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India and other developing countries are concerned that the US and EU are trying to scuttle the Kyoto Protocol mechanism, the first phase of which is due to expire in 2012, and replace it with a World Bank-type institution to manage climate change funding.

It is evident that they want to kill the Kyoto Protocol," Ambassador Lumumba D'Aping of Sudan, who represents G77 countries at the UN climate change negotiations now taking place in Bangkok. "The US is not a party to the protocol, so kill it off", is how he summarised the US approach. "The EU is also wedded to this notion, supporting the isolationist tendencies and exceptionalism of the US."

He echoed other G77 members in alleging that these countries were seeking a substantive new framework, based on "common responsibilities" as distinct from earlier "differentiated" ones. This was a strategic move to reclassify industrial and developing countries into one category, with the same responsibilities for tackling climate change.

Developing countries would have to take on long-term commitments where historical responsibilities -- the build-up of greenhouse gases over centuries of industrial development -- would be blurred with future commitments of emerging developing countries, like China and India.

"The degrees of irresponsibility have reached intolerable levels," he noted. While industrial countries had agreed to cut their emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, developing countries would have to bear the burden of reducing the remaining 20 per cent. "There would be no economic or population growth permitted," he said.

Ambassador Yu Qing-tai, China's Special Climate Change Envoy, said that the moves were "fundamentally to sabotage the protocol and terminate it altogether. The US wants a new framework based on common responsibilities of all parties."

EU representatives admitted that "substantive discussion still remain to be launched" and conceded that it would be open to a new framework where the "bits and pieces" of Kyoto would be present. It has so far only committed providing \$3-7 billion before 2013 as "start money" for developing countries to tackle climate change. By 2020, however, experts are unanimous that around \$150 billion a year have to be provided by industrial countries for this purpose, of which there is no sign today. (ends)