

India 'won't sign binding emissions pact': minister

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Environment Minister Jayanthi Natarajan's statement came after a UN conference in Durban earlier this month agreed for the first time to seek to negotiate a legally enforceable agreement to control all nations' emissions.

"There is no question of signing a legally binding agreement at this point of our development. We need to make sure that our development does not suffer," Natarajan told the upper house of parliament.

"Our emissions are bound to grow as we have to ensure our social and economic development and fulfil the imperative of poverty eradication," the minister added.

Some 42 percent of Indians, or 455 million people, live on less than \$1.25 a day, according to the World Bank.

The marathon UN [climate conference](#) in Durban approved a roadmap towards an accord that for the first time would bring all major greenhouse-gas emitters blamed for climate change under a single legal roof.

If approved as scheduled in 2015, the pact will be operational from 2020 and become the prime weapon in the fight against [climate change](#).

But emerging Asian giants India and China, which have become huge emitters of carbon over the last half-dozen years, have long resisted calls to reduce emissions.

The fast-growing economies said the burden of cuts should be on developed countries and that they cannot commit to binding targets which might hurt their ability to improve living standards.

India and China do not fall under existing 1997 [Kyoto Protocol](#) constraints aimed at fighting global warming as they are developing countries.

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