

# 'Isolationism is wrong medicine'

AFP, Ottawa

US President Barack Obama warned Wednesday against isolationist tendencies in America and elsewhere, calling it "the wrong medicine" to fix legitimate concerns about globalization.

While Obama did not mention Donald Trump by name, he took a clear swipe at the Republican presidential candidate's heated anti-trade rhetoric during a "Three Amigos" summit with his Canadian and Mexican counterparts.

"Even if we wanted to we can't seal ourselves off from the rest of the world," Obama said in a speech to the Canadian parliament after trilateral talks.

"In an integrated, global economy the solution is not for us to try to shut ourselves off from the world," he earlier told a news conference in Ottawa -- held as Trump repeated a threat to renegotiate or walk out of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"We've had times throughout our history where anti-immigration sentiment is exploited by demagogues," said Obama. "But guess what? They kept coming."

"Unless you are one of the first Americans, unless you are a native American, somebody, somewhere in your past showed up from some place else. And they didn't always have papers."

Six days after Britain's vote to exit the European Union, felt on both sides of the Atlantic, the shock British decision to go it alone topped the agenda of talks in Ottawa.

Obama recognised there existed "genuine concerns" about the impact on long-term global growth if the Brexit goes ahead.



Airport employees mourn for their colleagues, who were killed in Tuesday's attack at the airport, during a ceremony at the international departure terminal of Ataturk airport in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# Hollande says no to EU referendum

REUTERS, Paris

President Francois Hollande yesterday ruled out organising a referendum on the European Union in France, saying next year's presidential election will be the opportunity for voters to decide on which European policy they want.

"Why organise such a tumult and confrontation if it's not to leave the EU? Lies, simplifications, excesses and even the violence we saw in the referendum campaign in Britain were not enough for those sorcerer's apprentices?" Hollande told a newspaper.

There have been growing calls in France for a referendum on the European Union since Britons voted to exit the EU a week ago.

Mainstream politicians, including Economy Minister Emmanuel Macron and the 2017 presidential election front-runner Alain Juppe have called for a plebiscite on a new EU project. Only the far-right National Front is calling for a vote on EU membership.

# BREXIT: THINGS TO KNOW

## WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THE REFERENDUM?

During the Conservative campaign for the 2015 UK general elections, Prime Minister David Cameron promised that, if the Conservative Party were to win these elections, he would negotiate a settlement with the EU on issues of concern for the UK and submit that settlement to a referendum as to whether the UK should leave or stay in the EU. The leaders of the other EU Member States reached an agreement on such a settlement with the UK government at the 19 February 2016 European Council. It will only come into force if the UK decides (after the referendum) to stay in the EU. On 23 June 2016, the British voter will be asked the following question: "Should the UK remain a member of the EU or leave the EU?"

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

Leave won by 52% to 48%. The referendum turnout was 71.8%, with more than 30 million people voting. It was the highest turnout in a UK-wide vote since the 1992 general election.

## WHAT REGION VOTED FOR WHAT?

England voted strongly for Brexit, by 53.4% to 46.6%, as did Wales, with Leave getting 52.5% of the vote and Remain 47.5%. Scotland and Northern Ireland both backed staying in the EU. Scotland backed Remain by 62% to 38%, while 55.8% in Northern Ireland voted Remain and 44.2% Leave.

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

For the UK to leave the EU it has to invoke an agreement called Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. Invoking this will then set in motion the formal legal process of withdrawing from the EU, and give the UK two years to negotiate its withdrawal. Prime Minister David Cameron, who said before the vote that Article 50 would be triggered straight away, announced on Friday he would resign by October and leave that task to a successor. But EU, fearing more populist succession, demands a quick divorce.

## WHAT UK, EU OFFICIALS EYING NOW?

Many EU officials see two treaties with Britain being worked on in parallel: a "divorce" pact under Article 50, unwinding the EU budget for example, which would have to be agreed by a weighted majority of the 27 others and done in under two years; and a separate deal on a new economic relationship that would require unanimous acceptance by the bloc and which most expect would take longer to complete.

## HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE TO LEAVE THE EU?

It would take a minimum of two years for the UK to leave the EU. During that time Britain would continue to abide by EU treaties and laws - however it would not take part in any decision making. The two-year limit is intended to shorten uncertainty but can be dodged. Many officials say the process may be uncomfortable for both the parties and may take years to be completed.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO UK CITIZENS WORKING IN EU?

A lot depends on the kind of deal the UK agrees with the EU after exit. If it remains within the single market, it would almost certainly retain free movement rights, allowing UK citizens to work in the EU and vice versa. If the government opted to impose work permit restrictions, as UKIP wants, then other countries could reciprocate, meaning Britons would have to apply for visas to work.

## WILL BRITONS NEED A VISA TO TRAVEL TO THE EU?

While there could be limitations on British nationals' ability to live and work in EU countries, it seems unlikely they would want to deter tourists. There are many countries outside the EEA that British citizens can visit for up to 90 days without needing a visa and it is possible that such arrangements could be negotiated with European countries.

## WHAT ABOUT EU NATIONALS IN THE UK?

Again, it depends on whether the UK government decides to introduce a work permit system of the kind that currently applies to non-EU citizens, limiting entry to skilled workers in professions where there are shortages. But until then things are as like before.

## WHAT ABOUT CURRENT PASSPORT?

Yes. It is a British document - there is no such thing as an EU passport, so the passport will stay the same. In theory, the government could, if it wanted, decide to change the colour, which is currently standardised for EU countries, says the BBC's Europe correspondent, Chris Morris.

## WHAT IS A SINGLE MARKET?

The single market is seen by its advocates as the EU's biggest achievement and one of the main reasons it was set up in the first place. Britain was a member of a free trade area in Europe before it joined what was then known as the common market. In a free trade area countries can trade with each other without paying tariffs - but it is not a single market because the member states do not have to merge their economies together. The European Union single market, which was completed in 1992, allows the free movement of goods, services, money and people within the European Union, as if it was a single country. It is possible to set up a business or take a job anywhere within it.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR UK'S UNIT?

Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said in the wake of the Leave result that it is "democratically unacceptable" that Scotland faces being taken out of the EU when it voted to Remain. A second independence referendum for the country is now "highly likely", she has said. Northern Ireland's Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness said the impact in his country would be "very profound" and that the whole island of Ireland should now be able to vote on reunification. But Northern Ireland Secretary Theresa Villiers has ruled out the call from Sinn Féin for a border poll, saying the circumstances in which one would be called did not exist.

## HOW MUCH DOES REALLY UK CONTRIBUTE TO EU?

The UK is one of 10 member states who pay more into the EU budget than they get out, only France and Germany contribute more. The UK also gets an annual and money back, in the form of regional development



grants and payments to farmers, which added up to £4.6bn in 2014/15. According to the latest Treasury figures, the UK's net contribution for 2014/15 was £8.8bn - nearly double what it was in 2009/10.

## COULD MPS BLOCK AN EU EXIT?

The referendum result is not legally binding - Parliament still has to pass the laws that will get Britain out of the 28 nation bloc, starting with the repeal of the 1972 European Communities Act. Across Britain, more than three million Britons signed up to a rapidly-growing petition on an official government website pleading for a new vote. But it is highly unlikely. One scenario that could see the referendum result overturned, is if MPs forced a general election and a party campaigned on a promise to keep Britain in the EU, got elected and then claimed that the election mandate topped the referendum one. Two-thirds of MPs would have to vote for a general election to be held before the next scheduled one in 2020.

## WILL THE UK BE ABLE TO REJOIN THE EU?

BBC Europe editor Katya Adler says the UK would have to start from scratch with no rebate, and enter accession talks with the EU. Every member state would have to agree to the UK re-joining. But she says with elections looming elsewhere in Europe, other leaders might not be generous towards any UK demands. New members are required to adopt the euro as their currency, once they meet the relevant criteria, although the UK could try to negotiate an opt-out.



## RACE TO REPLACE CAMERON IN BRITAIN

# Boris Johnson bows out

Theresa May, Michael Gove launch bids as political turmoil deepens

AFP, London

Former mayor of London Boris Johnson yesterday ruled himself out of the race to succeed Prime Minister David Cameron on a day of high drama following Britain's shock vote to leave the EU.

The decision by Johnson, who spearheaded the "Leave" campaign, upended the Conservative Party leadership contest and added to deep uncertainty over how and when the country will split from the bloc.

Johnson had been tipped as a favourite to succeed Cameron, who resigned after the June 23 referendum saying he would leave it to his successor to begin formal talks with the EU on Britain's departure -- despite European leaders insisting on a quick divorce.

The favourite to take over from Cameron is now interior minister Theresa May, who supported staying in the EU but insists she would honour the outcome of the referendum if she won.

Johnson made his announcement a couple of hours after fellow Brexit campaigner Michael Gove announced his own surprise bid for the top job, sharply criticising his mop-haired former ally.

In a statement that one MP likened

to the actions of the murderous Macbeth in Shakespeare's play, justice minister Gove said Johnson "cannot provide the leadership or build the team for the task ahead".

After listing the qualities required in



Britain's new leader, Johnson left the punchline for the end.

"Having consulted colleagues and in view of the circumstances in parliament, I've concluded that person cannot be me," he told shocked supporters at a

press conference in a London hotel. "Time is not to fight against the tide of history," he added.

Observers were left stunned by the dizzying events in the corridors of power, where opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is also clinging on to his job after a revolt by MPs.

"It looks a bit like House of Cards and may be too many politicians are watching Game of Thrones at the moment," health minister Jeremy Hunt told SkyNews.

May insisted that "Brexit means Brexit" as she launched her campaign. May said she would not trigger the formal process for leaving the EU known as Article 50 until next year.

Gove, meanwhile, wants Britain to quit the European single market. He suggested during the campaign it could take at least four years to leave the EU.

There are a total of five candidates in the race to be Conservative leader, who will automatically become PM. They will be whittled down to two by a series of ballots by Conservative MPs in the coming days before being put to a vote of grassroots party members. The new leader will be announced by September 9.



# Corbyn under fire over Israel-IS comment

AFP, London

Embattled British opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn came under fire yesterday for allegedly comparing the state of Israel to "self-styled Islamic states."

Britain's chief rabbi condemned the comments, made at the launch of a report on anti-Semitism in the party, as "offensive" and said they were likely to cause more concern about Labour's stance.

"Our Jewish friends are no more responsible for the actions of Israel or the Netanyahu government than our Muslim friends are for those of various self-styled Islamic states or organisations," said Corbyn.

Corbyn denied comparing Israel with the so-called Islamic State (IS) group.

# Clashes kill dozens in Syria's Aleppo

AFP, Beirut

At least 70 regime and rebel fighters have been killed in 24 hours in a government assault and a jihadist-led counterattack in northern Syria, a monitor said yesterday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 30 regime soldiers and 39 rebel fighters had been killed in battles around Al-Maleh, north of Aleppo, since Wednesday afternoon.

Jihadists fighting for the Al-Nusra Front, the Syrian branch of Al-Qaeda, were also killed, said Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman, who did not provide a precise number.

The government of President Bashar al-Assad has been attempting to seize Al-Maleh for more than two years.



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his wife Sophie laugh during closing remarks after U.S. President Barack Obama addressed Parliament in Ottawa, Canada on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Denmark confiscates migrants' money

AFP, Copenhagen

Danish police yesterday announced they confiscated cash worth nearly 11,000 euros from migrants under a controversial law allowing authorities to seize valuables from people trying to obtain asylum in the country.

It marked the first time police used the law, which took effect in February. The seizure law allows authorities to take any cash above 10,000 kroner (1,340 euros) and any valuable objects worth more than that.

"The police in Copenhagen have seized around 79,600 kroner (10,700 euros, \$11,900) from five foreigners who were trying to enter the country with fake identity papers," the police said in a statement.

The measure sparked sharp criticism from abroad after the Danish parliament passed it. The Washington Post compared it with the seizure of Jewish valuables by the Nazis.

With the massive influx of refugees and migrants to Europe, many from war-torn Syria, Denmark received more than 21,000 asylum applications last year, a 44 percent jump from 2014. The crisis has led the Nordic country known for its social benefits to tighten border controls which were recently extended until November.

# Ten women migrants die in Med in new tragedy

REUTERS, Rome

Ten women died in a sinking boat packed with migrants off the coast of Libya on Thursday and hundreds of others were rescued in two separate operations, Italy's coast guard said.

The women were found dead in a rubber boat that had taken on water, spokesman Captain Cosimo Nicastro said.

The coast guard ship Diciotti rescued 107 people from the same boat, Nicastro said, adding that the boat had taken on so much water that it was about to sink.

"It would have been a greater tragedy just a few minutes later," he said.

He said the women likely died either of suffocation under weight of other people or by drowning at the bottom part of the rubber boat.

The same coast guard ship later rescued all 116 migrants aboard another rubber boat in distress in the same area, Nicastro said.

The latest deaths came as the wreck of a fishing boat that sank last year with up 800 people on board was due to arrive at a Sicilian port. The

sunken wreck was raised on Wednesday.

Nearly 120 bodies have already been recovered from the seabed but hundreds of corpses are believed to be trapped below deck, where survivors said migrants including many women and children were locked.

The latest deaths came as Italian authorities prepared to begin removing the remains of hundreds of corpses from a fishing boat which sank off Libya last year in one of the worst maritime accidents in the Mediterranean since World War II.

The boat, in which more than 700 people are feared to have died, was raised from the seabed on Monday and towed to the Sicilian port of Augusta.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, who authorised the salvage, said Thursday the horror of people being driven to their deaths after being crammed onto a rickety ship had helped to change Europe's approach to the migrant crisis.

"This ship contains stories, faces, people, not only a number of corpses," he said in a post on his Facebook page.