

## Climate Change Group to Try Framework Agreement



Representatives from China, the European Union, India and the United States convene today in Washington, D.C., to attempt to reach a Framework Agreement on Managing Long-Term Climate Change

BY SHARON BURKE

The meeting, called by the UN Secretary General and scheduled to begin today, is in preparation for November's International Climate Change Review Conference. According to documents obtained by *Climate Game Times*, the United Nations Secretary General will ask delegates to lead the world in to an agreement in four areas at "high risk for global conflict": migration, resource scarcity, disasters, and emissions reductions. A source close to Secretary General John Podesta reports that although delegates will come up with the content of the agreements, Secretary General Podesta has an agenda of his own.

"He would like to see some kind of legal recognition for environmental refugees and a recognition that it is difficult to repatriate these refugees in some cases," noted the source. "There are no guarantees the delegates will agree with Secretary Podesta, of course, but we are optimistic that they will come up with some strategy for dealing with these problems."

The documents outlining the Secretary General's proposal also have language calling on delegates to invest more in resilience to climate change in vulnerable societies, including in the agriculture sector, and to consider the

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creation of a new international disaster relief agency. Finally, the Secretary General will urge delegates to set a strategy for deep near-term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and for speeding up the pace of innovation and commercialization of new energy technologies.

The meeting takes place against a backdrop of growing global alarm and tension over global climate change. The last seven years have seen an increase in heatwaves, droughts, floods, wildfires, high food prices, and intense tropical storms, including Cyclone Bhola II, which killed nearly 200,000 people in Bangladesh in 2013, and the Category 5 hurricane that hit the Caribbean and Miami in July of this year, causing an estimated \$75 billion in damage.

According to the Fifth Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, released late last year, the world is likely to see more of the same – and worse – between now and 2050. Moreover, the IPCC reports that unless global carbon dioxide emissions peak and decline this year, catastrophic climate change could be the result by the end of the century.

"A 5.7 degree Celsius rise in temperature by 2100 – well, that's not a world anyone wants to live in," commented the United Nations source. "But even by 2050, we will have our hands full – if these countries do not lead the way to international cooperation, we are going to see a rise in human misery and conflict."

## LEADERS DISCUSS ENVIRONMENT, NATIONAL SECURITY & WAR GAMES

A Summary of Remarks by  
Hon. Carol Browner, Gen. Chuck  
Wald (Ret.) & Peter Schwartz

By CHRISTINE PARTHMORE

Last night, a crowd of more than 100 luminaries heard from three experts about the intersection of climate change and national security and how to plan for an uncertain future. The speeches were part of the opening ceremonies of the four-day meeting on long-term climate change effects.

The evening started with what was billed as a "conversation" between Carol M. Browner, former Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Chuck Wald, a retired four-star U.S. Air Force General.

Browner described a world that is now witnessing many of the effects of climate change projected by scientists fifteen years ago, when she was head of the EPA.

The biggest difference with how this challenge is interpreted today, she explained, was that it is now clear that climate change is "an economic issue, not solely an environmental one." Today, the business community is concerned about climate change and is pushing for U.S. political leadership on the issue. The former Deputy Commander of the U.S. European Command, Wald echoed Browner's call for global leadership.

Throughout his military career, General Wald saw that environmental and demographic changes will have major national security implications. "The world is likely to confront threats on a scale not faced before," said Wald.

As General Wald explained, the national security community conducts strategic planning by projecting the future world we'd like to live in and then interpreting how to build constructive relationships with international partners to achieve it. However, nations must also plan and train for alternative futures characterized by adversarial relationships. He offered a stark warning: "If it's only crisis that can move us, we're going to fail."

Browner agreed, noting the urgency of climate change, "which is something we have to face right now."

Following dinner, the audience heard a startling keynote speech from Peter Schwartz, the Co-Founder and Chairman of the Global Business Network. Schwartz pioneered the use of scenario planning, using his technique of analyzing plausible futures to benefit businesses such as Royal Dutch Shell and governmental agencies, including the U.S. Department of Defense.

"Far too often, the things that we think can't happen, do happen," said Schwartz. "The test of a good scenario is not whether it's right or wrong," he continued, "but whether it leads to better decisions."

According to Schwartz, scenario planning is a way to deal with uncertainty and plan for various contingencies. He noted that his experience with Shell Oil was formative. In the 1980s, he and his team created a scenario in which there was a price collapse in the oil market – at a time when all predictions called for continuing price hikes. As a result, Shell was ready when the prices did actually collapse.

Climate change lends itself to scenario planning, noted Schwartz, given the uncertainties involved. "Climate change will be "much more extreme, more frequent, in more places," he explained. Schwartz emphasized that the central challenge for the international community is to "decouple greenhouse gas emissions and economic growth."

Schwartz noted that the world is not on a trajectory to cut emissions, and that the science and technology developments needed for success have not yet occurred.

## At a Glance: What the 2012 Agreement Achieved

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS  
BY TIMES NEWS STAFF

In 2012, a new global climate change agreement went into effect. In some respects, the "Copenhagen Agreement" of 2012 (named for the initial negotiations in 2009) resembled its predecessor, the Kyoto Protocol, and in several important ways, it was a departure.

The signal achievement of the 2012 agreement was a global consensus that there needed to be an 80 percent reduction of global carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. At the time, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change noted that in order for the goal to be met, global carbon dioxide emissions would have to peak and



begin to decline by 2015.

Other elements of the 2012 agreement included increased pledges to adaptation assistance, which have been concentrated especially on flood control measures all over the world

and public health spending. The Clean Development Mechanism, a technology transfer program, was also increased and improved.

The most contentious negotiations preceding the 2012 agreement had to do with national targets. In the end, most major developed nations agreed to a 20 percent reduction in emissions by 2020, and major developing countries agreed to reduce carbon intensity by 20 percent by 2020.

While it is clear now in October of 2015 that very few signatories to the 2012 agreement are likely to make interim targets, the interim targets also have become less germane. The overall goal of an 80 percent reduction by 2050 is still valid, but the world clearly needs a far more aggressive path for getting there.