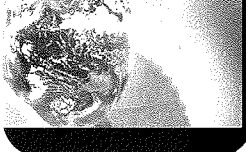
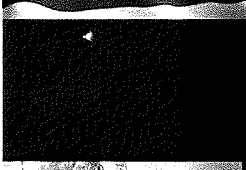
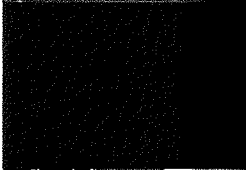
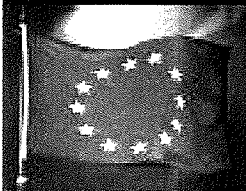


Top European Diplomat Addresses Conference Crowd

EUROPEAN UNION
Delegation of the European Commission to the USA



Angelos Pangratis
Deputy Head
European Union
Delegation to the
United States



Naming climate change “the most important global challenge that humanity is facing,” the European Union’s second-top envoy to the United States told the conference crowd (see article on pages 1-3) that, unless countries around the world stick together and to a strict set of rules, the consequences are impossible to even foresee.

“We need an unprecedented level of multilaterality,” said Angelos Pangratis, the Deputy Head of the European Union Delegation to the United States.

Apart from urging cooperation, Pangratis tackled economic concerns, described the currently divergent EU and U.S. approaches, and painted a grim picture of the earth’s present state.

The worst case scenario, the melting of the polar ice, has already materialized, he said. The next threshold that humanity must guard against crossing is a temperature rise of over 2 percent – if this happens, the consequences will be hard not only to address, but even to foresee.

A crucial step is the reduction of CO₂ emissions by 50 percent in 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

“That’s the best available science. It’s not political will,” said Pangratis, who addressed the conference participants during their lunch break.

A big part of the distance, close to 20 or 30 percent, must be crossed by 2020, he said. The European Union will do it unilaterally, but others must also join.

“That’s what we want the others to commit themselves to,” he said. “We’re talking about a profound change in our societies.”

How? By adopting a cap-and-trade emissions system, he said.

“We believe that the cap-and-trade system is indispensable.”

The new U.S. administration displays a much more positive attitude toward such a course of action, Pangratis said.

“We have seen an administration that wants to commit very seriously to developing a great economy,” he said.

But the commitment displayed so far by the U.S. is not adequate to stay below the 2 percent threshold.

“There’s some resistance in this country even among intellectuals to international compulsory targets,” he said.

But while the United States treats compliance with international rules as a loss of sovereignty, it has offered no other option either, he said.

The European Union, on the other hand, started fighting climate change in 2003, incorporating the issue as an element in the European security strategy and into other policies, such as regional and migration.

“It is a dimension that we have not managed to integrate sufficiently in our interaction with the United States,” Pangratis said.

Globally, there will be no results, unless all major countries participate and all major sectors of the economy are included. It is a huge mistake to view efforts against climate change as an economic burden.

“From the economic point of view, this effort does not have to be seen as an additional cost,” he said. The expansion of renewable energy stands to create 700,000



Angelos Pangratis addressing the conference crowd during lunch at the Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum. Pangratis called climate change “the most important global challenge that humanity is facing.”



jobs in the EU.

Closing, Pangratis expressed the hope that, by the time countries meet again to address the issue at the United Nations climate change conference in December 2009, mindsets will have shifted.

“We want to see in Copenhagen a projection of our system and discipline that we’re imposing on ourselves,” he said.

By Cynthia Malakasis



Elisabeth Prügl, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Angelos Pangratis, Marco Rocca, Andreas Psycharis