



EU-US summit: 245 days to Copenhagen “Climate action is in your hands. Delay kills”

Third stop on Obama’s European trip: EU and US green and development groups, including Oxfam International, Greenpeace, WWF and Friends of the Earth Europe, are coming together in Prague to call on their leaders to kick-off a new era for transatlantic action on climate change.

Photo & interview opportunity

WHEN: Sunday, April 5th, right after Obama’s speech (11-12 am approx.)

WHERE: Praha 1 – Alšovo nábřeží, Prague (map & directions: flyer enclosed)

WHAT: Oxfam 'big heads' (large 3D masks) of Obama, Brown, Merkel and Sarkozy, standing in front of a large countdown clock that is ticking down the days, hours, minutes and seconds to the UN climate conference in Copenhagen this December. The leaders will be holding a giant globe – symbolizing that the world is literally in their hands.

Quotes

Katia Maia from Oxfam Brazil said: “Rich countries have created the climate crisis. But it’s the world’s poorest people who are suffering most from its impact. Nobody knows better about urgency than the poor people faced with water shortages and hunger linked to global warming. Our worry is that rich countries are paralysed by the urgency climate change represents.”

Kate Smolski from U.S. Climate Action Network said: “Time is running out to prevent catastrophic global warming, but bold, urgent action now can tackle both the climate and the economic crisis together. EU and US leaders must build on the commitments they made at the G20 meeting, and ensure a strong Copenhagen agreement that can protect vulnerable people, and also boost economic growth, create millions of new green jobs, and secure safe energy supplies. 2009 is the year for climate action.”

Matthias Duwe from Climate Action Network Europe said: “There are only 245 days left until the Copenhagen climate conference. European leaders must use this EU-US informal summit to kick-off a new era for transatlantic action on climate change, backed up by ambitious action at home. EU citizens welcomed President Obama last time he was in Europe, and welcome his commitment to combat global warming - he must now match his fine words with strong leadership in the international negotiations.”

What do EU and US NGOs call for?

Green and development groups from both Europe and the United States are calling for rich countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25-40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and to commit substantial sums (the European Commission estimates €110 billion per year may be needed) of new money each year by 2020 to help the world’s poorest countries to develop clean energy, to protect their forests and adapt to the already unavoidable impacts of climate change. Current state of play:

- Europe has committed to a 20-30 percent cut in emissions below 1990 levels by 2020, and has not yet committed to any concrete financial contribution.
- Statements made by President Obama’s administration point to stabilization of emissions at 1990 levels by 2020, and the recent draft bill published indicates a cut of around 5-7% below 1990 levels by 2020. Both the draft bill and the President’s announcements indicate that revenues generated from a domestic cap and trade system will be used for climate action, but it is not clear how much these will amount to, or for what purpose they will be used.

Contacts

For further information or to arrange interviews in Prague or by phone, please contact Angela Corbalan on + 32 473 56 22 60, angela.corbalan@oxfaminternational.org, or Tim Gore on + 32 494 525 739, tim@climnet.org

Notes to the Editor

Killer facts

28 countries are represented at the EU and US Summit: they are responsible for 32 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, contain 12 per cent of the world's population and have 45 per cent of global GDP.

51 countries in Africa:

4 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions

14 percent of the world's population

Under 4 per cent of global GDP

BRICSAM (China, India, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa):

29 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions

42 percent of the world's population

19 per cent of global GDP