

PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, this week the United Nations climate change conference is continuing in Paris. I understand over the weekend a number of Democrats went to Paris to watch a part of the discussion.

I have been talking to folks back home in Wyoming about this climate conference and what the Democrats are proposing, and I will tell you, the people in Wyoming are not happy. They are not happy about President Obama's plan to destroy American energy jobs and also to destroy the communities that depend on these jobs.

They are not happy about the President's plan to give away billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars to other countries. They are not happy about the President's plan to ignore the will of the American people and to sign an expensive, destructive treaty on climate change in Paris. That is what they think the President is planning to do, and I believe they are exactly right.

Last Friday, the Foreign Relations subcommittee that I chair released a new report called "Senate Outlook on United States International Strategy on Climate Change in Paris 2015," a new report on President Obama's plan to bypass Congress and transfer American taxpayer funds overseas. This report shows how President Obama is supporting an effort to bypass Congress and to sign a climate deal that gives money to developing nations.

The subcommittee report found four things.

First, the report says that the President is making false promises to other countries about his ability to meet his own greenhouse gas reduction targets. President Obama has promised to cut back American energy production dramatically. The administration is pushing powerplant regulations that will destroy jobs and make electricity more expensive and less reliable. Bipartisan majorities in Congress, in the House and in the Senate, have rejected these regulations. President Obama wants to use this international agreement to force new regulations on the American people.

This administration has been doing all that it can to cripple American energy producers all across the country. It has piled new regulations on coal producers. It is blocking exports of American crude oil and liquefied natural gas. It set emission standards that are designed to put powerplants out of business, and that is the second thing that the report found—that the President's unrealistic targets and timetables for reducing targeted emissions are threatening jobs and threatening communities all across America.

The third main point in this report is that the President is forcing American taxpayers to pay for it—to pay for our past economic successes through his contributions to the so-called Green Climate Fund. I did a townhall event the other day in Wyoming and asked

what they thought about the President's plan of using their taxpayer dollars in this way, and 94 percent of the people in the townhall said they opposed President Obama's plan to send their hard-earned taxpayer dollars to the United Nations climate slush fund.

President Obama doesn't care. He says he wants the money anyway. He knows American emissions have actually been declining over the last decade. He knows we are not the biggest source of carbon dioxide in the world. Far more emissions are coming from developing countries. We see it in China; we see it in India. Those countries say that if they are going to be part of President Obama's plan, somebody else is going to have to pay up. They expect developed countries such as the United States to foot the bill.

How much money do they want? What are we talking about? So far, developing countries have said they want—the number is astonishing—at least \$5.4 trillion—not million, not billion, but trillion. That is what 73 developing countries are demanding over the next 15 years. It doesn't even count another 90 developing countries that haven't made their demands public yet. The reality is a great deal of this money is going to end up lining the pockets of government officials in these developing countries. The American people know it. They see through it, even though the Obama administration will not admit it.

That brings up the fourth thing that this report found. Our subcommittee found that the President plans to reach a climate change deal that ignores the American people and cuts them out of the process entirely. The American public doesn't want these policies. Congress has passed laws to change these policies. The Obama administration just goes on and on and makes the rules that it wants anyway. This administration refuses to have accountability to the American people.

What are we talking about with regard to the money? It is interesting because just today, this morning from Paris, there is a report from the New York Times: "U.S. Proposes Raising Spending on Climate-Change Adaptation."

Here is the byline from France:

In an effort to help smooth the passage of a sweeping new climate accord here this week, Secretary of State John Kerry announced on Wednesday a proposal to double its grant-based public finance for climate-change adaptation. . . . Mr. Kerry's announcement came as the momentum toward a deal appeared to have hit a momentary snag.

Why? Well, reading further: "The issue of money has been a crucial sticking point in the talks, as developing countries demand that richer countries open up their wallets. . . ."

So John Kerry is there to open up the wallet of the American taxpayers—because it is not his money—doubling what he is offering, to try to buy a solution that he wants to accomplish

even though it is directly in opposition to the American public. This administration, President Obama and Secretary Kerry, are out of touch with the American people, who reject this expensive and destructive energy and climate policy.

The Obama administration is also out of touch with the rest of the world. The Obama administration says that some parts of the agreement reached in Paris will be legally binding and other parts will not because, obviously, we are the Congress. We are the elected representatives of the American people, and we have a say. So the President is saying that parts of the agreement are binding and parts are not. China says the whole thing is binding. The European Union says the entire thing is binding. Who is right? President Obama or the rest of the world?

The Obama administration says it is going to give billions of our taxpayer dollars to these countries, including to a lot of countries that don't like us very much. That doesn't seem to matter to the President. The developing countries say they want trillions. John Kerry is in Paris today, doubling the amount of money, doubling to try to buy support for something the American people don't support.

It is interesting because, if you think back just a couple of months, President Obama was frantic—desperate—to get a deal with Iran over its nuclear programs because of his legacy. He signed a terrible deal—by all accounts, a terrible deal.

Now he is doing it again. He is once again frantic, once again desperate, to get a climate deal in Paris. Why? Because of his so-called legacy. He is planning once again to sign a terrible deal, and he has his Secretary of State, John Kerry, there giving the speeches and making promises that the American public will have to pay for if they get their way.

Iran says it will play the Obama administration's game on emissions and reduce its carbon emissions as the President wants, but before it does, it expects the Obama administration to lift all of the remaining sanctions from the Iranian deal. It wants the United States and other countries to give them \$840 billion over the next 15 years. That is what is at stake, and those are the things the President continues to give away as he surrenders our energy security, our energy reliability, our energy jobs—a surrender by the President. He is desperate for approval by the other countries when he should be focusing on the United States. He seems to want to promise any policy, pledge any amount of money to get it, but the American people oppose sending their money to a United Nations climate slush fund. As their elected representatives, Congress must not allow the President to continue to try to buy popularity for himself using American taxpayer dollars.

Congress must not allow the President to use this meeting in Paris to advance his own legacy at the expense of

the American people and the American economy.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECESS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 1 p.m., recessed until 2:01 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. Scott).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

UKRAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today is International Anti-Corruption Day. As the United States works to support good governance and anti-corruption efforts around the world, I wish to highlight one country, Ukraine, where these efforts are vital to the future viability of that state. The U.S. Congress has stood by the people of Ukraine since the Maidan demonstrations in November of 2013.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed two landmark pieces of legislation that are now law. This sent a clear signal to Kiev, Moscow, and the capitals of Europe that the United States stands squarely for the development, democratic aspirations, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine and its people.

However, Ukraine's political leadership must also continue to hold up its end of the bargain. Ukraine is a country that has been plagued for many years by weak democratic institutions and rampant corruption. This internal threat of corrupt institutions poses the greatest long-term threat to Ukraine's future.

Ukraine's reformers have made some progress. Last year Ukraine ratified an association agreement with the EU, which includes extensive commitments to governance reforms. The Parliament adopted a broad package of anti-corruption laws and established a set of institutions to fight corruption. The government made changes to the tax and budget codes and is starting to clean up its banking system. The government has also made reforms of the energy sector a top priority, adopting legislation to harmonize its natural gas markets with the EU's and raising tariffs to incentivize more efficient energy usage.

Importantly, on Monday, November 30, a new special anti-corruption prosecutor was appointed with the backing of the civil society, which is a big step forward in the fight against corruption.

Despite progress on these fronts, much work remains, and the political commitment to combat corruption among Ukraine's leaders is uneven. I acknowledge the pressure faced by the government. We all want to support Ukraine's positive path, but the Ukrainian people need more concrete

anti-corruption results—not just legislation, not just commissions, as important as these are, but actual results.

For example, there remain thousands of allegedly corrupt officials in the judicial branch, where judges and prosecutors are susceptible to bribes. While corruption in Ukraine's legal system cannot be resolved overnight, I urge Ukrainian officials to take measures that would remove these most egregious violators from the judicial branch and prosecutorial ranks and to retrain those who are not corrupt to build the next generation of jurists.

The Government of Ukraine has taken positive steps in this regard, including the establishment of a constitutional commission tasked with recalibrating the checks and balances between the judiciary and the rest of the government. In September, the commission submitted new draft amendments to the Constitution on the justice system. However, concerns remain regarding the independence and integrity of the judicial institutions, including the newly established institution, the High Council of Justice, or HCJ, which has been called the "gatekeeper to the court system."

It is critical that the civil society and watchdog organizations are empowered to continue their work of holding the HCJ and elected officials accountable to ensure that any weakness in the checks and balances of the judicial system are not exploited for personal gain.

I am also concerned about the process for vetting the current pool of judges. The Government of Ukraine is developing standards for judicial reappointment, which will be conducted by the HCJ. This process will test the political will of both the Government of Ukraine and the HCJ itself. Unfortunately, initial results are not positive. As of June of this year, the HCJ had received 2,200 complaints of judicial misconduct. Of this number, only 47 judges were disciplined and none were dismissed.

Ukrainian citizens expect a clean government that abides by the rule of law. In July, I wrote to President Poroshenko, urging him to make anti-corruption reforms a priority by considering the appointment of a special anti-corruption prosecutor and special anti-corruption courts. While the government recently selected a special anti-corruption prosecutor with the backing of the civil society, the government must now ensure that this office remains free from state influence and interference to fulfill its mandate to root out corruption within Ukraine.

I commend President Poroshenko for listening to the demands of civil society and amending the composition of the selection committee to include two candidates backed by civil society, which led to the selection of Nazar Kholodnytskiy. This was a step in the right direction. However, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine itself is still woefully understaffed,

which impacts its ability to fulfill its mandate to prosecute corrupt acts. I call on the Government of Ukraine to ensure that the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine is fully staffed and prosecuting cases without delay.

Polls show that most Ukrainians confront petty corruption in their daily lives, and our focus on corruption at the national level should not diminish the importance of programming that addresses corruption at the municipal and local levels. The Government of Ukraine must invest in training and education to identify and root out petty corruption in higher education, health care, and law enforcement. A clear commitment to attacking corruption in health care, education, and law enforcement within a measurable framework will pay dividends for citizens across the country and will help to restore faith in Ukraine's democratic institutions.

The United States is prepared to make a long-term commitment to Ukraine and, along with our European partners, we can provide support to Ukraine's efforts to tackle corruption within the judiciary, the civil service, and law enforcement while preparing these institutions to attract and retain talented individuals who are committed to eradicating graft and entitlement.

I firmly believe that Ukraine could be a case study for how a country with the political will can work with the international community to root out pervasive corruption, but that political will must manifest itself concretely and soon. When you look at public opinion polls in Ukraine, fighting corruption is the Ukrainian people's No. 1 demand. On this International Anti-Corruption Day, I look forward to supporting Ukraine's leaders if they are willing and committed to answering this demand.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for such time as I might consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BURUNDI

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am here today to speak a bit about Burundi—something the Presiding Officer is familiar with.

I had occasion to be in Burundi at their request some 16 years ago. At that time, the President's name was Buyoya. He is not there anymore; they have changed Presidents. There is something going on there on which I