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Photos: China May Have New Anti-Radar Missile for Suppressing Enemy Air Defenses
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Photos recently posted on social media from a People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) recruitment video seem to show a new anti-radiation missile under the wings of a J-11BS fighter jet, signaling that China may have a potent new weapon for hunting enemy radars.

In a new recruitment video by the Chinese air force, military analysts spotted a curious new weapon lurking under the wing of a J-11BS fighter.

According to German aviation author and expert Andreas Rupprecht, the "so far unknown" missile is likely an anti-radiation missile, used to target enemy radar systems as part of a mission called Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD).

SEAD is [a highly dangerous game of cat and mouse](#) necessary to pave the way for more vulnerable aircraft like bombers to fly their missions into enemy territory. Because anti-air missiles rely on radar stations to spot targets, their radars must remain on, actively broadcasting radar waves. Anti-radiation missiles home in on those radar emissions to neutralize the missile sites.

Rupprecht also noted the photo is the first to show a J-11BS in the new low-visibility paint scheme being slowly implemented by the PLA. [As Sputnik has reported, the paint not only helps](#) the aircraft to hide visually, but also dampens its radar return as well - an extremely valuable quality for radar-hunting fighters.

[The Drive's The War Zone noted the missile bears](#) a resemblance to the longstanding SEAD staple of the US Air Force arsenal, the AGM-88 High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM), although the image is not the highest quality, making more precise descriptions impossible.

While not a guarantee, the fact that the missile has been spotted on a two-seater version of the J-11B could also point to a SEAD role, thanks to the additional help coming from an electronic warfare officer. The PLAAF already uses the two-seater J-16, another variant of the Su-27, for SEAD missions, and two-seater aircraft have often been used for the SEAD role, including the F-100F, F-105F/G, Tornado ECR and Su-24M.

A new anti-radiation missile could signal that Chinese weapons manufacturers have perfected the technology after having long-relied on Soviet-built and Russian-built missiles like the Kh-31P.

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'Above Political Divisions': Poland's President Signs US Defense Pact, Welcomes Working With Biden

by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Polish President Andrzej Duda signed a new defense deal between Warsaw and Washington on Tuesday that will provide a legal framework for the stationing of thousands of US troops on Polish soil.

On Tuesday, Poland signed a deal with the United States that will provide for more than 1,000 additional US troops to be stationed on Polish soil, including the forward deployment of the US Army's V Corps from Fort Knox, Kentucky, to Poznan, Poland.

That means at least 5,500 US troops will be in Poland at any one time, while the deal provides for the possibility of another 20,000 to be rushed to the Eastern European country in case of an emergency.

Some of those troops will be rebased from Germany [after US President Donald Trump ordered some 9,600 troops redeployed](#) in response to Berlin's failure to increase its defense budget in compliance with its earlier pledge to match NATO's spending goals.

"Everyone who is familiar with politics knows perfectly well that the conclusion of this agreement will not only bring military effects, it not only translates into the US military presence - personnel and infrastructure ... - It is primarily a guarantee of security for Poland and for the whole of this part of Europe," [Duda said at the ceremony in the Presidential Palace in Warsaw.](#)

The Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) [had previously been approved by Polish Defense Minister](#) Mariusz Blaszczak and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in August. While the deal was drafted under the Trump administration and Duda [even offered to name a new base "Fort Trump."](#) the conservative Polish president has indicated he is just as willing to work with the incoming Biden administration, even though [Trump has not yet conceded the results](#) of the November 3 US election.

"I believe that our partnership is above political divisions," [Duda said, according to the Associated Press.](#) "We are waiting for the new US president to take office."

Biden previously played a pivotal role in facilitating the US-backed coup d'etat in Ukraine in 2014, which threw out a nominally pro-Russian government and replaced it with a fanatically pro-NATO and pro-European Union group.

Poland is just one of several former members of the Soviet Union-led Warsaw Pact defensive alliance to have joined NATO in the years since the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and socialism in Eastern Europe overthrown. In Poland and the Baltic States, the US has signed Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) deals allowing large numbers of US troops and equipment to be stationed and staged close to the Russian border after the nationalistic forces behind the coup in Ukraine forced Russian-speaking Crimea to secede and rejoin Russia, which the Western powers regarded as an illegal land grab by Moscow. More recently, US policy influencers in Washington have pushed for [the US to sign an EFP deal with Romania as well.](#)

Moscow has regarded NATO's policy of expanding eastward as a direct threat and [a violation of agreements made at the end of the Cold War](#) designed to ensure a more neutral political era in the region.

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'It's an Embarrassment': Biden Says Trump's Refusal to Concede Election Won't 'Help' His Legacy
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Democratic President-elect Joe Biden has signaled that he is beginning the process of forming a transition team ready to take over running the United States in January 2021, even if Republican US President Donald Trump hasn't conceded his loss by then.

Biden told reporters in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, on Tuesday that "we don't see anything that's slowing us down" in the process of preparing a transition team, even as [some resources typically available to presidents-elect](#) between the November election and January 20 inauguration remain outside his reach, thanks to obstinacy from Trump.

Among those things denied to Biden have been daily presidential intelligence briefings and additional funding, which he described as "useful, but it's not necessary."

Biden's office has [already released his "plan to combat coronavirus"](#) once he takes office, and he told reporters Tuesday he hoped to release some names for cabinet positions by November 26, which is the Thanksgiving holiday in the US. However, some agency figures have already sounded off about whether or not they will stay or go under Biden, with [NASA chief Jim Bridenstine saying he would no longer](#) head the US space agency, and [Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases](#) (NIAID) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and a member of Trump's COVID-19 task force, saying he would stay on.

Biden has been declared the winner of the November 3 election by all major US media outlets and [congratulated on it by many foreign governments](#), but Trump has remained adamant that the election was stolen from him and implemented extensive litigation in states across the country aimed at forcing recounts and revisions to ballot totals he believes will change the outcome in his favor.

"We all know why Joe Biden is rushing to falsely pose as the winner, and why his media allies are trying so hard to help him: they don't want the truth to be exposed. The simple fact is this election is far from over," [Trump said in a Saturday statement](#) following Biden's victory speech.

"I just think it's an embarrassment, quite frankly," Biden said Tuesday about Trump's stubbornness. "I don't see a need for legal action, quite frankly."

"I think it will not help the president's legacy. I think that I know from my discussions with foreign leaders thus far, that they are hopeful that the United States' democratic institutions are viewed once again as being strong and enduring," Biden added.

Earlier on Tuesday, [US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also doubled down](#), telling reporters "there will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration."

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NATO, Pentagon's DARPA Designing 'Drifter' Device to Watch Entire Oceans
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

The Pentagon's chief experimental research agency and the NATO alliance's maritime research center have partnered to design a network of floating devices that can map and monitor the conditions and contents of entire oceans.

The Center for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE), formerly the NATO Undersea Research Center, in La Spezia, Italy, [announced on Tuesday the center had begun work](#) with the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) on free-floating sensors that can sweep the seas.

The project is called the Ocean of Things (OoT). [According to DARPA, the project aims](#) to "enable persistent maritime situational awareness over large ocean areas by deploying thousands of small, low-cost floats that form a distributed sensor network."

CMRE also refers to the floats as "drifters" and notes they carry some 20 instruments that can support both oceanographic research as well as NATO exercises.

One of the 18-kilogram Ocean of Things floating sensor arrays built by PARC for DARPA "Each smart float contains a suite of commercially available sensors to collect environmental data-such as sea surface temperature, sea state, and location - as well as activity data about commercial vessels, aircraft, and even maritime mammals moving through the area. The floats transmit data periodically via satellite to a cloud network for storage and real-time analysis," DARPA added.

[Forbes reported in August, after DARPA awarded](#) a contract to technology company PARC for its 18-kilogram, solar-powered glass float design, that the cellphone industry had already invented many of the miniaturized sensors for the project.

"Mission sensors include cameras, software defined radio, AIS receivers, microphones, and hydrophones," DARPA project manager John Waterson told the outlet. The devices are also [made of environmentally safe materials](#) and pose no danger to either watercraft or marine life. In October, [PARC parent company Xerox announced a new phase](#) of the contract had been awarded under which the firm would deliver up to 10,000 even-better drifters on top of the 1,500 already supplied to DARPA.

DARPA is testing the first batch of drifters in the Southern California Bight and Gulf of Mexico, Xerox said.

The oceans that cover two-thirds of the Earth's surface are notoriously impenetrable to most forms of surveillance, including satellites, although some devices such as a magnetic anomaly detector can pick out the telltale signs of a submerged submarine. Moreover, vessels or aircraft sporting such sophisticated equipment often quickly and noisily pass over an area of sea, leaving long periods of quiet time in which any number of things might happen.

However, this is far from the first time someone has tried to develop a persistent maritime surveillance system. [DARPA is also working on Persistent Aquatic Living Sensors](#), which it hopes will "tap into marine organisms' innate abilities to sense and respond to perturbations in

their environments and apply those abilities to the detection, characterization and reporting of manned or unmanned underwater vehicles ranging from small autonomous vessels to large nuclear submarines.”

As early as 1954, [the US' Project Caesar built a network of hydrophones](#) along the Atlantic seabed intended to monitor Soviet submarine activity under the guise of oceanographic research. The Pentagon didn't admit its military quality until 1991, after the Cold War had ended.

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Election Limbo - Political Cartoon

It's been three days since the US election was called for Democratic challenger Joe Biden, but US President Donald Trump has yet to concede, instead vowing to come out on top once all is said and done.

Since the Saturday call for Biden, Trump and his reelection campaign officials have doubled down on [unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud](#). In fact, the commander-in-chief has taken to Twitter to vent out his frustrations, tweeting "[we will win](#)" to his millions of followers.

Most recently, Jason Miller, a senior adviser to Trump's 2020 campaign, said in a [Fox Business interview](#) that the president has no intention to concede. "That word is not even in our vocabulary right now," he said.

Surrender? I hardly know her

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Shark Glows in Bioluminescent Tasmanian Waters - Video Club

A shark swimming off the coast of Bellerive, Tasmania, recently gave onlookers quite the surprise when it ventured into bioluminescent water, creating fluorescent ripples as it swam past the shore.

Filmed by local resident Shiblii Reza Ahmed, recording of the jaw-dropping encounter captures the swell shark swimming in between boats at the Bellerive Yacht Club marina at around 2 a.m. local time.

A glow-in-the-dark shark, folks. Talk about making an entrance.

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'Found the Voter Fraud': Twitterati Mock Eric Trump Over Late Get-Out-The-Vote Tweet
by [Evan Craighead](#)

Eric Trump, the second son of US President Donald Trump, presumably encountered a scheduling issue Tuesday morning when his Twitter account encouraged Minnesota voters to head to the polls and get out the vote.

"Minnesota get out and vote!!!" Eric Trump wrote in a November 10 tweet, perplexing voters a week after voting for the US presidential election wrapped up.

The tweet was taken down after an hour, according to The Independent. Nevertheless, netizens were quick to comment on Eric Trump's delayed message to voters.

Meanwhile, Eric Trump is also coming under fire for his recent [amplification of misinformation](#) regarding the handling of mail-in ballots in Pennsylvania.

"The Democrats know the only way that they can win this election is to cheat in Pennsylvania, and we've seen it from day one, we've seen it from day one," he alleged. "We found ballots in drainage ditches."

In actuality, a total of nine military ballots - all with votes cast for Trump - were found to have been discarded in a dumpster in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, according to a [September 24 announcement](#) made by US Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania David Freed, citing the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The temporary seasonal contractor who made the apparent error was promptly terminated by the Luzerne County Elections Bureau. Luzerne County Manager C. David Pedri [also noted election officials](#) worked closely with the FBI during its probe.

"While the actions of this individual has cast a concern, the above statement shows that the system of checks and balances set forth in Pennsylvania elections works," Pedri wrote in late September.

Despite Eric Trump's assertion, no ballots were found in drainage ditches, and Pennsylvania Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar [has stated there](#) was no "intentional fraud," but rather an error in processing the ballots.

"The investigation is still going on, but from the initial reports we've been given, this was a bad error," she argued. "This was not intentional fraud. So training, training, training."

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Video: Turkey Launching Program for Country's First Armed Unmanned Surface Vessel
by [Evan Craighead](#)

Turkish defense companies Meteksan Defense Inc. and Ares Shipyard have teamed up to construct Ankara's first armed unmanned surface vehicle (AUSV), complete with artificial intelligence.

Antalya-based Ares Shipyard and Ankara-based Meteksan Defense Inc. [announced in an October 28 news release](#) that Turkey can expect its first AUSV prototype in December.

The AUSV program's prototype, dubbed the ULAQ, has a 400-kilometer range and will be able to travel up to 65 kilometers per hour.

The vessel will also be equipped with night vision technology and "an encrypted communications infrastructure allowing the platform to be operated from mobile vehicles and headquarters or from sea-going platforms such as aircraft carriers or frigates."

"The spectrum of missions will include intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), surface warfare, asymmetric warfare, escort missions and strategic infrastructure protection," the news release boasted.

A concept video of the AUSV was published by Public Defense on October 29, showcasing an illustrated version of the ULAQ.

The ULAQ will be armed with laser-guided Cirit and laser-guided, anti-tank L-UMTAS missile systems, as well as remote control and artificial intelligence capabilities.

"We are indescribably happy and proud to announce the launch of the first Armed Unmanned Surface Vehicle programme after years of intensive engineering works and investments following our dream," said Ares Shipyard CEO Utku Alanc during an October 28 joint news conference.

"We have achieved this success and pride with our owner's equity investments by prioritizing our national interests as it always has been. We hereby present the [AUSV] as the first platform of the ULAQ line to be launched in December."

"We have once again understood the importance of the 'Blue Homeland' defense, Economic Exclusive Zone protection, protection of maritime borders of the Turkish Peninsula especially with recently emerging disputes," added Meteksan Defense CEO Selçuk Alparslan during the joint news conference.

"Blue Homeland" defense refers to the protection of Ankara's maritime claims in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

Greece's foreign ministry accused Turkey of carrying out a "major escalation" by deploying Turkish seismic research vessel Oruc Reis to an area just south of the Greek island of Kastellorizo last month, [according to Reuters](#).

"Turkey has proven it lacks credibility. All those who believed Turkey meant all it said before the European summit of Oct. 1-2 now stand corrected," said Greek government spokesperson Stelios Petsas on October 12.

The EU had previously said that it would consider imposing sanctions on Turkey if it continued operations to exploit [hydrocarbons in the eastern Mediterranean Sea](#).

"They are doing everything to escalate tensions," Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar argued in response. "The Navy will provide the necessary escort and protection to our vessels as needed."

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Trump Campaign Cuts Staff Amid Calls for Supporters to Donate to 'Election Defense Task Force'

by [Evan Craighead](#)

Although US President Donald Trump continues to contest the win of US President-elect Joe Biden, a recent report citing former reelection campaign employees claims 45 has already begun laying off his staffers.

"They just laid off people," a former Trump campaign adviser told [Yahoo News on Monday](#), less than a week after the US presidential election.

Another source disclosed to the outlet that they have "heard a lot of people have just one week left." Those individuals will soon be receiving their last paycheck from the campaign, according to the anonymous individual.

According to one Republican source who spoke to Yahoo News, the rumored layoffs from the Trump campaign are not out of the ordinary.

"Every campaign has a sell-by date, even successful ones," the GOP source claimed. "This is why campaign life is the best and also worst job ever."

This comes amid Trump's continued claims of fraud that caused him and US Vice President Mike Pence to lose the general election to Biden and US Vice President-elect Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA).

He most recently tweeted that the so-called Democratic "ballot corruption" regarding the election would be "exposed" on Sean Hannity's Fox News program at 9:00 p.m. EST Tuesday night. Trump campaign Communications Director Tim Murtaugh echoed the Republican source's explanation and told Yahoo in an emailed statement that the reported layoffs were simply post-election turnover.

"Unlike most campaigns, which close down immediately after Election Day, because of the unprecedented nature of the 2020 race, we have long had a plan to continue on to see President Trump reelected," Murtaugh claimed.

"However, staffers related to events, trips, door knocking and grassroots organizing played roles that ended on Election Day and obviously play less of a role after Election Day."

As the Trump campaign's legal operations related to the election continue, the US president has called on his supporters to donate to his "Election Defense Task Force."

"Please contribute ANY AMOUNT IMMEDIATELY to join the Election Defense Task Force and to increase your impact by 1000%!" reads the task force's [website](#).

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Trump Administration Sanctions Four Hong Kong Officials Over China's National Security Law by [Evan Craighead](#)

The US Department of State and US Department of the Treasury have announced that four officials in the Chinese government have been sanctioned for their respective roles in the implementation of the Hong Kong national security law.

"The Department of State is designating Li Jiangzhou, Edwina Lau, and Steve Li Kwai-Wah as having been leaders or officials of entities, including any government entity, that have engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, developing, adopting, or implementing the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special

Administrative Region (NSL),” asserted US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a [Monday news release](#).

The US secretary of state also sanctioned Deng Zhonghua, the deputy director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, who has reportedly “taken several actions to interfere in Hong Kong affairs and crack down on protestors.”

From 1842 until 1997, Hong Kong was part of the British Empire, having been seized from China as a war prize at the end of the First Opium War. It was returned to Beijing by treaty in 1997, becoming a semi-autonomous part of China with a slow process of incorporation into the country’s market socialist system. When Beijing passed a new security law in June 2020 after a year of violent protest and included Hong Kong in the law, Washington cried foul and claimed the city’s autonomy had been undermined.

Hong Kong’s acting Chief Executive Matthew Cheung spoke out against Washington’s decision to impose sanctions against the officials from the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong.

“About US sanctions against four officials - two from the Mainland government and two from Hong Kong - we’ve stated our position clearly when the first batch of officials was sanctioned that it is absolutely unacceptable,” he said Tuesday, as reported by the [Hong Kong government’s news outlet](#).

“This is blatant and grossly outrageous - I would use the word barbaric - interference in Hong Kong’s internal affairs, in our motherland’s internal affairs, in the Central People’s Government’s internal affairs. This is absolutely unreasonable and unacceptable,” Cheung added.

Cheung contended the Hong Kong government had a right to protect its national security.

“We are doing our job to protect and safeguard Hong Kong’s national security and the nation’s security. It’s incumbent on Hong Kong officials to do that, incumbent on Hong Kong people to safeguard national security,” he claimed.

“So we are not going to be intimidated by any of these actions. In fact, this is clearly breaching international practice, apart from international law.”

November 5 marked the launch of the NSSA Reporting Hotline, an [anonymous snitch line](#) run by the National Security Service of the Hong Kong Police Force.

The hotline allows Hongkongers to report fellow citizens believed to be in violation of the Beijing-implemented national security law. Said legislation calls for acts of “secession,” “subversion,” “terrorism” and “collusion with foreign forces” to be met with possible life imprisonment.

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‘Not Seeing Any Relief’: US COVID-19 Hospitalizations Hit New Record as Cases Surge - Reuters

Hospital beds on Monday across the US were filled with around 59,000 COVID-19 patients, a new record for the number of inpatients being treated for the disease, according to the latest tally by Reuters.

The [Reuters tally](#) also reveals that the number of Americans with COVID-19 who are currently hospitalized has increased by around 73% over the past 30 days, surpassing the previous record set on July 22.

In addition, new daily COVID-19 infections exceeded 100,000 on Monday for the sixth consecutive day. Hospitalizations are a very important metric of how the outbreak is progressing in the US because they are unrelated to the number of tests conducted.

Reuters' tally also matches with data being reported by the [COVID Tracking Project](#), which shows that as of Monday, there were 59,000 COVID-19 patients hospitalized across the US. On Monday, US states reported 1.5 million tests performed and nearly 119,000 new cases, according to the COVID Tracking Project.

The US states with the highest numbers of hospitalized patients are Texas (6,103), Illinois (4,409) and California (3,668), according to Reuters.

Hospital beds in Ohio are also rapidly filling up, with state health officials pleading on Monday for residents to wear masks and engage in social distancing.

"I can't imagine what January is going to look like if people aren't willing to make those tough choices," said Dr. Andy Thomas, chief medical officer at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, [the Sandusky Register reported](#).

Colorado's intensive care unit (ICU) beds are also rapidly filling up, with 82% of such beds in the state in use and more than 1,000 COVID-19 patients hospitalized as of Monday.

"What is frightening to me is that the community rates continue to increase," said Dr. Connie Savor Price, chief medical officer at Denver Health, [9News reported](#). "Our surge is about two weeks behind that. So, I'm not seeing any relief anytime soon."

Reuters' analysis also shows that the US has reported more than a million new cases in the past 10 days, which is the steepest surge in infections across the country since the outbreak there began.

In addition, more than 770,000 new cases were reported in the week that ended on November 10, a 34% increase in the seven-day tally from the preceding week.

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US Election Results Could Impact Voters' Mental Health, Study Finds

A team of researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, (UCSF) have warned health care providers that they may see a deterioration of mental health among some of their patients following the US 2020 presidential election, based on an analysis of voter mental health after the previous election.

The [findings](#), which were recently published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine, are based on an analysis of US residents' mental health following the 2016 presidential election. By analyzing the responses of 499,201 adults surveyed in the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#) between May 2016 and May 2017, the researchers concluded that in states won by former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2016, the average monthly number of days of poor mental health per adult increased from 3.35 days in October 2016 to 3.85 days in December 2016, one month after the election took place.

"It's possible the mental health worsening in the Clinton states had been exacerbated by the largely unexpected nature of the loss - at least according to pre-election polls," study author Brandon Yan told [Medical News Today](#).

According to the researchers, the analysis thus revealed that there were 54.6 million extra days of poor mental health in December 2016 among the more than 100 million adults living in states won by Clinton. The analysis also indicated that there was no significant change in mental health among Americans in states where US President Donald Trump received the most votes. Clinical psychologist Lynn Bufka, who was not involved in the study, is not surprised by the study's findings, [HealthDay News reported](#).

"People had a lot of emotional investment in the 2016 election, and the current outcome as well," Bufka noted. "They really want certain outcomes, and if they don't get what they want it can be very, very disappointing."

Based on the study results, researchers believe that health care providers should be mindful of the possibility of worsening mental health among patients following the recent election as well.

"Clinicians should consider that elections could cause at least transitory increases in poor mental health and tailor patient care accordingly," Yan told Medical News Today.

"Elections may not seem like events that would themselves impact public health, but this study shows us that we should pay attention to their health effects," Yan added.

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US Air Force Awards \$800M In Contracts to Train Qatar F-15 Pilots - Boeing

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Three previously unannounced foreign military sales contracts for Qatar totaling \$800 million have been awarded in order to train pilots for a fleet of 36 upgraded F-15 aircraft that are slated for delivery beginning next year, Boeing disclosed in a press release on Tuesday.

"The QEAF [Qatar Emiri Air Force] will send pilots and weapon system operators to the US, where the aircrews will learn how to independently operate the F-15QA ahead of receiving their new aircraft. Training will include in-person instruction, simulation events and flying operations and will be held near Boeing's F-15 production facility in the US through mid-2021," the release said.

Boeing will deliver 36 F-15QA aircraft to Qatar starting in 2021, the release said.

The first previously unannounced contract was awarded in 2019 and will support the Qatar Emiri Air Force (QEAF) with F-15QA program management, maintenance and aircrew training valued at \$240 million over a five-year contract period, the release added.

Boeing also received a separate not-to-exceed \$68 million contract to provide maintenance and logistics support for the QEAF during their pre-delivery training for the F-15QA aircraft, which will commence in early 2021, according to the release.

A third contract awarded this month and valued at more than \$500 million will provide the QEAF with in-country spares and logistics support once the aircraft are delivered, according to the release.

The release described the F-15QA model as an upgraded version of the F-15 aircraft featuring next-generation technologies that offer more speed, range and payload than any other fighter in its class.

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US Imposes Iran-Related Sanctions on 4 Individuals, 6 Entities - Treasury

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The US government has imposed Iran-related sanctions on four individual and six entities, the Treasury Department said in a statement on Tuesday.

Included in the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control latest non-proliferation and Iran-related designations are two Iranian and Taiwanese nationals as well as entities based in Iran, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

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Global Airline Group Seeks Governments' Aid to Protect Jobs of Nearly 5Mln Workers

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Global airlines need additional subsidies from host governments, as well as pre-departure coronavirus testing instead of border restrictions to protect 4.8 million aviation workers' jobs, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) warned in a press release on Tuesday.

"Estimates from the Air Transport Action Group suggest some 4.8 million aviation workers' jobs are at risk as a result of air travel demand falling more than 75 percent," the release said. "The impact of COVID-19 related border restrictions and quarantine measures has effectively closed down the aviation industry, grounding planes and leaving infrastructure and aircraft manufacturing capacity idle."

The release called on nations to safely re-open borders by implementing a globally harmonized system of pre-departure testing of passengers and crew for coronavirus infections, as well as additional support from governments to survive the pandemic.

"The global aviation industry is in a state of prolonged crisis. By the end of the year, almost 80 percent of wage replacement schemes will run out, without urgent intervention from governments we will witness the biggest jobs crisis the industry has ever seen," International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) General Secretary Stephen Cotton said in the release. The ITF represents nearly 700 transportation worker trade unions while the IATA includes 290 airlines comprising 82 percent of global air traffic, according to the release.

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US Imposes Iran-Related Sanctions on 4 Individuals, 6 Entities - Treasury
(Updates with quote in para 2, details in paras 3, 5, 6)

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The US government has imposed Iran-related sanctions on four individuals and six entities, the Treasury Department said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Today, the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated a network of six companies and four individuals that facilitated the procurement of sensitive goods, including US-origin electronic components, for Iran Communication Industries (ICI)," the statement said.

The US government alleges that ICI is owned by the Iranian defense ministry (MODAFL). Included in OFAC's latest non-proliferation and Iran-related designations are two Iranian and Taiwanese nationals as well as entities based in Iran, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Washington claims that Hoda Trading, an Iranian-based company owned by ICI, acquired US electronic components used in military equipment through intermediaries in Taiwan and Hong Kong, the release said.

In addition to the latest round of sanctions against Iran, the US Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia filed criminal charges against two of the entities and one individual designated by the OFAC.

The imposed sanctions allow authorities to seize all assets owned by the individuals and entities in question in the United States, should there be any, and prohibit US and foreign entities with engaging in financial transactions with the sanctioned parties.

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US Approves Advanced Arms for UAE Worth \$23.3B In Including Up to 50 F-35 Jets - Pompeo

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United States has approved the sale of several advanced defense capabilities to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), including up to 50 F-35 fifth generation fighter jets, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement on Tuesday. "Today, I directed the [State] Department to formally notify Congress of our intent to authorize the UAE's proposed purchase of several advanced capabilities that are worth \$23.37 billion, for up to 50 F-35 Lightning II aircraft, valued at \$10.4 billion; up to 18 MQ-9B Unmanned Aerial Systems, valued at \$2.97 billion; and a package of air-to-air and air-to-ground munitions, valued at \$10 billion," Pompeo said.

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US Defense Undersecretary Anderson Resigns Over Disagreements With White House - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Acting US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy James Anderson has decided to step down from his position because of disagreeing with the White House, US media reported on Tuesday.

"I hereby tender my resignation ... effective immediately," Anderson said in a letter to US President Donald Trump, obtained by Politico.

Anderson stepped down a day after US President Donald Trump fired Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

The resignation came after Anderson clashed with the White House personnel office, according to defense officials who expect other departures from the Defense Department in the wake of Esper's firing, the report said.

While Anderson did not explain the reasons for his decision, the report said the White House was expected to ask him to step down.

Anderson's resignation potentially paves the way for Anthony Tata, Trump's nominee for the position who was pulled from consideration because of controversial messages he posted on Twitter.

US Senate confirmed Anderson as a Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy in June.

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US Senate Leadership Remains Same, Majority Power Hangs in Balance Amid Pending Races

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer on Tuesday were re-elected to lead their political parties in the new Congress for the next two years, however, two scheduled runoff elections in the state of Georgia will decide which party wields the majority power.

"We just had our leadership elections for the leadership team for the next two years and we are ready to get going even though there's suspense whether we will be in the majority or not which will be answered in Georgia on January 5th," McConnell told reporters.

Senate Democrats need to win two runoff races in Georgia on January 5 to split the Senate 50-50, but a potential Joe Biden presidency will give them the edge to become the majority party.

Biden can issue the vote to split a tie in the Senate to pass legislation should he is certified as the next US president.

McConnell added he is not alarmed that the results of the presidential election are still pending, adding that it is not unusual and fully within the rights of a US presidential candidate to exhaust his concerns about alleged vote irregularities in court.

President Donald Trump has claimed that he won another four-year term but that the presidential election was stolen from him via massive fraud and is seeking redress in court to rectify the situation.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Defense Official Confirms to Sputnik Acting Undersecretary Anderson's Resignation

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - A US defense official confirmed to Sputnik on Tuesday that Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy James Anderson has resigned from his post.

"I can confirm... that Mr. Anderson has resigned," the official said.

Earlier on Tuesday, US media reported that Anderson decided to step down because of disagreements with the White House.

Anderson's resignation comes a day after US President Donald Trump fired Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

While Anderson did not explain the reasons for his decision, the report said the White House was expected to ask him to step down.

Anderson's resignation potentially paves the way for Anthony Tata, Trump's nominee for the position who was pulled from consideration because of controversial messages he posted on Twitter.

US Senate confirmed Anderson as a Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy in June.

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UN Chief Relieved Karabakh Ceasefire Reached, Hopes for Protection of Civilians- Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, November 10 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is relieved that the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh has been

reached and expressed hope civilians in the region will now be protected, United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing on Tuesday.

"The Secretary-General is relieved that the deal has been agreed to on the cessation of hostilities," Dujarric said. "Our consistent focus has been on the well-being of civilians, on humanitarian access and on protecting lives, and we hope that this will now be achieved consistent with the previous important efforts of the Minsk Co-Chairs [Group]."

US House Committee Chairs Direct Over 50 Federal Agencies to Preserve Trump Admin. Records

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The chairs of more than 20 House committees sent letters informing more than 50 federal agencies of a US law requiring that records in the outgoing Trump administration be preserved, according to a press release from the chamber's entire Democratic caucus on Tuesday.

"As the Trump Administration prepares for the transition of power to the new Biden Administration, we write to remind you that all Executive Office of the President employees and officials must comply with record preservation obligations set forth in federal law and preserve information relevant to congressional oversight," the Chairs wrote to White House Counsel Pat Cipollone, the release said.

The release cited the Presidential Records Act, the Federal Records Act, and related regulations, as well as all documents that are or may be potentially responsive to any congressional inquiry, request, investigation, or subpoena that was initiated, continued, or otherwise undertaken during the 116th Congress.

"Over the last four years, the Administration obstructed numerous congressional investigations by refusing to provide responsive information," the Chairs wrote. "You are obligated to ensure that any information previously requested by Congress—and any other information that is required by law to be preserved—is saved and appropriately archived in a manner that is easily retrievable."

The release listed the chairs of 22 committees led by Oversight Committee Chair Carolyn Maloney and ending with Ways & Means Committee Chair Richard Neal. It also included links to 53 letters sent to the White House, Cabinet departments and lesser known agencies in the executive branch of the US government.

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UNHCR in Touch With Russian, Other Authorities to Support Karabakh Ceasefire - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, November 10 (Sputnik) - The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is in touch with the Russian authorities to discuss how the United Nations can best support the agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan to end the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing on Tuesday.

Early in the day, the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan adopted a joint statement on a ceasefire in the contested region.

"We, as the United Nations and UNHCR, have not been involved in discussions. UNHCR is in touch with the Russian and other authorities to see how we can best support the deal. So we're reviewing the elements," Dujarric said.

The spokesperson added it is paramount for all sides to respect international humanitarian law and human rights.

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UN Grateful for Russian Efforts to Reach Ceasefire Deal on Nagorno-Karabakh - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United Nations is grateful to Russia for its efforts to reach the agreement on cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh and will do its utmost to support the implementation of the deal, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing on Tuesday.

A trilateral agreement was signed in the early hours of Tuesday among the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.

"We're very grateful for the Russian authorities, for what they have done," Dujarric said. "We obviously express welcome to the fact that this deal was reached and we will do whatever we can on our part to support the parties as they implement it."

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Pompeo Says There Will Be A Smooth Transition to Second Trump Administration

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a press briefing on Tuesday said there will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration.

"There will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration," Pompeo said.

Pompeo added that he is confident the US government will continue to perform its national security function through the transition.

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Pompeo Says Will Travel to France, Turkey, Israel Friday to Discuss Mideast Peace Efforts

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told reporters on Tuesday that he will travel at the end of the week to seven countries, including Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia and France, to discuss a number of issues but certainly the efforts to promote peace in the Middle East.

"I'll be heading out again on Friday of this week this time to France, Turkey, Georgia, Israel, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates," Pompeo said. "The conversations will differ obviously in each country, many different things to cover, but I am sure many of them will focus on this administration's historic efforts to forge peace and cooperation throughout the Middle East."

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US Approves Advanced Arms for UAE Worth \$23.3Bln Including Up to 50 F-35 Jets - Pompeo (Updates with additional information in paras 3-5; background in para 6)

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United States has approved the sale of several advanced defense capabilities to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), including up to 50 F-35 fifth generation fighter jets, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement on Tuesday. "Today, I directed the [State] Department to formally notify Congress of our intent to authorize the UAE's proposed purchase of several advanced capabilities that are worth \$23.37 billion, for up to 50 F-35 Lightning II aircraft, valued at \$10.4 billion; up to 18 MQ-9B Unmanned Aerial Systems, valued at \$2.97 billion; and a package of air-to-air and air-to-ground munitions, valued at \$10 billion," Pompeo said.

The announcement follows the Trump administration's notification to Congress of its intent to sell F-35 fighter jets to the UAE at the end of October.

"This is in recognition of our deepening relationship and the UAE's need for advanced defense capabilities to deter and defend itself against heightened threats from Iran," Pompeo said.

The proposed sale will make the UAE even more capable and interoperable with US partners in a manner fully consistent with America's longstanding commitment to ensuring Israel's qualitative military edge, Pompeo added.

In October, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Benny Gantz announced in a statement that Israel has withdrawn its objections against the planned United States' sale of F-35 jets to UAE after Jerusalem secured guarantees that its qualitative military edge in the Middle East will be maintained.

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US Lowers 2020 Brent Oil Price Forecast to \$40 Per Barrel - Energy Information Agency

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Prices of Brent are likely to average closer to \$40 per barrel as 2020 winds down, the Energy Information Administration said on Tuesday, paring its forecast for the global crude oil benchmark by more than \$1 per barrel from October as the COVID-19 pandemic dims the outlook for energy.

"EIA expects high global oil inventory levels and surplus crude oil production capacity will limit upward pressure on oil prices and that Brent prices will remain near \$40/b through the end of 2020," the agency said in its monthly Short-Term Energy Outlook.

Last month's report predicted an average 2021 price of \$41.19.

The EIA, however, had a more positive projection for 2021, raising its Brent forecast by \$7 per barrel between the end of this year and next.

"EIA expects that as global oil demand rises, forecast inventory draws in 2021 will cause some upward oil price pressures," the agency said. "EIA forecasts Brent crude oil prices will average \$47/b in 2021."

Reviewing October's action, the EIA said Brent prices declined as previously disrupted crude oil production in Libya came back online and COVID-19 cases began increasing in many countries. Despite these developments, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) expects global oil inventories to continue falling in the coming months. However,

EIA expects high global oil inventory levels and surplus crude oil production capacity will limit upward pressure on oil prices and that Brent prices will remain near \$40/b through the end of 2020. EIA expects that as global oil demand rises, forecast inventory draws in 2021 will cause some upward oil price pressures. EIA forecasts Brent crude oil prices will average \$47/b in 2021.

It said an average of 95.3 million barrels per day of petroleum and liquid fuels was consumed globally in October, the agency said.

Liquid fuels consumption was down 5.9 million barrels per day (bpd) from October 2019, although it was up from both the third-quarter 2020 average of 94.1 million bpd and the second-quarter 2020 average of 85.3 million bpd.

The EIA also forecast that global consumption of petroleum and liquid fuels will average 92.9 million bpd for all of 2020, down by 8.6 million bpd from 2019, before increasing by 5.9 million bpd in 2021.

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US, Taiwan to Hold Economic Prosperity Dialogue - Pompeo

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Undersecretary of State Keith Krach will conduct on November 20 the economic prosperity partnership dialogue with Taiwan, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told reporters on Tuesday.

"I am pleased to announce that on the 20th of this month Undersecretary Krach will lead our economic prosperity partnership dialogue with Taiwan under the auspices of the American Institute of Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office here in the United States," Pompeo said during a briefing.

He praised Taiwan as "a vibrant democracy and a reliable partner." The dialogue signifies that "our economic relationship... is strong and growing," Pompeo added.

He said that US seeks closer ties with Taiwan on issues ranging from reliability of supply chains to 5g and health security.

China, which views Taiwan as its breakaway province, is uneasy over its cooperation with the United States, especially in the military field.

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Trudeau Says 'Deeply Disappointed' After Another Liberal MP Resigns Amid Scandal

TORONTO, November 10 (Sputnik) - Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Tuesday that he is deeply disappointed in former member of his Liberal Party caucus Yasmin Ratansi who resigned following revelations that she kept her sister on her ministerial payroll in violation of nepotism rules.

On Monday, the Toronto Member of Parliament Ratansi announced that she is leaving the ranks of the Liberal Party after an investigation by the state CBC broadcaster revealed that she employed her sister in her Don Valley East constituency office in violation of nepotism rules.

"I am deeply disappointed by the news I learned yesterday from Ms. Ratansi and how she handled the office," Trudeau told reporters. "It is unacceptable and I expect there to be a thorough follow up by the House administration on this."

Rantansi, according to the CBC, employed her sister under a false identity throughout much of her 12 years in office - between 2004 and 2011 and since 2015.

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US Interested In Learning More About Russian-Brokered Karabakh Ceasefire - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United States is interested in getting additional information about the Russian-brokered ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, a State Department spokesperson told Sputnik on Tuesday.

"We have taken note of the Russian-brokered arrangement to cease the fighting, and will be interested in learning more about the details and plans for implementation of this new arrangement as it takes shape," the spokesperson said.

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Pompeo Says There Will Be A Smooth Transition to Second Trump Administration

(Updates with details, background in paras 2-8)

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a press briefing on Tuesday said there will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration. All major media outlets projected Joe Biden as the winner of the US presidential election over the weekend. Biden, who leads by almost 5 million votes overall (50.8% to 47.5%), is projected to have won 290 of the 538 electoral votes apportioned across 50 states and the US capital. Trump would need to reverse the results in at least three states, where he is trailing by nearly 100,000 votes combined.

However, President Donald Trump has refused to concede and is filing legal challenges to reverse the results in at least 3 US states.

"There will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration," Pompeo said.

Pompeo added that he is confident the US government will continue to perform its national security function through the transition.

Pompeo scolded a reporter for asking if the United States loses its credibility to encourage free and fair elections abroad when Trump refuses to concede.

"That's ridiculous. You know it's ridiculous and you asked it because it's ridiculous," Pompeo said.

Trump has claimed that he won another four-year term and the presidential election was stolen from him via massive fraud and is seeking redress in court to rectify the situation.

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US Interested in Learning More About Russian-Brokered Karabakh Ceasefire - State Dept.
(Adds more details, background in paras 3-9)

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United States is interested in getting additional information about the Russian-brokered ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, a State Department spokesperson told Sputnik on Tuesday.

"We have taken note of the Russian-brokered arrangement to cease the fighting, and will be interested in learning more about the details and plans for implementation of this new arrangement as it takes shape," the spokesperson said.

A trilateral agreement was signed in the early hours of Tuesday among the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.

The text of the agreement published by the Kremlin provides for a complete ceasefire beginning from Tuesday and the deployment of Russian peacekeepers along the contact line to enforce its implementation. The warring sides have agreed to stop within the current borders of the territories they occupy. They have also agreed to exchange prisoners and bodies of killed soldiers.

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US Intelligence Chief Names Acting National Counterterrorism Center Director

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The US named an Acting Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) to replace Christopher Miller who will lead the Pentagon, Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe said in a statement on Tuesday.

On Monday, President Donald Trump terminated Pentagon chief Mark Esper and announced Miller would serve as acting defense secretary.

"I am excited to share that earlier today we selected Steve Vanech to serve as NCTC's next deputy director," Ratcliffe said. "Steve will immediately serve as the acting director of NCTC. Steve's deep commitment to the counterterrorism mission and the nation's security, along with his institutional knowledge and understanding of NCTC, will be invaluable in leading the Center."

Vanech has 15 years of experience in counterterrorism, he added, and has held a number of positions at NCTC including the director of intelligence, and a joint duty assignment at the National Security Agency as the Deputy Chief, Office of Counterterrorism.

Trump is also reportedly expected to fire FBI Director Christopher Wray and CIA Director Gina Haspel.

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Biden Says Transition Underway Unhindered by Trump's Reluctance to Concede Defeat

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Projected US President-elect Joe Biden told reporters on Tuesday that the transition of power is underway and will continue unhindered by the incumbent Donald Trump's reluctance to concede his defeat.

"We are well underway ... Nothing is going to stop that. I am confident that the fact they are not willing to acknowledge we won at this point is not of much consequence in our plan, in what we are able to do between now and January 20," Biden said during a press conference

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Biden Says He Hopes to Pick People for Some Cabinet Posts by Thanksgiving Holiday

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Presumed US President-elect Joe Biden said on Tuesday he hopes to reveal at least some of his picks for the Cabinet positions in his administration before Thanksgiving, celebrated in the United States on November 26. "One of the things that that I would do as President-elect and when I become President is lay out to Republicans as well as Democrats who we intend to name for each Cabinet position," Biden told reporters. "I hope we are able to be in a position to let people know, at least a couple that we want, before Thanksgiving, and we'll just work this out."

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Biden Calls Trump's Refusal to Concede Election 'Embarrassment'

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Projected US-President-elect Joe Biden on Tuesday called President Donald Trump's refusal to concede the election an embarrassment that would hurt the incumbent's legacy.

When asked what he would say to Americans who are anxious over the fact that Trump has yet conceded, Biden said, "I just think it's an embarrassment, quite frankly."

"I think it will not help the president's legacy," he added. "I know from my discussions with foreign leaders thus far that they are hopeful that the United States' Democratic institutions are viewed once again as being strong and enduring. But I think at the end of day, you know, it's all going to come to fruition on January 20, and between now and then my hope and expectation is that the American people do know, and do understand that there has been a transition."

Biden was referring to Inauguration Day in the US, scheduled for January 20.

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US-Brazil Form Working Group to Mine Security Related 'Critical Minerals' - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The United States and Brazil established a Critical Minerals Working Group to develop mines and refining techniques needed to supply so called rare earths that are needed for national security, the US State Department announced in a press release on Tuesday.

"The working group intends to support the advancement of bilateral diplomatic engagement and technical cooperation on critical minerals, including: improving critical minerals security in the United States and Brazil, promoting economically viable mining and production streams, stimulating investments, promoting technological innovation, and increasing U.S.-Brazil interconnectivity throughout supply chains for critical minerals," the release said.

Critical materials, often referred to as "rare earths" are needed to manufacture advanced electronic equipment ranging from smart phones to giant telecommunications networks to controls for fifth generation fighter jets such as the F-35 aircraft.

The release made no mention of China, the dominant global supplier of rare earths with names such as scandium, lithium, cobalt, graphite and manganese.

The United States and other developed nations are looking to diversify their supply chains, given recent trade tensions with China and occasional threats from Beijing to cut off supplies, according to media reports.

In August, the US Energy Department designated \$20 million to research rare earths, including extraction techniques from geological and recycled sources. The program will also seek to develop substitute materials with similar or enhanced properties.

The United States and Australia have also announced a similar initiative to lessen reliance on China for critical mineral supplies.

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Nearly One-Third of Biden Voters Say They Were Voting Against Trump – Poll

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Some 29 percent of Americans who voted for Joe Biden claim their decisions were driven not by enthusiasm for the former vice president but by a desire to remove President Donald Trump from office, a poll by Rasmussen Reports said on Tuesday.

"Among Biden voters, only 56 percent say they were voting for Biden. Twenty-nine percent of these voters say they were voting against Trump, while a surprisingly high 15 percent are not sure," a press release explaining the poll said.

Among Trump voters, 90 percent say they voted for the president, while just 8 percent say they were voting against Biden, the release also said.

For Biden voters, the most important issue to their vote in descending order was: Trump's overall job performance (41 percent); the novel coronavirus (35 percent); racial justice (8 percent); the economy (7 percent) and national security (5 percent). Illegal immigration was barely mentioned, according to the release.

For Trump voters, the most important voting issue was: the economy (42 percent) and Trump's overall job performance (36 percent), while the coronavirus pandemic was considered most important by just 7 percent, the release said.

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US Republicans Regain House Seat Lost in 2018 Democrat Sweep in California

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - US Republicans flipped a ninth seat in the House of Representatives on Tuesday after incumbent Democratic Congressman Harley Rouda conceded defeat in California's Orange County, traditionally a Republican stronghold where Democrats won every seat in 2018.

"We did not win this election," Rouda said in a statement conceding the race to his Republican opponent, County Supervisor Michelle Steel.

Republicans now hold 203 seats in the House, while Democrats have 217, according to a CNN projection of the races, some of which remain too close to call.

Although Republicans are expected to gain a handful of seats in the 435-member House, Democrats appear likely to win at least 218 seats needed to control the chamber, according to media projections.

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Biden Says Has Not Spoken With US Senate Majority Leader Yet, Expects Meeting Soon

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - Media-projected winner of the US presidential election Joe Biden said on Tuesday that he has not spoken to current Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell but does expect to meet with him in the near future.

"I haven't had a chance to speak to Mitch [McConnell]," Biden told reporters. "My expectation is that I will do that in the not too distant future."

McConnell will emerge as a powerbroker if Senate Republicans hold on to two Senate seats in the state of Georgia that will be contested on January 5 in runoff races, and if the projected presidential win stays with Biden.

Incumbent President Donald Trump has asserted that he won another four-year term but that the presidential election was stolen from him through voter fraud and is seeking redress in court to rectify the situation.

Commenting on the Republicans' refusal to back his claim of election victory, Biden said they are "mildly intimidated" by the sitting US President.

Senate Democrats need to win two runoff races in Georgia on January 5 to split the Senate 50-50, but a potential Joe Biden win will give them the edge to become the majority party.

Biden can issue the vote to split a tie in the Senate to pass legislation should he be certified as the next US president.

McConnell added he is not alarmed that the results of the presidential election are still pending, adding that it is not unusual and fully within the rights of a US presidential candidate to exhaust his concerns about alleged vote irregularities in court.

Trump has said he won the election but the election was stolen from him via a massive fraud and will seek redress in court.

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Taiwanese Resident Charged With Violating US Sanctions on Iran - Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - A Taiwanese resident and two businesses affiliated with her have been charged with conspiring to violate US export laws and sanctions against Iran, the Justice Department said in a news release on Tuesday.

"Chin Hua Huang, 42, a resident of Taiwan, was charged in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia with participating in a criminal conspiracy to violate U.S. export laws and sanctions against Iran," the release said. "Also charged was Taiwan business organization DES International Co., Ltd. (DES Int'l) and Brunei business organization Soltech Industry Co., Ltd. (Soltech)."

The department said Huang, DES Int'l, and Soltech conspired to defraud the United States and violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations (ITSRs).

"The defendants are charged with conspiring to violate American sanctions on Iran by buying goods from the United States, concealing the origin of those goods and sending them to Iran for use by the government and business," said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John Demers. "Violations of the sanctions diminish their effectiveness and delay the day when Iran will cease its belligerent activity."

If convicted, Huang would face up to five years of imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000, and Des Int'l and Soltech would each face a fine of up to \$500,000, the news release said.

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NASA Needs \$1Bln, 2 More Years to Carry Out Mars Mission - Panel

WASHINGTON, November 10 (Sputnik) - The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the European Space Agency (ESA) need up to \$1 billion more in their budgets and two extra years to land an unmanned mission on Mars and bring back to Earth Martian soil to analyze, an independent US panel said on Tuesday.

"The IRB (Independent Review Board) has concluded that the current baseline program with launches in 2026 and a budget of \$3 billion is not consistent with previous Category A Priority 1 missions," the panel concluded in its 79-page report.

IRB chairman David Thompson, former head of Orbital ATK, told a press conference on Tuesday that NASA and the ESA needed a budget of between \$3.8 billion and \$4.4 billion to carry out the mission - almost 50 percent higher than the previous accepted figure - and that it should be delayed for up to two years from 2026 to 2028.

Under the ambitious plans for the joint NASA-ESA mission, three separate missions would be required to be sent to Mars, the first of which, carrying the Perseverance Rover ground vehicle has just passed the half way mark in its voyage to the Red Planet.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY
WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik)

RUSSIAN-BROKERED CEASEFIRE IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

- * Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday expressed satisfaction with the Russia-brokered peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan to end hostilities over Nagorno-Karabakh and expressed hope for a lasting peace.
- * The possible deployment of Turkish peacekeepers to Nagorno-Karabakh has not been coordinated with anyone and is not mentioned in the statement of Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijan leaders, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.
- * Ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh is a victory for two countries and two peoples, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Peskov said.
- * Russia will send at least 22 military transport Il-76 planes with peacekeepers to Nagorno-Karabakh, according to a video released by the Defense Ministry.
- * Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in a conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin, announced Turkey's participation in controlling the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh within the framework of a joint center in Azerbaijan, the Turkish leader's office said.
- * The United States is interested in getting additional information about the Russian-brokered ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, a State Department spokesperson told Sputnik.

RUSSIAN HELICOPTER DOWNING IN ARMENIA

- * Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev has pledged that the case of the Russian helicopter downed in Armenian airspace will be investigated, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday.
- * The office of the Azerbaijan prosecutor general said a criminal case into the crash of Russian Mi-24 helicopter on Armenian-Azerbaijan border has been opened.
- * Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov discussed the helicopter incident and Baku apologized once again, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, said.

CORONAVIRUS VACCINE

- * All of Russia's coronavirus vaccines are efficient, President Vladimir Putin said, reaffirming readiness to cooperate with any country on the coronavirus response and saying the matter should not be politicized.
- * Secretary-General of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Dr. Saeb Erekat, who was in a critical condition due to COVID-19, died, members of Erekat's inner circle confirmed to Sputnik.

US PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

* US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a press briefing on Tuesday said there will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration.

* Projected US President-elect Joe Biden told reporters that the transition of power is underway and will continue unhindered by the incumbent Donald Trump's reluctance to concede his defeat.

NORD STREAM 2

* German energy company Uniper, a European partner of Nord Stream 2 project, hopes that US might change its harsh stance on the pipeline under the presidency of Joe Biden, CEO Andreas Schierenbeck said Tuesday.

* Sanctions against the Nord Stream 2 pipeline for carrying Russian gas to Europe should no longer be on the agenda after Biden's rise to power in the United States, the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations said.

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Biden Says Transition Underway Unhindered by Trump's Refusal to Concede Election Defeat
(Updates with additional information in paras 3-7)

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Projected US President-elect Joe Biden told reporters that the transition of power is underway and will continue unhindered by the incumbent President Donald Trump's refusal to concede defeat in the 2020 election.

"We are well underway... Nothing is going to stop that. I am confident that the fact they are not willing to acknowledge we won at this point is not of much consequence in our plan, in what we are able to do between now and January 20," Biden said during a press conference on Tuesday.

Last Saturday, major US media outlets projected Biden to be the winner of the presidential election. Trump also claims he is the winner but has said the election was stolen from him via a massive voter fraud and has demanded recounts as well as filed lawsuits seeking redress in court.

Biden said he hopes to reveal at least some of his picks for Cabinet positions before the Thanksgiving holiday on November 26. He said he is certain the transition will continue to run smoothly even if the Trump administration denies budget funds or refuses to share classified information.

"We can get through without the funding. We are in a position that we feel very good about... There is nothing that slows our efforts to put things together," Biden said. "Access to classified information is useful, but I am not in a position to make any decisions on those issues anyway... It would be nice to have it, but it's not critical."

Biden said that he has already spoken to six foreign leaders, including those of the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Canada.

"Reception and welcoming we got around the world from our allies and our friends has been real. I have a number of other calls to return. I feel confident that we are going to be able to put America back in a place of respect that we had before," Biden added.

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NASA Certifies Space X Crew Dragon For Routine Flights to Space Station - Administrator

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - NASA completed final certification of the world's first commercial spacecraft capable of transporting humans to and from the International Space Station (ISS), reviving the United States' human spaceflight capability that ended with the Space Shuttle's retirement in 2011, Administrator Jim Bridenstine announced in a press release. "I'm extremely proud to say we are returning regular human spaceflight launches to American soil on an American rocket and spacecraft," Bridenstine said on Tuesday. "This certification milestone is an incredible achievement from NASA and SpaceX that highlights the progress we can make working together with commercial industry."

Since 2011, the United States has relied on Russia's Soyuz spacecraft system to access the International Space Station.

The certification followed a successful test flight of the Space X system, which carried astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley to the station and returned them to Earth earlier this year.

Space X developed the system consisting of a Falcon 9 rocket and the Crew Dragon, under a NASA contract.

NASA plans to configure the capsule to carry four people at a time, plus cargo, with the next flight on November 14 sending Americans Michael Hopkins, Victor Glover and Shannon Walker, along with Japanese Soichi Noguchi, on a six-month mission to the orbiting laboratory, the release said.

Space X designed the Crew Dragon to carry up to seven people.

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Biden Takes Congratulatory Calls From Leaders of UK, France, Germany - Campaign

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Joe Biden, who has been projected by US media to be the next president of the United States, participated in congratulatory calls with the leaders of four European countries, the Biden campaign said in a statement.

"President-elect Joe Biden took part in separate congratulatory calls today with the leaders of France, Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom," the statement said on Tuesday.

During his call with French President Emmanuel Macron, Biden expressed a desire to strengthen US-France relations and reinvigorate bilateral and trans-Atlantic ties, including through NATO and the European Union, the statement said.

Biden also spoke with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and similarly expressed interest in renewing the trans-Atlantic partnership, the statement said.

"The President-elect noted his interest in working closely with Chancellor Merkel on common interests and challenges, including containing COVID-19, addressing the climate crisis, and working toward a sustainable global economy recovery," the statement said.

In addition, bilateral and multilateral cooperation through NATO and EU channels was the focus of Biden's discussion with UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

"Among the shared priorities they discusses were containing COVID-19 and promoting global health security, a pursuing a sustainable economic recovery... and working together on such issues as the Western Balkans and Ukraine," the statement said.

Biden discussed the peace process in Northern Ireland with Irish Taoiseach Micheal Martin, the statement added.

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Esper's Termination Sets Off String of Resignations at US Defense Department

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - The Pentagon announced more resignations a day after President Donald Trump's firing of US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper.

"Today, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Dr. James Anderson, Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Mr. Joseph Kernan and Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Defense, Jen Stewart submitted letters of resignation," the release said on Tuesday.

Earlier on Tuesday, US media reported that Anderson decided to step down because of disagreements with the White House.

These resignations come a day after Trump announced he terminated Esper from his defense chief post.

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Raytheon to Purchase Private Satellite Maker Blue Canyon Technologies - Statement

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - US defense contractor Raytheon agreed to buy the privately held satellite company Blue Canyon technologies for an undisclosed amount, according to a Raytheon press release.

"This acquisition enables us to deliver a broader range of solutions to support our customers' space missions - from sensing subsystems to mission systems integration and from launch and

range support to on-orbit operations," Raytheon Intelligence and Space President Roy Azevedo said in the release on Tuesday.

Azevedo said what makes Blue Canyon Technologies the right fit for Raytheon is the company's agile, innovative culture and expertise in small satellite systems and technologies.

Based in Boulder, Colorado with more than 200 employees, Blue Canyon Technologies was founded in 2008. The company currently has more than 90 satellites in production and has supported missions for the US Air Force, NASA and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the release said.

The deal expected to close in early 2021, depending on regulatory approvals, the release added.

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Biden Legal Team Says Trump Has No Proof of Election Fraud

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Legal advisers to projected US President-elect Joe Biden said that the Republican incumbent Donald Trump has no evidence to support his allegations of election fraud and is unable through courts to reverse the transition of power to the new Democratic administration.

Major US media outlets projected the Democratic nominee the winner of the presidential race. Trump still refuses to concede, accuses the opponents of "stealing votes" and promises to take legal action, including the address to the Supreme Court, to prove his victory. Biden won the popular vote by nearly 5 million votes (3.3%) but, more importantly, won the most critical statewide elections that are required to win the Electoral College.

"We have the evidence. It is in the form of 75 plus million voters and counting. Our evidence is the number of people who voted for Joe Biden and the number of electoral votes that he won," attorney Robert Bauer said during a social media briefing Tuesday. "His [Trump's] evidence... doesn't exist. There is nothing they have to raise any question whatsoever about this election and the legal process."

Bauer said that courts have already dismissed six suits before the elections and seven more after.

"It's a procedural maneuver that they may attempt, but it's not going to have any effect on the outcome," he said.

Bauer did not rule out the Trump campaign may work with its allies in various states to try to delay the certification of the election results, but said that the Biden team is not concerned about it.

"We are not worried about it. At the end of the day you can perhaps create obstacles to the smooth functioning of the process... but you can't succeed in stopping the process from coming to the inevitable conclusion," he said.

Kate Bedingfield, Biden Deputy Campaign Manager and Communications Director, dismissed Trump's accusations as "just noise."

"They simply have no evidence. And to succeed in a lawsuit that will stop certification there must be evidence of a problem with the process. They have to come forward with evidence of fraud and problems, which despite multiple opportunities to do so they have not been able to do so," she said.

She assured that Biden's camp is fully prepared for continued suits, attempts to create confusion and slow the transition. "But at the end of the day they have no evidence and thus they will not be able to stop this process," Bedingfield said.

Biden said earlier that the transition is well underway and promised to reveal at least some of his picks for the Cabinet positions before Thanksgiving, celebrated in the US on November 26. The US General Service Administration (GSA) has not ascertained a winner due to the lawsuits, citing the 2000 process. The agency's approval would activate crucial funding and resources for the transition process. Biden's camp has urged the GSA to recognize the results and even threatened legal action.

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Senator Grassley Seeks US Justice Dept. Probe Biden Family Foreign Agent Status With China

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Senator Chuck Grassley asked the US Justice Department to determine whether a brother and the son of presumed US President-elect Joe Biden registered as foreign agents during a series of business dealings with China, according to a letter to US Attorney General William Barr.

At issue is whether Biden's son, Hunter, or the former vice president's brother, James, complied with the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), which requires individuals to register with the Justice Department if they are acting as agents of a foreign government, Biden said on Tuesday.

"The actions by Hunter Biden and James Biden on behalf of the Chinese energy company CEFC Chairman Ye Jianming, and other officers connected to CEFC, potentially make them agents of the Chinese government for purposes of longstanding public disclosure laws. The American public deserves to know when foreign entities are operating in and attempting to influence U.S. policy and public opinion," Grassley's letter to Barr read.

The Bidens made a series of multi-million-dollar deals with CEFC in 2017. At the time, CEFC claimed it was a private company, but Grassley's letter said it received financing from the China Development Bank, hired former top officials from state-owned energy companies and had "layers of Communist Party committees across its subsidiaries."

During the 2020 presidential campaign, Senate Republican investigations sought to show that Joe Biden was personally involved in his family's overseas business dealings with China, as well as Ukraine and other countries, while the former vice president repeatedly dismissed the allegations as baseless.

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Nearly 70% of Republicans Believe US Election Was Not 'Free and Fair' - Poll

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Almost 70 percent of Republicans are convinced that the US presidential election was not free or fair, a Politico/Morning Consult poll revealed.

All US major media outlets have projected Democratic Party nominee Joe Biden as the winner of the November 3 presidential election. However, Republican President Donald Trump has refused to concede and has filed legal challenges in pivotal battleground states claiming voting irregularities.

The figure of 68 percent represents double the number of voters from the same party who believed before Election Day on November 3 that the result would not be free or fair, the pollster said in an article on Tuesday.

By contrast, 96 percent of Democrats who were asked told the same pollsters they were convinced of the fairness of the election process - a massive rise from the 52 percent of party voters who said that before the election.

However, a bipartisan majority of 69 percent - more than two-thirds - told the poll they believed the United States was now going in the wrong direction, the poll reported.

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Canadian Intelligence Says China Anti-Corruption Sting Targets Canada's Chinese Community

TORONTO, November 11 (Sputnik) - Beijing's clandestine anti-corruption operation dubbed Fox Hunt is targeting members of the Chinese community in Canada, Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) spokesperson John Townsend said in a statement.

CSIS made the announcement less than two weeks after the US Justice Department charged eight individuals who allegedly participated in the same covert Chinese operation on the territory of the United States.

"Certain foreign states routinely attempt to threaten and intimidate individuals around the world through various state entities and non-state proxies. These states, such as the People's Republic of China, may use a combination of their intelligence and security services as well as trusted agents to assist them in conducting various forms of threat activities," Townsend said as quoted by The Globe and Mail on Tuesday.

CSIS echoed the US authorities' claims that Chinese operatives are turning to pressure tactics, including harassment, manipulation and intimidation of loved ones in China, to coerce targets into submitting to Beijing's demands.

Both CSIS and the country's federal police agency, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who also acknowledged the operation, declined to say how many members of Canada's Chinese community have been targeted.

China has described Fox Hunt as an international anti-corruption campaign, but Western law enforcement and intelligence agencies have said the campaign aims to silence political rivals, dissidents and critics.

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Rights Groups to Pressure Biden to Pass Immigration Reform, Repeal Border Wall Policy

EL PASO, November 11 (Sputnik) - Border communities and immigration advocacy groups in the United States are ready to launch a new movement to pressure the presumed Biden administration to fulfill its promises to implement meaningful immigration reform policies, Border Network for Human Rights Executive Director Fernando Garcia told Sputnik.

"The fight continues, we're not appeased, we're not saying that everything is fine and that now [Joe] Biden is going to resolve that. It's the opposite," Garcia said. "We need to pressure this new administration because obviously it's a huge opportunity, probably 2021 is going to be the only year we really have a chance to pass something."

Garcia said Biden must respond to his Latino support by sticking to his promise to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill and repeal Trump immigration policies within the first hundred days of his administration.

Biden during his campaign promised that in the first 100 days he would reverse the Trump's administration's policies that deter asylum-seeking migrants seeking refuge in the United States, end prolonged detention of migrants in the United States, and end Trump's National Emergency on the border that justified the use of Defense dollars on new border wall.

"I think... ending MPP [Migrants Protection Protocols program] will be one of the first steps of this new administration," Garcia said. "I would think the refugees and asylum seekers will be happy that probably they will be able to make their case within the United States."

Earlier efforts to halt the influx of migrants coming to the United States included a "zero-tolerance" policy that led to the separation of children from families, sending more than 60,000 asylum seekers back to Mexico to wait for their asylum applications, and a ban on asylum seekers who crossed through a third country to reach the United States.

In October, US media reported, citing the American Civil Liberties Union, that the Trump administration is unable to find the parents of nearly 600 migrant children in US custody. More than 1,000 migrant families were separated in 2017 under the so-called zero-tolerance policy.

"I think we have done more than enough on the border - but now we need to concentrate on passing legislation that actually brings immigrants out of the shadows in the United States, but also stop militarizing the border and start making steps towards policies," Garcia said. "We don't need the wall, we don't need separation of children, refugees."

In addition, Biden has promised to surge humanitarian aid to the southern US border, offer deportation protections for migrants brought to the United States illegally as children - also known as Dreamers - and an end to the travel and refugee bans on Muslim-majority countries.

Biden also wants Congress to pass legislation to clear the path to citizenship for nearly 11 million people living in the United States and to reform visa programs for temporary migrant workers in certain industries.

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Republicans Close in on Senate Majority as Democrat Challenger Concedes in North Carolina

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Republicans moved to within two seats of retaining control of the US Senate, with the Democratic candidate in the state of North Carolina, Cal Cunningham, announcing in a press release that he had phoned incumbent Senator Thom Tillis to concede.

"I just called Senator Tillis to congratulate him on winning re-election to a second term in the US Senate and wished him and his family the best in their continued service in the months and years ahead," Cunningham said on Tuesday.

With 98 percent of ballots counted, Tillis led Cunningham by more than 95,000 votes, according to the latest results.

Republicans have now secured 49 Senate seats, with Democratic candidate Al Gross refusing to concede in Alaska, where he trails incumbent Republican Senator Dan Sullivan by a 62-32 percent margin, according to local media.

Alaska was set to begin counting more than 130,000 absentee and early ballots on Tuesday, of which Gross would need to capture about 70 percent to overtake Sullivan, the media reports said.

Should Republicans prevail in Alaska, they would need to win one of two runoff Senate races in Georgia scheduled for early 2021 to achieve a 51 seat majority.

Democrats could flip the Senate by winning both Georgia races, thereby achieving a 50-50 seat tie, with presumed Vice President-elect Kamala Harris holding the tie-breaking vote.

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ANALYSIS - US Domestic Tensions, Transition Issues May Hinder Biden's Foreign Policy Initiatives

WASHINGTON, November 11 (Sputnik) - Domestic tensions will likely hinder projected US President-elect Joe Biden from achieving many of his foreign policy objectives including those related to arms control pacts and Russia, analysts told Sputnik.

All major US media outlets have projected Biden as the winner of the 2020 presidential election, although President Donald Trump has refused to concede. Biden, who as of Tuesday is ahead overall by nearly 5 million votes (3.3%), has won enough of the most critical statewide contests to win the Electoral College. However, Trump is filing legal challenges claiming voter fraud to

overturn the results in 3 decisive battleground states where he lost by a combined 100,000 votes.

DIVISIONS/TRANSITION ISSUES

On Tuesday, new polling revealed that 70% of Republicans believe - as Trump does - that Biden did not win a fair election. Trump's lawsuits have also disrupted the transition process because the General Services Administration (GSA) has not yet ascertained a winner due to the court proceedings. The GSA must ascertain a winner to free up funding and resources to ensure a transition.

Although Biden may have won the presidency, it appears the Democrats might lose in their bid to take control of the Senate while their majority in the House will be smaller as a result of the election.

Former Canadian Diplomat Patrick Armstrong warned that Biden would be increasingly consumed by the dilemma that almost half the population of the country regarded him as an illegitimate president for whom the election was stolen by vote counting manipulation in not only one but several major industrial states.

"Whoever is actually resident in the White House, my expectation is that the US domestic situation will become very tense because half the American population will regard the vote as stolen from them and the sitting president illegitimate," Armstrong told Sputnik. "This resulting condition of rioting [and possible] incipient civil war combined with uncertainty over Biden's future, recrimination inside the Democrat Party over their poor performance and a power struggle inside a Biden administration will reduce the amount of energy devoted to foreign affairs."

Biden and his senior officials instead would take refuge in falsely accusing Russia of sinister machinations against the United States to distract public attention from their own failings, Armstrong advised.

"'Russiagate' will be confirmed as absolutely true ...and investigations [into it] will cease. Biden has promised to be tough on Russia and relations will get worse. So, it appears we are in a competition [or] a race between the internal decay of the United States into chaos and the warmongering tendencies of the Obama administration," he said.

Some Biden supporters have suggested he would save the 2011 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and bring the United States back into the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear deal with Iran.

University of Pittsburgh Professor of International Affairs Michael Brenner said this was unlikely and envisioned "no change of consequence except in style" on foreign policy matters.

"On Iran, [Biden] will not immediately go back to the 2015 treaty but instead will set some conditions. On [New] START, he will accept [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's offer of a one year extension, but will not immediately agree to an open-ended renewal," Brenner told Sputnik.

RUSSIA/NATO POLICIES

Biden on the campaign trail made it clear he did not intend to improve relations with Russia and has previously criticized Trump on his treatment of US and NATO allies.

"I expect Biden and his appointees to be anti-Russia," former Department of Defense analyst and retired US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski told Sputnik. "This leads to more NATO funding, as well as reinvigoration of the European side of the Pentagon spending and programs."

Biden's orientation would lead to an expansion of US military programs and activity across Eastern Europe, the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa, Kwiatkowski warned.

"This means AFRICOM (US Africa Command) grows and intervenes more aggressively, the United States stays in the various fronts against Russia in the Baltic and Black Seas, and maintains military focus on Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan - lest Russia stage an imperial comeback," she said.

Russia House Director Professor Edward Lozansky, who is also President of the American University in Moscow recalled that Biden had published an article in "Foreign Affairs" magazine where he claimed he would make America WLA - World Leader Again and put Russia in its place.

"These might be just words and pre-election rhetoric so I think we should give him some time to understand what happened and get someone to explain to him what to do. In three words: God Save America," Lozansky said.