

BRICS Joint Statement on "Strengthen BRICS Solidarity and Cooperation, Respond to New Features and Challenges in International Situation"

May 19, 2022, virtual (hosted by China)

1. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa met on 19 May 2022 in virtual format under China's Chairship. They reiterated that the BRICS countries shall continue to enhance the framework of intra-BRICS cooperation under the three pillars - political and security, economic and financial, and cultural & people-to-people exchanges, to contain the spread and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic with solidarity, to speed up the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and to further broaden and deepen the cooperation amongst the BRICS countries. The Ministers agreed that facing the newly emerging features and challenges, the BRICS countries should enhance their solidarity and cooperation and work together to address them. In this regard, they recalled the adoption in 2021 by BRICS Sherpas of the revised Terms of Reference for guiding BRICS engagement going forward on its working methods, scope of engagement and the Chair's mandate.
2. The Ministers took note of the unprecedented shock and hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to humanity. They acknowledged the related uncertainties which will impact the achievement of sustainable development goals globally. They stressed that the difficulties are possibly interconnected and therefore they reaffirmed the need for the international community to work together to build resilience through solidarity and cooperation.
3. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to multilateralism through upholding international law, including the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as its indispensable cornerstone, and to the central role of the United Nations in an international system in which sovereign states cooperate to maintain peace and security, advance sustainable development, ensure the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and promoting cooperation based on the spirit of mutual respect, justice and equality.
4. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to enhancing and improving global governance by promoting a more agile, effective, efficient, representative and accountable system; exercising inclusive consultation and collaboration for the benefit of all on the basis of respecting sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, equality, legitimate interests and concerns of different countries.
5. The Ministers recalled the Joint Statement on Strengthening and Reforming the Multilateral System in 2021 and reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the process of reform mentioned in the Joint Statement along with all the relevant parties of international community, in order to make the global governance institutions more inclusive, representative and democratic and to facilitate greater participation of emerging markets and developing countries in global decision-making. They supported the call for greater representation of developing countries in the international organizations and multilateral fora so that they could play an important role in global governance. The Ministers recalled the 2005 World Summit Outcome document and reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, and to increase the representation of the developing countries so that it can adequately respond to global challenges. China and Russia reiterated the importance they attach to the status and role of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and supported their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN.
6. The Ministers reiterated that it was imperative to ensure the availability of safe, efficacious, accessible and affordable diagnostics, medicines, vaccines and essential medical products to

people from different countries especially developing countries, and equitable distribution of vaccines and expeditious vaccination, to fill the immunization gap globally. They supported the leading role of the WHO in combating the pandemic, as well as acknowledged initiatives such as the COVAX and the ACT-A. They recognized the importance of the on-going discussions in the WTO on relevant IP waiver proposals, as well as capacity building and strengthening local production of vaccines and other health tools, especially in developing countries. They stressed the need to continue to strengthen the cooperation on developing, testing methods, therapeutic, research, production and recognition of vaccines, the research on their efficacy and safety in light of new variants of COVID-19 virus and recognition of national document of vaccination against COVID-19 and respective testing, especially for purpose of international travel, as well as knowledge-sharing on traditional medicine among the BRICS countries. They expressed support to the launch of the BRICS Vaccine Research and Development Center, the establishment of BRICS Integrated Early Warning System for preventing mass infectious diseases risks, and the adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Regulation of Medical Products for Human Use. They called for conducting an origin-tracing based on scientific principles, evidence-based decision-making, objectivity, inclusivity, transparency and free from stigmatization or interference, within existing international frameworks including the WHO.

7. The Ministers stressed that global economic governance is of critical importance for countries to ensure sustainable development and recalled further their support for broadening and strengthening the participation of emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs) in the international economic decision-making and norm-setting processes. They reiterated their support for G20's leading role in global economic governance and underlined that G20 shall remain intact and respond to current global challenges. They called upon the international community to foster partnerships while underlining that it is imperative to strengthen macro-policy coordination in driving the world economy out of the crisis and shaping a strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive post-pandemic economic recovery. They urged major developed countries to adopt responsible economic policies, while managing policy spillovers, to avoid severe impacts on developing countries.
8. The Ministers called for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its three dimensions - economic, social and environmental-in a balanced and integrated manner.
9. The Ministers expressed their support for an open, transparent, fair, inclusive, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system with a view to ensuring a level playing field with special and differential treatment for developing countries, and avoid the unilateral actions and protectionist measures that run counter to the rules of WTO. They supported a robust Global Financial Safety Net with a quota-based and adequately resourced IMF at its center.
10. The Ministers reiterated that the objectives, principles and provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances, must be honored. They reaffirmed their national and joint efforts to promote implementation of the Paris Agreement and, in that regard, stressed the importance of the fulfillment by developed countries of their commitments to provide technology and mobilize credible and adequate, predictable and timely new and additional climate financing to assist developing countries to combat climate change. They also expressed their concern on the attempts to link security with climate change agenda and recalled that the UNFCCC, including the annual COP sessions, is the appropriate and legitimate international forum to discuss the issue of climate change, considering all its dimensions.
11. The Ministers recalled their national positions concerning the situation in Ukraine as expressed at the appropriate fora, namely the UNSC and UNGA. They supported talks between Russia

- and Ukraine. They also discussed their concerns over the humanitarian situation in and around Ukraine and expressed their support to efforts of the UN Secretary-General, UN Agencies and ICRC to provide humanitarian aid in accordance with UN General Assembly resolution 46/182.
12. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) discussed in the Meeting of BRICS Deputy Ministers/Special Envoys on 17 May 2022.
 13. The Ministers expressed strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed. They recognized the threat emanating from terrorism, extremism conducive to terrorism and radicalization. They committed to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens. They reiterated that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. They reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to contribute further to the global efforts of preventing and countering the threat of terrorism on the basis of respect for international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and human rights, emphasizing that States have the primary responsibility in combating terrorism with the United Nations continuing to play central and coordinating role in this area. They also stressed the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach of the whole international community to effectively curb the terrorist activities, which pose a serious threat, including in the present-day pandemic environment. They rejected double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism. They called for an expeditious finalization and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the UN framework and for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism, at the Conference of Disarmament.
 14. The Ministers called for continued efforts to strengthen the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements and to preserve its integrity for maintaining global stability and international peace and security, and stressed further the need to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency as well as the consensus-based nature of the relevant multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
 15. The Ministers called for strengthening the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), and for preserving their integrity and effectiveness to maintain global stability and international peace and security. They underlined the need to comply with and strengthen the BTWC, including by adopting a legally binding Protocol to the Convention that provides for, inter alia, an efficient verification mechanism. The Ministers reasserted their support for ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and of its weaponization, including through negotiations to adopt a relevant legally binding multilateral instrument. They recognized the value of the updated Draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in 2014. They stressed that practical Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs), may also contribute to PAROS.
 16. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and stressed their strong commitment to nuclear disarmament and their support to the work on this subject during the session of 2022 of the Conference on Disarmament. They noted the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the People's Republic of China, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races on 3 January 2022, in particular the affirmation that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

17. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion of an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT-environment, underscored the importance of enhancing common understandings and intensifying cooperation in the use of ICTs and Internet. They supported the leading role of the United Nations in promoting constructive dialogue on ensuring ICT-security, including within the UN Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of ICTs 2021-2025, and developing a universal legal framework in this realm. They called for a comprehensive, balanced, objective approach to the development and security of ICT products and systems. They underscored the importance of establishing legal frameworks of cooperation among BRICS countries on ensuring security in the use of ICTs. They also acknowledged the need to advance practical intra-BRICS cooperation through implementation of the BRICS Roadmap of Practical Cooperation on ensuring security in the use of ICTs and the activities of the BRICS Working Group on security in the use of ICTs.
18. The Ministers supported information exchanges and technical cooperation on AI technology. They recalled the declaration of the 7th BRICS Communications Ministers meeting recognizing the rapid developments and huge potential of Artificial Intelligence technologies and its value to economic growth. They acknowledged the need to cooperate with each other to build trust, confidence and security, as well as transparency and accountability in promoting trustworthy AI to maximize its potential for the benefit of society and humanity as whole with specific emphasis on marginalized and vulnerable groups of population. They expressed their concerns on the risk, and ethical dilemma related to Artificial Intelligence, such as privacy, manipulation, bias, human-robot interaction, employment, effects and singularity among others. They encouraged BRICS members to work together to deal with such concerns, sharing best practices, conduct comparative study on the subject toward developing a common governance approach which would guide BRICS members on Ethical and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence while facilitating the development of AI.
19. The Ministers, while emphasizing the formidable potential of the ICTs for growth and development, recognized new associated possibilities they bring for criminal activities and threats, and expressed concern over the rising level and complexity of criminal misuse of ICTs. They welcomed the ongoing work in the UN Open-Ended Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes and reaffirmed their commitment to cooperating in the implementation of the mandate adopted by the UN General Assembly resolution 75/282.
20. The Ministers reiterated the need for all countries to cooperate in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms under the principles of equality and mutual respect. They agreed to continue to treat all human rights including the right to development in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis. They agreed to strengthen cooperation on issues of common interests both within BRICS and in multilateral fora including the United Nations General Assembly and Human Rights Council, taking into account the necessity to promote, protect and fulfil human rights in a non-selective, non-politicised and constructive manner and without double standards.
21. The Ministers called for the respect of democracy and human rights. In this regard, they underlined that they should be implemented on the level of global governance as well as at national level. They reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all with the aim to build a brighter shared future for the international community based on mutually beneficial cooperation.
22. The Ministers commended China's Chairship for hosting the Dialogue session under the theme "Increased Role of Emerging Markets and Developing Countries in Global Governance".

23. The Ministers recalled the BRICS efforts of extending its cooperation to other developing countries and emerging markets and supported further promoting the BRICS Outreach and BRICS Plus Cooperation, in line with the updated Terms of Reference adopted by the BRICS Sherpas in 2021 through inclusive and equal-footed and flexible practices and initiatives.
24. The Ministers supported promoting discussions among BRICS members on BRICS expansion process. They stressed the need to clarify the guiding principles, the standards, criteria and procedures for this expansion process.
25. Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa extended their support to China's BRICS Chairship in 2022 under the theme of "Foster High-quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in a New Era for Global Development". They are fully committed to working together to ensure the success of the 14th BRICS Summit.

(Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China)