VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm David Byrd in Washington.

U.S. President Donald Trump says he has directed Secretary of State Mike Pompeo not to travel to North Korea next week as scheduled.

As AP's Sagar Meghani reports, the president cited a lack of progress in negotiations over the denuclearization of North Korea.

The president citing insufficient progress on denuclearization.

Tweeting China is not doing enough to rein in North Korea, he is blaming that on the U.S. stepping up trade pressure on Beijing and tweets "Pompeo looks forward to going to North Korea in the near future, most likely after the trading relationship with China is resolved."

The president adds he looks forward to soon seeing North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and in the meantime, sends his "warmest regards and respect."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

The family of U.S. Senator John McCain has announced he is discontinuing medical treatment for terminal brain cancer.

The family made the announcement Friday, saying the former Republican presidential nominee had "surpassed expectations for his survival" since making his cancer diagnosis public last year.

The statement continued "the progress of disease and the inexorable advance of age render their verdict." "With his usual strength of will," it said, "he has now chosen to discontinue medical treatment."

McCain talked about his diagnosis recently in his memoir "The Restless Wave: Good times, Just Causes, Great Fights, and Other Appreciations."

"I don't know how much longer I'll be here. Maybe I'll have another five years, maybe with the advances in oncology they'll find new treatments for my cancer that will extend my life. Maybe I'll be gone before you hear this."

McCain has been undergoing treatment for aggressive glioblastoma since July of 2017.

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The State Department says the United States will "redirect" more than $200 million in economic aid for projects in the West Bank and Gaza to programs elsewhere.

AP's Ben Thomas tell us why.

The notice doesn't give an exact amount but says it's more than the $200 million that was approved in 2017.

The U.S. had planned to give the Palestinians $251 million for good governance, health, education and funding for civil society in the current budget year. But with just over a month to go before that money must be used or returned, less than half has actually been spent.

Ben Thomas, Washington.

Zimbabwe's highest court dismissed a challenge that sought to nullify the results of last month's presidential election.

As Anita Powell reports, the move clears the way for the swift inauguration of incumbent President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Chief Justice Luke Malaba took nearly an hour to go through the details of what he said was a unanimous judgment, dismissing the opposition's claims of rigging and declaring Mnangagwa the victor.

The official results showed Mnangagwa winning a majority of the vote, 50.8 percent.

Opposition candidate Nelson Chamisa trailed with just over 44 percent. Chamisa argued the results were not accurate and that he was the winner.

International election observers said the vote suffered from irregularities and Chamisa's lawyers on Wednesday presented what they said was clear evidence that the results had been falsified.

Opposition figures at the courthouse did not immediately say what they would do next. Officials told VOA they would meet in the coming week to explore all their options, including protests.

Anita Powell, VOA news, Johannesburg.

Pope Francis travels to Dublin on Saturday, making him the first pontiff to visit Ireland in nearly four decades.

As Sabina Castelfranco reports, recent sexual scandals in the Catholic Church have taken center stage in the pope's visit.

The latest clerical sex scandals in different parts of the world will change some of the initial focus of the papal visit.

This past week, the pope wrote a letter to the world's Catholics, stressing that "no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated."

The Vatican, in an unusual announcement, also said the pope would be meeting with victims of clerical sexual abuse. No date or time has been given, but the meeting has been confirmed, as has been the pope's visit to pray in Saint Mary's Cathedral in Dublin in memory of the suffering of victims.

Sabina Castelfranco, for VOA news, Rome.

Officials tried to keep tourists and others away from storm-driven waters on Hawaii's Waikiki Beach Friday as Hurricane Lane churned offshore.

The hurricane was losing power and slowing as it weakened to a Category 2 storm.

It's forecast to pass to the west of the islands over the weekend, with hurricane conditions expected over Maui and Oahu.

I'm David Byrd, VOA news.