



China will never use force to reach its goals: Xi

AFP, Sydney

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday vowed always to use peaceful means in pursuit of Beijing's goals, including in maritime disputes, just days after US President Barack Obama warned of the dangers of outright conflict in Asia. Addressing the Australian parliament in an honour bestowed only on one other Chinese leader, Hu Jintao in 2003, Xi said: "China remains unshakable in its resolve to pursue peaceful development." "Neither turbulence nor war serves the fundamental interests of the Chinese people." The Chinese president evoked history to make the point that no one ever benefited from conflict, after Obama at the weekend G20 summit in Brisbane again stressed that Beijing must be a responsible actor on the world stage.

Ukraine crisis deepens

EU sanctions separatists; Moscow expels EU diplomats

AFP, Brussels

EU yesterday agreed to blacklist more Ukrainian separatists but stopped short of fresh economic sanctions against Russia, as Moscow expelled several diplomats in a deepening of the worst East-West crisis since the Cold War.

Fresh bloodshed between pro-Kremlin rebels and Kiev's forces added to the tensions after Russian President Vladimir Putin left a G20 summit in Brisbane early amid criticism from fellow leaders.

Putin hit back yesterday, rejecting western claims that Russia has sent troops and equipment into Ukraine to buttress the uprising that has killed 4,100 people, while saying "righteous" fighters would "always get weapons".

In Brussels, European Union foreign ministers agreed to add more separatists to a blacklist of people facing asset freezes and travel bans over the crisis in Ukraine, diplomats told AFP.

There would be a final decision on the names at the end of the month, they said.

But Russia escaped further economic sanctions, with EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini saying sanctions should be accompanied by talks with Moscow and reforms in Ukraine.

"Sanctions in themselves are not an objective," she said.

The EU has so far blacklisted 119 individuals, ranging from close

Putin allies and Russian oligarchs, to separatists in Ukraine.

Kiev urged the EU to go further, with Ukrainian foreign minister Pavlo Klimkin calling for Brussels to send a "clear message" to Moscow, with "robust" sanctions if Russia continues to destabilise Ukraine.

The EU has long been divided

DEVELOPMENTS

- 10 more troops killed in restive east
- Putin denies Russian troops claims in Ukraine
- Russia 'will not prevail' in Ukraine: Merkel



over sanctions, first targeting individuals after Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, then broadening them to target the Russian economy after the shooting down of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 in July over eastern Ukraine.

The West said it was downed by pro-Moscow rebels using a missile

supplied by Russia.

More than 4,100 people have died in seven months of violence in eastern Ukraine.

Russia has denied backing the rebels but relations with the West are at their worst since the fall of the Berlin Wall 25 years ago.

Moscow yesterday said it had expelled a German diplomat and a number of Polish diplomats in a tit-for-tat measure for similar expulsions of Russian staff from those countries.

The Polish diplomats were expelled for conduct "incompatible with their status", diplomatic jargon for espionage, while the German was kicked out in retaliation for Berlin's "unfriendly" expulsion of a Russian diplomat, Russia's foreign ministry said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel yesterday called on the West not to lose hope in what may be a long struggle with Russia over Ukraine, but vowed that the Kremlin "will not prevail".

Western leaders at the summit, including US President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron, denounced Putin's "unacceptable" actions in Ukraine, branding the Russian president a "bully".

In the latest casualties in eastern Ukraine, seven Ukrainian soldiers and three police officers were killed in the past 24 hours, while one civilian was killed and eight wounded over the weekend, security officials said. An AFP reporter in the city heard fresh shelling early yesterday.

Red lights flashing

UK PM warns of second global economy crash

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

David Cameron has issued a stark message that "red warning lights are flashing on the dashboard of the global economy" in the same way as when the financial crash brought the world to its knees six years ago.

Writing in the Guardian at the close of the G20 summit in Brisbane, Cameron says there is now "a dangerous backdrop of instability and uncertainty" that presents a real risk to the UK recovery, adding that the eurozone slowdown is already having an impact on British exports and manufacturing.

His warning comes days after the Bank of England governor, Mark Carney, claimed a spectre of stagnation was haunting Europe. The International Monetary Fund managing director, Christine Lagarde, expressed fears in Brisbane that a diet of high debt, low growth and unemployment may yet become "the new normal in Europe".

"The eurozone is teetering on the brink of a possible third recession, with high unemployment, falling growth and the real risk of falling prices too," Cameron writes. "Emerging market economies which were the driver of growth in the early stages of the recovery are now slowing down. Despite the progress in Bali [trade talks in 2013], global trade talks have stalled while the epidemic of Ebola, conflict in the Middle East and Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine are all adding a dangerous backdrop of instability and uncertainty."

The G20 summit, dogged by controversies over Ukraine, extra aid to fight Ebola and climate change, was hailed as "a weekend of achievement" by the Australian prime minister, Tony Abbott. He said the group of leading nations had managed to "shift a gear", by moving from a responsive to a proactive stance on world events.

World leaders pledged 800 separate measures designed to lift their combined economic growth by an additional 2.1% above the current trajectory by 2018 compared with 2013 – a measure the IMF and OECD have calculated would add more than US\$2tn (£1.3tn) and millions of jobs to the global economy.

Much of the growth would come from infrastructure investment and getting an extra 100 million women into the labour force.



EBOLA FIGHT

160 Chinese medics arrives in Liberia

AFP, Monrovia

A large team of Chinese health workers arrived in Liberia to boost the Ebola fight as a US-based doctor infected in Sierra Leone was described as being "extremely ill".

The 160-strong Chinese deployment to the west African country worst hit by the virus came as the world's most powerful economies vowed to "extinguish" the epidemic, which has claimed more than 5,100 lives.

The Chinese doctors, epidemiologists and nurses will staff a \$41 million Ebola treatment unit which will be up and running in 10 days, ambassador Zhang Yue said.

The health workers have had previous experience in tackling the SARS in Asia, Zhang said, adding that its total aid to Liberia would be \$46 million.

At least 2,812 people have so far died of Ebola in Liberia.

So far Beijing has promised Ebola-hit countries the equivalent of \$122 million to help fight the epidemic. China is Africa's largest trading partner, and its diplomatic footprint across the continent has expanded hugely in recent years as it seeks resources to power its economy.

NEWS IN brief

Colombia suspends peace talks with FARC

AFP, Bogota

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos on Sunday suspended two-year peace talks with the country's largest rebel group, the FARC. The decision to suspend the talks came during an emergency meeting between the president and the top military leaders that was called after the general's disappearance was announced.

Diplomat named Burkina interim leader

AFP, Ouagadougou

Career diplomat Michel Kafando was named yesterday as Burkina Faso's interim president to steer the west African nation during a one-year transition back to civilian rule. The appointment of the former foreign minister and UN ambassador is set to end weeks of uncertainty in the impoverished country after mass protests brought down the 27-year regime of president Blaise Compaore and the military seized power.

Baghdad car blasts kill at least 12

AFP, Baghdad

Two car bombs exploded in the Iraqi capital yesterday, killing at least 12 people and wounding at least 29, security and medical officials said. There was no immediate claim for the attacks but the ISIS jihadist group has claimed multiple car bombs in Baghdad in recent weeks.

U2's Bono needs surgery after accident

AFP, New York

U2 frontman Bono will be getting surgery after injuring his arm in a fall from his bicycle in New York's Central Park, the band said Sunday. The statement from band members Edge, Adam and Larry did not give details on the injury or the upcoming surgery.

Anti-graft mayor wins Romania polls

AFP, Bucharest

An ethnic German mayor of a medieval Transylvanian city pulled off a shock victory in Romania's presidential elections, defeating the premier after vowing to stamp out corruption in the graft-riddled country, early results showed yesterday. Klaus Iohannis secured an overwhelming 54 percent of the votes cast in Sunday's poll, soundly beating Prime Minister Victor Ponta.

GLOBAL SLAVERY INDEX, 2014

36m people live as slaves



BBC ONLINE

Nearly 36 million people worldwide, or 0.5% of the world's population, live as slaves, a survey by anti-slavery campaign group Walk Free says.

The group's Global Slavery Index says India has the most slaves overall and Mauritania has the highest percentage.

The total is 20% higher than for 2013 because of better methodology.

The report defines slaves as people subject to forced labour, debt bondage, trafficking, sexual exploitation for money and forced or servile marriage.

It uses slavery in a modern sense of the term, rather than as a reference to the broadly outlawed traditional practice where people were held in bondage and treated as another

person's property.

The Global Slavery Index's estimate is higher than other attempts to quantify modern slavery. In 2012, the International Labour Organisation estimated that almost 21 million people were victims of forced labour.

Walk Free says it found evidence of slavery in all 167 countries it surveyed.

The report says Africa and Asia face the biggest challenges in eradicating slavery, while the practice is least prevalent in Europe.

According to the report, more than 14 million people live as slaves in India. Next in the index comes China, with more than 3 million slaves, followed by Pakistan, Uzbekistan.

Russia is ranked fifth. The country's economy is said to rely on enslaved

migrant workers in the construction and agricultural sectors.

Mauritania meanwhile has the highest number of slaves as a proportion of the population, at 4%. Many people in the African country inherit their slave status from their ancestors.

The report calls for much wider international cooperation on slavery. It wants governments to increase penalties for trafficking and to put pressure on businesses to clamp down on the use of slaves in their supply chains.

The Global Slavery Index was first published last year. The rise in the overall figure from 2013 was attributed by the report's authors to better data and methodology, rather than to an exponential rise in the numbers enslaved.

Al-Qaeda paymasters 'living freely' in Qatar

MAIL ONLINE

Two senior terrorist financiers are alleged to be living freely in Qatar - despite the Gulf state's claim that it does not support terrorist groups.

Khalifa Muhammad Turki al-Subaiy and Abd al-Rahman bin Umayr al Nuaymi are reportedly living in the country's capital Doha, according to a US official.

In a transcript of a keynote speech in Washington, obtained by the Sunday Telegraph, David Cohen - the under-secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence - confirmed their residence.

He accused Qatar and its near neighbour Kuwait of being 'permissive jurisdictions for terrorist financing' - but so far the fate of these bankers has not been known.

However, the US Treasury told the newspaper it could not disclose further classified information on the men.

Al-Nuaymi, 60, was last month added to a list of suspects targeted with financial sanctions in the UK after the Government confirmed he is banned from doing business in Britain.

It comes 10 months after the US authorities imposed sanctions on him, saying al-Nuaymi was a 'terrorist financier and facilitator who has provided money and material support and conveyed communications to al-Qaeda and its affiliates in Syria, Iraq, Somalia and Yemen for more than a decade'.

The US Treasury said he oversaw the transfer of over 2 million US dollars (£1.25 million) per month to al-Qaeda in Iraq for a period of time.

While al-Subaiy, 49, who was a former employee at Qatari Central Bank, was outed as a terrorist fundraiser in 2008 when he allegedly served a brief prison sentence. According to the official US report he has 'provided financial support to al-Qaeda' on behalf of the group's senior leaders, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

While it is alleged that both men have been kept out of jail thanks to their links with senior figures in Qatar.

Qatar, which has huge investments in the UK, insists it does not support jihadists fighting in Syria and Iraq operating out of the Gulf.

The country introduced a designated terrorist list but so far not one person has been added to it.



Hunt launched for Kassig killer

BBC ONLINE

Western intelligence officials are trying to identify Islamic State (ISIS) militants seen in the video that shows the beheading of US aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig and 18 Syrian prisoners.

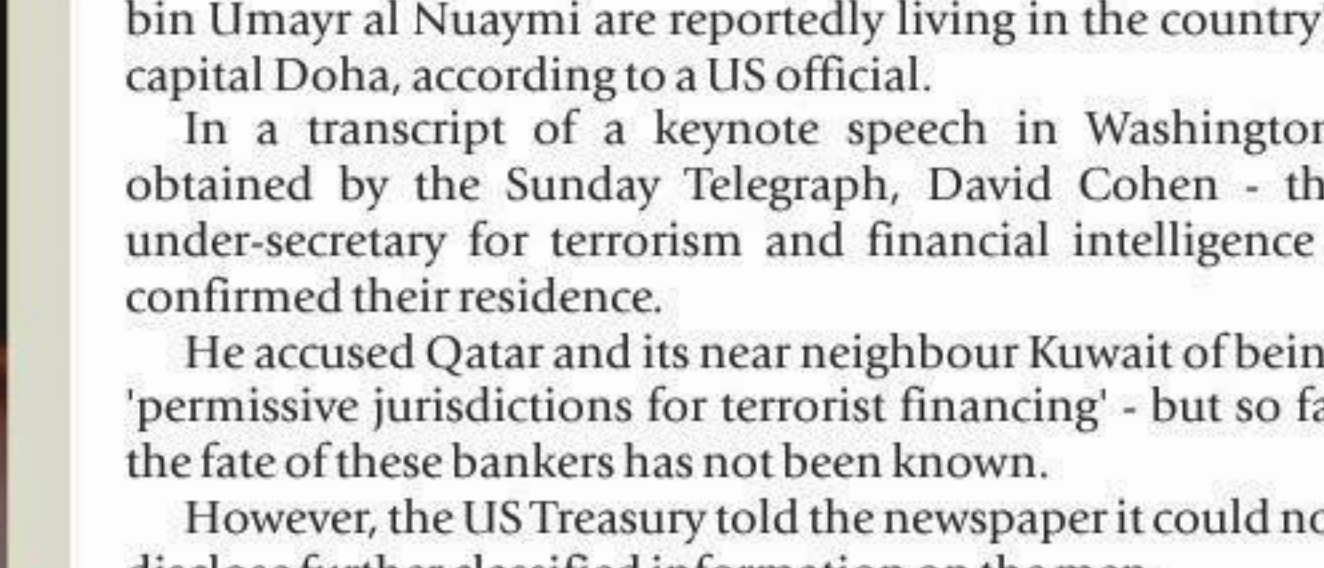
Kassig, 26, is the fifth Western hostage to be killed by ISIS.

One of the militants is likely to be a Frenchman named Maxime Hauchard, 22, France's interior minister said. Another was reported to be a Briton, but the father of Nasser Muthana, 20, now denies it is his son.

The Daily Mail had earlier reported Ahmed Muthana as saying "it looks like my son".

The ISIS video shows a masked man standing over a severed head, which the White House confirmed was Kassig's.

He was captured by ISIS, which controls large parts of Syria and Iraq, in October 2013 while travelling to Heir Ezzour in eastern Syria. His parents, Ed and Paula, from Indiana, said in a statement they were heartbroken by his death.



Khalifa al-Subaiy Umayr al Nuaymi

Ping-pong settles poll dispute in US

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

Scraps of paper, a coin and a sack of numbered ping-pong balls settled a deadlocked local election in Florida on Saturday morning.

For the first time in Duval County history, an election tie was broken by a game of chance, after the two candidates running for Neptune Beach city council seat four were tied at 1,448 votes apiece.

On Saturday morning, Arthur, who won the polls, and his challenger, Rory Diamond, met at the supervisor of elections office in Jacksonville, Florida, to settle the tie once and for all.

The rules governing the three-round game stipulated that the outcome would determine the winner of the election.

In the first round, the candidates' names were written on "equally sized pieces of paper" and placed in a container. The supervisor drew a name: Diamond. He therefore got to call a coin toss in round two. The supervisor flipped the two-sided coin and Diamond called heads. He won again, and therefore earned the right to decide if he drew first or second in round three. Diamond elected to draw second from a sack of ping-pong balls numbered one to 20, the drawer of the highest number being the winner of the election. Arthur selected a ball numbered 12. Now it was Diamond's turn to draw. He drew No4, and lost.

SAARC SUMMIT

Pakistan snubs India over bulletproof car

AFP, Kathmandu

Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has rejected the use of a bulletproof car provided by rival India for next week's summit of South Asian leaders in Kathmandu, a Nepalese official said yesterday.

Sharif "will be bringing his own car... all other vehicles for (visiting) heads of countries have come from India", said foreign ministry spokesman Khaga Nath Adhikari.

Adhikari denied the move was a snub specifically targeted at India, whose tense ties with Pakistan have worsened since October over some of the worst cross-border firing in years.

The SAARC summit will see the leaders of Bhutan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India and Pakistan meet in Kathmandu on November 26 and 27.

Iran nuke deal: Failure not an option

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

Iran, the US and other world powers meeting in Vienna this week are close to a historic, comprehensive agreement that could bring a permanent end to 12 years of deadlock over Iran's nuclear programme.

With a deadline for the talks looming in a week's time, diplomats are converging on the Austrian capital for the last stretch of marathon negotiations beginning today, with the outcome still in the balance.

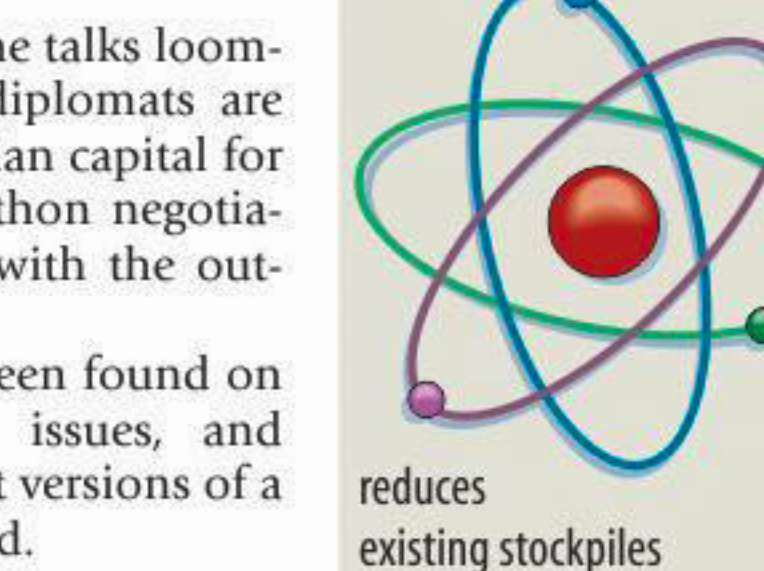
Compromises have been found on previously contentious issues, and detailed text for different versions of a final deal has been drafted.

Some diplomats described their work as 95% done, pending political decisions to be made in national capitals over Iran's capacity to enrich uranium over the next few years, and the sequence in which international sanctions are lifted.

Several leading arms-control experts have argued that the residual obstacles are more political than substantial, determined by the need of President Barack Obama's administration and President Hassan Rohani's reformist government in Iran to reassure conservatives at home, rather than by the actual requirements of Iran's nuclear energy programme or genuine nonproliferation concerns.

STICKING POINTS

- Western powers are offering to ease oil and financial sanctions only if Iran: ceases enriching uranium to 20% or more
- stops building the Arak reactor, (which could provide plutonium as an alternative to uranium for making a bomb)
- reduces existing stockpiles of enriched uranium



There are also differences among the six-nation group involved in the negotiations with Iran. France has consistently been more opposed to nuclear concessions than the other five (the US, UK, Germany, Russia and China).

John Kerry, the US secretary of state, flew to Paris on 4 November for talks with Laurent Fabius, the French foreign minister, seeking assurances that he would not make a public intervention in the last few days of negotiations. In the closing stages of talks over the 2013 interim deal, Fabius warned against western concessions,

saying Paris would not play along with a "fool's game". Accounts vary as to whether Kerry was able to secure a guarantee from Fabius not to break ranks in the eleventh hour of talks.

"For Fabius, the ties with the Gulf Arabs - Saudi Arabia and Qatar - are much more important economically, and for French jobs in the next few years, than Iran," said a French source familiar with the discussions. The Sunni monarchies in the Gulf are as opposed as Israel to western endorsement of an Iranian nuclear programme on any scale.

"I think extension is the least likely scenario because of the domestic political ramifications for all sides," said Reza Marashi, a former state department official, who is research director of the National Iranian American Council in Washington. "In the words of the negotiators themselves: failure is not an option."

Given the high stakes, all sides at the Vienna talks will be extremely reluctant to break off negotiations if a complete agreement is not reached by 24 November. One option would be to announce a framework agreement, leaving gaps to be worked out later, or simply extend the talks. But neither option would be politically sustainable for long without proof of genuine progress.