

Shyam Saran Press Conference Transcript Part 2

KP remains valid until all the parties to the KP, which includes the developing countries, decide what it is that needs to be done with the KP- whether it needs to be amended, whether it needs to be superseded. These are decisions which cannot be taken through this kind of talk. This is emerging as an important point of contention in the current discussions.

The second part is with regard to finance and linked to finance is the issue of technology transfer. Whatever be the scale of action that we are trying to put into place, the level of ambition that we are trying to put in place, it is quite obvious that unless we have a matching effort on the financial and the technology side, you are not going to get anywhere.

I must confess, on the tech side, there have been some positive development in terms of identifying areas where we could work together, the areas we could advance our tech cooperation. But the fundamental issue remains how the UNFCCC is going to come up with a global mechanism which will enable the transfer of climate friendly technologies and can it set up some kind of global platform on which technological cooperation to create transformational technologies for the future can be created.

Underlying all this is of course is there money available to do all this. Is there money available to assist developing countries to adapt to climate change, which is already taking place and which will continue to take place in addition to support mitigation action that they voluntarily take themselves?

There are a set of proposals from developing countries, from G77 and China but so far we have not seen much progress in this respect.

To conclude, (there is) slow progress in our deliberations. Hopefully the pace of these deliberations will increase as we come closer to Copenhagen but there are some very key issues, which not only remain unresolved but in a sense have become more complicated because of the new factors that I mentioned.

Questions and answer session: Transcript

Q. Is this minimum 40% reductions by 2020 suggested in Bonn still on the table?

A. Yes. It's a submission by India and 36 other developing countries.

Q. The EU has committed to 30% reductions by 2020. Is that correct?

A. No. The EU position is 20% by 2020 with 1990 as a base year and 30% reductions if there is a climate agreement which is concluded in Copenhagen, not in the absence of an agreement at Copenhagen.

Q. We just attended a press conference where the US Chief Negotiator was also there and there was a question asked of him- are you looking for a new instrument by the end of Copenhagen or are you looking for processes to be cleared by the end of Copenhagen. He had suggested earlier that processes needs to be cleared, procedural things on technology. It echoed very closely to what the Indian government has said outside the UN earlier, saying that we do not necessarily want look only for an ambitious agreement at Copenhagen but we could also look at agreements on technology and finance separately. Maybe that could be the way out, because, as one of the representatives said, Copenhagen is not the end of the road.

Are we looking at a common platform somewhere, where India and the US are saying almost the same thing, that in case we do not achieve an ambitious goal, we could actually have agreements on finance, technology which are procedural in character and do not have concrete figures in place? Is that something that is possible?

It comes specific to the context. The flipside of the question is that is the continuation of the KP in its second commitment period non negotiable idea for India at Copenhagen.

A. Firstly, I think whatever you are quoting about Indian officials who are saying we could have partial agreements, this is not the official position.

The environment minister may be looking at various outcomes which may be possible. As far as the negotiating position of India is concerned, the Government of India's position is that we must continue to work for a comprehensive, balanced and equitable outcome at Copenhagen.

Secondly, that Copenhagen is not the end of the road. That's true because it's not that the world is going to come to an end at Copenhagen. We will continue to have to work with this issue because this issue is going to remain with us for a long time. We are hoping that Copenhagen will give us a global platform for collaboration. That is the key.

Can we create a platform at which countries of the world- both developed and developing can work together in order to deal with this challenge? We all say that this is a cross cutting challenge, is a global challenge.

If it is a global challenge, we must have a global response to this challenge. Are we in a position to create a global platform at Copenhagen to deal with this. If we are not in a position to get what we are looking for, and what everyone is looking for, then not just India, but all of us will have to sit down together and decide what is possible and feasible by the time we get to Copenhagen.

I don't think we are right now in a position to say that we have come to the end of the road and that we should start looking for partial solutions. That is not the spirit in which we are working today. The spirit that we are working with today is that it is still possible for us and that we should continue to press for a very strong and balanced, comprehensive outcome at Copenhagen.

Q. So far the Indian position on emission targets for Annexe I countries of the KP obviously exclude the US at one level because they are not party to the KP. Towards the end of Copenhagen are we still looking to have Annexe I commitments? Is that non negotiable for us? Is the existence of the KP in its 2nd commitment period non negotiable?

A. As I mentioned, this is not a decision for India alone to take. It's not that KP belongs to India.

What we have said is also a process question. If you have an international instrument, that international instrument has provisions laid down- if you want to amend it, if you want to abrogate it or if you want something else to supersede it, all the parties to that particular international instrument will have to sit down and take that decision.

We are saying you cannot do this in a surreptitious manner by not going through that process but by trying to come up with a new instrument here and then saying that the KP has now become irrelevant. Or that we have now already taken a decision and the impact of this decision is that the KP is no longer valid. How can India be a party to something like that? Because then, what is the credibility of any international treaty or any international instrument that we all are part to?

What we are saying is that KP is a valid instrument. After all, if it was not a valid instrument then why do we have an AWG on KP? Why are we still continuing those discussions?

Rather than working on the main agenda item of that AWG which is to come up with new targets, you are talking about all other miscellaneous things and are blurring the debate by saying unless the US comes in, what does KP mean? Or unless developing countries are on board, this is not an instrument that will give us results.

We come up, again and again, with this question- what we are engaged in at this point of time, is not rewriting of the mandate of the BAP. The KP is not something that everyone has signed, but you can't say that of the UNFCCC.

(Continued..)