

U.S. urges new sanctions against South Sudan, Russia says ‘no’

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley urged the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday to impose an arms embargo and additional sanctions on South Sudan to pressure the parties to end the civil war in the world’s newest nation — but Russia and China remain opposed.

Two counties in South Sudan are already in the throes of famine and Haley warned the council that 5.5 million people — half the country’s population — face “life-threatening hunger if nothing changes soon.”

“We must not wait for more deaths, more displacement and more destruction before we have the courage to act,” she said.

There were high hopes that South Sudan would have peace and stability after its independence from neighboring Sudan in 2011. But the country plunged into ethnic violence in December 2013 when forces loyal to President Salva Kiir, a Dinka, started battling those loyal

9 former U.S. ambassadors urge Congress not to cut UN funding

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Nine former American ambassadors to the United Nations are urging the U.S. Congress to maintain Washington’s leadership at the world body by fully funding its operations.

The letter to congressional leaders released Tuesday was a response to the Trump administration’s signal that it wants to cut back on U.S. funding for the U.N. and other international organizations.

It follows Monday’s White House lunch hosted by President Donald Trump for members of the U.N. Security Council who also raised the issue of U.S. funding.

The ambassadors who signed the letter served under five different Republican and Democratic presidents. In their words, “While the U.N. is imperfect, and

many reforms are needed, the U.N. remains an indispensable instrument for advancing the global stability and prosperity on which U.S. interests and priorities depend.”

Top Mexican official calls U.S. border wall a ‘hostile’ act

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico’s foreign relations secretary says U.S. President Donald Trump’s plan to build a border wall is an “unfriendly, hostile” act.

Foreign Secretary Luis Videgaray said Tuesday that he doesn’t think such a wall would accomplish anything. He calls it “a bad idea.”

Mexico has repeatedly said it will not pay for the wall, despite Trump’s repeated assertion he will get the U.S.’s neighbor to do so. Videgaray repeated on Tuesday in a meeting with legislators that Mexico’s won’t pay a cent for the wall.

Trump had requested that Congress provide U.S. funds to

begin the wall, but he signaled Monday that he would not insist on it, saying he might be willing to wait until September for the funding.

Venezuela’s chief prosecutor decries violence as deaths rise

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela’s chief prosecutor on Tuesday denounced a wave of unrest that has resulted in 26 deaths, vowing to hold all those responsible accountable and calling on both sides of a heated political spectrum to “lower the tone of confrontation.”

“The death of a person hurts very much,” Luisa Ortega Diaz said. “Whether they are with the government or the opposition.”

More than 400 people have been injured and nearly 1,300 detained in clashes since last month’s Supreme Court ruling that stripped congress of its last powers. In an unusual move, Ortega Diaz broke with the government in the immediate days after the decision to denounce it as a “rupture” of


the constitutional order. The ruling was later partially reversed amid a storm of international criticism.

On Tuesday, Ortega Diaz took pains not to single out the opposition or the government as bearing the bulk of responsibility for the violence.

“I want to express my firmest rejection to violence as an arm of political action,” she said. “Politics should not lead us to war.”

Tens of thousands of Venezuelans have taken to the streets over the last month to protest against socialist President Nicolas Maduro, who they blame for triple-digit inflation, hours-long lines to get food, shortages of medical supplies and a rise in crime. Protesters have clashed with security forces, which have used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse crowds, and overnight looting has destroyed dozens of businesses.



Opposition leaders have blamed armed pro-government militias known as “colectivos” for a number of the deaths, while government officials have accused the opposition of working with criminal gangs to foment unrest.



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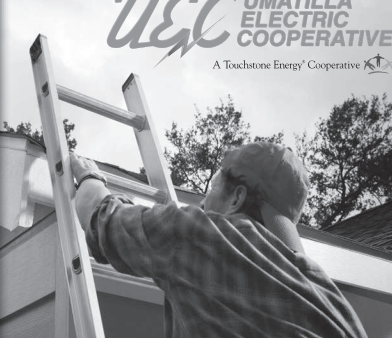
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