

Turkey last stop on Obama's 8-day swing

by UPI

ANKARA, Turkey -- U.S. President Barack Obama honored Turkey's founding father Monday against a backdrop of international condemnation of North Korea's failed missile launch.

Obama's schedule on the last segment of his eight-day trip to Europe included an address to the Turkish parliament and a meeting with Turkish President Abdullah Gul and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

In the Turkish capital of Ankara, Obama honored the memory of modern Turkey's founding father, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, participating in a wreath-laying ceremony at Ataturk's tomb, The Times of London reported.

"I'm honored to pay tribute to his name," Obama said.

In Prague, Czech Republic, Sunday, Obama condemned the North Korean launch as a "provocative" act, pledging a broad new government effort to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons and eventually eliminate them

Speaking at a hilltop plaza outside of Prague Castle hours after the launch, Obama said he would seek a ban on nuclear testing, convene a summit in Washington to stop the spread of nuclear materials and support a nuclear fuel bank to allow for the development of nuclear power for peaceful purposes, The Washington Post said.

"The world must stand together to stop the spread of these weapons," Obama said.

The U.N. Security Council met Sunday in emergency session concerning North Korea's rocket launch, the Post reported. Despite the urging of the United States and Japan, the council could not agree on a statement critical of the launch, with China and Russia saying they weren't convinced that North Korea violated U.N. rules, council officials said.

Copyright © 2009, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Turkey last stop on Obama's 8-day swing by UPI