

President Obama Meets with 19 Foreign Leaders in Copenhagen (and President Arroyo Is Not in the List)

Written by The White House Press Office

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Update from Press Secretary Robert Gibbs

After arriving in Copenhagen for the international climate summit, President Obama joined a multilateral meeting with the following leaders that just concluded:

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

United Kingdom Prime Minister Gordon Brown

French President Nicolas Sarkozy

Danish Prime Minister Lars L. Rasmussen

German Chancellor Angela Merkel

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso

Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

Brazilian President Luiz Lula da Silva

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

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South African President Jacob Zuma

Mexican President Felipe Calderon

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak

Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg

Colombian President Alvaro Uribe ###

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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A photograph of the President's bilateral meeting with Premier Wen Jiabao can be viewed [HERE](#)

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WASHINGTON, DC — President Barack Obama abruptly altered the timing of his upcoming appearance at an international climate summit in Copenhagen, hoping to capitalize on steps by India and China and build a more-meaningful political accord, the White House said.

The move means President Obama will be at the summit on Dec. 18, considered a crucial period when more leaders will be in attendance.

It also means that Obama will be squeezing in a separate, 10th foreign trip before Christmas — a record pace of travel for a first-year President — as a means to giving momentum to a deal aimed at combating global warming.

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President Obama had said that he would travel to the Copenhagen conference if his appearance would help clinch a deal. His decision to go early to the two-week meeting was looked upon by many as a sign that an agreement was still a long shot.

But now with the U.S., India and China all with specific proposals on the table for the first time, a political agreement seems more likely. World leaders are no longer expected to reach a legally-binding agreement, as had long been the goal, but are aiming for a deal that includes commitments on reducing emissions and financing for developing countries.

"There are still outstanding issues that must be negotiated for an agreement to be reached, but this decision reflects the president's commitment to doing all that he can to pursue a positive outcome," White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said in a statement. Secretary Gibbs said the U.S. will have negotiators involved throughout the Dec. 7-18 conference.

It is also possible that President Obama could tack on another agenda item to his revamped, final trip of the year: the signing of a broad treaty with Russia to reduce both nations' nuclear arsenals. The White House had hoped that deal would be ready in time to coordinate it with his receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, but talks have not produced a final breakthrough. # # #