

HISTORIC KOREA SUMMIT WORLD REACTION

World leaders and governments yesterday hailed the historic summit between the leaders of North and South Korea as a step towards peace, but also sounded a note of caution about the challenges ahead.

US: 'ONLY TIME WILL TELL'
"Good things are happening, but only time will tell!" tweeted Trump, who is scheduled to meet Kim within weeks. In a second tweet, Trump wrote: "KOREAN WAR TO END! The United States, and all of its GREAT people, should be very proud of what is now taking place in Korea!"



CHINA: 'JOURNEY TO STABILITY'
"We applaud the Korean leaders' historic step and appreciate their political decisions and courage," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a press briefing. "We hope and look forward to them taking this opportunity to further open a new journey of long-term stability on the peninsula."

JAPAN: 'WATCHING MOVES'
"I want to welcome that (talks) as a positive move toward comprehensive resolution of various issues concerning North Korea," Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters. "We strongly hope that North Korea will take concrete action through this meeting and a summit between the US and North Korea. "We will keep watching North Korea's future movements."



RUSSIA: 'VERY POSITIVE NEWS'
"This is very positive news," Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman told reporters. "Today we see that this direct dialogue has taken place (and) it has certain prospects," he said. "The will to seek agreement can be seen on both sides, including the most important thing -- the will to begin and continue dialogue. That is a positive fact," Dmitry Peskov said.

NATO: 'HARD WORK LIES AHEAD'
"This is a first step, it is encouraging, but we have to realise there is still a lot of hard work that lies ahead of us," Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg said at a meeting of Nato foreign ministers in Brussels.

UK: 'DON'T BE OVER-OPTIMISTIC'
"I am very encouraged by what's happened. I don't think that anyone looking at the history of North Korea's plans to develop a nuclear weapon will be over-optimistic but it's clearly good news that the two meet," British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said in Brussels. SOURCE: AFP



(From top left, clockwise) North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un (L) and South Korea's President Moon Jae-in hold hands as they step together over the Military Demarcation Line that divides their countries at Panmunjom; the two leaders hug after a joint declaration to end hostilities between two Koreas; Kim and Moon busy in deep consultation; the leaders, with their wives, enjoy a state banquet; and Kim waves to his hosts as he departs for Pyongyang. All pictures were taken yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

Crossing border 'so easy'! FROM CHEERLEADER TO FIRST LADY

Kim, 'flooded with emotion', asks 'why it took so long'

AFP, Cnn

It was the moment the world was waiting for. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un walked down the steps to the line that separates the divided Koreas, where South Korea's President Moon Jae-in was waiting for him. They shook hands and exchanged a few words. Kim then stepped over the raised Military Demarcation Line, entering territory controlled by the South for the very first time. After posing for the cameras, Kim then grasped Moon's hand and they briefly crossed into the northern side. By doing so Kim became the first North Korean leader to set foot on the South's territory since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a ceasefire. According to transcript released by South Korea, the North Korean leader was "flooded with emotion" as he walked into the South. Walking across the cement blocks that mark the border was "so easy," Kim said, making him wonder "why it took so long to do so after 11

years," referring to the last summit in Pyongyang in 2007. At the Peace House venue in the heavily fortified truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone, Kim said: "I walked about 200 metres, flooded with emotion." A new period in inter-Korean history was beginning, he told Moon. "Unlike in the past when we failed to follow up and went back to where we had once started, I'd like to meet the expectations of the people," he added, promising a "frank, serious and honest mindset". At the two previous summits in 2000 and 2007, Kim's father and predecessor Kim Jong Il met the then South Korean leaders with much fanfare, but ties soured after conservative administrations took power in Seoul in 2008 and Pyongyang accelerated its banned nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes. "I think both of us feel a heavy weight on our shoulders," Moon told Kim.

ReUTERS, Seoul

Ri Sol Ju first travelled to South Korea more than a decade ago as a cheerleader for North Korea's 2005 athletics team. Yesterday she returned as the wife of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, sharing the global stage with her husband after an historic summit that pledged to end more than 60 years of conflict on the Korean peninsula. In matching bright pink skirt and jacket and glittery black high heels, Ri smiled as she was greeted by her South Korean counterpart, Kim Jung-sook and later the leaders of the two Koreas. "I was so glad to hear the summit went well," Ri told South Korean President Moon Jae-In as the four spoke briefly in the lobby of the Peace House in the South Korean side of the border with North Korea. It was the first time any North Korean leader had brought his wife to a summit with a South Korean president. Kim's father and grandfather who led North Korea before him had never taken their wives to official meetings with other heads of state. Kim Jong Il, Jong Un's father, was never seen in public with any of his wives. Little is known about Ri, including her exact age, when she married Kim or whether they had a wedding ceremony. Ri's status within North Korea has also risen in recent weeks, after state media began referring to her as First Lady during Ri and her husband's visit to China. That was the first time the title was used in North Korea in more than 40 years. Prior to this, Ri had been called "comrade" or simply, "wife of Kim Jong Un".



Palestinian demonstrators run for cover from tear gas fired by Israeli security forces near the southern Gaza Strip town of Khan Yunis, yesterday. Three Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in clashes on the Gaza border yesterday, the health ministry in the enclave said. The deaths brought the number of Palestinians killed since protests began on March 30 to 44. PHOTO: AFP

Pompeo replaces Tillerson Flies to Brussels for Nato, Russia diplomacy

AFP, Washington

Former CIA director Mike Pompeo was sworn in as America's top diplomat Thursday after a bruising battle over his hardliner image, and immediately embarked on a mission to Europe and the Middle East with a strong declaration of support from President Donald Trump. Pompeo overcame stiff opposition in the Senate from Democrats who warned he would add fuel to Trump's aggressive foreign policy. But ultimately, the 54-year-old West Point graduate and former congressman beat back critics, easily winning Senate confirmation in a 57-42 vote. He was sworn in as secretary of state by Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito at the White House. Barely 12 hours after being sworn in, Pompeo went straight to Nato headquarters yesterday to hammer home one of his boss's oldest themes -- demanding that other members pay their way -- as the allies sought a

common front against Russia. There was broad agreement in Brussels on the need find ways to counter Russia's adoption of "hybrid warfare" techniques -- subversion, propaganda, cyber warfare -- to undermine the West without triggering a full Nato military response. But divides remain on spending commitments, with Germany in particular holding out against the large military spending increases demanded by Trump, and on how to balance a stern response to Moscow with keeping open a door to dialogue. Welcoming Pompeo to the Nato headquarters, Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg spoke of the need to adapt the 29-member Western alliance "to a more demanding security environment." "There was consensus on Russian aggression, the scale of Russian aggression and this being a problem that requires a response," a senior State Department official told reporters after the session.



AFP, London

PROTECTION OF HONEY BEES

EU nations back ban on pesticides

REUTERS, Brussels

European Union countries yesterday backed a proposal to ban all use outdoors of pesticides known as neonicotinoids that studies have shown can harm bees.

The ban, championed by environmental activists, covers the use of three active substances - imidacloprid developed by Bayer CropScience, clothianidin developed by Takeda Chemical Industries and Bayer CropScience as well as Syngenta's thiamethoxam. "All outdoor uses will be banned and the neonicotinoids in question will only be allowed in permanent greenhouses where exposure of bees is not expected," the European Commission said in a statement.

The use of neonicotinoids in the European Union has been restricted to certain crops since 2013, but environmental groups have called for a total ban and sparked a debate across the continent about the wider use of chemicals in farming. Campaign group Friends of the Earth described the decision of EU governments a "tremendous victory" for bees and for the environment.

Merkel, Trump still differ on trade

They put on show of friendship in Oval Office

REUTERS, Washington

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and US President Donald Trump were unable to overcome differences on trade yesterday at a White House meeting where they nonetheless put on a show of warmth and friendship despite tensions between the two allies. With Trump poised to impose tariffs on steel soon that will impact European exports, Merkel said the decision is now in Trump's hands on whether to grant exemptions to European Union nations. "The president will decide. That's very clear," Merkel told a joint news conference with Trump after the US president complained about the US-European trade imbalance, particularly in regards to automobiles. After their last White House meeting drew attention when the two leaders did not shake hands in the Oval Office, Trump made a point of doing just that, twice, while

congratulating the German chancellor on her recent election win. "We have a really great relationship, and we actually have had a great relationship right from the beginning, but some people didn't understand that," Trump said in the Oval Office. Merkel acknowledged that it took a while to form a government after heavy election losses to the far-right, but she said it was important to her to make her first trip out of Europe since establishing her administration to Washington. The cautious Merkel has not established a particularly strong personal rapport with the brash Trump, and the mood of her one-day working visit contrasted sharply with the tacit "bromance" between Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron. Before heading home after a three-day state visit to Washington, Macron acknowledged that Trump was likely to pull out of the multinational Iran nuclear deal.

Prince William and Kate name baby son Louis



AFP, London

Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate have named their baby son Louis Arthur Charles, Kensington Palace announced yesterday. "The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are delighted to announce that they have named their son Louis Arthur Charles," said a palace statement. "The baby will be known as His Royal Highness Prince Louis of Cambridge." The name pays tribute to William's great-great uncle Louis Mountbatten, who was killed by the IRA in 1979, while Charles is the name of William's father. Mountbatten was the last British Viceroy of India before independence in 1947.

PANMUNJOM DECLARATION

THE KEY POINTS

The leaders of North and South Korea yesterday signed the "Panmunjom Declaration" following a historic summit between the two countries, which are technically still at war.

'DENUCLEARISATION'
"South and North Korea confirmed the common goal of realising, through complete denuclearisation, a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. South and North Korea shared the view that the measures being initiated by North Korea are very meaningful and crucial for the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula and agreed to carry out their respective roles and responsibilities in this regard. South and North Korea agreed to actively seek the support and cooperation of the international community for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula."

'PEACE REGIME'
"During this year that marks the 65th anniversary of the Armistice, South and North Korea agreed to actively pursue trilateral meetings involving the two Koreas and the United States, or quadrilateral meetings involving the two Koreas, the United States and China with a view to declaring an end to the War and establishing a permanent and solid peace regime."

'PYONGYANG VISIT'
"The two leaders agreed, through regular meetings and direct telephone conversations, to hold frequent and candid discussions on issues vital to the nation, to strengthen mutual trust and to jointly endeavour to strengthen the positive momentum towards continuous advancement of inter-Korean relations as well as peace, prosperity and unification of the Korean Peninsula. In this context, President Moon Jae-In agreed to visit Pyongyang this fall."

FAMILY REUNIONS
"South and North Korea agreed to endeavour to swiftly resolve the humanitarian issues that resulted from the division of the nation, and to convene the Inter-Korean Red Cross Meeting to discuss and solve various issues including the reunion of separated families. In this vein, South and North Korea agreed to proceed with reunion programs for the separated families on the occasion of the National Liberation Day of August 15 this year."

'JOINING SPORTING FORCES'
"On the international front, the two sides agreed to demonstrate their collective wisdom, talents and solidarity by jointly participating in international sporting events such as the 2018 Asian Games."

DISARMAMENT
"South and North Korea agreed to carry out disarmament in a phased manner, as military tension is alleviated and substantial progress is made in military confidence-building."

'NO MORE WAR'
"The two leaders solemnly declared before the 80 million Korean people and the whole world that there will be no more war on the Korean Peninsula and thus a new era of peace has begun." SOURCE: AFP

NEWSIN brief

Knife attacker kills 7 children in China

AFP, Beijing

A knife-wielding man killed seven middle school children and injured 12 others as they returned home in northern China yesterday, authorities said. The suspect was detained and the injured children were receiving treatment, officials said. The suspect confessed that he had been "bullied" when he attended the same Number Three Middle School when he was a child, "hated" his classmates and decided to use a "dagger" to kill people on Friday, they added.

8 more Maoists killed in India jungle battle

AFP, New Delhi

Indian security forces killed at least eight suspected Maoist rebels in a raid on a jungle hideaway yesterday, adding to the dozens of dead from recent operations against the radicals. At least six women fighters were among the latest dead in the Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh state, regional police chief Mohit Garg told AFP.

Saudi Arabia downs Yemeni rebel missile

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia's air defences yesterday intercepted a missile fired by Yemeni rebels, days after the insurgents' second-in-command was killed in an air raid by Riyadh and its allies. The missile, the latest in a series of similar attacks, was heading towards the kingdom's southern coastal city of Jizan, state-run Al-Ekhabriya television said.