

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mexican minister calls for global treaties; pessimistic on Durban

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With global talks on climate change going nowhere, developing countries such as India and Mexico could sign treaties with each other and with developed nations to boost sustainable development, according to Mexico's environment minister Juan Rafael Elvira.

"We have seen a very big movement (in policy) and very good performance as a country...in not only the domestic (front) but even in setting the international agenda," Elvira said on Friday on the sidelines of the Delhi Sustainable

Development Summit, organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (Teri).

He said existing global arrangements such as the Kyoto Protocol to curb carbon emissions—blamed for global warming—were not enough.

"For that reason, we think Mexico and India could work together, and could invite many of the other countries to move in the same line," he added. "We, as developing countries, can demonstrate to the rest of the world that it is possible to have green growth and with no sacrifice at all."

During global talks on climate change, such as at Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2009, and at Can-

cun, Mexico, last year, countries failed to reach a consensus on how to curtail carbon emissions.

Officially, India has refused to accept legally binding deadlines for emission cuts. But at Cancun, environment minister Jairam Ramesh deviated from a prepared speech to say: "All countries must agree to a legally binding commitment under an appropriate legal form."

Elvira said Cancun was a good starting point, but nations had to work faster on implementing steps to share technology and allocate money to check climate change.

Nations trying to hammer out an agreement are next expected

to converge at Durban, South Africa towards the end of this year to reach a compromise on how to allocate responsibility for containing carbon emissions.

Elvira said he was not confident the Durban talks would prove any more fruitful than earlier efforts. "Mexico is in the same position as India. We are also looking for a legally binding agreement. I'm not sure we can reach one in Durban," he said. "While we are looking at this, we require Cancun platform to implement and create all these operational decisions."

Separately, Ramesh said on Friday that he was pessimistic about the Durban talks. "One should be realistic, and should not hope for what we will not be able to accomplish at Durban, else we begin another disappointment," he said. "If you ask me from the environmental point of view, Cancun was a disappointment. But from the political point of view, it was an advancement."

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