

## Developing nations make plea for Kyoto extension

Representatives of several developing nations called for the extension of the Kyoto Protocol on Wednesday, saying that the pact was the only hope for securing a global commitment to fight climate change.

"We cannot accept again to redefine what we have concluded. It would put us backward," Mohamed Aslam, the Maldives' Housing and Environment Minister, said at a plenary session of the high-level meeting of the 17th UN Climate Conference in Durban, South Africa, on Wednesday.

Aslam said that rising sea levels were submerging the Maldives on a daily basis, adding that any delays in fighting climate change would "wipe out" the Indian Ocean archipelago.

The Kyoto Protocol, the only treaty that curbs global emissions, stipulates that 37 industrialized countries and the European community must reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to an average of 5 percent of their 1990 levels.

Two days away from the end of the Durban conference, participating countries have yet to produce a significant agreement to break the standoff over negotiations on a legal commitment to secure global efforts to tame emissions.

"We are racing against time. We should put aside selfishness and work together for a better future," Moroccan Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Minister Latifa Akherbach said.

Xie Zhenhua, the vice chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission, said China fully supported implementing the existing consensus, citing the principle of "common, but differentiated responsibility" stipulated in the Bali Road Map.

European Union (EU) climate commissioner Connie Hedegaard said that new proposals were not meant to secure the interests of the EU but were intended for developing and vulnerable nations, as well. "We already have our [emission] reduction targets. We have a road map towards 2050, regardless of Durban or any other international conferences."