

U.S. shrugs off historical responsibility for greenhouse gases in World Court hearing on climate

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A large, thick gray 'X' is drawn over a rectangular frame. The frame is composed of a thick dark gray L-shaped border on the left and bottom, and a thin light gray line on the top and right. The 'X' is formed by two intersecting diagonal lines that span the width of the frame.

The Hague, December 7 (RHC)-- A Biden administration official has told the International Court of Justice in The Hague that historical greenhouse gas emissions should not be considered wrongful acts.

State Department legal adviser Margaret L. Taylor made the argument during a landmark climate case brought by low-lying island nations who face an existential crisis caused by wealthier, polluting nations.

“International human rights law, however, does not obligate states to mitigate anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, nor does it currently provide for a human right to a healthy environment. ... Acts or emissions that preceded the crystallization of international obligations with respect to climate change cannot be internationally wrongful acts.”

That line of reasoning prompted sharp criticism from Vanuatu’s special envoy for climate change, who also called out the governments of Australia and Saudi Arabia for attempting to shrug off responsibility for historical emissions.

[SOURCE: DEMOCRACY NOW]

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