

## Trump Now Offers Tax Cuts All Around

NEW YORK (AP) — After weeks of vowing to raise taxes on “hedge fund guys” and high-income earners, Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump unveiled a tax plan Monday that would cut rates across the board and reduce the amount paid by wealthiest Americans and corporations into the U.S. Treasury.

The plan, which Trump said would “provide major tax relief for middle-income and for most other Americans,” appears certain to come with a significant price tag that experts said would likely add to the national debt, despite Trump’s assurances.

“There will be a major tax reduction,” Trump said at a news conference at his Trump Tower skyscraper in Manhattan. “It’ll simplify the tax code. It’ll grow the American economy at a level that it hasn’t seen for decades, and all of this does not add to our debt or our deficit.”

The plan Trump unveiled proposes eliminating income taxes entirely for millions of single Americans earning less than \$25,000 and married couples earning less than \$50,000 a year. Individuals would receive a new one-page form to send the IRS saying, “I win.”

Wealthier Americans would also see large reductions in their annual tax bill. Under Trump’s four-bracket plan, the highest marginal tax rate would be cut from the current 39.6 percent to 25 percent.



Trump

## Taliban Capture Strategic Afghan City

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban captured the strategic northern Afghan city of Kunduz on Monday in a multi-pronged attack involving hundreds of fighters, the first time the insurgents have seized a major urban area since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion.

The fast-moving assault took military and intelligence agencies by surprise as the insurgents descended on the city, one of Afghanistan’s richest and the target of repeated Taliban offensives as the militants spread their fight across the country following the withdrawal last year of U.S. and NATO combat troops.

Within 12 hours of launching the offensive around 3 a.m., the militants had reached the main square, tearing down photographs of President Ashraf Ghani and other leaders and raising the white flag of the Taliban movement, residents reported.

More than 600 prisoners, including 140 Taliban fighters, were released from the city’s jail, and many people were trying to reach the airport to flee the city.

“Kunduz city has collapsed into the hands of the Taliban,” Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi told the Associated Press. “Security forces in Kunduz were prepared for an attack, but not one of this size, and not one that was coordinated in 10 different locations at the same time.”

## Hope, Fear, Waiting At Migrant Camp

TETEGHEM, France (AP) — A Mercedes and a BMW, both with British license plates, sit in a forest clearing on the edge of a small migrant camp in northern France. Everyone here speaks in whispers, or not at all. Bullet holes pock two shipping containers sheltering migrants, all trying to get to England, helping to explain the silence.

People smugglers who get rich off desperate migrants span the globe, and their tentacles extend into nooks and crannies like Teteghem, a small town outside Dunkirk. Here the smuggling kingpins are firmly in control, and growing nasty.

“Don’t come see me in the camp,” said a typically cautious Iranian migrant in the parking lot of a local grocery store, where talking is easier. “Problems,” he added, putting his finger to his head. “Bang!”

An Iraqi migrant was wounded by gunfire in mid-August, caught in the crossfire of score-settling among smugglers, said Teteghem Mayor Franck Dhersin. This month, police chased a Mercedes driven by a suspected smuggler into a ditch at the camp entrance, the shattered glass and skid marks visible a week later. An 18-year-old Syrian displayed his bandaged right leg and a hospital report stating that “metallic” objects were removed — police bullets according to migrants, metal from bullet-punctured containers hit by smugglers, says the mayor.

Few French know of the town of Teteghem, but some migrants first heard the name in a phone call before ever leaving their homeland. It is described by Mayor Dhersin and others as a drop-off point for a band of people smugglers taking in Syrians, Iraqis and Iranians; ultimately, officials believe, the gang is locked into a Britain-based network that may stretch to Kurdish regions of the Middle East.

## GOP Scrambles After Boehner Resigns

WASHINGTON (AP) — A chaotic scramble is on to fill the top GOP jobs in the House following Speaker John Boehner’s surprise resignation. Now the same conservatives who pushed him out are maneuvering to yank the next leadership team to the right.

The frenzied action under the Capitol Dome will help determine how Congress contends with upcoming battles on keeping the government running and avoiding a federal default — and whether Republicans can take back the White House next year.

Boehner’s announcement shocked nearly everyone, opening a rare chance for ambitious lawmakers to climb the congressional ladder and for competing factions to exert new sway as an anti-establishment fever sweeps GOP politics.

The front-runner for the speaker’s job, Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, made his candidacy official Monday in a letter to fellow GOP lawmakers in which he pledged to fight for conservative principles and listen to all members — something Boehner was accused of failing to do.

“If elected speaker, I promise you that we will have the courage to lead the fight for our conservative principles and make our case to the American people,” McCarthy wrote. “But we will also have the wisdom to listen to our constituents and each other so that we always move forward together.”

## PP Officials ‘Proud’ Of Fetal Tissue Work

WASHINGTON (AP) — In Planned Parenthood’s first congressional appearance since the release of undercover videos, the group’s president is defending its provision of fetal tissue for researchers and castigating Republicans for not investigating the anti-abortion activists who furtively made the recordings.

In testimony prepared for a hearing Tuesday, Cecile Richards said the organization’s donation of tissue from aborted fetuses is a “minuscule” part of its work proving health services for women. She said the group has nearly 700 clinics but obtains fetal tissue in less than 1 percent of them.

“Planned Parenthood is proud of its limited role in supporting fetal tissue research,” she said, arguing that the donations have helped scientists search for cures.

Abortion opponent David Daleiden obtained the videos by posing as an executive of a fake company seeking to supply fetal tissue to researchers. Richards said Daleiden, despite three years of doing that, didn’t entrap any Planned Parenthood officials into doing anything illegal.

# At UN, Obama And Putin Clash Over Syria’s Future

BY JULIE PACE  
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin sharply disagreed Monday over the chaos in Syria, with Obama urging a political transition to replace the Syrian president but Putin warning it would be a mistake to abandon the current government.

After dueling speeches at the United Nations General Assembly, Obama and Putin also met privately for 90 minutes — their first face-to-face encounter in nearly a year.

At the heart of their dispute over Syria is the fate of embattled Syrian leader Bashar Assad, a Russian ally. The U.S. has long called for Assad to leave power, while Russia has cast the Syrian government as the only viable option for confronting the Islamic State, a militant group that has taken advantage of the vacuum created by the civil war.

During his address to the UN, Obama declared, “We must recognize that there cannot be, after so much bloodshed, so much carnage, a return to the prewar status quo.”

Putin, speaking shortly after the U.S. president, urged the world to stick with Assad.

“We believe it’s a huge mistake to refuse to cooperate with the Syrian authorities, with the government forces, those who are bravely fighting terror face-to-face,” Putin said during his first appearance at the U.N. gathering in a decade.

Obama and Putin’s disparate views of the grim situation in Syria left little indication of how the two countries might work together to end a conflict that has killed more than 250,000 people and resulted in a flood of refugees. Indeed, the leaders’ private meetings ended with vague statements about the need for a political resolution to the crisis, but no clear pathway for making that happen.

The crisis has taken on fresh urgency amid Russia’s recent military buildup in Syria. Putin has cast the increased presence of equipment and troops in Syria as part of the effort to defeat the Islamic State, and suggested Monday that Russia could launch airstrikes against the militants.

“We are thinking about it and don’t exclude anything,” he said.

It’s unlikely Putin would join the U.S.-led coalition already launching strikes against the militants. He said Russia will only take such a step in accordance with international law, and criticized the U.S. and its allies for striking the Syrian territory without U.N. permission.

The Syria crisis largely overshadowed the summit’s other discussions on peacekeeping, climate change and global poverty.

French President Francois Hollande backed Obama’s call for Assad’s ouster, saying “nobody can imagine” a political solution in Syria if he is still in power. Hollande called on countries with influence in Syria, including Gulf nations and Iran, to be engaged in a transition.

However, Iran — which along with Russia is a strong backer of Assad — said the Syrian president must remain in power to fight extremists. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that while Syria’s government needs reform, the country will fall to the Islamic State if the international community makes getting rid of Assad its top goal.

Despite Obama’s staunch opposition to Assad remaining in office, the U.S. has struggled to push him from power. Russia has long been a major obstacle, shielding Assad from U.N. sanctions and continuing to provide the Syrian government with weapons.

In fact, Russia has appeared to deepen its support for Assad in recent weeks, sending additional military equipment and troops with the justification that it is helping the



FELIPE LOEY/TASS/ZUMA PRESS/TNS

**U.S. President Barack Obama listens before speaking at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly, at the United Nations headquarters Monday in New York City.**

government fight the Islamic State. The military buildup has confounded U.S. officials, who spent the summer hoping Russia’s patience with Assad was waning and political negotiations could be started.

Obama and Putin each framed his case for Syria’s future in the context of a broader approach to the world, launching veiled criticisms at each other.

The U.S. president condemned nations that believe “might makes right,” and sought instead to highlight the benefits of diplomacy. He touted his administration’s efforts to restore ties with Cuba after a half-century freeze and the completion of a nuclear accord with Iran, noting that Russia was a key partner in negotiating the Iran deal.

Putin, without naming the

United States, accused Washington of trying to enforce its will on others and mulling a possible reform of the U.N., which he suggested stands in the way of the perceived U.S. domination.

“After the end of the Cold War, the single center of domination has emerged in the world,” Putin said. “Those who have found themselves on top of that pyramid were tempted to think that since they are so strong and singular, they know what to do better than others and it’s unnecessary to pay any attention to the U.N.”

Obama and Putin briefly shook hands during a leaders’ lunch that followed the morning of speeches. Seated at the same table, they clinked glasses during a toast, with Putin smiling and Obama grimaced.

## US: Countries Pledge 40,000 Troops To UN Peacekeeping

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President Barack Obama on Monday announced notable steps to upgrade U.N. peacekeeping, with his administration saying more than 50 countries have pledged to contribute more than 40,000 new troops and police to serve in some of the world’s most volatile areas.

But there was no sign the U.S., which pays a quarter of the peacekeeping budget, would put more of its own troops into the field.

The United States chaired a high-level meeting to strengthen and modernize peacekeeping, whose nearly 125,000 personnel increasingly face threats from extremist groups while being severely stretched in personnel and equipment. Deployments to crises can take several months.

And a series of sexual abuse allegations against peacekeepers has brought new concerns about a long-standing problem that Obama called “an affront to human decency.”

Obama’s presence at Monday’s meeting, shortly before his first face-to-face meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of an annual U.N. gathering of world leaders, was the latest sign of high-level U.S. interest in the issue.

The leaders have long had a strained relationship, with ties deteriorating to post-Cold War lows after Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine and allegedly backed rebels in Ukraine’s east. The U.S. has sought to punish Russia through economic sanctions.

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