

Brussels, 29 March 2001

Mr Romano Prodi
President of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

BY FAX AND MAIL

Dear Mr. Prodi,

We would first of all like to thank you for having taken out some precious time on 21 March to discuss with us the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

Furthermore, we also welcome your initiative together with Swedish Prime Minister Persson for a letter addressed to President Bush on the same issue.

Unfortunately, in the meantime the situation has deteriorated. As you are no doubt aware, a White House spokesperson confirmed on 28 March 2001 that President George W. Bush opposes the Kyoto Protocol and will not submit the 1997 climate accord to the Senate for ratification. On the same day EPA Administrator Whitman announced that the US has no interest in implementing the Kyoto Protocol. Finally, US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice told European Union (EU) ambassadors in Washington on March 22 the Protocol was "dead on arrival".

Given the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol by the USA, the European Union and its Member States individually must assume the responsibility of taking the lead in ensuring that the Protocol comes into force by 2002. Firstly it must lead by example, simultaneously accelerating its ratification plans and programmes for implementing domestic action. We are concerned, however, that the EU has not given sufficient attention to this to date and urge you to assist in upgrading EU efforts in this regard. The EU needs to show great leadership in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol by the end of this year. This will, however, never happen if the European Commission does not present the legal instrument for ratification by the next EU Environment Council in June.

Secondly, while it is important that the EU continues to talk to the US and we welcome ongoing efforts in this area, the EU needs to urgently develop major diplomatic efforts towards Japan, Russia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, China and developing countries to ensure that the USA cannot and does not wreck the resumed Climate Negotiations in Bonn in July. The EU - and the countries mentioned - must signal to the White House that this would be totally unacceptable. We believe that these diplomatic initiatives should be a fully co-ordinated EU response involving the highest levels of the Commission as well as Member States.

Meanwhile it appears that there is no alternative but for the international community to prepare to ratify the Kyoto Protocol without the USA. In this context the EU needs to anticipate and be prepared for an extremely difficult situation at the resumed COP6 in Bonn in July. It seems likely that the USA will attempt to block COP6bis decisions. Hence the EU needs to develop a strategy that can enable ratification of the Kyoto Protocol even if COP6bis is unable to formally conclude its business.

We would appreciate your personal involvement in this matter, which we consider of vital importance for the EU and global environment.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Wolters
Head, Greenpeace European Unit

Michel Raquet
EU Climate Advisor

Cc: Mrs Margot Wallström, European Commissioner for the Environment
Mr Chris Patten, European Commissioner for External Relations