

Civil BRICS Forum Statement

Appeal to the BRICS leaders

We, the participants of the Civil BRICS Forum, highly appreciate the Russian Presidency initiative to launch the first ever BRICS civil society consultative process. Civil society inclusion into the discussion of the BRICS agenda is crucial, since it

- increases the legitimacy of and participation in the decision-making process;
 - provides for constructive dialogue between civil societies of BRICS countries;
 - provides platform between civil societies and BRICS governments;
 - mobilizes civil society stakeholders and ensures efficacious implementation of decisions taken;
- allows for awareness raising, social mobilization, service delivery, training, research, and advocacy;
 - promotes transparency, monitoring and evaluation of commitments;
 - encourages cross-national civil society dialogue with the involvement of other countries, especially global South.

It is time for BRICS to help formulate and implement a new path of economic and social development based on the needs and aspirations of the people of developing world. BRICS civil societies, as well as other participants of the global political dialogue, are ready to bear their share of responsibility for overcoming inequality and poverty, promoting social justice, healthy environment, human rights and peace and security in our countries.

Civil BRICS Forum was driven by seven thematic working groups established in accordance with the priorities of the Russian BRICS Presidency in

2015 and covered the topics of healthcare, education and science, culture and intercivilizational dialogue, sustainable development, peace and security, economics and trade, harmonization of interethnic affairs. Since the early days of the Russian Presidency these groups worked on the preparation of the recommendations to the BRICS leaders. The result is the "green book"- a collection of draft recommendations prepared by the Russian delegation and discussed at the Forum June 29 — July 1, 2015.

We hope that the experience of the first Civil BRICS process is further elaborated and continued by next BRICS presidencies. Following the proposed process we ask the BRICS leaders to support the establishment of the national coordinating mechanisms for the BRICS Civil process.

We support elaboration of a coordinated civil BRICS position for the “Group of Twenty” agenda issues and at other international institutions. We also support coordination on issues within the framework of Civil 20 and Civil BRICS.

The main recommendations of the working groups we want to pay particular attention are as follows:

Healthcare

1. Strengthening public health action at national, regional and global levels by promoting health literacy, ensuring access to clean water, food security, sovereignty and nutrition, immunization and vaccination, chemoprophylaxis and treatment, improved disease surveillance, prevention and control of infectious diseases and lifestyle diseases, by also enhancing the participation of civil society in public health-related decision making and for implementation and monitoring of activities.

2. Promoting and expanding equitable access to health care and medicines for all groups of populations through enhanced public financing and predominant public provisioning of healthcare by building and strengthening health systems that are universal, integrated and comprehensive. Such health systems should have the capacity to prevent and treat communicable diseases such

as malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, and others. They should also be capable of scaling up efforts for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. Health systems should be accountable to the State and communities. Take measures to meet the challenges posed by contemporary viral pandemics that travel quickly across continents. Establish a special fund for public health development within the framework of the New Development Bank.

3. Securing and expanding access to safe and affordable medicines by adequately resourcing public health systems and by ensuring the full use of flexibilities under the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The BRICS should examine the need for reform of the TRIPS Agreement on the basis of consideration of global health needs. Also promoting collaboration among BRICS countries to promote transfer of technology for expansion of local manufacturing of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and medical devices in all the BRICS countries.

4. Promoting a BRICS coordination and sustainable financing mechanism for research and development of new medicines, diagnostics and vaccines related to unmet public health needs and neglected diseases, so as to delink the cost of innovation from the price of medical products, and thus make available and accessible new medical products on an equitable basis.

Education and science

1. As one of the foremost national priorities in and across all BRICS nations, education and science, including research, requires adequate funding at all levels with the objective of achieving equity, excellence and competitiveness. All BRICS nations should ensure equal access to education irrespective of gender, physical and learning ability, race, religion, and socio-economic status.

2. For the BRICS nations to be competitive, high standards and inclusive and equitable access to education are paramount. Some of the proposals for the governments and educational authorities to consider and implement could include creating a BRICS education and learning web portal offering multi-disciplinary,

multilingual Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs); an e-library that houses research publications and other educational resources; translating educational resources into BRICS languages; promote academic mobility, research partnerships, fellowships, scholarships, internships and jobs among BRICS countries.

3. Training the teachers and trainers remains a key priority for all BRICS countries and emphasis must be given to this crucial area. Similarly, all BRICS countries must collaborate on professional development of educators, researchers and education administrators. Similarly, they could consider developing a BRICS-wide matrix for curricula and educational standards.

4. Civil BRICS Forum supports the establishment of BRICS University League, BRICS Network University, BRICS Network Research Center.

Cultural cooperation

1. Realization of the agreed actions directed on increase of the status of national and world cultural and natural heritage in public life of BRICS countries and inclusion of issues of preservation and use of heritage objects, including their involvement into programs and plans of social and economic development of BRICS countries.

2. Investment into intercultural training and interaction of BRICS countries in sphere of culture, including mutual education in national language, translation and printing of the most prominent writings, production of television programs and creation of specialized resources in the information network, realization of joint cultural projects that promote cultural wealth on high technical and artistic level.

3. Raising awareness and promoting cooperation among government bodies of different levels, organizations and expert community of BRICS countries in the sphere of sharing of experience on effective national and international management in sphere of culture, including through the creation of information and communication centers of BRICS; the creation of permanent, networking

experts community in the fields of culture and civil initiatives of BRICS countries.

Sustainable development

1. BRICS countries shall cooperate and create a concrete roadmap to combat poverty and reduce extreme inequalities, especially those affecting women, through social, economic and environmental justice. This shall be done via work with CSOs (e.g. sharing best practices in the South, SDGs, New Development Bank etc) as well as through ensuring equitable access to energy, health, education services, water, land rights, sanitation and other public services, reducing gender inequality and gender pay gap and ensuring fairer distribution through tax.

2. BRICS countries should support the global effort to respond to climate change and achieve SDGs by sharing best practices in environmental and oceans protection, sustainable production, green technology, responsible consumption behaviors and green investments and energy efficiency. Technology banks and IPR pools should be considered for the ease of access to sustainable growth. Governments must work together with civil societies to develop a progressive emission intensity reduction roadmap. We urge the BRICS countries to double energy efficiency by 2030 and increase the mix of renewables in incremental energy capacities.

3. Sustainable and resilient farming is a key element to ensure food security and food justice by combating poverty and hunger. Special attention should be paid to responsible public and private investment in agriculture and rural development and increase of livelihood levels of the poor. Climate adapted and ecologically sound food systems guarantee continuous access of the vulnerable groups to nutritional and healthy food. Food and nutrition security shall become part of the country's developmental and economic strategy. Cooperation and research on cultivation and biotechnology should be guided by the public sector and focused on the enhancement of the nutritional quality of food.

4. New Development Bank should support sustainable and "inclusive" development and the SDGs, rather than another investment bank. It should work to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality in income, wealth and ensure access to basic needs for all, women in particular. The Bank should reflect transparency, accountability and participation and be based on the highest environmental, social and governance standards and safeguards. Important directions of the Bank's should be green investments, sustainable farming and food production, and food justice. We urge BRICS governments to develop mechanism of CSO and expert community participation in all aspects of the Bank's operation.

5. CSOs should be actively involved in development and implementation of the sustainable development policy at national and BRICS levels through participation in the BRICS Environmental Ministries Working Group and other BRICS bodies and meetings. BRICS countries must promote social entrepreneurship.

Economy and trade

1. To support establishment of an open, participatory and independent web based institution facilitating discussions on the most important areas of common interest, such as Economic Policy Coordination, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, Access to Financing, Small Businesses, Digital Economy, Intellectual Property Regime, Food Security, Culture, Education and some sectoral panels on Energy, Aerospace, Agriculture, Mining, etc.

2. To boost cooperation and coordinate positions on trade policy at the multilateral level (WTO, G20) and through bilateral negotiations in order to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth and SDGs.

3. To enable a dialogue on commodity trade transparency and predictability and to ensure protection from illegal mining and exploitation of labor as well as environmental degradation.

4. To concentrate efforts towards technological cooperation and the realization of joint technological projects, including e-commerce, as well as on balanced IP rights regulation in order to meet trade and development needs.

Peace and security

1. BRICS civil society representatives recognize that peace and security are indispensable for development. BRICS civil society representatives note that new confrontations and contests are on the rise in several regions. Civil societies of the BRICS urge all countries to respect international law and strengthen and develop mechanisms of peaceful conflict resolution as per the UN Charter.

2. On the 70th Anniversary of the UN we strongly urge that all countries reaffirm and renew their commitment to the founding principles of non-aggression and peaceful coexistence as enshrined in the UN Charter. We recommend creating the specialized BRICS mechanism on International Law (Hub of International Law) for regular consultation and exchange of information for strengthening international law. The BRICS Parliamentary Forum, created at the initiative of Russian Presidency, could be one of the mechanisms for such efforts.

3. New and emerging weapons and technologies pose dangers to global stability and balance of power. BRICS must cooperate on supporting new conversations on non-proliferation and arms control regime to manage such weapons.

4. BRICS Civil Society representatives note that concrete priority areas of cooperation may include Countering Terrorism, International Cybersecurity, Drug trafficking, Money-Laundering, etc. One new area BRICS countries could address together, and in consultation with the global community is the threat of catastrophic collisions of asteroids and comet nuclei with the Earth.

5. BRICS Civil Society representatives support the government initiatives to collaborate on HADR. The governments must enhance collaboration on responding to the increasing incidents of natural disasters and should assist in building institutions and capacities within the BRICS and in their regions.

Strengthening diversity and pluralism

1. To develop and implement comprehensive legislation against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, beliefs, country and region of origin. The principle of equality remains fundamental, even if different countries adhere to different practices in the sphere of human rights as understood in the three UN main documents on human rights.

2. To strengthen and implement proactive policies and programs of action to promote and implement cultural diversity. First of all – in spheres of education, mass communications, economics, and law enforcement, aimed at promoting principles of equality and cultural diversity as the basis for civil unity. We insist on the priority of human rights during the development and implementation of policies in the abovementioned spheres.

3. To develop and implement national programs of adaptation and integration of migrants paying special attention to women and children. To ensure access to rights protection and legalization or refuge for migrants and asylum seekers respectively in line with international legal standards. Policies in this sphere need to adhere to the principles of human rights, humanism, and equality.

4. Role of civil society institutions has to be recognized in promoting tolerance, integration, and countering the discrimination against external and internal migrants. States should support existing civil society initiatives and social practices, develop partnership with civil society institutions for developing and implementing decisions in these spheres