

Massive protest held at COP17

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Thousands of people from around the world took to the streets of Durban on Saturday 3 December to call for action on climate change as the second week of negotiations are about to begin at COP17.



The colourful crowds carried banners which expressed their desire for action as opposed to rhetoric as far as climate change goes.

Tasneem Essop, head of international climate strategy at the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), said: "Today's march was an amazing moment of solidarity that showed people want real action from their governments on climate change - not just talk. The will of the people is strong. The problem is that the will of our leaders is weak."

The protestors were also concerned by the positions of bigger nations like Canada and the United States.

Last week, Peter Kent, Canada's environment minister, refused to confirm or deny rumours that his country had decided to pull out of the Kyoto Protocol.

"After six days of talks, we seem to be moving backward, not forward. It's time for governments to stand bravely side-by-side with their citizens. The stakes are enormous as we fight to secure enough food, water and energy for all," said Essop.

The protestors handed over a letter to the president of COP17 and South Africa's international relations minister, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and UNFCCC executive secretary Christiana Figueres.

Figueres once again thanked all stakeholders for making their voices heard.

She said Mashabane and herself were working to push governments.

"We are working tirelessly. I want you to know [we] were working until four o'clock this morning and we will continue to work," said Figueres.

Security was tight at the Global Day of Action and there were no reports of disorderly behaviour.

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