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## **TURKEY SAYS RUSSIA RELATIONS NO ALTERNATIVE TO NATO**

*August 11, 2016* spacedaily.com reported: "Turkey remains a "strong" member of NATO, the presidency said on Wednesday, after a hugely symbolic visit by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Russia raised questions about its future in the alliance. Erdogan's spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said Ankara's NATO membership -- which dates back to 1952 -- was not "mutually exclusive" with relationships with other countries like China and Russia.

"There is no argument that Turkey should not remain a member. It is something important. We are a strong member," he told reporters during a briefing at the presidential palace in Ankara.

His comments came shortly after NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu said Turkey's NATO membership was "not in question", in a statement issued in response to "speculative press reports". Kalin said: "We do not see this as a zero sum game. We do not see (relations with other countries) as mutually exclusive, we see it as mutually empowering."

After a rogue military faction tried to oust Erdogan in the failed July 15 coup, Turkey has criticised what it perceives to be the European Union's lack of support."..."

## **WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SPRAYING TO KILL ZIKA MOSQUITOS MIGHT BE HURTING YOU**

*August 10, 2016* circa.com reported: "What's worse: getting the Zika virus or being exposed to potentially harmful chemical pesticides?"

As more states are beginning to deploy aerial spraying campaigns to kill off mosquitos, some scientists are warning the chemical spray could be harmful to humans in the long term. Over 1,000 people in the continental U.S. have been infected with the virus, which can cause severe birth defects like microcephaly.

Airplanes have already been flying over Miami spraying an EPA-approved insecticide called Naled. It's a neurotoxin that kills adult mosquitos. But some scientists say high exposure to the chemicals used in Naled can have negative long-term health effects for humans.

"I think we need to take a step back and recognize that we should always look at these interventions in terms of risk versus benefit," said Dr. David Perlmutter, a board-certified neurologist. "Sure there is a benefit here, but there is a risk."

Several studies have already shown Naled kills bees and butterflies, which are important pollinators that help with agriculture. But it's not just insects, there are other studies that suggest the chemicals in Naled could be harmful to humans. Animal testing found high exposure to trichlorfon, one of the main ingredients in Naled, could cause cancer and birth defects (involving fetal brain development)..."

## **ISRAELI ATHLETES IN RIO ENDURE 'SHOCKING' HOSTILITY, TAUNTING BY MUSLIM NATIONS**

*August 10, 2016* washingtontimes.com reported: "The 2016 Olympic Games have been billed as an opportunity to put politics aside in the spirit of international camaraderie, but that's not necessarily how it's working out for Israeli athletes. Animosity toward the 47-member delegation has triggered a reprimand from the International Olympic Committee and alarm from Jewish groups such as the Anti-Defamation League, which issued a statement this week decrying anti-Israel "hostility" in Rio de Janeiro.

"Shocking but not surprisingly, the Lebanese and Saudi delegations obviously have the wrong idea about the Olympic Games," said a statement Wednesday by Roz Rothstein, CEO of the pro-Israel group Stand With Us.

"Instead of using the events to forget animosity and promote peace between people, they have brought their brainwashed minds to Rio," she said. "How unfortunate that they could not implement the good, peaceful intentions of the Olympics, and instead have used it as a forum to spread hate and continued rejection of peace."

The confrontations with delegations of nations traditionally hostile to Israel have marred an otherwise successful Olympics for Israel. Two days ago, judo fighter Yarden Gerbi won the bronze medal, making her the nation's first medal winner since the 2008 Olympics. On Sunday, however, the IOC issued a reprimand to the head of the Lebanese Olympic delegation after he blocked Israeli athletes from entering a bus that the teams were supposed to share to reach the opening ceremony."..."

## **YOU MAY BE BROKE AND NOT KNOW IT**

*August 10, 2016* bloomberg.com reported: "One in seven U.S. households has a negative net worth, as student loans and credit cards plunge a diverse group of people—including those with good jobs—into the red. There are really two ways to be poor. Some people just don't earn much money. Almost 15 percent of Americans, or 47 million people, live below the poverty line<sup>1</sup>, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Then there are the people loaded up with debt. Even people with good jobs can owe so much on credit cards, student loans, or mortgages that, on paper, they're worth less than zero.

About 14 percent of U.S. households fall into this category, with a negative net worth, according to an analysis this month by the New York Federal Reserve. Add up all their possessions—cash, property, retirement accounts—and subtract all their debts, and one in seven Americans ends up in the red.

Overall, U.S. households have \$12.3 trillion in debt, according to another New York Fed report, released this week. At least Americans are doing better at managing their debt than during the dark days of the housing bubble that led to the Great Recession. The total debt load is up 10 percent from the middle of 2013 but is 3.1 percent below its 2008 peak. The biggest improvement since the recession has been in housing debt, which is still more than \$1 trillion below its peak."..."

## **JAPAN MILITARY ON ALERT TO DESTROY N. KOREA MISSILE: MEDIA**

*August 9, 2016* spacedaily.com reported: "Japan's newly appointed defence minister on Monday ordered the nation's military to be ready to destroy any missiles fired by North Korea that threaten the country, local media reported.

Tomomi Inada issued the order, public broadcaster NHK said, without mentioning any indication that Pyongyang is preparing to launch such a missile. Last week Prime Minister Shinzo Abe picked Inada, a close confidante with staunchly nationalist views, as the new defence minister.

NHK said Inada is expected to renew the readiness order every three months so that Tokyo can seamlessly maintain a state of alert. A Japanese defence ministry spokesman declined to confirm the report. Her appointment came Wednesday, the same day North Korea, a major security headache for Japan, fired a ballistic missile that landed just 250 kilometres (155 miles) off its coast -- hitting Japanese-controlled waters for the first time.

The US military said the North had actually launched two Rodong intermediate-range missiles simultaneously, but one appeared to have exploded on take-off. The launches followed a North Korean threat of "physical action" over the planned deployment of a sophisticated US anti-missile system in South Korea, and came just weeks before the start of large-scale joint South Korea-US military exercises.

Pyongyang has conducted a series of missile tests this year in defiance of UN sanctions imposed after its fourth nuclear test in January. After Wednesday's launch Japanese media quoted officials as saying they were surprised and voicing concern that North Korea was getting better at concealing its preparations to fire missiles."..."

## **TENSIONS ESCALATE BETWEEN CHINA, JAPAN OVER DISPUTED ISLANDS**

*August 9 2016* voanews.com reported: "Japan says relations with China are 'remarkably deteriorating' over the continued appearance of Chinese naval ships sailing near a group of disputed islands in the East China Sea.

The Foreign Ministry in Tokyo issued a statement Tuesday saying Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida issued the warning Tuesday when he summoned Chinese ambassador to Japan Cheng Yonghua to issue a formal protest. The ministry says Kishida accused Beijing of trying to unilaterally 'change the status quo' over the islands, known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China. Cheng told reporters after the meeting that he told Kishida that it was natural for the ships to operate in the waters near the islands.

'With regards to the current situation in relevant waters, both countries need to work together to control the situation, avoid escalating and complicating the situation and eventually resolve the problem properly, following the spirit of the four-point consensus that China and Japan reached in November 2014,' said Cheng..."

## **RUSSIA MOVES TANKS TO EUROPEAN BORDER AMID REPORTS OF DEADLY CRIMEA SHOOTING**

*August 8 2016* express.co.uk reported: "It has been reported that Russian tanks have been spotted moving into occupied territory in Crimea, which was seized following an operation carried out by Vladimir Putin's forces in 2014. Witnesses have reported large amounts of Russian military hardware massing near the towns of Dzhankoy and Armyansk in northern Crimea, close to the border with Ukraine.



Norman Dzhelalov, deputy chairman of Crimean Tatar Mejlis – which represents the peninsula's ethnic Tatar group, claimed on Facebook that tanks had arrived.

He wrote: "Witnesses report that large groups of Russian military hardware have been massed near Armyansk and Dzhankoy. "Dzhankoy has been cordoned off by troops with tanks and other equipment."

Video footage shows Russian armoured trucks and troop transporters as part of a large military convoy moving down the street. The footage uploaded to YouTube shows the vehicles moving through the city of Kerch near the Russian border.

Russia also closed its checkpoints along the Crimean border with Ukraine on Sunday morning. The press centre of the State Border Service of Ukraine also confirmed the closure to the Unian news agency. It said: "The Russian occupying authorities suspended, for unknown reasons, the handling of citizens and vehicles crossing the administrative border with Crimea."

A local journalist has also reported a deadly gun battle near the border town of Krasnoperekopsk in a Facebook post shared by Mr Dzhelalov. Elzara Abduramanova wrote: "I don't want to create panic, but today, as far as possible, it is better to refrain from visits...inside of the Crimea..."

## **PRIEST WHO CONVERTED FROM ISLAM: 'CLERGY AT RISK OF JIHADI ATTACKS**

*August 8, 2016* ChristianToday.com reported: "A UK priest who converted from Islam to Christianity has warned that more clergy could be at risk of being targeted by jihadists following the killing of Father Jacques Hamel in Rouen, France, by extremists last month. Iranian-born Rev Mohammad Eghtedarian told the Liverpool Echo that church workers 'don't have to be naive'.

'We can't go out and pretend to be heroes,' he said. 'The extremists can touch me. I know that. What happened in Normandy was awful and evil.'

However, Eghtedarian – who sought asylum in the UK after speaking out against the Basij militia in Iran – insisted that the risk of being attacked would not stop him from continuing his work as a priest.

'At the end of the day I believe that life and death are in our Lord's hands. So I could die in an accident or in an act of terrorism. We must continue our work,' he said. 'If our Lord went through affliction and difficulties along the way then this is also our mission too.'..."

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