

EU/NR 37/09: AMBASSADOR BRUTON CONCERNED THAT THE US SENATE MAY BE DRAGGING ITS FEET ON CLIMATE CHANGE



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Ambassador John Bruton, Head of the European Commission Delegation to the United States, issued the following statement today expressing his concern that the US Senate may not deal with the climate change issue until next year:

"It is suggested that the US Senate may not, after all, deal with the climate change issue until next year, when the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen is over and the delegates have gone home. If this were to happen, it would open the United States to the charge that it does not take its international commitments seriously, and that these commitments will always take second place to domestic politics.

"The United States is just one of the 190 countries coming to this Conference. But the United States emits 25 percent of all the greenhouse gases that the Conference is trying to reduce.

"Is the US Senate really expecting all the other countries to make a serious effort on climate change at the Copenhagen Conference in the absence of a clear commitment from the United States?

"Of course we must be realistic about what politics can and cannot achieve, and temper our ambitions accordingly. And this applies to international politics just as much as it does to the legislative agenda of the US Senate.

"I submit that asking an international Conference to sit around looking out the window for months, while one chamber of the legislature of one country deals with its other business, is simply not a realistic political position