



Deal at U.N. meeting opens way for satellite tracking of jets

GENEVA (AP) — A deal reached at a U.N. meeting opens the way for satellite tracking of airliners, a major breakthrough motivated by the mysterious disappearance of a Malaysia Airlines jetliner last year. The agreement allows nations to set aside radio frequencies so that airplanes can be tracked by satellite — not just from the ground. Under current radar-based systems, the movement of planes is monitored by land-based systems, leaving around 70 percent of the world's surface uncovered, according to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the U.N. communications agency. Modern planes that can send what are known as Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast, or ADS-B, signals to the ground are now on track to send signals to satellites too — with implementation expected by 2017. The accord to set aside the 1087.7-1092.3 MHz radio frequency for satellite tracking of planes came at the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), an international gathering organized every four years by the ITU. International civil aviation regulator ICAO has pushed for satellite tracking of aircraft, as long as current safety measures aren't jeopardized. "The WRC's action today will enable better tracking and location of aircraft that otherwise could disappear from terrestrial tracking systems," said U.S. Ambassador Decker Anstrom, who led the U.S. delegation at the conference. "This is an excellent example of the ability of nations, working through the ITU process, to take action in improving peoples' lives." The March 2014 disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight 370 with 239 people on board exposed weaknesses in worldwide air navigation systems. Debris from the Boeing 777 was found in the Indian Ocean in July.

Six sentenced to death in torture deaths of two boys

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Courts in Bangladesh have sentenced six people to death for torturing and killing two young boys earlier this year. Thirteen-year-old Samiul Islam Rajon died in July after he was brutally beaten. In August, 12-year-old Rakib Hawlader died after his former employer at a car repair shop used a nozzle to pump air into his rectum in retaliation for quitting his job. A court found the main suspect, Kamrul Islam, and three others guilty of torturing Rajon to death and sentenced them to death. A separate court found the owner of the car repair shop and an employee guilty of killing Hawlader and sentenced them to death. A video of Rajon screaming for help went viral online, shocking a nation inured to violence against children.

Worker dies, 18 faint at Cambodian garment factory

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — One worker died and 18 others fainted at a garment factory in eastern Cambodia that has been closed pending an investigation, according to authorities. Five female workers at the Or Sambath Trading factory reported dizziness, vomiting, and difficulty breathing before passing out, said Duk Kanthor, district governor where the factory is located in eastern Prey Veng province. They were sent to a hospital, where a 21-year-old worker later died, he said. The next day, 14 more workers fell ill with similar symptoms before passing out and being taken to a hospital, he said. The factory, which is Chinese owned, employs more than 1,000 workers, mostly women, said Duk Kanthor. It was ordered closed for four days to determine what caused the health problems. The garment industry is Cambodia's biggest export earner, employing about 700,000 people in more than 700 garment and shoe factories. In 2014, the Southeast Asian country shipped more than \$6 billion worth of products to the United States and Europe. In October, the Labor Ministry announced it was raising the minimum wage for garment workers by 9.4 percent to \$140 per month, hoping to ease tensions after tense negotiations with workers and employers. Wages in Cambodia remain low by international standards.

Two-child policy to add 30 million workers by 2050

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese authorities expect that easing the country's one-child policy will add more than 30 million people to the country's labor force by 2050, according to a senior official. Wang Pei'an, spokesman for the National Health and Family Planning Commission, said at a news conference that more than 90 million women will become eligible for having a second child when China formally moves away from the one-child policy to allow all couples to have two children. The new policy is expected to add 3 million extra births each year in the initial years, Wang said. China had 16.87 million births last year, and the easing of the policy is expected to boost the annual figure to nearly 20 million births — in line with China's population goals, he said. Lu Jiehua, an expert on demographics at Peking University, said the 30 million estimate appears to be conservative, given an estimate of 3 million extra births per year. "Maybe the consideration is that the birthrate will drop after the initial several years," Lu said. Wang said the younger blood will improve China's age makeup in the labor force, lower the percentage of the elderly in the population by two percent, and slow the society's aging process. The policy is expected to be formally adopted in the spring. About half the women of child-bearing age expected to become eligible to have a second child will be in their 40s, Wang said. The country's family planning workers — notorious for their past work of forced sterilization and forced abortions to enforce the one-child policy — are also involved with processing applications for additional children and directing couples to prenatal care. Wang said they are likely to see their workload increase under the new policy. "Their tasks will only increase and get heavier, so this team can only be strengthened, not weakened," Wang said. He told reporters that China is not ready to abolish the birth limit because it still needs to manage the population growth.



HISTORIC HANDSHAKE. Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou, left, and China's President Xi Jinping shake hands at the Shangri-La Hotel on November 7, 2015 in Singapore. The two leaders shook hands at the start of a historic meeting, marking the first top-level contact between the formerly bitter Cold War foes since they split amid civil war 66 years ago. (AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying)

A China-Taiwan handshake, 66 years in the making

By Tim Sullivan
The Associated Press

It was just a handshake. Just two prosperous-looking men in dark suits walking across a hotel meeting room to say hello.

But, of course, it wasn't. It was highly choreographed political theater, a gesture that had been discussed and negotiated for more than two years. And now, the leaders of China and Taiwan, two rivals whose hatred for each other had once seemed poised to draw the world into nuclear war, were shaking hands and smiling for hundreds of cameras. They kept it up for a full minute, turning together so everyone in the cavernous room could capture the moment from the proper angle.

For decades, that handshake had seemed impossible.

Sixty-six years ago, in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek retreated to an island across the Taiwan Strait as Mao Zedong's forces took control of mainland China. Each man claimed to be the true leader of all of China. Each claimed the other was an illegal occupier. In the depths of the Cold War, the world lined up behind their favorite: the Eastern Bloc behind Mao and Beijing, the West behind Chiang and Taiwan.

Slowly, though, the enmity faded. Talk of war was heard less and less. Money became a common language.

First Taiwan got rich, in part by investing the wealth that Chiang's forces had carried with them on their retreat, becoming an

industrial powerhouse that churned out cheap electronics. Then, after China opened its economy, Chinese factories became the place to go for cheap consumer goods. Eventually, Taiwanese investors poured billions of dollars into the mainland.

By then, Taiwan had become an international stepchild, a not-quite country abandoned by the United Nations and forced to compete in the Olympics as Chinese Taipei. But if China became far more powerful, Taiwan wasn't just going to give up.

Bitterness, both sides saw, was not going to achieve very much.

Which is why at 3:00pm on Saturday, November 7, China's Xi Jinping and Taiwan's Ma Ying-jeou entered from either side of a ballroom at Singapore's Shangri-La Hotel, walked up to one another and shook hands.

They stood there long enough so each could try out a variety of smiles: effusive, diplomatic, maybe even coy. Stuttering shadows danced behind them as hundreds of cameras clicked on and on.

You could endlessly try to parse the moment. What did it mean that Ma kept up his brightest politician smile as Xi started to look bored? Why did Ma keep Xi's hand pulled so close?

But the men wanted no other news. Even the backdrop — a plain yellow wall — was selected to be neutral, neither the red of China nor the blue of Ma's Kuomintang party.

They made sure the handshake itself was the news. And it was.

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Units per U.S. dollar as of 11/13

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Cambodian Riel	4039.2
China Renminbi	6.3736
Fijian Dollar	2.1608
Hong Kong Dollar	7.751
Indian Rupee	66.099
Indonesian Rupiah	13685
Iranian Rial	29957
Japanese Yen	122.76
Laos New Kip	8185.5
Malaysian Ringgit	4.378
Nepal Rupee	104.94
Pakistani Rupee	104.55
Papua N.G. Kina	2.9455
Philippine Peso	47.1
Russian Ruble	66.543
Saudi Riyal	3.7501
Singapore Dollar	1.4217
South Korean Won	1163.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	142.05
Taiwan Dollar	32.829
Thai Baht	35.904
Vietnam Dong	22438