



THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING

Chairman Edward J. Markey

**“Preparing for Copenhagen: How Developing Countries Are
Fighting Climate Change”**

**Opening Statement, Chairman Edward J. Markey
Wednesday, March 4, 2009**

Over the last two years, the Select Committee has examined closely how the U.S. can fight climate change and improve our energy security. But we are not in this fight alone, and the progress that our country can make is deeply dependent on the progress that developing countries are making. That is the focus of today’s hearing: to take an assessment based on the facts that exist in 2009 – not as they existed five or ten years ago – of steps taken by the key developing countries to address global warming.

This inquiry is important because Americans rightly want to know that they are not the only ones altering their policies to combat global warming. This inquiry is also important because many Members have rightly expressed concern about maintaining the competitiveness of critical industry sectors, and they want to know that other countries are joining the fight and requiring their industries to move away from business as usual.

A discussion on what developing countries are doing needs to be fuelled by current facts and not by old perceptions. One old perception is that China is unwilling to join the fight against climate change and is wedded to growth at any cost. A current reality is that China has already adopted an energy efficiency law that far exceeds anything on the law books of our country. Other examples abound of how developing countries are making progress.

I am not suggesting that the developing countries are doing everything that they can do, and they are certainly not doing everything that needs to be done. But as we undertake climate change legislation in our country we should understand the steps taken by key developing countries around the world.

China, India, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa are some of the biggest emitters in the developing world. Over the last years, all these countries have displayed an increasing awareness of the need to act. Just last week, President Obama acknowledged China in his speech to the joint session of Congress for having launched “the largest effort in history to make their economy energy efficient.” Also last week, Greenpeace welcomed India’s national climate plan’s first step – a market mechanism that could phase-out 400 million incandescent bulbs until 2012. In December, last year Mexico set an aspirational target to cut in half its 2002 carbon emissions by 2050. And the Brazilian government released its National Plan on Climate Change. These are encouraging signs of action.

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But the world has to do more and the world has to act together. Despite the action and efforts shown around the world, emissions continue to rise. We have to reverse this trend. Certainly, developed countries will have to show clear commitment and live up to their promises, and developing countries will need support when accelerating their action. To ensure that the world achieves the needed reductions, we need a strong agreement in Copenhagen. And we need to monitor and verify the efforts all across the world. We need to be sure that promises lead to action, that plans get implemented, that results live up to expectations.

The United States must show that it is will lead this effort. Only by doing so, we will collectively be able to win the fight against dangerous climate change.