

Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region to build world-class airport cluster

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Beijing, Tianjin and Shijiazhuang will join hands to build a world-class airport cluster. There will be about 260 airports across China in 2020 when the new airports in Beijing and Chengdu and other major projects are constructed and put into operation.

Guizhou reports new H7N9 case

[unable to retrieve full-text content] One human infection of H7N9 bird flu has been reported in southwest China's Guizhou Province, local health authorities said on Thursday.

Movement in EU thinking on Brexit and "populism"

There are signs that more governments on the continent are beginning to realise that the UK is not seeking continued membership of the single market or customs union, and accepts it will have a relationship based on friendship, collaboration, joint working and trade in a wide range of areas and activities.

Germany now grasps that they need continuing access to the large London financial markets which do so much to help finance continental business as well as to our lucrative car market. French, Dutch, Danish and other farming businesses on the continent do not want to see the quite high tariffs allowed under the otherwise low tariff WTO regime placed against their voluminous exports to us. The more realistic continental politicians see they cannot undertake the type of negotiation they expected. They thought the UK would be begging to stay in the single market, so they could impose requirements over financial contributions and freedom of movement. It is not going to be like that.

A good negotiation for the UK needs to be friendly, straight forward, and with limited requests of the others. Indeed, it is difficult to see that the UK wants anything from the negotiation that the rest of the EU does not want

and need more. They need tariff free more than us. They need good access to financial services and banking. They want their many citizens resident in the UK to be able to stay here. They want the UK to continue to make the largest contribution to the European part of the NATO defence activity and budget. The great news is they can have all that if they simply reassure our UK citizens resident on the continent about their status – which they will – and opt for tariff free trade which they would be wise to do in their own interests.

Many are breathing a sigh of relief in the Chancellories of Europe that the Dutch did not give a larger vote to Mr Wilders, and made Mr Rutte the leader of the largest party. However, they would be wise not to be complacent. Mr Rutte lost 8 seats and Mr Wilders gained 5 seats. Mr Rutte had to disrupt the EU's relationship with Turkey to sound more like Mr Wilders in a bid which did swing some voters back according to the polls. In line with the progressive collapse of the Conservative and Labour look alike parties in Euroland owing to their inability to influence main economic policies, the Dutch Labour party had a disastrous election.

The EU without the UK does have to find more tax revenue from the remaining members or cut back its spending. It is curious to see how all those pro EU forces who told us our net contribution was tiny before the referendum are now saying it will leave a nasty hole in EU finances when we are gone. Fortunately they need to agree a new longer term budget around the time we leave, so they can decide as a more homogenous group of countries, mainly in the Euro, how much collective spending and taxing they need for the new circumstances. As they build their more integrated Europe they would probably be wise to ensure it is properly funded, with sufficient cash to send to the poorer regions and countries. Other single currency areas send much more money around their unions as grants than the Euro area does. That, however, is a matter for them, not for us. They will benefit from not having the UK in the room trying to stop any budget increase when they turn to these important matters for their future.

[UN Broadband Commission urges public-private partnerships to reach 'the unconnected'](#)

17 March 2017 – New public-private partnerships are essential if broadband is to reach everyone and help accelerate the achievement of global sustainable development goals, members of the United Nations broadband commission said today.

“ICT [information and communications technology] and broadband are

linking everyone and everything for the betterment of economies and societies,” said Rwandan President Paul Kagame, Co-Chair of the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, during its spring meeting in Hong Kong.

“We are motivated by wanting to have the global community connected, especially the billions of unconnected. We will succeed when we work together: government, industry and civil society leaders,” he added.

The Broadband Commission was established by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in May 2010 with the aim of boosting the importance of broadband on the international policy agenda, and expanding broadband access in every country as key to accelerating progress towards national and international development targets.

Following adoption of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, the Commission was re-launched as the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development to showcase and document the power of ICT and broadband-based technologies for sustainable development.

According to a press release on the meeting, some 5 billion people are currently without mobile broadband access, meaning that the paths to access digital services and applications are blocked for much of the world's population – holding back progress on sustainable development.

RELATED: UN Internet Governance Forum closes with call to close 'digital divide'

The release also said that at the spring meeting, the need for a new deal between all players was roundly debated, with renewed commitment to work towards concrete actions that will effectively connect the unconnected with broadband – especially to support least developed countries.

In particular, emphasis was placed on remote and rural areas which represent the biggest challenge and where barriers to access need to be also viewed through the prism of affordability and content, notably local and multi-lingual content.

Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General and Commission Co-Vice Chair, stated, “ICTs underpin vital achievements and modern services in many sectors, and governments and industry must increasingly work together to create the conditions so badly needed to facilitate the growth of broadband for sustainable development,” he stressed.

Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General and Commission Co-Vice Chair, noted, “We must ensure the digital revolution is a revolution for human rights, in order to promote technological breakthroughs as development breakthroughs.”

Employers must address all aspects of gender-based violence in workplace – UN Women chief

16 March 2017 – Tolerating violence against women in the workplace will have a huge cost to employers, including lost productivity, legal expenses, high turnover, sick leaves and harm to corporate reputation, panellists today told a United Nations-hosted discussion, urging Governments and institutions alike to take responsibility for putting in place adequate standards and measures to prevent such practices.

“Violence against women has long-term consequences,” UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said, explaining that children who watched their mothers and sisters beaten up at home could become perpetrators themselves or unhappy persons when they grow up.

She also said that women could die from violence and experience various forms of suffering, including physical and emotional damage, trauma, stigma, and limited access to the labour market. Employers will also have to pay the heavy price in the form of lost productivity, legal cost, high turnover, sick leaves and damaged reputation.

To prevent violence against women, institutions must take responsibility for addressing the issue at the macro-level by setting standards and putting in place preventive measures, she stressed.

The panel discussion, titled ‘Ending Violence against Women: Prevention and response in the world of work,’ was sponsored by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN Women, formally known as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

VIDEO: During the 61st Commission on the Status of Women, ILO expert Manuela Tomei, at a panel discussion on violence against women at work, highlights the importance of prevention, protection, and assistance to the victims, adding that the issue requires interventions and commitment from employers and workers.

The event was held on the sidelines of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women, known as the largest inter-governmental forum on women’s rights and gender equality. The theme this year is on women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work.

Manuela Tomei, Director of ILO’s Working Conditions and Equality Department, said that violence against women is a violation of human rights, a threat to

women's security and health, and a threat to women's empowerment.

She said that a survey conducted by ILO and Gallop found that one of the top three challenges women find in workplace is "abuse and harassment."

The world of work goes beyond the physical workplace to include commutes, social events and home, she said, stressing the importance of addressing the issue through an integrated approach that includes prevention, protection and assistance to victims.

She said ILO is leading efforts to set a new global standard by 2019 or 2020 against violence and harassment in workplace.