

## EFE News Briefs for Tuesday, Dec. 9 (End of the day)

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Obama: CIA torture did not help U.S. efforts against terrorism

U.S. President Barack Obama said that the use of torture by the CIA on suspected terrorists during the past decade did not help the efforts against terrorism or the country's national security interests, after the release of a Senate report on the issue.

The report on CIA practices published Tuesday by the Senate Intelligence Committee "documents a troubling program" of interrogating terrorism suspects between 2001 and 2009, and it should contribute to leaving "these techniques where they belong - in the past," said the president in a statement.

The document "reinforces my long-held view that these harsh methods were not only inconsistent with our values as nation, they did not serve our broader counterterrorism efforts or our national security interests," he said.

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Ban urges writing new history for our planet by reversing climate change

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the countries of the world "to write a new history for our planet" by reversing climate change, as he inaugurated the summit on that phenomenon being held in Lima.

First of all, Ban said, COP20 "must deliver here in Lima a balanced, well-structured, and coherent draft text for the 2015 Agreement that provides a clear and solid foundation for negotiations next year in Paris."

He said "the window of opportunity is fast narrowing" and we must act now.

On the positive side, however, the U.N. secretary-general noted "the recent U.S.-China joint announcement, the European Union's 2030 Climate and Energy Framework - as well as the commitment recently by Germany," and said that "all provide the foundation for ever higher levels of ambition."

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With drawings and letters, 1,000s of kids ask Congress for immigration reform

With drawings and more than 4,000 letters, thousands of children asked Republican congressional leaders for comprehensive immigration reform to complement the recent executive action by President Barack Obama, to whom they directed words of affection and thanks.

The "We Belong Together" organization collected 4,000 letters from boys and girls around the country and ensured that 400 of the missives were delivered to the White House and Congress.

House Speaker John Boehner, future Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell and the spokesman for the Republican majority in the lower house, Kevin McCarthy, are the Republican leaders to whom the children expressed their Christmas wishes, as if they were writing to Santa Claus.

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Uruguay restaurant bars entry to black U.S. diplomat

A Montevideo restaurant, in the downtown Pocitos neighborhood, over the weekend barred a black official from the U.S. Embassy in Uruguay from entering the premises, diplomatic sources said.

The person in charge of seating diners at tables in the Circus restaurant did not allow the U.S. diplomat to enter, saying, first, that she had no reservation, and secondly, that she was not dressed properly, the Uruguayan daily El Observador said Tuesday.

The African American woman replied that the real reason they didn't let her in was the color of her skin, the Uruguayan daily said.

U.S. diplomatic sources consulted by Efe confirmed the truth of the incident as reported in El Observador, but declined to provide further details pending a possible legal case.

In that regard, the U.S. ambassador to Uruguay, Julissa Reynoso, told local media that she and her colleagues were weighing what action to take against the establishment.

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Mexico City officials unveil expansion of Metro system

Mexico City's Metro system will be expanded by 45 kilometers (about 28 miles) in different areas of downtown, with work on the project expected to start in 2018, Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said.

The Metro system plans to acquire 45 trains, upgrade 150 escalators and add 19 elevators, making handicapped access easier, Mancera said during the opening session Monday of the General Assembly of the Latin American Association of Underground Metros, or ALAMYS.

Metro fares rose 66.7 percent in December 2013 after many years of no increases, with the additional revenues earmarked for improving the system, officials said.

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Kazakhstan organizes migration conference in Spain

More than a score of experts will gather at the University of Granada to discuss "The Great Migrations: The Colonization of Europe" in an event organized by the government of Kazakhstan as part of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures.

The Decade (2013-2022) is an initiative of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization that grew out of the 2010 Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, proclaimed by the United Nations at the urging of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

"The organization of this conference is our contribution to rapprochement among cultures," Kazakhstan's ambassador to Spain, Bakyt Dyussenbaev, said during a visit to the Alhambra along with the other participants in the gathering.

"We are delighted to be here in Granada," he said.

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Mexican business group warns drop in price of crude could affect investment

The Mexican business community is warning that a period of prolonged low oil prices could affect the investment goals set in the energy industry overhaul.

"The oil market could become a bigger problem if crude prices stay low since it would make any kind of production project less attractive, limiting the benefits expected from the energy reforms," the Business Coordinating Council, or CCE, said in a statement.

The document prepared by the CCE's Center for Private Sector Economic Research, or CEESP, warns that the weakness in the oil market could also have a "negative effect" on Mexico's economy.

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British royals visit 9-11 memorial on their last day in NYC

Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate visited the 9-11 memorial on their last day in New York City, also participating in charitable and youth-related activities.

Using umbrellas to protect themselves from heavy rain, the royal couple paid tribute to those killed in the 2001 terrorist attacks by depositing a floral offering at the monument.

Next to the white roses, the pair left a handwritten note that, according to a photograph released by the British Embassy in the United States, read: "In sorrowful memory of those who died on 11th Sep & in admiration of the courage to rebuild."

William and Kate also visited the museum inaugurated earlier this year at Ground Zero at the entrance to the new 1 World Trade Center, the key building of the reconstructed complex.

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