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9/26/24 Thursday

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Ukraine, Gaza Show Americans Will Accept Anything

On Tuesday, ProPublica reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken rejected findings from two US agencies that Israel blocked US humanitarian aid from reaching Gaza, thereby allowing US weapons to continue flowing into Tel Aviv. On Thursday, Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) called for Blinken's resignation, the only member of Congress to do so.

It is not only the US Government that is happy to look the other way as the military-industrial complex leads the country into insanity and destruction, the American people have likewise decided that their comforts outweigh genocide and the possible end of civilization as we know it. The US Secretary of State lied to Congress to protect a government that was and continues to perpetuate genocide while blocking US taxpayer-funded humanitarian aid to keep the weapons enabling that genocide to continue and mainstream media outlets barely make a peep and it looks unlikely to alter the outcome of the coming presidential election. The reaction outside Tlaib and advocacy groups seem to be an apathetic shrug. The American people, the media and even Congress expect such evil acts from the upper echelons of power.

"[To] any of us who were watching it closely at the time, not even that closely, this is not a surprise," explained Daniel McAdams, the executive director of the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity told Sputnik's Political Misfits. "We saw it happening. We saw aid workers getting killed. We saw food kitchens being blown up. We saw people being assassinated. We saw food trucks being stopped and emptied out. It wasn't a surprise to anyone who wanted to see it. But the US government and a lot of Americans didn't want to see it."

McAdams added that it was a "very serious stain on the US" and he hopes "Blinken's name will go down in history as one of the most evil secretaries of state we've had."

Meanwhile, the "elderly man with a poor memory" who still technically occupies the White House met with Ukraine's apparent leader-for-life Volodymyr Zelensky in Washington to announce an $8 billion surge in aid and make the declaration that "Ukraine will prevail" in opposition to every observable fact and rational analysis.

As with Blinken, the lie is blatant to anyone with even a passing curiosity about the subject, but no one in the world expected US President Joe Biden to say anything else. Had he, it would have been a massive controversy and front-page news across the country. "The President Tells the Truth About Ukraine" would make national headlines, though it's unlikely they'd use that framing.

Again, we expect our leaders to lie to us and we project that expectation onto other world leaders. When the man in charge of the world's largest nuclear arsenal tells us NATO planning and coordinating attacks deep inside Russia would be seen as an attack by those countries– and changes his country's nuclear doctrine to match– our leaders tell us that Vladimir Putin is lying just like our leaders lie to us, and the obtuse public believes them.

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The meeting was said to have included Zelensky's so-called "victory plan"which was expected to include permission to use long-range NATO weapons to strike deep into Russia.
Zelensky is "a comedian, but he's not funny anymore," explained McAdams. "From what we've seen of [the plan], is basically all the stuff we've been doing for two and a half years that doesn't work. Let's double down on it, and it'll work. Let me into NATO tomorrow and I can invoke Article 5 and force all of you guys to go to war with Russia and have a nuclear war. I mean, that's how dumb it is."
Outside of some Palestinian protests, which have seemingly decreased in size as the election nears, there is scant outrage against the government spending trillions of dollars to fight destructive wars while people suffer on the streets of American cities.
"China has pulled 200 million people out of poverty. That's literally more than half of the [population of] the United States over the last 20 years. They haven't been spending their money on wars," Jamarl Thomas, co-host of the Sputnik's Political Misfits pointed out. "For us, we spent $7 trillion on Iraq, $3 trillion on Afghanistan. That's $10 trillion on just war… you don't have a health care system. You don't have high-speed rail. You don't have free education."
China now maintains the world's largest high-speed rail system. From 2008 to 2015, China spent roughly $370 billion on high-speed rail according to the World Bank. By that time, they had completed well over 15,000 km of high-speed rail, already the most extensive in the world.
"What are we spending this money on? And how is it benefiting us as Americans?" asked Thomas. "For whatever reason, that's off the table in regards to that politics. It's super bizarre."
While polling shows that the majority of American people oppose Israel's actions in Palestine, it is likely to continue because polling also indicates that the vast majority of the voting public plans to vote for a candidate –either Vice President Kamala Harris or Trump– who promise to continue that support.
"But neither you nor I write hundred million dollar checks to candidates,"noted McAdams.
"People may care about it but they don't seem to care about it to the point of being able to pressure their politicians," Thomas argued. "The majority of people that care about it are Democrats, but you even get a large share of Republicans saying this is unfortunate, but from their point of view, if Kamala Harris loses, it's not worth that, meaning I don't want to hit her and push her on this because I don't want her to lose."
"It kills me," Thomas concluded. "This idea that genocide is no longer a redline."
Death Toll From US Hurricane Helene Rises to 6 – Reports

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WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) – The death toll from Hurricane Helene that made a landfall in the United States late Thursday has climbed to six, ABC News reported on Friday.
At least one person was killed in the state of Florida, and another four died in Georgia, the report said, citing local officials.
One person was killed and another one injured in Charlotte, North Carolina, when a tree fell on a house, it added.
As of Friday morning, almost 3.5 million customers had no power in South Carolina, Florida and Georgia, while about 480,000 remained without electricity in North Carolina, according to the

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Poweroutage.usportal.
The US National Hurricane Center said earlier in the day that Hurricane Helene weakened to a tropical storm on Friday after coming ashore in northwestern Florida as a Category 4 storm overnight.
However, the National Weather Service (NWS) warned that the storm remains dangerous and still may cause significant damage.
"Helene will continue to bring catastrophic and life-threatening extreme rainfall and flooding threats through at least midday for the southern Appalachians where upslope flow should increase rain totals and varying terrain is likely to lead to landslides. Tornadoes will be most likely during the morning and remain possible into the afternoon across parts of the Carolinas and southern Virginia," the NWS said in a statement.
The storm continues to produce damaging gusty winds and life-threatening flooding in the region, according to the weather service.

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Harris to Make First Southern Border Visit as Presidential Nominee
WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) – US Vice President Kamala Harris is scheduled to make her first visit to the southern border as a presidential nominee on Friday, according to her official schedule.
Harris will be visiting the town of Douglas in Arizona and focus her speech on former President Donald Trump pressuring congressional Republicans to veto a bipartisan border security bill earlier this year.
Harris has said that she would revive the bill if elected president.
The trip will mark Harris' second trip to the southern border as vice president. She visited El Paso, Texas in June 2021.

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Somali Foreign Minister Says Somalia to Attend Next Africa - Russia Summit
UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - Somalia will take part in the next Russia-Africa summit, Foreign Minister Ahmed Moalim Fiqi told Sputnik.
"We have an Africa-Russia summit at the end of this year and we are going there. Maybe we'll meet the officials," Fiqi said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.
In March, Oleg Ozerov, the ambassador-at-large of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the head of the secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, told Sputnik that the foreign ministers of Russia and African countries will gather for a two-day meeting in Sochi in the fall of 2024 to discuss the interim outcomes of the second Russia-Africa summit in the summer of 2023 in St.Petersburg and outline future plans.

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Somalia Calls on World To Solve Problems Peacefully, Not With Sanctions- Foreign Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 27(Sputnik) - Somalia is urging the world to solve issues peacefully, not with sanctions, Foreign Minister of Somalia Ahmed Moalim Fiqi told Sputnik.
“As a country that has had a civil war over 30 years and our people suffered for the war and all these things, we are always encouraging the world to be peaceful and to solve the global problems and issues in a peaceful way,” Fiqi said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.
The countries of the collective West have imposed a comprehensive sanctions regime on Russia, targeting the country's economy, energy, and banking services, among other areas, after Moscow launched a special military operation in Ukraine in February 2022. Russia has repeatedly said that the Western sanctions have failed.

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Somalia Interested in Increasing Trade With Russia - Foreign Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - Somalia doesn’t have a lot of trade with Russia, and wants to boost it, Foreign Minister of Somalia Ahmed Moalim Fiqi told Sputnik.
“We don't have much trade but Somalis are a very entrepreneurial people so they have a connection with the whole world,” Fiqi said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.
The Minister further added that Somalia was ready to boost trade ties with Russia.
The 79th session of the UNGA opened on September 10.
The annual debate will take place from September 24-28 and on September 30.

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Somali Foreign Minister Says Ukrainian Conflict Can Be Resolved Only Through Dialogue

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - The resolution of the Ukrainian conflict lies in negotiations and dialogue, the Somalian Foreign Minister Ahmed Fiqi said in an interview with Sputnik.
“The solution [to the conflict in Ukraine] is dialogue, the solution is to sit down together and to solve this problem with the dialogue,” Fiqi said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.
Fiqi further added that no one can force others to do anything.
Russian President Vladimir Putin said in June that Russia would cease fire and start talks with Ukraine as soon as Kiev withdrew troops from Russia-controlled regions and abandoned plans to join NATO. Zelenskyy rejected the proposal, calling it an ultimatum.

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Food Prices in Somalia Impacted by Ukraine Conflict - Foreign Minister to Sputnik

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - The cost of food in Somalia has been very negatively impacted as a result of the Ukraine conflict, Somalian Foreign Minister Ahmed Fiqi told Sputink.
“Yes," Fiqi said when asked whether the Ukrainian conflict has impacted the prices of food in Somalia.” [Food prices have been] very, very impacted.”
In addition, many other areas have also been impacted by the Ukrainian conflict, Fiqi added.
Somalia collapsed in 1991 with the fall of the dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siad Barre. The federal government, which controls the capital city of Mogadishu and several other areas, is recognized by the international community as the only legitimate authority in the country.
The remaining parts of Somalia are under the control of unrecognized state entities or are self-governing territories. The northern part is the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland and in the eastern part is the Puntland region, which declared autonomy in 1998.

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Somali Foreign Minister Says Ready to Meet With Lavrov If There is a Chance

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - Somali Foreign Minister Ahmed Fiqi told Sputnik that he is ready to meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov if such an opportunity arises during the UN General Assembly high-level week.
"Actually, it is not in our plan. But if we get a chance, we can meet. No problem," Fiqi said.
Fiqi, who took office in April, said he has not met with Lavrov yet.
The 79th session of the UNGA opened on September 10. The annual debate will take place on September 24-28 and September 30.

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Somalia Wants to Expand Cooperation With Russia on Development, Infrastructure - Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) - Somalia would like to expand cooperation with Russia on development and infrastructure and is grateful to Moscow for humanitarian assistance it provided in the wake of drought last year, Somali Foreign Minister Ahmed Fiqi told Sputnik.
"Actually, we are very thankful and very grateful that Russia has two times last year ... contributed humanitarian aid, 25,000 tonnes each. We are so grateful and we are thanking it for that humanitarian aid. And we want to cooperate on any other areas, on all development issues, infrastructure," Fiqi told Sputnik in an interview.

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When asked about the level of military cooperation with Russia, the minister said he would talk about the matter with relevant officials.
Somalia ceased to exist as a single state in 1991 with the fall of the dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siad Barre. The federal government, which controls the capital city of Mogadishu and several other areas, is recognized by the international community as the only legitimate authority in the country.
The remaining parts of Somalia are under the control of unrecognized state entities or are self-governing territories. In particular, in the northern part of the country is the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland, which the international community considers part of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and in the eastern part is the Puntland region, which declared autonomy in 1998.

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US Indicts Iranians Allegedly Involved in Hacking of Trump Campaign - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - A US grand jury has filed charges against Iranians who were allegedly involved in a cyberattack against the Trump campaign last month, Politico reported, citing sources familiar with the matter.
The report said on Thursday that the names of the defendants and the specific criminal charges were not disclosed, but the US Justice Department is expected to make an announcement on this matter as soon as Friday.
The grand jury secretly approved the indictment on Thursday afternoon, which targets an Iranian operation that allegedly hacked and stole internal communications from the Trump team, according to the report.
The stolen materials were sent to US journalists and the Harris campaign in an alleged effort to hurt Trump's presidential campaign.
The Justice Department did not immediately respond to Sputnik's request for comment on this matter.

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US Navy Approves Production for Northrop Grumman's JCREW/DRAKE 2.0 Drone Defense System

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - The US Navy has given the go-ahead to Northrop Grumman with a more than $161 million contract to enter into full prediction with its JCREW/DRAKE 2.0 system to defend targets against attacks from drones, the company announced in a press release.
"Northrop Grumman Corporation was awarded a follow-on production contract as part of a larger contract, which is now valued at over $161 million, by the US Navy for the next generation JCREW/DRAKE 2.0 systems," the release said on Thursday.

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The system provides 360 degrees of protection by using intelligent jamming to selectively defeat threats without interruption to friendly communications, the release said.
The system can operate independently or can integrate with other command and control systems such as Northrop Grumman's FAAD, delivering a layered defense and technological advantage, the release added.
It achieved full operational capability ahead of schedule in July 2023 and is currently employed by the US Navy and Air Force as well as by the armed forces of Australia and New Zealand, according to the release.

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Trump Says He Would Try to Make Nuclear Deal With Iran if Reelected in November

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said that he would try to conclude a nuclear deal with Iran if reelected in November.
"Sure, I would do that," Trump said on Thursday when asked by a reporter if he would consider making a nuclear deal with Iran.
In 2015, Iran signed the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on together with United States, China, Russia, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, with the participation of the European Union. Under the terms of the agreement, Iran would scale back its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.
However, the United States withdrew from JCPOA in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump, leading to the collapse of the agreement. In 2021, Iran voluntarily allowed the IAEA to replace cameras at the nuclear facility in the city of Karaj, but said it would not provide data from the cameras' footage until the US lifted the reimposed sanctions.

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Trump Says Disagrees With Zelenskyy Claim He Doesn't Understand How to End Ukraine Crisis

NEW YORK, September 27 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump said during a press conference that he disagrees with Volodymr Zelenskyy's criticism that he does not understand what it would take to end the conflict in Ukraine.
In an interview with The New Yorker this week, Zelenskyy said Trump himself is unable to stop the conflict in Ukraine despite his claims to do so if elected president.
"I disagree with him, he doesn't know me, but I disagree," Trump told reporters on Thursday. "I believe I will be able to make a deal between President Putin and President Zelenskyy quite quickly."
The Republican presidential candidate declined to disclose his ideas for brokering a peace plan in Ukraine and responded "We'll see" when asked if he believes Ukraine should give up territory as part of efforts to negotiate a peace plan.

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Trump said he will meet with Zelenskyy in New York on Friday.

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Thirty Nations Joined US to Train 127,000 Ukrainians to Fight Russia - GAO Report

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - More than 30 countries have joined the United States in training 127,000 Ukrainians outside their country to fight Russia, though the programs are sometimes rushed and plagued with organizational challenges, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) said in a report.
"GAO found that over 30 countries helped train about 116,000 Ukrainians outside Ukraine as of February 2024," the report said on Thursday. "The United States trained about 16% of them. As of May, the number trained had grown to about 127,000."
The US government collects data on this training, but the GAO investigators found that it was sometimes incomplete or inconsistent, the report said.
"GAO also identified key challenges to providing international military training outside of Ukraine ...[including] insufficient time for training and lack of standardized content and support. Other key challenges involved administrative problems with personnel, scheduling, equipment, and logistics," the report said.
The US government, primarily through the departments of Defense and State, has committed more than $55 billion in security assistance, including both training and defense articles, since the conflict began in 2022, the report said.

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White House Says Biden Signed Temporary US Government Funding Bill

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden signed a continuing resolution to temporarily fund the federal government and avoid a shutdown, the White House said in a statement.
Biden signed the legislation on Thursday, following the US House of Representatives and Senate's passage of the legislation on Wednesday, the statement said.
The continuing resolution funds the federal government through December 20 in an effort to give lawmakers more time to pass long-term funding bills.
Congress had to pass appropriations bills or a temporary funding measure before the end of the month to avert a government shutdown.

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Trump Says He Will Meet Ukraine's Zelenskyy on Friday

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NEW YORK, September 27 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump told reporters that he will meet with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday.
"I'm going to see President Zelenskyy tomorrow," Trump said during a press conference in New York.
Earlier in the day, Trump posted on Truth Social a message that apparently showed Zelenskyy requesting a meeting with the Republican presidential candidate on Friday.
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Ukraine Losing Conflict With Russia 'Biggest Risk' to NATO - Stoltenberg
WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - Ukraine losing the conflict with Russia represents the biggest risk to the NATO alliance, Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said in an interview with the Council on Foreign Relations.
"There are no risk-free options in war. So, I'm not saying that what we do - there are no risks. But I'm saying that the biggest risk is if [Russian President Vladimir Putin] wins," Stoltenberg said on Thursday.
Russia would be in a position to "coerce" NATO allies again if it succeeds in Ukraine, Stoltenberg said.
Stoltenberg said he regrets that NATO did not do even more to help Ukraine under his leadership.
Ukraine needs credible security guarantees to resolve the conflict with Russia in the long-term and NATO membership is the most credible guarantee possible, Stoltenberg added.

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Jordanian FM Says Will Not Allow Forced Displacement of Palestinians, Alternative Homeland

UNITED NATIONS, September 27 (Sputnik) — Jordan opposes the forced displacement of Palestinians into Jordan and rejects the idea of an alternative homeland, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Al Safadi said on Thursday.
"Jordan will not allow the forced displacement of Palestinians into Jordan. An alternative homeland will never happen and we will defend our own," Safadi said during a UN press conference.
On October 7, 2023, the Palestinian movement Hamas attacked Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing more than 1,100 Israelis - both military and civilians - and took hostages. Israel imposed a complete blockade of Gaza and subjected it to bombardments causing mass devastation and a military invasion.
More than 42,000 Palestinians have so far been killed during Israel's military operations while the vast majority of the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza have been displaced.

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US Navy Pays BAE Systems $177Mln to Upgrade Systems on Aegis Destroyer - Statement

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WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - The US Navy will pay BAE Systems more than $177 million to upgrade the electronic warfare systems of the Aegis system guided missile destroyer Halsey, the company announced in a press release.
"BAE Systems has received a $177.8 million contract from the US Navy for the maintenance and modernization of the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Halsey (DDG-97)," the release said on Thursday.
The work is expected to begin later this month and will continue into 2026, the release said.
"BAE Systems' San Diego shipyard will dry-dock the 509.5-foot-long ship, perform underwater hull preservation work, enhance the ship's Aegis combat system with the Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program (Block 3) [and] upgrade the command-and-control systems," the release added.
The total value of the previously awarded contract award could reach $225.5 million if all options are exercised, according to the release.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY
WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) -

BIDEN-ZELENSKYY MEETING
* US President Joe Biden and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy will meet in Germany on October 12 to follow up on the so-called victory plan after US and Ukrainian officials spend the next several weeks reviewing it, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said on Thursday.
* Zelenskyy presented to Biden the "broad contours" of his "victory plan" against Russia, and the US leader directed his team to work on it with their Ukrainian counterparts over the coming weeks, Kirby said.

MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS
* The Israeli Air Force has struck approximately 220 Hezbollah targets in Lebanon over the past day, the Israel Defense Forces said on Thursday.
* The death toll from the Israeli strikes of various areas of Lebanon has reached 1,540, with 5,400 civilians injured, the Lebanese Ministry of Health's Emergency Response Center said.
* Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has called for the establishment of an international peacekeeping force between Palestine and Israel after the end of the war in the Gaza Strip to ensure the security of both states.
* The United Nations is in touch with all parties relevant to hostilities between Israel and Lebanon to defuse tensions, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik.

BRICS
* The United Nations must strengthen itself as an institution while working with other international organizations like BRICS, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik on Thursday.

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* The prospect of Zambia joining BRICS will depend on benefits the country could receive from the membership, Zambian Minister of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development Charles Milupi told Sputnik.
* The global economic growth in the 21st century will be concentrated in BRICS countries and not in Europe or North America, Russian President Vladimir Putin said.
* BRICS sees its task in combining economic potentials, creating a space for mutually beneficial cooperation between countries, Putin said.

CONFLICT IN UKRAINE
* US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris said on Thursday that the United States will continue to provide security assistance to Ukraine.
* Harris said that any proposals calling for Ukraine to give up territory and accept neutrality are unacceptable.
* The United Nations wants to see an end to the Ukraine conflict, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik, commenting on deliberations by Washington on whether to allow Ukraine to strike deep into Russia.
* White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said that she does not expect President Joe Biden to announce a decision on allowing Ukraine to use US-provided, long-range weapons to strike deep into Russian territory.

ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN TALKS
* Yerevan has asked Ankara to facilitate the signing of the peace treaty with Azerbaijan, and Turkey making efforts to do this, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Thursday.
* Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov agreed at a meeting in New York to make additional efforts to conclude a peace treaty in the shortest period, the Armenian Foreign Ministry said.
* The Constitutional Court of Armenia has upheld the decision that the provision on the activities of the commissions on the delimitation of the border with Azerbaijan as consistent with the Constitution.

NEW YORK MAYOR CASE
* New City Mayor Eric Adams was charged with a five-count indictment on Thursday, including for bribery, becoming the first serving mayor of the city to face criminal charges.
* Adams said that his indictment was not a surprise and was an expected development.
* US Attorney Damian Williams said that Adams knowingly accepted illegal campaign contributions from Turkish officials and businessmen to buy influence with him.

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No Breakthrough in Negotiations on Gaza Ceasefire, Exchange of Hostages – White House

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) – There has been no breakthrough in negotiations on a ceasefire and prisoner exchange in Gaza as the talks have stalled for weeks, White House

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National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said during a press briefing.
“I wish I could tell you that we had some kind of breakthrough to speak to, we don't,” Kirby said on Thursday.
On Wednesday, CNN reported citing US officials that the Biden administration had stopped pushing for reaching a deal on ceasefire in Gaza after having concluded there is no political will on either side to end the ongoing conflict.
The ceasefire talks have been stalled since August after negotiators came up with an updated version of the peace agreement announced by US President Joe Biden in late May containing a detailed schedule and locations for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza.

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Stoltenberg Says Regrets That NATO Did Not Do More to Arm Ukraine

NEW YORK, September 26 (Sputnik) — NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on Thursday he regrets the fact that NATO did not provide more military assistance to Ukraine.
"What I will regret is that we didn't do more in support of Ukraine," Stoltenberg said during an event at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.

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White House Says It’s Up to Zelenskyy Whether to Trade Any Territory to Reach Peace

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – It is up to Volodymyr Zelenskyy to decide whether to trade any Ukrainian territory to end the ongoing conflict, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said on Thursday.
“If there's some [territory] trade space to be had there, that's got to be up to president Zelenskyy,” Kirby said during a press briefing. “[Zelenskyy] is not getting direction from the United States and administration in one way or another when it comes to that [territory trade].”

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stoltenberg says regrets that nato did not do more to arm ukraine
Sputnik

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Biden Announces Nearly $8 Billion in Military Aid for Ukraine as Zelenskyy Visits

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WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden on Thursday announced nearly $8 billion in military assistance for Ukraine, including long-range weapons and an additional Patriot air defense battery, according to a statement released by the White House.
"Today, I am announcing a surge in security assistance for Ukraine and a series of additional actions to help Ukraine win this war," Biden said in the statement, which the White House released ahead of his meeting with Volodymyr Zelenskyy.
The assistance includes $2.4 billion for the purchase of new arms for Ukraine, as well as $5.55 billion worth of weapons to be drawn from Pentagon stockpiles under the so-called Presidential Drawdown Authority.
As part of an initiative to increase Ukraine's air defenses, the aid package instructs the Department of Defense to provide Kiev with an additional refurbished Patriot air defense battery and associated Patriot missiles, Biden said in the statement.
Additionally, the package includes Joint Standoff Weapon (JSOW) long-range munition, Unmanned Aerial Systems, and air-to-ground munitions intended to strengthen Ukraine's defense industrial base and support its maintenance.
Western countries have provided hundreds of billions of dollars worth of aid to Ukraine since the start of Russia's special military operation in February 2022. Aid shipments began in 2022 with artillery munitions and training and have escalated to include tanks, advanced air-defense systems, missiles and cluster munitions. The Kremlin has consistently warned against the West's continued arms deliveries to Ukraine, saying that they only prolong the conflict.

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white house's kirby says it's up to zelenskyy whether to trade any territory to reach peace
Sputnik

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UPDATE - New York Mayor Charged With Corruption Offenses, Turkey Bribe Scheme
(Adds details, comments and context in paragraphs 2-20; modifies headline and lede)
NEW YORK, September 26 (Sputnik) - Eric Adams on Thursday became the first serving mayor of New York City to face criminal charges with a five-count indictment, including for allegedly taking bribes worth some $100,000 in luxury travel and other benefits from Turkey and millions of dollars in unlawful campaign money, which he denied.
"Public office is a privilege," Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York told a news conference after the charges filed against Adams in court. "Mayor Adams abused that privilege and broke the laws that are designed to ensure that officials like him serve the people, not the highest bidder, not a foreign bidder and certainly not a foreign power. These are bright red lines and we allege the mayor crossed them again and again for years."
Adams' decade-long pattern of abuse allegedly began when he was elected president of the Brooklyn borough in New York in 2014 and accelerated as he embarked on his mayoral

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campaign in 2021, Williams said.

Benefits received by the mayor included routinely upgraded business-class travel to France, China, Sri Lanka, India, Hungary and Turkey, stays in opulent hotels, meals at high-end restaurants and luxurious entertainment — all often paid by a certain Turkish businessman, with tacit knowledge sometimes of the government in Ankara, for favors that Adams would repay with the influence he held through New York's top office, Williams said.

"These upgrades and freebies were not part of some frequent-flier or loyalty program," the prosecutor said. "This was a multi-year scheme to buy favor with a single New York City politician on the rise."

Williams said Adams was duty-bound to disclose such gifts in annual, public disclosures.

"But as we allege, year after year, he kept the public in the dark, he told the public he received no gifts, even though he was secretly being showered with them," Williams said. "We realize that Adams accepted these benefits, knowing that they were given to him because of his position and in exchange for some of those improper benefits he could deliver."

One particular payback that Ankara got from Adams was his intervention to ensure the Turkish consulate building in New York — a 36-story skyscraper — opened in time for a high-profile visit by that country's president when it had not yet passed a New York Fire Department inspection.

Another major violation by Adams was accepting for his mayoral campaign money from so-called straw donors, who act as proxies for Americans who had already donated the maximum amount allowed for an election under US law. Straw donors are also a front sometimes for foreign parties forbidden from participating in or influencing any public office election in the United States.

"Adams increased his fundraising by accepting these concealed, illegal donations — at the cost of giving his secret patrons the undue influence over him that the law tries to prevent," Williams said, alleging that the mayor's underlings did false certifications of straw funds as genuine donations. "As a result of those false certifications, Adams' 2021 mayoral campaign received more than $10,000,000 in public funds."

Adams denies all the charges, saying he had done no wrong and that "everyone who knows me, knows I follow campaign rules and I follow the law."

"I ask New Yorkers to hear our defense before making any judgments," the mayor told reporters, amid shouts of "resign" that could be heard from some members of the public who attended his news conference.

The 64-year-old Adams faces a maximum sentence of 45 years in prison if convicted on all five counts.

Adams' indictment follows the resignations of the city's police commissioner Edward Caban and chancellor of schools David Banks who stepped down over the past two weeks amid the probe against the mayor and his inner circle.

The mayor's case is expected to add to the high political drama of the US presidential election set for November 5. Adams, a Democrat, represents the party of Vice President Kamala Harris, who is running against former president and Republican Donald Trump.

The White House has already distanced itself from Adams, with Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre telling reporters that President Joe Biden "did not speak" to Adams at a reception both attended in New York City the night before the mayor's indictment.

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Williams said that even with the mayor's indictment, the investigation into Adams' administration will continue.

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Biden, Zelenskyy to Meet in Germany Oct. 12to Follow Up on 'Victory Plan' - White House

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy will meet in Germany on October 12 to follow up on the so-called victory plan after US and Ukrainian officials spend the next several weeks reviewing it, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said on Thursday.
"Both presidents are planning to meet in Germany when we head over there on the 12th of October," Kirby told reporters. "They'll meet to kind of further flesh it out and see what we can do to help President Zelenskyy."

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Zelenskyy Presented 'Broad Contours' of His 'Victory Plan' to Biden – White House

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – Volodymyr Zelenskyy presented to President Joe Biden the "broad contours" of his "victory plan" against Russia, and the US leader directed his team to work on it with their Ukrainian counterparts over the coming weeks, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said on Thursday.
"[Zelenskyy] had a chance to present the broad contours of his victory plan to President Biden and to our national security team, and the President directed our team to work with his [Zelenskyy's] team over the next couple of weeks to dig into it a little bit more," Kirby said during a press briefing.
At the same time, Kirby declined to talk in further detail about Zelenskyy's plan or explain what it entails.

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biden, zelenskyy to meet in germany on october 12 to further flesh out 'victory plan'

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Jordanian FM Says Israel Is Ignoring International Law, Allies' Warnings, Including US

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) — Israel is ignoring international law, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the advice of its allies, including the United States,

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Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said on Thursday.
"It's [Israel] not listening to international law. It's not listening to the ICJ, and it's not even listening to his friends, including the US," Safadi said during a UN press conference.
Safadi said Israel's actions are likely to continue unless it faces consequences, adding that these actions, including illegal measures in the West Bank, are undermining the two-state solution, the only viable path to peace.
On October 7, 2023, Israel was subjected to a rocket attack from the Gaza Strip. In addition, Hamas fighters infiltrated the border areas, opened fire on the military and civilians, and took hostages. Israeli authorities say that about 1,200 people were killed during the raid.
The Israel Defense Forces launched Operation Iron Swords in the Gaza Strip and announced a complete blockade of the enclave. The enclave's health ministry said that the death toll from Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip since October 7 had exceeded 41,000.

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zelenskyy presented broad contours of 'victory plan' to biden, us and ukrainian teams will work over next few weeks to dig into it more - white house

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Jordanian FM Says UNRWA 'Must' Continue Its Operations Until Two-State Solution Reached

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) — Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Al Safadi said on Thursday that UNRWA must operate under its mandate for refugees until a comprehensive Palestinian-Israeli solution is achieved.
"UNRWA must continue to operate according to its mandate under the issue of refugees until it is resolved within the context of a comprehensive solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state solution and addresses the rights of Palestinian refugees," Safadi said during a UN press conference.
On October 7, 2023, Israel was subjected to a rocket attack from the Gaza Strip. In addition, Hamas fighters infiltrated the border areas, opened fire on the military and civilians, and took hostages. Israeli authorities say that about 1,200 people were killed during the raid.
The Israel Defense Forces launched Operation Iron Swords in the Gaza Strip and announced a complete blockade of the enclave. The enclave's health ministry said that the death toll from Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip since October 7 had exceeded 41,000.

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Harris Says Proposals for Ukraine to Give Up Territory, Accept Neutrality 'Unacceptable'

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WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris said on Thursday that any proposals calling for Ukraine to give up territory and accept neutrality are unacceptable.
"There are some in my country who would instead force Ukraine to give up large parts of its sovereign territory, who would demand that Ukraine accept neutrality and would require Ukraine to forego security relationships with other nations," Harris said. "These proposals are the same as those of Putin. And, let us be clear, they are not proposals for peace. Instead, they are proposals for surrender, which is dangerous and unacceptable."
Former US President and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has vowed to immediately broker a peace plan if he is reelected in November.

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Harris Says US Will Continue to Provide Security Assistance for Ukraine

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris said on Thursday that the United States will continue to provide security assistance to Ukraine.
"We will continue to provide the security assistance. Ukraine needs to succeed on the battlefield," Harris said.
Harris' comments come only hours after US President Joe Biden announced an additional aid package for Ukraine worth more than $2.4 billion that will include air defense missiles.

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harris says proposals that call for ukraine to give up territory and accept neutrality 'dangerous and unacceptable'
Sputnik

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harris says We will continue to provide security assistance for Ukraine

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EU Foreign Policy Chief Borrell Did Not Comment on Zelenskyy's New Peace Formula

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on Thursday refused to comment on the peace plan proposed by Volodymyr Zelenskyy to end the conflict in

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Ukraine.
Borrell is attending the UN General Assembly High Level Week in New York and was asked by a Sputnik correspondent to comment on Zelenskyy's so-called "victory plan" for the Ukraine conflict.
Zelenskyy previously said that his victory plan had been fully prepared and contains a powerful package of coercion measures for Russia to end the war through diplomatic means.
Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Russia is aware of the "essence" of the Kiev regime and would continue its special military operation until its set goals are achieved.

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Helene Strengthens to Category 3 Hurricane, Expected to Hit Florida Thursday Evening - NHC

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - Helene has strengthened into a category 3 hurricane and is expected to make landfall in Florida on Thursday evening, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said in a statement.
"Air Force Hurricane Hunters found that the max sustained winds have increased to near 120 mph (195 km/h). This makes Helene a dangerous Category 3 MAJOR hurricane," the NHC said.
Helene is expected to continue strengthening before it hits Florida later on Thursday evening, the NHC added.
US President Joe Biden has approved federal resources ahead of time to help the states of Florida, Georgia, and North Caroline as they prepare for recovery efforts.

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UN Working With All Parties to Deescalate Lebanon-Israel Tensions - Dujarric

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - The United Nations is in touch with all parties relevant to hostilities between Israel and Lebanon to defuse the tensions, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik on Thursday.
"Through our political representative in Lebanon, we are in touch with all the parties – Israel, Lebanese government, Lebanese armed forces and also Hezbollah – in an effort to deescalate the situation," Dujarric said in an interview.
Every country in the region with influence on any party should push for deescalation and speak "from the same song sheet," Dujarric said.

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Un Working With All Parties to Deescalate Israel-Hezbollah Tensions – spokesman to sputnik
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No Meeting Scheduled Between Israeli, UN Leadership - Dujarric

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - There are no meetings currently scheduled between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik on Thursday.
"At this point, none is scheduled. They [Israelis] have not asked for one. The Secretary-General's door is always open. He will meet with any delegation that comes to New York," Dujarric said in an interview, in response to a question about whether Guterres will meet with Netanyahu on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

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No Meeting Scheduled with Netanyahu, but secretary General's doors always open - un spokesman to sputnik

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UN Sees US Sanctions on Russian Media as Bilateral Issue - Guterres' Office

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - The United Nations views the United States' sanctions against Russian media as a bilateral issue, spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik.
"That is a bilateral issue between Russia and the United States," Dujarric said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. "Obviously, as a matter of principle, not particularly tied to this case, we stand for freedom of the press. But this issue is a bilateral issue."
When asked whether the United Nations is looking into that matter, Dujarric noted, "This is not an issue that we are involved in or nor is it an issue that people have asked us to be involved in."
Earlier in September, the US State Department tightened the operating conditions for Rossiya Segodnya, RT and their subsidiaries, designating them as "foreign missions." Under the Foreign Missions Act, they will be required to notify the department of all personnel working in the United States and disclose all real estate they own.
Russia will respond with restrictions on the dissemination of information by US media outlets in Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Sputnik.
On Wednesday, the TikTok video-sharing app blocked the account of RIA Novosti with more than two million subscribers, just a few days after similar actions were taken against the accounts linked to Sputnik and RT International.

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Meta (banned in Russia for extremism) earlier banned RT and Rossiya Segodnya from its apps globally.

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un spokesman tells sputnik us sanctions on russian media a bilateral issue, BUT un stands for freedom of press

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UN 'Extremely Worried' About Risk of Major Ground War in Lebanon - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - The United Nations has grave concerns about the risk of a major ground war in Lebanon amid an escalation between Israel and Hezbollah, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik.
"We are extremely worried at the risk of a major ground war in Lebanon," Dujarric said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. "I think it is clear that we cannot afford Lebanon to become another Gaza. It is clear that the people of Lebanon and the people of Israel cannot afford a conflict."
Dujarric stressed that in any conflict, it is the civilians who are paying the ultimate price, pointing out that more than 100,000 Lebanese have already had to leave everything behind and flee the south as well as tens of 1000s of Israelis have had to do the same in the north.
"People have been displaced. People are suffering. There is no military solution to this problem," he stated. "There is a Security Council resolution 1701, that provides the framework on how to end this conflict, on how to bring the state of the authority of the state of Lebanon back to southern Lebanon to control its own territory. That's what we want to see."
Israel began carrying out massive strikes on southern and eastern Lebanon last week after announcing a new phase of its war effort in the region, with the focus on the northern front. Hezbollah, in turn, fired dozens of rockets toward northern Israel.
On Monday alone, Israeli airstrikes killed 558 people, Lebanese Health Minister Firass Abiad said.
The escalation was preceded by a series of explosions of pagers and walkie-talkies in Lebanon from September 17-18, which killed over 40 people and injured nearly 3,500 others.

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un 'extremely worried' about risk of major ground war in Lebanon, world cannot afford another Gaza - spokesman to sputnik

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Sentencing of Hunter Biden on Gun Charges Delayed to December 12 - Court Filing

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The sentencing of Hunter Biden on gun charges has been delayed further until December 12, a court filing revealed on Thursday.
"Oral Order as to Robert Hunter Biden: The Unopposed Motion to Continue Sentencing (268) is granted. The Sentencing is reset for 12/12/2024 at 01:00 pm in Courtroom 4A before Judge Maryellen Noreika. Ordered by Judge Maryellen Noreika on 9/26/2024," the court filing said.
The sentencing had previously been set by the court for December 4.
In June, a jury found Hunter Biden guilty of making a false statement to acquire a firearm, making a false statement with respect to information required to be kept in records and possessing a firearm as an unlawful user of a controlled substance.
Biden faces a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison, although the sentences given for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum prescribed penalties, according to the US Justice Department.

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UN Must Strengthen Itself While Engaging With Groups Like BRICS - Dujarric

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - The United Nations must strengthen itself as an institution while working with other international organizations like BRICS, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik on Thursday.
"The Secretary-General [Antonio Guterres] has been engaged with the BRICS countries … he engages because it's important for him as Secretary-General of the UN. But it's also important to remind people that we need to strengthen the one multilateral institution that represents every member state, and that's the United Nations," Dujarric said in an interview.
Guterres will continue to engage BRICS and other groups on economic and political issues, Dujarric said.

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guterres engages and will continue to engage with BRICS countries - spokesman to sputnik
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UN Spokesman on Ukraine's Strikes Deep Into Russia: We Want to See End to This War

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - The United Nations wants to see an end to the Ukraine conflict, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik, commenting

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on deliberations by Washington on whether to allow Ukraine to strike deep into Russia.
"Our focus, and we've been very clear, is that we want to see an end to this war," Dujarric said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. "We want to see an end to this war in line with international law, General Assembly resolutions and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. I think, for the sake of people in Russia, for the sake of people in Ukraine, we need to see an end to this war in line with the principles I just stated."
Moscow hopes the United States has "enough sense and reason" not to allow Kiev to strike deep into Russia, a nuclear power, with US-supplied weapons, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin earlier told Sputnik on the UNGA margins.
Ukraine's request to use US-supplied long-range weapons deep in Russian territory will be discussed during Volodymyr Zelenskyy's meeting with President Joe Biden at the White House on Thursday, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said.
Russian President Vladimir Putin said earlier that NATO countries are not only discussing the possibility of letting Kiev use Western long-range weapons against Russia, but are essentially deciding whether to get directly involved in the Ukraine conflict. The direct participation of Western countries in the Ukraine conflict would change its essence, and Moscow would be forced to make decisions based on the threats that would be created against Russia, he added.

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un spokesman on ukraine's strikes deep into russia: we want to see an end to this war

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Guterres, Lavrov at UNGA Will Discuss Middle East, Ukraine, Global Issues – UN Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik), Liudmila Chernova - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov are expected to discuss the Middle East, Ukraine and other issues of interest to both parties during a bilateral meeting on the UN General Assembly sidelines on Thursday, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told Sputnik.
"The Secretary General will indeed meet with the Foreign Minister Lavrov later this afternoon," Dujarric said. "Obviously, Russia being a permanent member of the Security Council, there are a number of issues that I'm sure they will discuss whether it's the situation in the Middle East, the situation in Ukraine and a number of other global issues."
Guterres will discuss any issues brought forward by the Russian foreign minister, Dujarric said. "All that being said, we have to see how the meeting goes," he added.
The 79th session of the UNGA opened on September 10. The annual debate will take place on September 24-28 and September 30.

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Guterres, lavrov at unga will discuss situation in Middle East, Ukraine, other global issues – un spokesman to sputnik

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Astana Meeting on Syria Likely to Take Place on Friday on UNGA Sidelines – Pedersen

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - An Astana format meeting on Syria will likely take place on Friday on the UN General Assembly sidelines, UN Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen told Sputnik.
"I will be participating in the Astana meeting. It will be most probably tomorrow," Pedersen said on the margins of the UNGA high-level week.
Pedersen also did not rule out a bilateral meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the UNGA sidelines.
"We will see tomorrow," the special envoy said.
The Astana format brings together Iran, Russia and Turkey.

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Zelenskyy's Trip to Pennsylvania Arms Factory Organized at Ukraine's Request - White House

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - A trip by Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy to a weapons plant in Pennsylvania was organized at the request of Kiev, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said on Thursday.
"The Ukrainians asked to visit the facility," Jean-Pierre said during a press briefing, when asked about Republican criticism of the trip. "This is something that the Ukrainians asked for."
On Wednesday, US House Speaker Mike Johnson sent a letter to Zelenskyy, urging him to fire Oksana Markarova as Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States for organizing the trip. Markarova organized the trip to influence US domestic politics by aiding Democrats, which constitutes election interference, according to Johnson.
Jean-Pierre urged Republicans to drop the issue and pointed to other trips by Zelenskyy in Republican-led states.

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Pentagon Has Sped Up Weapon Development Cycles But Still Must Do Better - US Senator

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The US Department of Defense has reduced its time cycle for introducing and producing new operational weapons and equipment by 60% with many items but still has a long way to go how to adapt far more quickly to battlefield conditions and

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supply needs, US Senator Tom Cotton said on Thursday.
"Our Department of Defense doesn't innovate fast," Cotton said. "It's just too big an organization, [It's] too bureaucratic [with] too many problems so you have to focus on a few priorities. ... You have to know there are a lot of challenges and problems that are not going to get fixed no matter how long you're there."
For those reasons, the Department of Defense needs to be run by secretaries who are "laser focused" on the speed of innovation and who provided continual active leadership, Cotton said.
The senator, who is a member of the US Senate Armed Services Committee, noted that some improvements have been made in how the Defense Department operates but a lot more needs to be done.
"They have got time cycles for pretty basic munitions down from 60 months (five years) to 24 months (two years), but that's still not nearly enough," Cotton said. "The part of our budget that is spent on production and research and development but could be done a lot better. ... We need to spend more, but to spend it more effectively."
Lessons learned from studying the current and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East had shown the increased need for smaller, more expendable weapons systems that had much higher and more rapid reproduction rates, Cotton added.

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un envoy for syria TO SPUTNIK ON BILATERAL MEETING WITH LAVROV: WE'LL SEE
Sputnik

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Zelenskyy's visit to Pennsylvania weapons plant was organized at Kiev's request, not on initiative of United States - white house

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Biden Did Not Speak to NYC Mayor Adams During Reception Yesterday - White House

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – US President Joe Biden neither saw nor spoke to New York City mayor Eric Adams during a reception at the Metropolitan Museum of Arts the previous night that they both attended, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said on Thursday.
"I can confirm to you that the President did not see the mayor and they did not speak," Jean-Pierre said during a press briefing.
Earlier in the day, US prosecutors charged Adams with a five-count indictment, including bribery, making him the first serving mayor of the city to face criminal charges.

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white house says biden did not speak to new york city mayor adams when they both attended reception in new york last night

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Blair to Attend Global Coalition Against Daesh FM's Meeting in Washington – Ministry

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – Canada's Department of National Defense (DND) said on Thursday that Minister Bill Blair will attend Washington's Global Coalition Against Daesh Foreign Ministers' Meeting on September 30.
"The Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of National Defence, will travel to Washington, D.C. to participate in a Global Coalition Against Daesh [Islamic State terrorist group, IS, banned in Russia] Foreign Ministers' Meeting on September 30, 2024," DND said in a media advisory.
Blair will attend the meeting in Washington on behalf of Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly, the advisory added.
During the meeting, chaired by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the member states will mark the tenth anniversary of the coalition and recommit to mobilizing and coordinating efforts to defeat IS, the advisory continued.
The US-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS is one of many coalitions formed to defeat the terrorist group both on the battlefield and financially by cutting off its funding and resources.

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white house says does not expect decision on long-range strikes on russia during biden's meeting with zelenskyy today

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US Sanctions Russian Virtual Currency Exchange Company, Financier - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 27 (Sputnik) - The US government is sanctioning the Russian virtual currency exchange PM2BTC and financier Sergei Ivanov for alleged money laundering in cryptocurrencies, the Department of the Treasury announced in a press release on Thursday.
"Today, the US Department of the Treasury is undertaking actions as part of a coordinated international effort to disrupt Russian cybercrime services. Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) is issuing an order that identifies PM2BTC - a Russian virtual currency exchanger associated with Russian individual Sergey Sergeevich Ivanov (Ivanov) - as being of 'primary money laundering concern' in connection with Russian illicit finance," the

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release said.
The Treasury Department is sanctioning Ivanov and the exchange Cryptex, which is registered in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and operating in Russia, the release said.
Ivanov has laundered hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of cryptocurrencies for ransomware actors, initial access brokers, darknet marketplace vendors and other criminal actors for approximately the last 20 years, the release said.
The sanctions were taking place in conjunction with moves by other US government agencies and international law enforcement partners, the release added.
The US Secret Service's Cyber Investigative Section, the Netherlands Police and the Dutch Fiscal Intelligence and Investigation Service have seized web domains and/or infrastructure associated with PM2BTC and Cryptex, according to the release.

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Russia Assists Zambia With Training, Education of Students - Zambian Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - Russia has no infrastructure projects in Zambia at the moment, but provides education to Zambian students at its colleges and universities, Zambian Minister of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development Charles Milupi told Sputnik.
"There is no physical engagement at the moment. In other words I cannot mention any project which is being undertaken by Russia," Milupi said on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York.
However, a lot of Zambian students go to Russia and get training there.
"The level of cooperation is where we have the assistance in terms of training our people through their colleges and so on," the minister said.

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Zambia Keen to Have Nuclear Projects With Russia - Infrastructure Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - Zambia is keen to have joint nuclear projects with Russia to enhance its capability to generate energy, Zambian Minister of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development Charles Milupi told Sputnik.
When asked what areas of cooperation with Russia are of interest to Zambia, Milupi said, "Roads, bridges, railway lines, airports, nuclear power."
"In other words, energy. We want to enhance our ability to generate energy, electrical energy," the minister said on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York.
Milupi noted that currently not much is happening between the two countries in terms of infrastructure projects.
"But we have a number of students from Zambia undertaking various studies in Russia," he added.

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All nations are welcome to develop joint infrastructure projects in Zambia, according to the minister.
"So if they are able to come, we'll be very happy," Milupi said.

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Zambia Keen to Have Nuclear Projects With Russia - Infrastructure Minister to sputnik
Sputnik

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Austin Says Stopgap Funding Measure by US Congress Harms Military

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - A temporary government funding measure passed by Congress harms the United States' military, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Thursday.
"While I am pleased that the passage of another continuing resolution (CR) has averted another government shutdown… the stark truth is that these short-term, temporary funding measures create uncertainty throughout the US military and put us at a strategic disadvantage," Austin said in a statement.
The failure to secure long-term funding undermines readiness and impedes the creation or acceleration of new programs, Austin said. The US' strategic competitors do not have to operate under continuing resolutions, Austin added.
Austin urged Congress to reach a bipartisan agreement on Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations this fall.
On Wednesday, the US Senate and House of Representatives passed a continuing resolution to fund the federal government through December 20. Lawmakers had to pass a temporary funding measure or appropriations bills before the end of the month to avert a government shutdown.

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Zambia Wants Russia to Do Well in Face of Western Sanctions - Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - Zambia wants Russia to do well despite the Western sanctions imposed on the country so that Moscow can continue to provide assistance to impoverished countries, Zambia's Minister of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development Charles Milupi told Sputnik.
“We want Russia to do well,” Milupi said on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. “That's the whole basis of sanctions to stop a country from doing well. So if a country is not doing well, they cannot therefore use their resources to help other countries, because they may not have those resources. I think that would be one of the disadvantages of sanctions.”

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Milupi indicated that sanctions are one of the tools that great powers employ as they compete with each other in what has become a multipolar world.
“You have the United States, you have Russia, you have European Union, you have China and so on, each competing for spheres of influence,” he explained. “So what they do to each other, we are not concerned, because we also have our own problems to deal with - problems of development, problems of poverty, problems of these other things. So that's what concerns us at the moment.”
The countries of the collective West have imposed a comprehensive sanctions regime on Russia, targeting the country's economy, energy and banking services, among other areas, after Moscow launched a special military operation in Ukraine in February 2022. Russia has repeatedly said that the Western sanctions have failed.

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Zambia Not Against Potential BRICS Membership, Will Depend on Benefits - Minister

UNITED NATIONS, September 26 (Sputnik) - The prospect of Zambia joining BRICS will depend on benefits the country could receive from the membership, Zambian Minister of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development Charles Milupi told Sputnik.
When asked if Zambia is interested in joining BRICS, Milupi said, "It depends on what benefits that would come from there."
"We are not against anybody," the minister said on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. "Our foreign policy is about what is best for our country and also for peace and stability in the world. That's what we want in the world - peace and stability."
Zambia believes that "the concept of BRICS is a good thing" and has "the greatest respect" for its members, Milupi added.
"Brazil, Russia itself, India, South Africa, China - We have the greatest respect for these countries. But we want that system to work and then that what will attract even more people," Milupi said. "So that even in terms of the financial architecture, you're now going to have two systems - the Western system and that particular one that encompasses many countries."
Speaking of the upcoming BRICS summit in Kazan, Milupi said he is not aware whether Zambia was invited.
Established in 2009, BRICS is an intergovernmental organization comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates. Russia assumed the rotating presidency of BRICS in 2024 and will host a leaders' summit in Kazan from October 22-24.

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Zambia Not Against Potential BRICS Membership, Will Depend on Benefits - Minister

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US Attorney Says New York Mayor Adams Accepted Turkish Contributions for Influence

NEW YORK, September 26 (Sputnik) - US Attorney Damian Williams said on Thursday that New York City Mayor Eric Adams knowingly accepted illegal campaign contributions from Turkish officials and businessmen to buy influence with him.
"Mayor Adams engaged in a long-running conspiracy, in which he solicited and knowingly accepted illegal campaign contributions from foreign donors and corporations and even though he knew these contributions were attempts by a Turkish government official and Turkish businessmen to buy influence with him," Williams said during a press briefing.
Adams allegedly sought and accepted more than $100,000 in luxury travel benefits from the same foreign actors who facilitated many of the illegal campaign contributions, Williams added.

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Canada Establishes Cyber Command - National Defense Dept.

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - Canada has established a Cyber Command to consolidate its cyber capabilities, the Department of National Defense said in a statement on Thursday.
"Today, the Honorable Bill Blair, Minister of National Defense, and General Jennie Carignan, Chief of the Defense Staff, officially announced the establishment of the Canadian Armed Forces Cyber Command (CAFCYBERCOM)," the statement said.
The new command will consolidate the Canadian military's cyber capabilities into a single unified and dedicated entity, and enhance its readiness to address cyber threats, the statement said.
Maj. Gen. Dave Yarke has been appointed commander of CAFCYBERCOM and will oversee its operations, sustainment, management and development, the statement said.
The command will also enable Canada to meet its NATO commitments in the cyber domain, the statement added.

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nyc mayor sought, accepted well over $100,000 in luxury travel benefits from foreign actors who arranged illegal campaign contributions - us attorney

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us attorney says nyc mayor adams accepted contributions from turkish government though he knew these were attempts to buy influence

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US Says No Indication China Will Stop No-Limits Partnership With Russia - Ambassador

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns said on Friday that there is no indication that China will back away from its no-limits partnership with Russia.
"There's no indication that China's going to back away from its no-limits partnership with Russia, and it's greatly disturbing," Burns said at an Atlantic Council conference.
Burns said he did not believe China had provided lethal military assistance to Russia, but it had supplied critical components and dual-use technologies.
The move has allowed Russia's defense industrial base to become stronger than it was at the start of the special military operation in Ukraine, Burns said.
China cannot have it both ways and position itself as a neutral party in the war, Burns added.

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New York City Mayor Adams Says Expected Indictment, Not Surprised by It

NEW YORK, September 26 (Sputnik) - New York City Mayor Eric Adams said on Thursday that his indictment was not a surprise and was an expected development.
"We are not surprised. We expected this. This is not surprising to us at all, the actions that have unfolded over the last ten months, the leaks, the commentary, the demos. This did not surprise us that we reached this day," Adams said during a press briefing.

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New City Mayor Faces 5 Charges, Including For Bribery - Court Documents

NEW YORK, September 26 (Sputnik) - New City Mayor Eric Adams was charged with a five-count indictment on Thursday, including for bribery, becoming the first serving mayor of the city to face criminal charges.
Adams denied the charges, saying he was innocent, and pleaded with New Yorkers to wait and hear his side of the narrative as well before making a judgment. He said the "day-to-day administration of the city will not change" and that he "will continue carrying out his job."
Adams has been charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and also for federal program bribery and receipt of campaign contributions from foreign nationals.
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Israel Secures Additional $8.7 Bln in US Military Aid – Israeli Defense Ministry
WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – Israel's Ministry of Defense announced on Thursday that it had secured an $8.7 billion aid package from the US to support its "ongoing military efforts."
"The IMoD's DG, Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir has concluded negotiations in Washington for an $8.7 billion US aid package to support Israel's ongoing military efforts. The package comprises $3.5 billion for essential wartime procurement and $5.2 billion for air defense systems," the ministry posted on its social media account.

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new york city mayr says we are not surprised by indictment, we expected this

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US Has Stabilized Relationship With China - Ambassador

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns said on Friday that the United States has been able to stabilize its relationship with China over the past nine or ten months.
"I think we've been able to stabilize it over the last nine or ten months, since President Biden met President Xi Jinping in San Francisco on the margins of the APEC summit," Burns said at an Atlantic Council conference. "Prior to that, we had a very, very rocky time."
Burns cited the resurgence of various cabinet-level communication channels, including US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi; US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng; and US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao.
In addition, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Charles Brown had reestablished contact with their Chinese counterparts, and US Indo-Pacific Command chief Sam Paparo recently had two meetings with Chinese Southern Theater Command chief Wu Yanan, Burns said.
China had pledged to help reduce the flow of illicit precursor chemicals for fentanyl into the United States and the two governments also had a strategic dialogue on the military risks of artificial intelligence, Burns added.

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US Economy Grew 3% Per Annum in 2nd Quarter, Slightly Above Wall Street Call

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WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The US economy grew 3% per annum in the second quarter of 2024, unchanged from the previous quarter and a notch above Wall Street's 2.9% projection, Commerce Department data showed Thursday.

"Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 3.0 percent in the second quarter of 2024, according to the "third" estimate," the department said in a statement, referring to its final economic reading for the quarter.

Separately, the Labor Department reported 218,000 unemployment claims during the week ended September 21 — below Wall Street's 223,000 forecast — suggesting that the job market was tanking as badly as some feared.

The Federal Reserve's Summary of Economic Projections showed last week that the forecast for unemployment among Americans had been raised to 4.4% this year, from a previous 4%. That heightened worries about the labor market, especially after the United States added just 142,000 non-farm payrolls in August, some 23,000 jobs below Wall Street estimates. In comparison, non-farm payrolls grew by 315,000 in April.

Latest data indicate that the economy "will continue to expand at a decent pace over the coming year" and "labor market conditions are unlikely to deteriorate markedly from here", Michael Pearce, deputy chief economist at the Oxford Economics advisory, said in a note to the firm's clients on Thursday.

In another positive sign, the Fed cut US interest rates last week for the first time in four years, dropping 50 basis points to bring the peak rate Americans pay for their borrowings to 5% from a previous two-decade high of 5.5%. The central bank has indicated that it was open to cutting another 50 to 100 basis points before the year-end.

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US Defense Secretary Says Risk Exists of 'All-Out War' in Middle East

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - There is a risk of an "all-out war" in the Middle East amid heightened tensions between Israel and the Lebanese movement Hezbollah, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Thursday.

"We now face the risk of an all-out war," Austin said during a trilateral press conference in London following an AUKUS defense ministerial meeting.

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nyc mayor adams charged in conspiracy to commit wire fraud, federal program bribery, receive campaign contributions by foreign nationals - indictment

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UK, Australia Agree to Launch Negotiations for New Bilateral Treaty - Healey

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WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The United Kingdom and Australia will soon begin negotiations for a new bilateral treaty to bind AUKUS collaboration into law, British Defense Secretary John Healey said on Thursday.
"I can announce that [Australian] Deputy Prime Minister Marles and I have agreed that negotiations will soon be underway for a new bilateral treaty to bind our AUKUS collaboration into law," Healey said during a trilateral press conference in London following an AUKUS defense ministerial meeting.

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UK to Train Hundreds More Australians to Operate Nuclear-Powered Submarines -Defense Chief

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The United Kingdom will train another group of several hundred Australians to operate and maintain nuclear-powered submarines, UK Defense Secretary John Healey said on Thursday.
"The United Kingdom has agreed today to train hundreds more Australians to operate, maintain and regulate modern nuclear-powered submarines after the first course of 250 Australians was completed this month," Healey said during a trilateral press conference in London following an AUKUS defense ministerial meeting.

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US Has Started Strategic Talks With China on AI Military Risks - Ambassador

(Updates with an more details in paras 3, 4)
WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - The United States has begun to have a strategic conversation with China on the military risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI), US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns said on Thursday.
"We've begun a strategic conversation with the government of China to deal with the military risks associated with AI," Burns said at an Atlantic Council conference, referring to a meeting in Geneva a couple months ago.
Burns also said that the United States would like to have next a more in-depth discussion on the matter.
"We would like to have an in-depth discussion, particularly to address the risks associated with AI in the military sphere and that's an exceedingly important conversation to have, and we hope the Chinese will be ready to meet us to have that dialogue," Burns added.

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US House Panel Demands Biden Warn Iran That Attempt on Trump's Life Would Mean Act of War

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) - House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Mike Turner issued a statement on Thursday demanding US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to warn Iran that an attempt to assassinate Donald Trump would be considered an act of war.
"President Biden and Vice President Harris must make it clear to Iran that any attempt on President Trump's life would be an act of war," the statement said.
On Tuesday, the Trump campaign said that US Intelligence officials briefed the former president about alleged threats from Iran to assassinate him, adding that these threats have grown in the past few months.
Trump said on Wednesday that Biden should warn Iran that it will face severe consequences, including direct military action if it attempts to assassinate him.

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"We've begun a strategic conversation with the government of China to deal with the military risks associated with AI," Burns said at an Atlantic Council conference, referring to a meeting in Geneva a couple months ago.

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US Offers Up to $20Mln for Info on IRGC Member Charged in Alleged Plot to Murder Bolton

WASHINGTON, September 26 (Sputnik) – The United States is ready to pay up to $20 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps member Shahram Poursafi, whom it accuses of attempting to arrange an assassination of former National Security Adviser John Bolton, the State Department said on Thursday.
"The U.S. Department of State's Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program, which is administered by the Diplomatic Security Service, is offering a reward of up to $20 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction of Shahram Poursafi, also known as Shahram Pursafi, Mehdi Rezayi, and Shahin Pourbakhsh," the department said in a statement.
The United States believes that Poursafi worked on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force to arrange an assassination attempt on Bolton in retaliation for the killing of Iranian Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani, the statement said.
It is alleged that between October 2021 and April 2022, Poursafi in a bid to organize the murder

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of Bolton in Washington D.C. or Maryland attempted to hire criminals and offered to pay them $300,000, according to the statement.

The US Justice Department indicted Poursafi for his alleged role in the plot on August 5, 2022. If found guilty, Poursafi faces up to 25 years in prison and a $500,000 fine, the statement said.

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