



Weekly Media Report

14 – 18 October 2013

International Affairs

Syria chemical weapons: Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) plea for short ceasefires – BBC (UK), 14 October 2013

Ahmet Uzumcu, of the OPCW, called for local, short-term ceasefires to allow experts to work. Syria officially joins the Chemical Weapons Convention on Monday, 14 October 2013. Meanwhile, three of the six Red Cross workers who were kidnapped on Sunday, 13 October 2013, have been freed, the ICRC has said. A Syrian Red Crescent volunteer who was with them has also been released, the group added. All those freed are reported to be unharmed.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24516303>

Greek Foreign Minister in Tirana visit Albania - Balkan Web (Albania), 14 October 2013

The Greek Foreign Minister (FM), Evangelos Venizelos, was in Tirana for a round of meetings with the Albanian top officials, according to the electronic media reports. On the eve of the Greek FM's visit to Tirana, the Party for Justice, Integration and Unity (PJIU) announced that the resolution on the Cham question that was passed by the Albanian Assembly in 2004, has been published in the Official Journal, on 20 June. They urged the government to abide by the resolution in all their dealings with the Hellenic authorities.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/index2013.php>

Iran nuclear talks get under way in Geneva – CNN (US), 15 October 2013

Iran's negotiators are sitting down Tuesday, 15 October 2013, in Geneva with six world powers for talks aimed at curbing its nuclear ambitions, amid a spirit of new optimism since President Hassan Rouhani took office this summer. Ahead of the meeting, Iranian Foreign Minister, Javad Zarif, said he hoped that together Iran and the West would be able to work out a "roadmap" toward a final resolution by Wednesday, 16 October 2013.

http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/15/world/meast/iran-nuclear-talks/index.html?hpt=hp_t1

Vote for prisoners: Supreme Court rejects appeal by two inmates – The Guardian (UK), 16 October 2013

Two convicted murderers who argued that European Union law gave them the right to vote in UK elections have had their appeals dismissed by the Supreme Court at Westminster. The European court human of rights in Strasbourg has already ruled that Britain's ban that denies all those serving any sentence the ability to vote is illegal. A parliamentary committee is currently considering the political options - whether to enforce those rulings or defy ECHR judges. The Supreme Court judges acknowledged that Strasbourg has stated that the ban on prisoner voting is incompatible with human rights but observed that since the declaration has already been made there was no point in repeating it.

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/oct/16/votes-prisoners-supreme-court-rejects-appeal>

Albanian Prime Minister seeks to strengthen ties with Arab countries - Panorama newspaper (Albania), 15 October 2013

Panorama newspaper reported that Albanian Prime Minister Mr. Rama met with the ambassadors of five Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, and Libya) to explore ways of enhancing Albania's relations with them.

<http://www.panorama.com.al/>

European Commission (EC) recommends candidate status for Albania, but the EC puts 5 new conditions - Top Channel TV (Albania), 16 October 2013

The European Commission (EC) published its annual progress report on Albania and other countries assessing how far countries aspiring to full accession have come in bringing their laws and behaviour into line with EU standards. "In view of Albania having achieved the necessary progress, the Commission recommends that the Council should grant Albania the status of a candidate country on the understanding that Albania continues to take action in the fight against organised crime and corruption," reads a document titled "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014". The Commission said that Albania needs to meet the following key priorities for the opening of accession negotiations: 1. continue to implement public administration reform with a view to enhancing professionalism and de-politicization of public administration; 2. take further action to reinforce the independence, efficiency and accountability of judicial institutions; 3. make further determined efforts in the fight against corruption, including towards establishing a solid track record of proactive investigations, prosecutions and convictions; 4. make further determined efforts in the fight against organised crime, including towards establishing a solid track record of proactive investigations, prosecutions and convictions; 5. take effective measures to reinforce the protection of human rights, including of Roma, and anti-discrimination policies, as well as implement property rights.

<http://www.top-channel.tv/video.php?id=32293>

Osborne agrees to China investing in UK nuclear plants – BBC (UK), 17 October 2013

The Chancellor, George Osborne, has announced that the UK will allow Chinese companies to take a stake in British nuclear power plants.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24561325>

National Affairs

Today, 14 October 2013, a boat with more than 150 immigrants on board arrived to Lampedusa – Repubblica (IT), 14 October 2013

The immigration emergency continues in Lampedusa and Italy where, after the tragedy of 3 October 2013, another boat with more than 150 people on board arrived this morning. The Italian authorities are now investigating the presence of people organizing the arrival of immigrants from North Africa directly from Lampedusa.

[http://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/10/14/news/lampedusa sbarchi senza sosta 150 tunisini arrivano da soli in porto-68539129/?ref=HREA-1](http://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/10/14/news/lampedusa_sbarchi_senza_sosta_150_tunisini_arrivano_da_soli_in_porto-68539129/?ref=HREA-1)

Russia's Alexei Navalny's sentence suspended on appeal – BBC (UK), 16 October 2013

A Russian appeals court has upheld opposition leader Alexei Navalny's conviction for embezzlement, but suspended his jail sentence, allowing him to go free. However, his conviction is likely to prevent him running in the next presidential election. Navalny was sentenced to five years in July but released pending the appeal. He has always denied the charges, which relate to his time as an adviser to the governor of the Kirov region.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24547785>

More than 100 dead after earthquake hits the Philippines – CNN (US), 16 October 2013

The death toll from the magnitude-7.1 earthquake in central Philippines rose to 127 on Wednesday, authorities said. The quake, which struck Tuesday, injured 181 people and rattled many celebrating a religious holiday

http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/16/world/asia/philippines-earthquake/index.html?hpt=hp_t2

US debt crisis: Congress passes deal – BBC (UK), 17 October 2013

The US Congress has passed a bill to reopen the government and raise the federal debt limit, with hours to spare before the nation risked default. The Democrat-controlled Senate passed the measure by 81 votes to 18, and the Republican-controlled House of Representatives by 285 votes to 144.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-24559869>

Economy

The Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta announced that Italian businesses are going to face a three year period of stability thanks to the new stability pact – Corriere della Sera (IT), 14 October 2013

The Italian Prime Minister announced that the Italian deficit and debt are decreasing, and that the country has now the right to claim for growth politics and funds from the EU. The intention of the Italian government is to promote a three year plan in order to offer economic stability to businesses on the Italian territory.

http://www.corriere.it/economia/13_ottobre_14/letta-certezze-lavoratori-imprese-3-anni-7aef5878-34d3-11e3-b0aa-c50e06d40e68.shtml

Alitalia's associates agreed on a 300 million EUR capital increase – Repubblica (IT), 15 October 2013

In order to deal with the risk of bankruptcy faced by Alitalia, its associates agreed a 300 million EUR capital increase to be completed within 30 days, starting from 16 October 2013. Meanwhile, the Alitalia board of directors' members announced they will resign soon after this operation will be successfully concluded.

http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2013/10/15/news/alitalia_assemblea-68613862/?ref=HREC1-2

UK eases rules for Chinese trading – BBC (UK), 15 October 2013

Chancellor George Osborne has announced moves aimed at making London the main centre for Chinese financial business overseas. Mr Osborne will loosen regulation to allow the move. He is also facilitating talks between Chinese banks and the UK banks regulator, the Prudential Regulation Authority, to allow them to establish branches for wholesale activities in London.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24529280>

IBM reports a surprise fall in third quarter sales – BBC (UK), 17 October 2013

IBM has reported a 4% decline in sales in the three months to September, which was worse than analysts had been expecting.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24560198>

Albanian Finance Minister warns of Public Administration's drastic downsizing - Panorama Newspaper (Albania), 13 October 2013

Albanian Minister of Finance Shkëlqim Cani said during an interview with VoA that the tax administration officials, who have violated the relevant legislation and also abused their office, will be brought to justice. With regards to the outstanding bills that the government owes to the business companies, he said that they have only approximate data, but Government will hire an international company to estimate the reality of bills.

<http://www.panorama.com.al>