously hit by sanctions over the military junta's brutal suppression of the then opposition led by Aung Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi's spokesman stressed the civilian government still has to work with the military and said that previous sanctions lead to results that are not positive.

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The U.N. human rights office and U.N. refugee agency are condemning Australia's policy toward some 600 refugees and asylum seekers at a former Australian immigration camp in Papua New Guinea. Lisa Schlein reports from Geneva.

The agencies warned a humanitarian emergency is unfolding at the Manus Island camp following Australia's decision to close the facility housing the refugees and asylum seekers and pull out its support staff.

Human rights spokesman Rupert Colville says his agency is very concerned. "The men have said they fear they will be subjected to violence at the hands of locals if they leave the compound."

Colville says the men have been victims of violence in the past, so these fears should be respected and addressed.

Australia's strict immigration policy bars asylum seekers who come from the Middle East, Africa and Asia from reaching the country's shores by boat. Instead, they go to Manus Island or another facility on Papua New Guinea. Rights activists have criticized conditions at the camps.

Lisa Schlein, for VOA news, Geneva.

With new losses Friday, the Islamic State group has been driven out from more than 96 percent of the large parts of Iraq and Syria it once held, crushing its goal of establishing a "caliphate" in the region.

And, Liberia's Supreme Court will rule Monday on a petition asking for delay in the runoff presidential election after a complaint said the National Election Commission failed to investigate claims of irregularities in the first round of the vote to replace Africa's first elected female president.

From Washington, I'm Steve Miller.

That's the latest world news from VOA.