

U.S. Emerges as 'Kinder, Gentler' Superpower

BY DAVID CAPEZZA

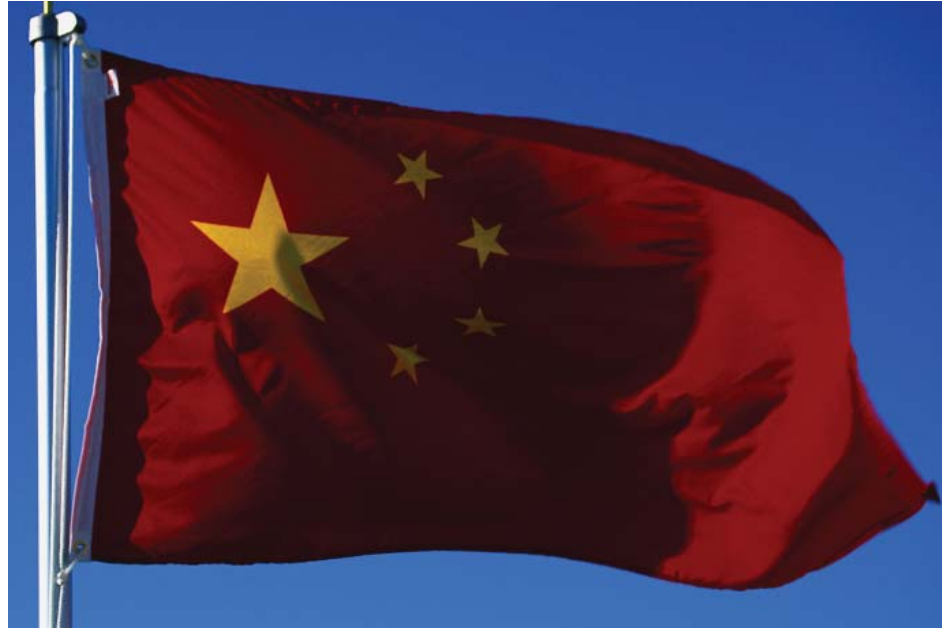
Yesterday the United States met with representatives from China, the EU, and India in hopes of producing a framework agreement to address global climate change. In what was hailed as a marked shift in its position, the U.S. delegation offered guiding principles that it claimed represented a "new America."

Among several specific proposals over which the American government is now willing to negotiate, the U.S. delegation suggested that it would convene an international conference to share best practices when dealing with the challenges of climate change effects, such as migration, resource scarcity, and disaster relief. The United States also expressed concern about climate and economic migrants (CEM) and stated a desire to take a global leadership role in addressing this issue. Interestingly, the U.S. delegation was open to forming a definition of environmental refugees.

During the course of yesterday's deliberations, the U.S. delegation also made clear its stance that it is essential for developing nations to pledge their support for mandatory cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. On the challenge of its own emissions, the U.S. proposed a 30 percent reduction from 2005 levels by 2025.

In a move that took many other nations by surprise, the United States offered its support in principle for international institutions and multilateral and regional agreements to solve some of these adaptation and mitigation challenges.

China Gains International Attention with Positions on Resources, Technology Transfers



Representatives from China met with the European Union, India and the United States yesterday in Washington, D.C., to attempt to reach a Framework Agreement on Managing Long-Term Climate Change; Talks Continue Today

BY CLIMATE GAME TIMES STAFF

Monday marked the beginning of preparations for next month's Climate Change Review Conference, an attempt by China, India, the United States, and the European Union to address the long-term effects of global climate change.

After holding predominantly internal meetings throughout the morning, the world's four biggest economies--and emitters of greenhouse gases--gathered for an afternoon plenary session to present their findings.

Many observers on hand were especially eager to hear China's approach to the challenges ahead. China put forth a set of principles yesterday that will guide today's continued negotiations on migration, disaster relief, resource scarcity, and emissions reductions, and will set the stage for high-level discussions among delegation leaders. These principles included statements that China's efforts in these areas will be consistent with

its development objectives, and that historical contributions to greenhouse gas emissions be considered in setting targets and dividing the responsibility for global mitigation.

Adaptation was a critical area for the China delegation, which emphasized that it would be willing to support the creation of new food and water sharing and cooperation arrangements and agencies. Though no other nations presented this option, China's negotiators were explicit that they would recommend both an increase in North-South assistance and South-South cooperation.

In perhaps the most important detail to emerge from yesterday's negotiations, the China team will continue to lead in pushing for technology transfers for mitigation and adaptation measures, particularly in emissions reductions, in land use and forestry, and in agriculture so as to encourage a new "green revolution."

INDIA RECOMMITS TO 80 PERCENT EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

New Commitment
May Shape
Future Deliberations

BY THEO MILONOPOULOS

In a bold announcement during a United Nations meeting on climate change, India pledged Monday to recommit itself to achieving 80 percent reductions in carbon emissions by 2050, provided equitable distribution of the burdens for meeting these cuts and that developed countries assume responsibility for their historic greenhouse gas emissions.

The commitment was also contingent on calibrating these emission targets on a per capita basis, which India argued would be more equitable than a system based on total emissions into the atmosphere.

"Our position is that any agreement should reflect equitable burden-sharing," said one representative of the India delegation, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "The social and economic benefits of rapid growth should not be denied to any country or sectors of society. Any agreement should not infringe on these rights."

India's new proposal came through a meeting convened by UN Secretary General John Podesta to formulate a framework agreement that would help meet the growing security and environmental challenges posed by climate change. By convening the world's largest carbon emitters in a single strategy session, Podesta said he hopes these countries can come to an agreement in mitigating issues like disaster relief, migration flows, and resource scarcity that evidence suggests will only be exacerbated by continued climate change by 2050.

"We have to manage the unavoidable by adapting, and we need to avoid the unmanageable in 2100," Assistant Secretary General Michèle Flournoy said. "We have to start today."

The Indian emissions proposal also commits the country to reducing emissions by 30 percent by 2025, a major development from Monday's deliberations. Although the 80 percent emissions reductions by 2050 is consistent with India's obligations under the 2012 Copenhagen Agreement, the intermediate 30 percent reduction would be a more robust interim target.

The Indian delegation also proposed establishing regional, on-the-ground migration centers that could provide information on movement of peoples across borders; and called for the creation of a multilateral disaster relief mandate for the United Nations along the lines of current peacekeeping operations and said that India would be willing to play an important role in such operations.

Throughout the day, negotiators from India met with representatives of the United States, China, and a delegation representing developing nations. Some observers suggested that India may position itself as a leader of developing nations and aim to safeguard the interests of such countries in future negotiations.

European Union Focuses Climate Efforts on Refugees, Disasters

BY NICOLE DEMARCO

At the end of the first day of intense negotiations, European Union representatives put forth several key provisions to address the causes and effects of global climate change. Member States demonstrated their ongoing support to international law and humanitarian assistance in a series of proposals that included adaptation to the recent dramatic increases in the world migrant population as well as global funding mechanisms to assist those hardest-hit by climate change.

One example of the EU's leadership in the humanitarian response to climate change-related crises is in the area of refugee law. In support of Secretary General John Podesta's proposal in Washington yesterday to confer legal status on so-called environmental refugees, EU Member States offered delegates from In-



dia, China, and the United States notional language for a definition as "one who is displaced from his or her homeland and cannot return due to a) short term issues (natural disaster, etc.) or b) long term effects of climate change (deforestation, water shortages)."

The European assembly also proposed the creation of a United Nations Disaster Relief Force, nicknamed 'green helmets' in recognition of the UN's success with blue helmeted peacekeeping personnel. In order to realize such an objective, the EU has pledged a significant increase of investment in their disaster response capacity. Initial talks focused on empowering

preexisting UN infrastructure in addition to international NGOs to better prepare for the host of predicted disasters in the near term.

As the only party present at the negotiating table with the realistic ability to meet their Copenhagen commitment, the EU team focused on how to best engage the other delegations on global emissions reductions. Essential to this goal, team members proposed an international mandate for price signals, such as nationally implemented taxes on CO₂ emissions or a cap and trade system. EU delegates indicated that price signals would be flexible to the economic capacity of individual countries, but should be implemented as a necessary step for all countries in reaching worldwide emission reductions goals.

It remains to be seen how participating countries will engage in European proposals over the next two days of international negotiations.