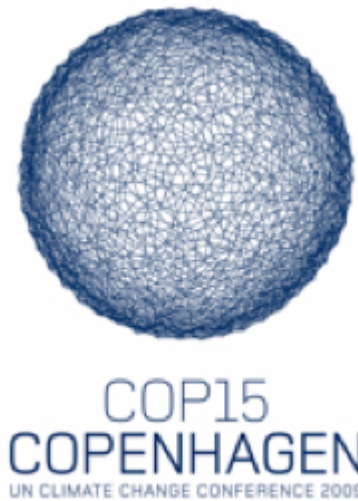




Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on December 15, 2009

Developing Countries Demand Cash at Copenhagen

Delegates from developing nations to the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen are insulted at an EU pledge of 7.2 billion euros (\$10.6 billion) in foreign aid over the next three years to help combat effects of greenhouse gas emissions. Relatively poor countries claim their economies and public health are damaged by rising sea levels, deforestation, and other alleged climate-change problems, and they believe industrialized nations bear the blame for their woes. They call for more long-term guarantees from developed countries.



[European Voice](#) reports that the Chinese ambassador, Song Zhe, demands "more ambitious commitments" before reaching any climate-change deal. Zhe says past promises from industrialized nations have amounted to "empty talk." He suggests setting up a system by which developed countries "transfer the equivalent of 1 to 1.5 percent of their gross domestic product each year," an ambitious request from the world's largest holder of U.S. debt. When asked about his country's rank as largest carbon dioxide emitter, Zhe pointed out that China has promised up to a 45 percent reduction in carbon intensity from 2005 levels by 2020. Carbon intensity is a number measured in tons of CO₂ per unit of GDP. This differs greatly from the EU pledge to reduce total emissions by 20 percent from 1990 levels by the same deadline.

China is one of 77 developing countries represented in Copenhagen. Delegates from China's bloc agree the EU pledge is not enough. [EU Business](#) reports the Sudanese negotiator, Lumumba Stanislaus Diaping, complained the funds "are not only insignificant, they actually breed even more distrust on the intentions of European leaders on climate change."

Activist groups are quick to agree. "Copenhagen must deliver deep emissions reductions, and at least \$200 billion a year in new money to help the poorest countries tackle climate change," demanded Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and UN human rights commissioner. [Financial Times](#) quoted her leading a candlelight vigil of some 30,000 protestors huddled around bonfires in freezing temperatures outside the conference center on Saturday. Tim Gore, EU climate-change policy advisor for Oxfam International, said in a [press release](#), "Offering just a token handout for the next 3 years made up of recycled promises won't achieve the breakthrough in talks we need." Gore claims the funds offered merely cover existing aid commitments. Oxfam International, a confederation of 14 organizations, calls for the EU to promise 35 billion euros (\$50 billion) per year starting in 2013. [Greenpeace](#) also complained that the EU is stalling progress at Copenhagen by only pledging short-term support. "EU leaders are avoiding the really crucial issues of longer term financing," said Joris den Blanken, Greenpeace EU climate policy director. "Climate change ... carbon emissions ... [and] deforestation in those countries will not end in 3 years, so neither should the flow of cash."

Other officials view the EU pledge as a first step toward a final Copenhagen agreement. [CNN](#) reports that the executive secretary of the UN conference, Yvo de Boer, congratulated the EU on this "huge



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encouragement to the process." UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown agreed, saying, "What we are seeing today is a very significant move forward in the search for a Copenhagen agreement."



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