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Copenhagen climate summit

December 7-18



## Clinton arrives in Copenhagen to stake US claim in deal of the century

America's unifying influence is not without strings as monitoring cuts becomes fresh sticking point with China

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Suzanne Goldenberg and Allegra Stratton in Copenhagen  
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US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton gives a press conference at the Bella Centre. Photograph: Olivier Morin/AFP/Getty Images

With Hillary Clinton's sudden appearance at the Copenhagen summit at its moment of crisis – and the prospect of billions in cash – America today lays claim to the role of lead broker in what could be the deal of the century.

Clinton's intervention, on a day that began with the Danish hosts of the talks saying they had given up hope of a deal, allows the US to claim a role in helping to unite countries that were turning on each other.

"It is no secret that we have lost time," she told a press conference. "In the time we have left here it can no longer be about us versus them, this group of nations pitted against that group of nations."

But Clinton said America would sign on to a proposal – originally offered by Gordon Brown several months ago – for industrialised countries to provide \$100bn a year from 2020 to help developing countries cope with climate change.

"The US is prepared to work with other countries to jointly mobilise \$100bn a year by 2020," Clinton told a press conference on a day that began with reports that the summit's Danish hosts had given up hope of reach a deal.

But she said the funds would only flow if there was a deal – and that there would only be a deal if it met certain American conditions. Those conditions go to one of the most contentious issues of these negotiations: America's demand that China and other rapidly emerging countries provide documentation of its efforts to cut emissions.

Clinton's pointed reference to the need for transparency escalated an American attempt to put China on the spot over its resistance to submitting its carbon emission cuts to a monitoring regime. Indonesia's president today, in the country's speech to the summit, indicated he would be open to such a regime. India and other rapidly emerging economies also said they would offer data on their efforts to curb carbon to a monitoring system, leaving China somewhat isolated.

Clinton also argued the price was worth it. "\$100 billion dollars a year is a lot of money. That is a commitment that is very real and will have tangible effects," she said.

However, she was careful not to commit America to a specific share of the \$100bn fund, and she made it clear that much of the financing would have to come from private, rather than government sources.

She said there would be a significant focus on preventing deforestation – which has domestic political support in America – as well as aid to cushion the poorest countries from the ravages of climate change. The fund will also help countries acquire new clean energy technology.

Clinton's commitment to a post-2020 climate fund arrived as somewhat of a surprise.

Analysts had downplayed prospects of getting firm support for post-2020 climate finance. The European Union has proposed a fund of €110bn a year from 2020 – but has yet to make an official offer.

American officials had indicated before the Copenhagen summit that Barack Obama was not in a position to make a forward-looking commitment on finance for fear of triggering a backlash from Congress. However, there was still speculation that Obama was keeping an offer on finance in reserve for his arrival in Copenhagen tomorrow morning.

Apparently, the last resort option arrived sooner than anticipated. "We have now reached a critical juncture at these negotiations," Clinton told a press conference. "I understand the talks have been difficult."

British officials who travelled to Copenhagen with Gordon Brown were surprised by the timing of the announcement. The prime minister's official spokesman had not expected what they described as "the first public confirmation" of a shift in the US position but said: "Obama said he wanted to be as helpful as he could but was concerned about public opinion at home." Another official said: "This is a very serious move by the Americans. We were waiting for it."

They said that one of the prime minister's chief negotiators, Jon Cunliffe, had been on the phone with his American "opposite number" over night.

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**Boslow**

17 Dec 2009, 2:24PM

This reminds me of an advert they used to run on Radio Luxembourg.

"Send me £50 and I will show you how to become a millionaire."

Some serious money being banded about...nice contracts for some no doubt.

For God's sake Brown grow up!

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**kdsandeep**

17 Dec 2009, 2:40PM

this is a brave commitment. Well done Clinton, although I do not see why 100 billions from all the OECD countries is such a big amount. After all US spends around 650 billion dollars on US defence and has spent 1 trillion dollars on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Still the figure of 100 billion dollars is a shot in the arm.

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**FredFrosty**

17 Dec 2009, 2:46PM

In Iraq, A country that has cost us money and blood, why doesn't the government do anything about the "ethnic cleansing" against Christians, recently stepped up as Christmas approaches.

A policy of ?ethnic and religious cleansing? is underway in Mosul

Western media is silent. (Are they too embarrassed?) WHY?

Google it!

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**robopp2002**

17 Dec 2009, 3:50PM

So with the US government sitting on \$1 trillion deficit, Clinton is going to borrow an additional \$100 billion a year from China in order to pay China (plus more in servicing interest every year). I guess with the way things are going, US\$100B won't be worth much by 2020.

How about spending \$100 billion at home? I am sure \$100 billion would go a long way making American homes and businesses more efficient. And \$100 billion in economic incentives would go a long way towards giving US companies a head start in rolling out these new technologies, so that America can reap the economic benefits further down the line, in the manner that America always re-organized and took advantage of each technological change. But no - now the game is different!! Now the west prostrates before "Third World" propaganda, and it is about giving OTHER PEOPLE money so they can develop while the West performs Seppuku on its moribund economy. Just who does the Obama administration thinks it works for? The American people, or the Third World? The American people will shortly get to judge in 2010.

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17 Dec 2009, 5:00PM

All this is far too little too late.

\$100bn a year from 2020 is a drop in the ocean and in spite of all the "hot air" coming out of Copenhagen it is unlikely to make any difference whatever to global warming.

The Danes might as well resurrect King Canute to keep the rising seas at bay.

The best thing for the rest of us to do is to re-cycle, avoid greed and consumerism, and boycott non essential products from the worlds biggest environmental polluters, starting with the US and China.

Best wishes

Peter Franzen

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17 Dec 2009, 5:05PM



Contributor

What's missing from this picture is where the US pledge on emissions cuts stand.

The science says we need a 40% cut on 1990 levels to give us just a 50:50 chance of averting the most disastrous levels of climate change that come with a 2 degree rise in temperatures. For many third world countries, that's so far below the bare minimum as to be totally unacceptable, given the catastrophic consequences they'll face even below a 2 degree rise.

The latest US offer? A 4% cut.

Yes, **four**. And apparently, that's the final offer.

In that context., Clinton's \$100bn isn't assistance. Its blackmail. Its saying to the third world: we're doing nothing about climate change, so you can either take this \$100bn, do what little you can with it, and smile nicely for the cameras at Obama's end-of-conference photoshoot, or you can f\*ck off home with empty pockets and await the apocalypse.

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**Durward**

17 Dec 2009, 5:50PM

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**writeon**

17 Dec 2009, 7:52PM

One needs to take the numbers Clinton is presenting with a giant pinch of salt, and examine the proposals in detail. But going on their record, I wouldn't trust Clinton or Obama with the future of the world. This money is a form of bribe and blackmail rolled into one. They want to control the development of the poorer countries by locking them into a form of climate straightjacket. The rest of the world would be insane to accept this kind of deal. What it amounts to is a "moral mask" to hide the fact that one is participating in the rape of mother earth.

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**SakariO**

17 Dec 2009, 7:57PM

hahaha.... This is such an american way of solving a situation, a "show me the money" type of thing. Not only that apparently there is no commitment from them to cut the emissions but even the financial aid will come iiiiin (drums rolling) - 2020!!!!  
Adding to this that it is not clear who will give these money, it seems to me that Mrs. Clinton statement is like a handful of twigs thrown on the ashes of the conference, hoping to spark again discussions.

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