



Erik Solheim, the director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) today expressed his optimism that the world would continue on a more environment friendly path, despite the negative declarations of US President elect Donald Trump.

At a press encounter with a selected group of journalists at UNRIC, Mr. Solheim said that the new administration's policy had not yet been presented in a coherent way.

"If the worst were to happen, that we see very little American political leadership, I am still very confident," Mr. Solheim said. "You will still see a huge number of Americans moving in the right direction. California will not stop...and the big companies will not stop,"

Solheim said that "basically all the industrial drivers in the US, the Googles, the Microsofts, the

Facebooks, were moving towards renewable energy whatever happens”.



Erik Solheim, Press Briefing UNRIC, 20 December 2016

The UN Environment chief pointed out that the new jobs are in the green sector, but the coal sector had very few jobs to offer.

“We will miss American leadership if it’s not there, but Europe, China, others will step up. China and the private sector will be very strong counterforces whatever happens.

Mr. Solheim was also optimistic about the world’s capacity to fight pollution, citing successful efforts to stop acid rain, as an example to follow.

“Seven million people are dying prematurely because of pollution. This is a topic we can handle. The Germans cleaned up the Rhine, the French cleaned up the Seine, the Brits cleaned

up the smog in London,” Mr. Soleheim said. “Obviously, we can clean up pollution everywhere else..So we want to make a frontal attempt with UN Environment, the World Health Organisation, the European Union and others, to put pollution much higher on the global agenda, where it deserves to be.”