

VOA NEWS

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I'm VOA's Joe Ramsey with this worldwide news update.

Two senior Ukrainian officials say a Kyiv delegation that will meet with America's top diplomat in Saudi Arabia will propose a cease-fire with Russia covering the Black Sea and long-range missile strikes. The Ukrainian delegation is due to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Tuesday. AP correspondent Jon Gambrell has more from Dubai.

Ukrainians are trying to recover after that disastrous meeting that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had in the Oval Office last month that descended into an argument between him, President Donald Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance.

They're looking to sign, likely in the coming weeks, a rare earth mineral deal that the Trump administration had sought, and the Ukrainians are likely really hoping to turn back on American military aid as well as American intelligence sharing to counter the Russians.

For the Americans, they want to push forward with what Trump wants, which is this peace deal, peace talks between him and Russian President Vladimir Putin. Now so far, Trump has been really conciliatory towards Putin. That's raised the concerns of Europeans who are increasing their defense spending. But Trump in the last couple of days has threatened the Russians with new economic sanctions.

AP correspondent Jon Gambrell.

Military officials from more than 30 nations are expected to take part in Paris talks on the creation of an international security force for Ukraine. A French military official says such an international force would aim to dissuade Russia from launching another offensive after any cease-fire that comes into effect.

The long list of participants on Tuesday will also include Asian and Oceania nations joining the talks remotely.

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Doctors said Pope Francis is no longer in imminent danger of death as a result of pneumonia, but have decided to keep him hospitalized for several more days to receive treatment. Francis on Monday followed the Vatican's week-long spiritual retreat via video conference. AP correspondent Charles De Ledesma reports.

As he did on Sunday, Francis participated in the retreat remotely from the Rome hospital where he's being treated.

He could see and hear the Reverend Roberto Pasolini, preacher of the papal household, but the priests, bishops and cardinals gathered for the retreat in the Vatican auditorium could not see or hear him.

Pasolini is delivering a series of meditations this week on the hope of eternal life, a theme that was chosen well before the Pope's hospitalization on February 14 with a complex lung infection.

I'm Charles De Ledesma.

The leader of Canada's most populous province on Monday announced a countermeasure to President Trump's trade war. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

"It needs to end."

Premier Doug Ford says Ontario is now charging 25 percent more for electricity to a million and a half American homes and businesses in New York, Michigan and Minnesota. Ford says on CTV it's a necessary step amid what he calls the chaos and confusion of the president's on again, off again tariffs.

"If the United States escalates, I will not hesitate to shut the electricity off completely."

The president's trade war has incensed Canadians, sent markets sharply lower and worried American consumers about higher prices.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Fears that uncertainty over trade tariffs will trigger a recession grip the U.S. stock market on Monday. Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener reports.

A Reuters poll showed 91 percent of economists see higher recession risks due to President Trump's shifting trade policies. But the White House pushed back on talk of a recession on Monday.

The director of its National Economic Council, Kevin Hassett, said there were many reasons to be optimistic about the U.S. economy, despite concerns about inflation and predictions of a contraction in GDP in the first quarter.

He argued U.S. tax cuts would boost the economy and said Trump's tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China were already bringing manufacturing and jobs back to the U.S.

Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener.

That wraps up this update, but the world and news never stop. For additional updates, visit our website, voanews.com. I'm Joe Ramsey, VOA News.