VOA NEWS

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

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called for a return to civilian rule in Zimbabwe. "Zimbabwe has an opportunity to set itself on a new path: one that must include democratic elections and respect for human rights. Ultimately the people of Zimbabwe must choose."

Tillerson's comments came as the 93-year-old Mugabe made his first public appearance since the military put him under house arrest earlier this week.

The military has announced "significant progress" on talks for his departure and arrested some of his allies.

A Belgian judge did not rule on a European arrest warrant issued by Spain against ousted Catalan President Carles Puigdemont, instead setting a December 4th date for the next hearing. Robert Raffaele has more.

Madrid issued the warrant for Puigdemont and the four ex-ministers after they fled to Brussels last month and ignored a summons to appear before a Spanish judge, claiming they would not get a fair trial.

They face charges of rebellion and sedition for their roles in the region's independence drive.

Spanish authorities had removed Puigdemont and his 13-member cabinet from office for pushing ahead with secession.

At least 20 internally displaced persons were killed by a car bomb Friday in Syria, an attack that has been blamed on Islamic State.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor put the death toll at 26, adding that 12 of the victims were children.

Syrian state broadcaster SANA said that 30 others were injured at a site where displaced families were relocated in eastern Syria near the city of Deir el-Zour.

According to U.N. figures, 6.3 million Syrians are internally displaced as the country's civil war continues for the seventh year.

This is VOA news.

Philip Alexiou reports that North Korea has ruled out negotiations with Washington as long as joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises continue, and said that Pyongyang's atomic weapons program would remain as a deterrent against U.S. nuclear threats.

It's a statement similar to one that China made Thursday. Beijing called a dual suspension proposal to handle North Korea was the best option to reduce tensions.

However, U.S. President Donald Trump disagreed. "President Xi recognizes that a nuclear North Korea is a grave threat to China, and we agreed that we would not accept a so-called freeze-for-freeze agreement."

North Korea has said it needs to develop its weapons to protect itself from what it sees as U.S. military aggression. It also sees U.S.-South Korean military exercises as joint preparations for invasion.

South Korea and the United States, which has about 28,000 troops based in South Korea, say their exercises are defensive in nature.

Philip Alexiou, VOA news.

At least five people were killed Friday in confrontations between Kenyan police and supporters of ousted opposition leader Raila Odinga as tensions over disputed presidential elections continued.

Police fired live rounds and tear gas to prevent Odinga's convoy from making its way from the airport to Nairobi's main park so he could address supporters after returning from a trip overseas.

Earlier this week, police warned they would not allow a ceremony to welcome Odinga back from speaking engagements abroad. Opposition legislators had urged supporters to come out "more than 1 million strong."

Police said five people were killed by mobs that stoned them to death when they were caught stealing during the confrontations. But mortuary attendants and eyewitnesses said police shot them.

The nullification of Kenya's August election was the first time a court in Africa had overturned a presidential vote. At least 70 people have died in political unrest since then, the majority opposition demonstrators shot by police during protests.

Miller Sega, VOA news.

Amnesty International alleged Friday that Philippine troops detained and tortured civilians trying to flee a besieged southern city during a five-month battle with militants loyal to the Islamic State group.

The U.S.-backed military campaign to retake Marawi claimed the lives of more than 1,100 people, including around 900 militants, displaced 400,000 residents and reduced large parts of the city to rubble.

The United States stopped election support for Cambodia with a promise of more "concrete steps" after the main opposition party to Prime Minister Hun Sen was banned.

China said it supported Cambodia in following its own path, making no criticism of the government.

From Washington, I'm Steve Miller.

That's the latest world news from VOA.