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With more world leaders assembled to tackle climate change than ever before, the Copenhagen negotiations have become urgent and tense. All eyes are on the United States and China, which are engaged in a fierce standoff over the issue of whether or not rapidly developing countries like China and India will submit to transparency procedures for measuring and verifying emissions reduction pledges. Some parties are also urging the United States and the European Union to provide more specificity about financial commitments and consider strengthening mitigation targets. Meanwhile, small island states and other countries most vulnerable to climate change have said they will not accept any deal that fails to respond to scientific projections of what is needed to prevent catastrophic impacts to their countries.

As of mid-day Friday, the talks were still ongoing and the Convention secretariat reportedly informed delegations to anticipate overtime — suggesting that negotiations may continue through Saturday, perhaps into Sunday.

## **Obama Arrives to High Expectations**

Against the backdrop of gray skies, exhausted negotiators and high expectations, President Obama arrived in Copenhagen early Friday morning to address the Conference. His speech was delayed, however, so that the President could participate in an emergency head-of-state level meeting to resolve outstanding issues among key parties. The emergency meeting was marred by the decision of the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, to skip the discussion, sending a vice foreign minister instead.

In his speech to the Conference, President Obama identified three necessary ingredients for a successful final agreement — mitigation, transparency and financing, subtly prodding China to agree to transparency measures. His speech urged leaders to act, but did not articulate any specific new ideas for resolving the negotiations. “We are ready to get this done today, but there has to be movement on all sides,” said Obama. “America has made our choice. We have charted our course. We have made our commitments and we will do what we say. Now is the time for the nations of the world to come behind a common purpose. We must chose action over inaction; the future over the past — with courage and faith. Let us meet our responsibility to our people, and to the future of the planet.”

Just before Obama spoke, Premier Wen said his country would reduce emissions relative to economic growth regardless of the outcome this week. “We have not attached any

condition to the target, nor have we linked it to the target of any country.” Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said he could help finance other developing countries if a successful agreement is reached. But he called for a substantive agreement, not an empty accord “just to say we signed a document or paper.” Following the speeches, President Obama met one-on-one with Premier Wen to explore a solution to the monitoring and verification issue. The leaders agreed that U.S. and Chinese negotiators would work together to try and resolve the impasse.

## Secretary of State Clinton Revives Negotiations

The flagging negotiations were revived on Thursday by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s dramatic announcement that the U.S. would participate in mobilizing \$100 billion by 2020 to help developing countries respond to climate change. Secretary Clinton’s remarks breathed new life into the talks, but some parties expressed a desire for more information about how much new public funding the U.S. will commit to.

Subsequently, conference organizers initiated new negotiating teams. Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen set up two working groups, both chaired by former conference president Connie Hedegaard, to work out unresolved issues. The working groups were tasked with producing two texts, one that would address issues associated with extending the Kyoto Protocol, the other to address new issues like financing, developing country commitments and U.S. participation. “The conference is now at a critical juncture and we have now agreed on how to proceed,” Rasmussen said.

## What World Leaders Are Saying From the Podium

One after another, heads of state took the podium Thursday and Friday to underline the importance of reaching a deal this week.

“The time for excuses and pretexts is over. The time has come for commitments and action,” said Mexico President Felipe Calderón, who also said Mexico would reduce emissions 30 percent by 2020 relative to economic growth, if suitable financing is provided.

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said future generations will reflect on what happens at the conference. “We are privileged to have been given by history this opportunity and this responsibility to write a different narrative of human cooperation.”

UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown made his own appeal for nations to resolve their differences. “The task of politics is to overcome obstacles even when people say they are too formidable,” he said. “While the challenges we face are difficult and testing, there is no insuperable barrier of finance, no inevitable deficit of political will, no insurmountable wall of division that need prevent us from rising to the much needed common purpose.”

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said “failure in Copenhagen would be a catastrophe for every one of us” and all parties will need to make compromises. He proposed a six-month deadline after the Copenhagen meeting to transfer political commitments into a legal text.

“France and Europe,” he said, “are prepared to negotiate.”

## **Pelosi Touts House Climate Bill's Jobs, International Focus**

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi joined several committee chairmen to advertise how the House climate change bill, passed in June, could help pave the way for success in Copenhagen. The bill, she said, “was drafted with an eye toward Copenhagen” and can be “a vehicle for how we can work together.” House Select Committee Chairman Ed Markey said the bill’s funding for adaptation and reducing deforestation in developing countries, which would be paid for through the sale of permits in a cap-and-trade system, is consistent with Clinton’s announcement that the United States would help industrialized nations deliver \$100 billion annually in financial assistance by 2020.

Pelosi added that the impact of climate change legislation, along with a global agreement, would be to create jobs. “We come here about one word: It's about jobs. It's about jobs that are sustainable for the future; new jobs, new technology, new green jobs for a green revolution.”

## **International Military Experts Rebut Senator Inhofe**

International military and security experts convened today to further challenge assumptions made by Senator James Inhofe, who said few military leaders recognize a link between national security and climate change. “Well, that’s five generals out of 4,000 retired generals that say that [global warming threatens national security],” Inhofe said in November. “There are a lot of generals who don’t like to be out of the limelight. They’d like to get back in. A handful of retired U.S. generals seeking attention are making this link.”

At an event titled “Climate Change and International Security” organized by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Major General A.N.M. Muniruzzaman NDC PSC (Ret.), President of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, said that the people of Bangladesh are already experiencing the direct impacts of climate change. He was joined by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, European Union President Carl Bildt, and UNDP Administrator and former Prime Minister of New Zealand Helen Clark, who came to Copenhagen to call on all governments to work for an ambitious and equitable agreement on climate.

## **Hollywood and Euro-Royalty**

**by Laura Angela Bagnetto**

I’m wondering if it was a bit lonely in the Bella Center on Thursday, as only delegates, press and a handful of non-governmental organizations were allowed to enter. The center of town was blanketed in snow and bustling with people, including those who could not get into the conference.

Early on Thursday, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was allowed into the Bella Center to make her exciting announcement of further commitments from the United

States. Wednesday night, even Queen Margrethe II of Denmark was at a dignitary dinner at the opera house, which apparently was the place to be seen. I was trying to make another appointment, so I could not join the gawkers flanking the red carpet and freezing in the snow waiting for Her Royal Highness. This is the second Scandinavian royal dinner that President Obama has declined in the last week due to scheduling difficulties.

Meanwhile, some activists are holding a hunger strike in order to get the world's attention. I sympathize, even as I check out the amazing anti-climate change food. At Café Norden, they are combating climate change every day with a *Klimavenlig sandwich*, or, "climate friendly sandwich." The pork loin in the sandwich is from Denmark, while the vegetables, including chicory (what the Danes call 'Christmas salad') and homemade red cabbage, were grown outdoors domestically, not unnaturally in a greenhouse. "We do this all year round," said café manager Bryan Tamakloe. In fact, this is part of a *Klima+* initiative that is quite popular among restaurants in Copenhagen.

At a casting trailer prominently positioned in the center of the city, Christian Lollike, one of Denmark's foremost living playwrights, is hoping Brad Pitt will come by. If Pitt is in town (and he is, according to rumors), he won't miss the shiny gold trailer emblazoned with the red letters, "Brad Pitt is Saving Planet Earth," which is also the title of Lollike's artistic film on climate change. All week, people were auditioning for Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie roles (including yours truly). The art film, made with look-alikes, is being shot in 12 four-minute episodes. The final episode will be shot on Friday, the last official day of the COP 15. Maybe some Pew mittens-with-a-message will be featured? Stay tuned!