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GUATEMALA
AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

USA OUTLOOK

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Foto: Reuters

U.S. congressional study urges sanctions on China over 'crimes against humanity'

A U.S. congressional report called for sanctions against China over human rights abuses, and U.S. officials to keep rights concerns in mind during dealings with Beijing, including trade negotiations.

The annual human rights report from the Congressional-Executive Commission on China said human rights and rule of law conditions worsened in China from August 2018 to August 2019, the period studied. The report detailed what is said was China's crackdown on religious minorities, labor activists and the press, and focused extensively on treatment of the minority Muslim Uighur population in Xinjiang, "where the Commission believes Chinese authorities may be committing crimes against humanity."

"In addition, the Administration should develop talking points for U.S. Government officials – including those engaged in trade negotiations – that consistently link freedoms of press, speech, and association to U.S. and Chinese interest," the report released on Wednesday said.

The study also described a "further erosion" of Hong Kong's autonomy and fundamental freedoms, and said months of pro-democracy protests reveal "deep discontent" at a grassroots level. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Office in Hong Kong said the study "distorts the truth," in a statement posted on its website on Thursday. Hong Kong residents' rights and freedoms are fully protected, it said, and the "black hand" of the United States is responsible for inciting protests.

Fuente

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-congress-report/u-s-congressional-study-urges-sanctions-on-china-over-crimes-against-humanity-idUSKBN1Z71ZM>



Foto: US News & World Report

China Confirms Signing of Phase One Trade Deal in Washington

A Senior Chinese official on Thursday confirmed a commerce team will travel to Washington next week to sign a long-awaited partial trade accord – potentially ending nearly two years of international tension during which the world's largest economies exchanged tariff salvos on hundreds of billions of dollars of products.

China's leading trade executive has accepted an invitation from U.S. to travel to Washington from Jan. 13 through Jan. 15, according to an official quoted by the South China Morning Post. On the agenda next week is expected to be the signing of a "phase one" trade agreement between the U.S. and China that was first teased back in October but has yet to be released publicly.

President Donald Trump's administration had previously earmarked Jan. 15 for the signing of the trade accord in Washington, but Thursday's announcement represents the first confirmation from the Chinese side that they have agreed to those plans.

The signing of the phase one deal will likely be heralded as a key victory for the Trump administration's trade policy, especially considering a revised North American trade agreement continues to languish on Capitol Hill. The deal is expected to eventually work its way through the Senate, but the timing of its passage remains unclear given the uncertainty over Trump's impeachment proceedings.

Fuente

<https://www.usnews.com/news/economy/articles/2020-01-09/china-confirms-signing-of-phase-one-trade-deal-in-washington>



Foto: usatoday.com

Pelosi says she'll send Senate articles of impeachment against Trump 'soon'

House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi said Thursday she would send the articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump to the Senate "soon".

The Republican-led Senate awaits the articles so it can begin a trial on whether to remove Trump from office. Such an action would require a two-thirds vote of the senators. But Pelosi has delayed sending the articles, which accuse Trump of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, since the House approved them D. 18. She said she wants to know more about how the Senate would conduct its trial before naming the lawmakers to serve as managers. Pelosi reiterated this condition Thursday.

Part of the impasse has focused on whether the Senate would hear from witnesses who didn't testify in the House inquiry. But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Tuesday that no decision would be made on witnesses until after opening statements from House managers and White House defense lawyers, and the submission of written questions from senators.

McConnell quoted Feinstein's concerns on the Senate floor Thursday and said Trump deserved a chance to clear his name. Trump and congressional Republicans have argued he had the authority to set foreign policy and was justified in fighting corruption in Ukraine. Trump has said he expects to be exonerated in the Senate trial.



Foto: USA Today

Trump moves to exempt big projects from environmental review

The White House in Thursday introduced major changes to the nation's benchmark environmental protection law, moving to ease approval of major energy and infrastructure projects without detailed environmental assessment or consideration of climate change.

Many of the changes to the law – the 50-year-old National Environmental Policy Act, a landmark measure that touches nearly every significant construction project in the country – had been long sought by the oil and gas industry as well as trade unions, which have by environmental activists to drag out legal disputes and kill infrastructure projects.

Representative Peter DeFazio, an Oregon Democrat who chairs the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, said Congress will look for ways to block the changes. The existing law, he said, "ensures the environmental impacts of a proposed project are examined and that the public has a role in the decision-making process."