EU turns up Heat on Climate Change Debate

COPENHAGEN (AP) – Fearing that a possible global deal on climate change is in danger, European foreign ministers announced Thursday they were stepping up efforts to make sure that nations around the world face up to global warming.

Five EU foreign ministers have been traveling to European capitals for the last week to press the issue — and now they are taking the case for tackling climate change to other world capitals.

The complexity of disputes between industrialized and developing nations over how to cut greenhouse gas emissions without derailing economic growth have threatened the climate change negotiations.

"Time is now short and the need is urgent," British Foreign Minister David Miliband said Thursday at Copenhagen University.

His Danish counterpart, Per Stig Moeller, said the EU "must also do all it can to engage key players."

A series of EU meetings were planned with Brazil, India, China, the United States and Russia, said Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt.

The prime ministers of Sweden and Denmark, meanwhile, were traveling to South Africa and India, two of the world's major polluters, to discuss the climate change treaty. Sweden holds the rotating EU presidency while the U.N. climate change summit is being held in Copenhagen in December.

At that summit, negotiators will attempt to strike a pact to succeed the Kyoto Protocol, which bound 37 industrial countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2 percent of 1990 levels by 2012.

The Kyoto accord placed no obligations on developing countries, but now industrialized nations want countries including India and China — seen by many as

the world's largest polluter — to agree to stall and eventually cut their emissions.

The United States, which did not sign the Kyoto Protocol, agreed with nearly 200 other nations at a conference in Bali in December to negotiate a new agreement by the end of 2009.

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