

Expect a tough round of climate talks in Durban: S.Africa

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South Africa's Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane listens to a question during a press conference in Bulgaria in September 2011. The upcoming UN climate talks in South Africa will be "tough" despite progress in moving toward a new round of Kyoto Protocol commitments, Nkoana-Mashabane said Friday.

The upcoming UN climate talks in South Africa will be "tough" despite progress in moving toward a new round of Kyoto Protocol commitments, South Africa's foreign minister said Friday.

"We no longer have time to postpone the key issue particularly of the second commitment period to somewhere else or to another COP (Conference of Parties). It has to be discussed in Durban," Maite Nkoana-Mashabane told journalists.

"The majority of party members here were saying Kyoto is very very

important because this is the only instrument we have in the UNFCCC (UN [Framework Convention on Climate Change](#)) process that is legally binding."

Nkoana-Mashabane hosted two days of ministerial consultations in Stellenbosch which she said had seen [consensus](#) for fresh Kyoto commitments with the current set expiring after 2012 ahead of the end of year talks.

"The majority of the countries that were represented here...are all saying that one of the key outcomes for Durban is that we commit on the second commitment of Kyoto," she said.

"There are a few countries who are still putting conditions to say if A happens or B happens, they think they will sign on but they are not too many. So therefore again the general [thrust](#) of the outcome of this meeting was very positive."

However, parties can expect that the next round will not be easy.

"We've said that this would be a tough COP because when we emerged from [Copenhagen](#), there was a lot of disillusionment so in Cancun there was no energy to discuss the difficult political issues that needed attention but progress has been made," she said, saying trust had been boosted in Mexico.

"It is going to be a tough COP because it is a COP that can't avoid the political issues that were not thoroughly discussed in Cancun.

But while Durban will not be easy, Nkoana-Mashabane said the latest consultations had given her hope that there was a political will to ensure success in Durban.

"I really am quite confident that we have made a lot of progress but with COP processes or UNFCCC processes it's not done until it's done," she told reporters.

The conference takes place from November 28 to December 9.

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