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WASHINGTON: The United States hopes to promote wider use of fossil fuels at a global meeting on climate change next week, a White House official said, reflecting the gaping divide between Washington and the rest of the world on the issue of global warming.

President Donald Trump's administration has envoys at the UN-sponsored talks in Bonn, Germany, even though the

United States has derided the Paris Agreement climate accord and has begun a years-long process to withdraw from it. The meeting, the Conference of Parties 23, is intended to hammer out the details of the Paris Agreement's efforts to fight climate change.

While a small State Department team has been on the ground for technical negotiations since the talks opened last week, the administration is sending another delegation for the second week that will include senior White House advisers.

One of the three main priorities for the administration will be promotion of "universal access to affordable, reliable energy, including highly efficient fossil fuels," the official told reporters in a briefing.

The other two priorities include raising "support for open and competitive energy markets that enhance energy security and innovation and technology, and decoupling emissions growth from economic development," the official said.

The official, who asked not to be named, defended the US focus on fossil fuels at the summit, saying that other countries were just "burying their heads in the sand" if they did not engage in a conversation about coal, which continues to be used heavily in populous places like southeast Asia.

As part of the effort, the official said, the White House advisers, along with energy company representatives, will lead a side event at the conference on Monday to promote "fossil fuels and nuclear power in climate mitigation."

That group will include George David Banks, a special assistant to Trump on energy and environment; Francis Brooke, a policy adviser to Vice President Mike Pence; and representatives of coal producer [Peabody Energy Corp](#) (BTU.N), nuclear engineering company NuScale Power and liquefied natural gas company Tellurian Inc (TELL.O).

Environmentalists in Bonn are considering protesting the side event. "It's a bit of a flashpoint," Camilla Born, of the E3G climate think-tank, said of the US meeting.

Meanwhile, dozens of US governors, mayors and lawmakers who disagree with Trump's disengagement on climate change have set up a large pavilion in Bonn showcasing climate action around the country.

The climate talks are intended to hash out rules for the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement, mainly by slashing carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.

Former President Barack Obama's administration had pledged to cut U.S. emissions by at least 26 percent by 2025 from 2005 levels under the deal, something Trump has said would cost the U.S. economy trillions of dollars.

Trump announced in June he is pulling the United States from the Paris Agreement, a process that could take four years. The United States is now the only country opposed to the pact, after war-torn Syria last week announced it will join.

The US official said he does not expect any discussion at the talks about what it would take for Trump to re-join the pact. "We are not going to address the issue," he said.

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