

**Media Statement:
Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations**

Pretoria, South Africa, June 4, 2018

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 4 June 2018 in Pretoria, South Africa.
2. The Ministers reflected on the importance of this year marking a decade of BRICS Summits, as a testimony to the fortitude of BRICS cooperation and reiterated the commitment to implement the outcomes and consensus of past BRICS Summits. The Ministers welcomed South Africa's Chairship and looked forward to the 10th BRICS Summit to be held under the theme, "BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution" and committed themselves to work together for a fruitful Johannesburg Summit.
3. The Ministers recalled the BRICS tradition of outreach to extend its cooperation to fellow developing and emerging economies. In this respect, the Ministers welcomed South Africa's two-pronged outreach approach through the BRICS-Africa Dialogue and the BRICS Plus cooperation, to be held during the Summit.
4. The Ministers expressed their gratitude to South Africa for hosting the Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations, contributing positively to the BRICS cooperation. The Ministers exchanged views on current issues of global significance in political, security, economic, financial and sustainable development spheres, as well as intra-BRICS cooperation.
5. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the United Nations, as the universal multilateral organisation entrusted with the mandate for maintaining international peace and security, advancing global development and to promoting and protecting human rights so as to build a brighter shared future for the global community.
6. They 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 reiterate the importance they attach to the status and role of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN.
7. The Ministers underscored the importance of sustained efforts aimed at making the United Nations more effective and efficient in implementing the mandates conferred upon it. In this regard, they committed to intensifying dialogue amongst the BRICS countries on the administration and budget of the United Nations, with a view to strengthening the Organization and preserving its Member State-driven character.
8. The Ministers expressed their support for continued cooperation of BRICS members in areas of mutual interest including through regular exchanges amongst their multilateral Missions.
9. The Ministers also reconfirmed the commitment to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to equitable, inclusive, open, all-round innovation-driven and sustainable development, in its three dimensions– economic, social and environmental in a balanced and integrated manner. The Ministers pledged their support for the important role of the United Nations, including the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), in coordinating and reviewing global implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and support the need to reform the UN Development System with a view to enhancing its capability in supporting member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda. They

urged developed countries to honor their Official Development Assistance commitments in time and in full and provide more development resources to developing countries.

10. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to tackling climate change. They welcomed the entry into force of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which reflects the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. They expressed hope to complete the Paris Agreement Work Programme at COP 24. They drew attention to the importance of strengthening cooperation to face the challenges brought by climate change, which requires financial flows and technology transfer. They therefore urged developed countries to fulfill their commitments in this regard.

11. The Ministers reiterated BRICS commitment to multilateralism and a rules-based international order and in this regard reaffirmed the centrality of UN, WTO and international law. The Ministers pledged their support to efforts towards making global governance more representative with greater participation of emerging markets and developing countries in global decision making.

12. The Ministers emphasized the importance of an open and inclusive world economy enabling all countries and peoples to share the benefits of globalization. They underlined their firm commitment to free trade, and the centrality of a rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO. They opposed the new wave of protectionism and the systematic impact of unilateral measures that are incompatible with WTO rules, and undermines global trade, and economic growth. In this regard, they reiterated that the WTO Dispute Settlement System is a cornerstone of the MTS as it is designed to enhance security and predictability in international trade.

13. The Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to foster a global economic governance architecture that is more effective and reflective of current global economic landscape, increasing the voice and representation of emerging markets and developing economies. They reaffirmed their commitment to conclude the IMF's 15th General Review of Quotas, including a new quota formula, by the 2019 Spring Meetings. They will continue to support the implementation of the World Bank Group Shareholding Review. The Ministers welcomed the institutional progress of the New Development Bank (NDB), including the upcoming establishment of the Americas Regional Office in São Paulo, Brazil, which, alongside the Africa Regional Centre (ARC), will help the NDB consolidate its presence in those continents.

14. The Ministers deplored the continued terrorist attacks, including in some BRICS countries. They condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever committed and by whomsoever. They urged concerted efforts to counter terrorism under the UN auspices on a firm international legal basis, and expressed their conviction that a comprehensive approach was necessary to ensure effective fight against terrorism. They recalled the responsibility of all States to prevent financing of terrorist networks and terrorist actions from their territories. The Ministers highly value the 3rd BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group Meeting held in Nelspruit on 19 and 20 April 2018. They called upon for an expedited adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the UN General Assembly.

15. The Ministers expressed concern over the ongoing conflict and heightened tensions in the Middle-East region, especially with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian situation. The Ministers reiterate the need for renewed diplomatic efforts to achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid Principles, the Arab Peace Initiative and previous agreements between the parties through negotiations with a view to create an independent, viable, territorially contiguous Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel. The Ministers reiterated that the status of Jerusalem is one of the final status issues to be defined in the context of negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

16. The Ministers reiterated their countries' support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). They commend the vital role it plays in providing health, education and other basic services for almost 5.3 million Palestinian refugees and underscored its

relevance to bringing stability to the region and the need for ensuring a more adequate, sufficient, predictable and sustained funding for the Agency.

17. The ongoing conflict in the Republic of Yemen is a further concern, having become a major humanitarian crisis. The Ministers urge all parties to fully respect international law to cease hostilities and to return to the UN brokered peace talks, leading to an inclusive Yemeni-led dialogue towards the achievement of a political solution to the conflict.

18. The Ministers reaffirmed their support to process of 'Afghan-led, Afghan-owned' national reconciliation process. The Ministers expressed their concern over the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan particularly the increase in the number and intensity of terrorist-related attacks on the Afghan National Security Forces, the Government and civilians. The Ministers called on the international community to assist the government and the people of Afghanistan with stabilising the security situation in the country as well as for the return of dialogue with the objective of working towards the realisation of peace in the country and an inclusive political process. The Ministers also welcomed the Parliamentary elections which are scheduled to be held in October 2018 and the Presidential elections in 2019.

19. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment for a political resolution of the conflict in Syria, through an inclusive "Syrian-led, Syrian-owned" political process which safeguards the state sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Syria, in pursuance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015) and taking into account the result of the Congress of the Syrian National Dialogue in Sochi. They reiterated their support for the Geneva process and the mediation offered by the UN, as well as the Astana process, and stressed the complementarity between the two initiatives. They expressed their support to the efforts by Russia to advance the Syrian national dialogue. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a peaceful resolution in Syria. They expressed their opposition to measures that run contrary to the UN Charter and the authority of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and do not contribute to advancing the political process. They also highlighted the importance of unity in the fight against terrorist organizations in Syria in full observance of the relevant UNSC Resolutions. The Ministers reiterated their strong condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by any party, for any purpose and under any circumstances and renewed calls for comprehensive, objective, independent, and transparent investigations of all alleged incidents. The Ministers called for enhancing efforts to provide necessary humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people bearing in mind urgent reconstruction needs.

20. The Ministers recalled the importance that all relevant parties of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear issue fully comply with their obligations and ensure full and effective implementation of the JCPOA to promote international and regional peace and security.

21. The Ministers welcomed the recent developments to achieve the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and maintain peace and stability in North East Asia. The Ministers reaffirmed the commitment for peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation.

22. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the elaboration under the UN auspices of rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviour of States in ensuring security in the use of ICTs.

23. The Ministers expressed their concern over the growth of criminal misuse of ICTs and in this regard reiterated the need to develop an international universal legally binding instrument on combatting criminal use of ICTs within the UN. The Ministers acknowledged the work to promote cooperation according to the BRICS Roadmap of Practical Cooperation on Ensuring Security in the Use of ICTs or any other mutually agreed mechanism. Ministers acknowledge the initiative of the Russian Federation on a BRICS intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in ensuring security in the use of ICTs and look forward to its consideration at the upcoming meeting of the National Security Advisors/High Representatives in Durban.

24. The Ministers commended African countries and the African Union on the signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as an important step to economic integration on the continent and the unlocking of the tremendous potential of intra-African trade and addressing the socio-economic challenges. In this regard the Ministers reiterated their support for Agenda 2063 and efforts to promote continental integration and development.

25 The Ministers underlined the importance of the upcoming meeting of the National Security Advisors/High Representatives in Durban. They also highlighted their support for the meeting of BRICS Deputy Ministers/Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa, in taking BRICS dialogue further.

26. The Ministers look forward to the next meeting on the margins of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Source: [Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Republic of South Africa](#)