VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. I'm Liz Parker reporting.

The Islamic State's deadly strike kills dozens. Afghan officials say more than 40 people have been killed and 84 others wounded in a suicide attack on a building in Kabul Thursday morning. The building houses a Shiite Muslim cultural center with ties to Iran.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack. An online statement said the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber, and that three other bombs were also used.

Reporter Ayaz Gul spoke to VOA from Pakistan about the growing threat from the Islamic State.

Islamic State apparently is becoming a greater threat now for the security of Kabul because since early October, there have been seven suicide bombings in the Afghan capital that have killed a total of 130 people and all of them were against either worship places of the minority Shiite community or their procession, and as we saw once again Islamic State targeted another Shiite-linked facility in Kabul.

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration released a statement saying the country "stands firmly with the government and people of Afghanistan."

The United States announced Thursday that the full visa services for Turkish citizens wishing to travel to the U.S. will resume. The U.S. also saying it received assurances Ankara would inform Washington before arresting any embassy employees.

Turkey welcomed the decision on visas, but said that it had not provided the U.S. any such assurances.

The U.S. suspended all non-immigrant visa services in Turkey earlier this year in response to the arrest of a consulate employee in Istanbul on terrorism charges.

This is VOA news.

In Malawi, the push for more female members of parliament was dealt a blow when the government said it would not consider a proposal to create 28 automatic seats for women. Malawi ranks among the countries within the [Southern] South African Development Community where women are underrepresented in government.

Out of 193 members in Malawi's parliament, only 32 are women.

Proponents of the provision say its removal is unfortunate.

Esmie Kainja: "Now I am beginning to doubt if Malawi is really serious about achieving gender equality and women empowerment in the area of politics. And it is very sad that it is happening to us in this way."

Malawi officials cited a complicated legal process as one of the reasons for removing the provision.

The Somali government has retaken control of its airspace after more than two decades. Air traffic over the country had been controlled by the United Nations from Kenya since 1992, a year after the Somali civil war broke out. For VOA, Mohammed Yusuf reports.

Inaugurating the aviation control center in the capital, Mogadishu, President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo said this is a sign the country is moving forward.

"We are here today because we have worked together, stopped fighting among ourselves, we fought division. As you know, nothing will work if there is division and people are fighting among themselves."

The president and government officials toured the newly equipped center Thursday, the day Somalia formally retook control of its airspace from the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Somalia's transport minister, Mohamed Abdullahi Salad, told reporters the entire process of controlling the country's skies will be complete in early 2018.

Mohammed Yusuf, for VOA news, Nairobi.

A new report by the U.N. children's fund finds 2017 has been a particularly brutal year for children caught in conflict. Lisa Schlein has more on the report.

The report finds children are being targeted and exposed to attacks and brutal violence in their homes, schools and playgrounds. This, in blatant disregard of international laws established to protect the most vulnerable.

The report presents a numbing catalogue of abuse in conflicts around the world - in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and even in Europe, in eastern Ukraine. It reports children are deliberately targeted, used as human shields, killed, maimed and recruited to fight.

That was Lisa Schlein from Geneva.

The World Health Organization is set to recognize gaming disorder as a serious mental health issue. We have more on this story on voanews.com.

I'm Liz Parker reporting from Washington.

That's the latest world news from VOA.