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WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

With Trump meeting, May looks to keep UK on global map

DAVOS, Switzerland — British Prime Minister Theresa May sought to reaffirm her country's central role in world affairs today, when she delivered a speech to the World Economic Forum and met with President Donald Trump to dispel any perceptions of tensions between them.

May came to the gathering of the global elites in Davos, Switzerland, amid questions about whether Britain could lose influence on the world stage after it leaves the European Union and doubts about the strength of the relationship with the U.S.

Her meeting with Trump appeared to be an effort by both sides to solidify a relationship that has come under strain. Trump and May last year traded criticism over Trump's tweets of a U.K. far-right group's anti-Muslim videos and Trump canceled a trip to London for the opening of a new U.S. embassy.

After the meeting, May said the "special relationship" between the U.S. and U.K. continues. As though to put to bed any tensions about Trump's canceled visit, the two sides agreed to plan a Trump visit to London later this year.

Britain is hoping on good relations with the U.S. to offset somewhat the weaker commercial relations it will have with the EU, a bloc that guarantees no barriers to trade, money or people between its members.

With an eye to the future, May used her speech earlier to focus on Britain's desire to lead in technologies that are already causing profound change.

Britain's economy, once one of the fastest in the developed world, is now among the slowest. Some companies are worried of losing access to the EU's single market after Brexit in March 2019.

Earlier, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said that the U.S. is ready to negotiate an "attractive" trade deal with Britain once the country has left the EU.

Michigan State president resigns in wake of Nassar sex abuse scandal

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Michigan State President Lou Anna Simon submitted her resignation Wednesday amid an outcry over the school's handling of allegations against Larry Nassar

The announcement that Simon was stepping down came hours after the sentencing of Nassar, who worked at Michigan State as a doctor and received 40 to 175 years in prison for molesting young girls and women under the guise of medical treatment. Several of the 150-plus victims who spoke at the hearing were former athletes at the school, and many victims accused the university of mishandling past complaints about Nassar.

Simon was promoted to school president in 2005 after moving up the ranks while flourishing in various administrative roles.

Simon's resignation was welcomed in Michigan's Legislature, where pressure had been building for her to step down or be ousted.

Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., a Democrat from East Lansing, where the campus is located, called it "an important step in moving the university forward."

Hertel, who graduated from Michigan State, said further investigation is needed. State Attorney General Bill Schuette will review how Michigan State handled the allegations against Nassar. And the NCAA has asked the school for information regarding potential violations related to Nassar.

Former Michigan State gymnastics coach Kathie Klages resigned last year after she was



AP Photo/Eric Talmadge

A North Korean military guide leads a tour Wednesday of the USS Pueblo in Pyongyang.

Captured USS Pueblo displayed as North Korean prize

PYONGYANG, North Korea — Fifty years after it was seized by North Korea, the USS Pueblo is the only U.S. Navy ship held captive by a foreign government. And though mostly forgotten in the United States, the "Pueblo Incident" for North Korea remains a potent symbol of military success.

The spy ship, attacked and captured 50 years ago this week, sits in the frozen Potong River on the edge of the sprawling "Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum" complex in central Pyongyang, where thousands of North Koreans are brought each day to hear the North's version of how their country, against all odds, defeated the Americans in the 1950-53 Korean War and has been fighting off the hostile Gollath ever since.

Amid an escalating flow of rhetorical attacks on Washington for allegedly trying to sour North-South relations ahead of next month's Winter Olympics in South Korea, North Korea's state-run media have played up the anniversary as a milestone in the country's continuing struggle against the United States, now over leader Kim Jong Un's development of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The Pueblo was ill-equipped for the fight it got on Jan. 23, 1968. One U.S. sailor was killed when the ship was strafed by machine gun fire and boarded. The 82 survivors were taken prisoner.

But, coming at the height of the Cold War, its capture escalated quickly and threatened to become a serious military conflict. The U.S. sent carriers to the Sea of Japan and demanded the captives be released. North Korea, for its part, forced members of the crew, who say they were beaten frequently, to make public confessions.

The incident came to an end on Dec. 21, 1968, when Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, the chief U.S. negotiator, signed a statement acknowledging that the Pueblo had "illegally intruded into the territorial waters of North Korea." He disavowed that before and afterward.

suspended for defending Nassar over the years. Klages is accused of downplaying complaints made by two teens in 1997.

Trump: Palestinians must return to talks to receive aid

DAVOS, Switzerland — President Donald Trump threatened today to withhold aid money from the Palestinians until they return to peace talks with Israel as he sat down with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the sidelines of an economic summit in Switzerland.

Trump's decision last year to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital roiled Arab nations and led the Palestinians to refuse to meet with Vice President Mike Pence during his visit to the Mideast this week. They also declared a new U.S.-led peace push dead, saying Washington can no longer be trusted as an honest broker.

Trump said that decision has consequences. The U.S., he said, gives "hundreds of millions of dollars" to the Palestinians, and "that money is on the table and that money's not going to them unless they sit down and negotiate peace."

A Palestinian official called Trump's "language of dictation unacceptable." Nabil Abu Rdeneh, a spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, said the Palestinians are "ready to engage in negotiations" and committed to a peace process "based on a Palestinian state

with east Jerusalem as capital."

It wasn't immediately clear what money Trump was referring to in his threat. Washington has contributed over \$5 billion in economic and security aid to the Palestinians since the mid-1990s. Annual economic aid since 2008 has averaged around \$400 million, much of it devoted to development projects.

Last week, the Trump administration moved to withhold some — but not all — of a scheduled aid payment to the United Nations agency that assists Palestinian refugees. The Trump administration said it would provide \$60 million, while keeping \$65 million until the U.N. body undertakes a "fundamental re-examination."

Trump 'looking forward' to being questioned under oath by Mueller

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump declared he's "looking forward" to being questioned — under oath — in the special counsel's probe of Russian election interference and Trump's possible obstruction in the firing of the FBI director.

Trump said he would be willing to answer questions under oath in the interview, which special counsel Robert Mueller has been seeking but which White House officials had not previously confirmed the president would grant.

"I'm looking forward to it, actually," Trump

said late Wednesday when asked by reporters at the White House. As for timing, he said, "I guess they're talking about two or three weeks, but I'd love to do it."

He said, as he has repeatedly, that "there's no collusion whatsoever" with the Russians, and he added, "there's no obstruction whatsoever."

The full scope of Mueller's investigation, which involves hundreds of thousands of documents and dozens of witness interviews, is unknown. And there have been no signs that agents aren't continuing to work on ties between Trump's campaign and a Russian effort to tip the 2016 election.

UN official says not safe yet for Rohingya return to Myanmar

DHAKA, Bangladesh — It is not yet safe for the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims living in refugee camps in Bangladesh to begin returning to Myanmar, a senior United Nations official said today.

While many Rohingya want to eventually return to their villages, UNICEF deputy executive director Justin Forsyth said that no one he met during visits to Bangladesh's refugee camps said they would go back now.

"This moment is not safe to go back," he said. "We have to improve the security situation inside Myanmar to send them back."

More than 680,000 Rohingya fled Myanmar's Rakhine state beginning in August, after Myanmar security forces began "clearance operations" in their villages in the wake of attacks by Rohingya insurgents on police posts. While most of the refugees left Myanmar in the first weeks of the crisis, Rohingya are continuing to trickle across the border into Bangladesh, complaining of mistreatment at home.

Forsyth spoke one day after former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson resigned suddenly from an advisory panel on the crisis, calling it a "whitewash and a cheerleading operation" for Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"She blames all the problems that Myanmar is having on the international media, on the U.N., on human rights groups, on other governments, and I think this is caused by the bubble that is around her, by individuals that are not giving her frank advice," Richardson, once a close friend of Suu Kyi, said in an interview in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city.

Trump says he's open to pathway to citizenship for Dreamers

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump says he's open to an immigration plan that would provide a pathway to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of young people who were brought to the country as children and are now here illegally.

"We're going to morph into it," Trump told reporters Wednesday. "It's going to happen, at some point in the future, over a period of 10 to 12 years."

Trump's pronouncements came as the White House announced it would be unveiling a legislative framework on immigration next week that it hopes can pass both the House and the Senate. The president's remarks amounted to a preview of that framework. He said he'll propose \$25 billion for building a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border and \$5 billion for other security measures.

But immediately after Trump spoke, a senior White House official stressed the idea of a pathway to citizenship so-called Dreamers was just a "discussion point" in the plan that the White House intended to preview to the House and Senate.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to preview the administration's thinking on a contentious issue that has roiled lawmakers for months.

Time Life Library

Small Town

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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SCHEDULE.

Evening listingsTHURSDAY

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