VOA NEWS

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VOA news.

President Trump says he misspoke when he said in Helsinki that he doesn't see why Russia would have interfered in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Associated Press correspondent Shelley Adler reports.

This is what President Trump actually said at the news conference in Helsinki on Monday.

"My people came to me, Dan Coats came to me and some others, they said they think it's Russia. I have President Putin; he just said it's not Russia. I will say this: I don't see any reason why it would be."

And here is today's clarification.

"The sentence should have been I don't see any reason why I wouldn't or why it wouldn't be Russia."

He added that he accepts the American intelligence community's conclusion that Russia interfered in the election, but he did deny that his campaign had colluded in that effort.

Shelley Adler, Washington.

Taliban insurgents have attacked police checkpoints in southern Kandahar province, killing at least nine and wounding seven.

Twenty-five Taliban were killed, 15 wounded.

Kandahar is close to the border with Pakistan. It's one of the more violent districts in Afghanistan.

Dozens of [civilian] Syrian civilians carrying white flags gingerly approached the Israeli border along the Golan Heights Tuesday in an apparent appeal for protection from Russian and Syrian airstrikes.

Syrian forces have launched an operation to take back the last parts of southwest still in rebel hands, with about 160,000 people stuck in the middle.

But an Israeli soldier shouted at them in Arabic through a loudspeaker, "You are on the border of the state of Israel. Go back. We don't want to hurt you. Go back before something bad happens. If you want us to be able to help you, go back."

This is VOA news.

The European Union and Japan have signed a new free trade deal that creates the world's largest open economic zone. It cover a third of the global economy.

European Council President Donald Tusk says the deal aims to shine a light in the increasing darkness of international politics.

"We are sending a clear message that you can count on us. We are predictable, both Japan and the EU, predictable, responsible and will continue defending a world based on rules, on freedom, on transparency and common sense."

The deal was signed Tuesday in Tokyo, which the largest ever negotiated by the 28-member European bloc.

The U.N. Human Rights Office accusing Nicaragua of extreme violence against peaceful protesters resulting in many deaths, injuries and gross violations of human rights.

Correspondent Lisa Schlein reports for VOA from the agency's headquarters in Geneva.

During past three months, the U.N. Human Rights Office estimates 280 people have been killed, including 19 police officers, and 1,830 injured during protests against Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's government.

It says the state and pro-government armed groups are to blame for the overwhelming number of deaths and injuries. Human Rights spokesman Rupert Colville says there is a growing sense of dread that violence will escalate in the lead-up to the anniversary, with more loss of life and a further erosion of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Lisa Schlein, for VOA news, Geneva.

Former President Barack Obama is in South Africa to observe the 100th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birth.

In his speech to 14,000 people at a soccer stadium in Johannesburg, Obama called today's times strange and uncertain.

"I believe in Nelson Mandela's vision, I believe in a vision shared by Gandhi and King, and Abraham Lincoln, I believe in a vision of equality and justice and freedom and multi-racial democracy built on the premise that all people are created equal."

Obama warned about the rise of nationalism and totalitarianism in the world.

A migrant aid group is accusing the Libyan coast guard of abandoning three people in the Mediterranean Sea, including a woman and a young child. The child died.

The coast guard had intercepted 160 people near the Libyan shore. They were headed for Europe.

Proactiva Open Arms said it found one woman alive Tuesday and another person dead, along with the body of the child, amid the drifting remains of a destroyed migrant boat.

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