



PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
**BRICS Think Tanks  
Workshop**  
**5th BRICS**  
**Academic Forum**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
**BRICS THINK TANKS WORKSHOP**  
AND **5<sup>TH</sup> BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM**

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## FOREWORD BY AMBASSADOR ANIL SOOKLAL

BRICS sous-SHERPA

Deputy Director-General: Asia and Middle East  
Department of International Relations and Cooperation, South Africa

The BRICS inter-governmental forum, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, aims to promote global peace, security, development and cooperation. BRICS countries seek to contribute significantly to the development of humanity and establish a more equitable and fair world.



This formation has received overwhelming global attention since its inception in 2009 and has incrementally assumed a catalyst role in advocating for change in the global security and financial architectures of the post-Second World War era, which are at great variance with current global realities and in need of urgent reform to deal with the common challenges of humanity and in particular developing countries in their quest for prosperity.

It was indeed an historic occasion for South Africa to host the Fifth BRICS Summit, the first time on African soil, which also coincided with the OAU/AU's 50th anniversary, as well as the customary preparatory meetings that preceded the Summit, notably that of the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum and the BRICS Think Tanks Workshop that led to the establishment of the BRICS Think Tank Council.

Since the inception of BRICS, our leaders recognised the need for leading research institutions and think tanks to lay the dynamic ground work for a BRICS public forum that would support dialogue and cooperation. Our leaders also called for a structure that could conduct joint research on identified topics at their request. The respective coordinating research institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the occasion of the Fourth BRICS Summit held in India. A notable achievement of the Fifth BRICS Summit, which was convened by South Africa on 27 March 2013 in eThekweni, Durban, was the establishment of the BRICS Think Tank Council.

Considering the sectoral expansion of the BRICS work programme, in-depth research and analysis is required from the participants at the annual Academic Forum meetings. The purpose of the Academic Forum meetings is further aimed at building a solid framework for cooperation among the

academics and research communities of the BRICS countries. The debates and discussions of the Academic Forum deliberately precede the Summits so that their recommendations can be presented to, and considered by, the BRICS leaders.

Academics are aware of the value of research, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, and capacity building to policy development. It is in the area of ideas where this Forum is critically placed to play an innovative and catalyst role in the BRICS architecture. Academics are the brain-trust that must analyse and enrich policy development within BRICS countries, as well as generate scientific knowledge to improve our understanding of the world. Cognisant that knowledge can be used to engender the hegemony of certain ideas, BRICS academics should act as vanguards of the shared BRICS vision of restructuring the global political, economic and financial architecture into one that is more equitable and balanced, and that rests on the important pillar of multilateralism, in the process raising public consciousness in their respective societies on critical global debates.

Our academics must ensure our critical distance in evaluating global best practices which are packaged as 'scientific' and 'objective' when in fact they are views of a particular interest group. In this sense, knowledge production is not a neutral exercise. It is highly contested and not immune from the political economy of power relations in society and the world.

The BRICS grouping of influential emerging countries is an amplified voice for emerging economies and developing countries globally and acts as a caucus on the margins of international fora as required. The contemporary literature on BRICS juxtaposes the perceived relative decline of the West's traditional political and economic power to that of the ascendancy of BRICS and other rising emerging countries' economic and political power, usually in terms of classical zero sum game theory, which is contrary to the narrative of BRICS governments that aims to seek global solutions to global challenges in a more equitable manner. In a short space of time, the agenda for cooperation and consultation between the BRICS member states has expanded to encompass issues ranging from diplomacy to finance, agriculture, health, science and technology, business links, developmental matters and, of course, academic exchanges.

It is evident that BRICS is already a global player. While the BRICS nations are occasionally competitors, they choose to emphasise their commonalities and synergies with a view to offer each other ever-expanding opportunities

on their common path towards achieving development and prosperity for their people.

The summit theme of the Fifth BRICS Summit and Academic Forum was informed by the ever closer relationship between BRICS and Africa. BRICS countries have been instrumental in Africa's own repositioning on the global stage and have served as a buffer against the shocks of the global financial crisis. BRICS leaders have pledged cooperation to support Africa's development agenda, particularly by increasing financial aid to build infrastructure and industrial capacity, and by increasing imports of value-added manufactured products from the continent.

From the perspective of South Africa, we view Africa as the new global growth centre, and BRICS countries are well positioned to become leading investors in and trade partners to the continent with strong exponential growth potential for the future. The Summit theme emphasises the African Union's own prioritisation of infrastructure development and industrialisation and will also contribute to the sharing of related international and regional approaches and best practices between BRICS and Africa.

Finally, our cooperation in the BRICS context is grounded on our respective strong and cordial bilateral relationships, which provide the rationale for our shared vision and aspirations to achieve a more equitable global order and prosperity for our own as well as the global citizenry.

I therefore recognise the invaluable contributions of participants in the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum and BRICS Think Tank Workshop to an ongoing and deepening academic reflection on the BRICS Grouping and the way forward in a complex and ever-changing world. I trust that these debates will deepen and broaden in future Academic Fora.

## PROLOGUE BY DR SIPHAMANDLA ZONDI

HEAD OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION TO THE 5<sup>th</sup> BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM

Director: Institute for Global Dialogue

When South Africa hosted the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban, in March 2013, it marked the coming into full swing of the evolution of this growing club of emerging and developing countries. South Africa's entry into this body expanded the demographic, economic and political capital of this growing catalyst in international diplomacy, making it one of the most important diplomatic clubs and geopolitical alliances in the post-Cold War era. The club represents roughly three billion people – more than a third of the world population – straddling poor and emerging continents. BRICS countries contributed 55% of the growth of PPP-adjusted GDP in 2008. The first four summits had established a recognisable framework for BRICS agency in international relations that continued to be marked by power asymmetry between the Euro-North American geopolitical centre of the world and the many other centres in what is supposed to be a polycentric international system.



By the time of the Durban Summit, BRICS had developed its common positions on the need for global economic reform in order to enable the world to cope with and overcome the vagaries of the global economic crisis that manifested in European and North American economies in the period after 2008. These include the democratisation of decision making in international finance institutions, more reliable ODA flows, greater support for industrialisation in the developing world and so forth. It embraced the emergence and the growing role of the G20 as a relatively representative body for the management of international economic co-operation during the period of economic crisis. It promoted the diversification of sources of development finance for poor countries facing cuts in funding from OECD countries that are battling the effects of the economic crisis. BRICS had already placed at the centre of its strategic vision the importance of international development and global development partnerships, with the emphasis on the full implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the successful completion of the work on development effectiveness under the auspices of the High-Level Plan on Aid Effectiveness. Its position on international security reflected the general consensus of the global south regarding the

need for the reform of the UN Security Council by expanding seats, including veto-wielding permanent seats, in order to ensure the representation of all regions of the world as well as greater security cooperation against the scourges of piracy, terrorism and internationally organised crime. There are many other positions.

As the Durban Summit approached, an urgent need to give a special focus to the BRICS agenda on the African continent was felt. Hence, the Summit met under the theme *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation*, thus positioning itself to think carefully about the more fundamental challenges facing Africa and the south in a global economy that assigns them the role of suppliers of raw material and cheap labour, the epicentres of global poverty in a world that is seeing growing economic prosperity. This meant also that BRICS would take further the commitments it made at the Fourth Summit in India in 2012, especially the idea of responding to the needs identified by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the need to diversify the structures of economic production in Africa in order to unlock its immense economic potential. As the theme suggested, this could be done by supporting and strengthening regional integration as a premise for the continent to achieve collective self-reliance, supporting infrastructure development as an enabler for industrial development, and pledging incentives for the industrialisation of African economies. This was a radical idea, even if it was not taken to its logical conclusion, for Africa's external assistance for six decades has willfully avoided support that enables it to stand on its feet economically; rather, it has promoted economic dependency that keeps Africa permanently subservient to western economies.

On the sidelines of the Durban Summit, as has become customary in BRICS business, there are several track-two platforms, and chief among them were the Think Tanks Workshop and Academic Forum.

The BRICS Think Tanks workshop of 8 and 9 March 2013 saw the establishment of the BRICS Think Tanks Council, which provides a platform for the exchange of ideas among researchers, academia and think tanks, and the convening of the BRICS Academic Forum. The BRICS Think Tanks Council agreed on a process for finalising the joint long-term vision document for BRICS on the basis of the Indian draft, with inputs from other BRICS countries, in pursuance of paragraph 17 of the Delhi Declaration.

The Academic Forum brought together thinkers from BRICS countries to intellectually engage with the theme of the summit, broken down into five

subjects: the global economy; the reform of institutions of global governance; cooperation on Africa; education, research and skills development; and peace and security. Research papers were presented by delegates and extensive interactive discussions held as the basis for generating policy recommendations that were agreed to and communicated to the BRICS leaders at the Summit.

This report provides a synthesis of the discussions conducted over two days of the Academic Forum. Because naturally papers presented at a forum of this nature would be uneven in length, tenor and depth, it is always wise to generate a synthesis report that evens out the discussions, truly reflecting in full the actual discussions rather than being a mere compilation of papers. This allows for teasing out tendencies in the discussions, and areas of convergence of ideas and areas where there were disagreements, while keeping the record of proceedings focused on the purpose set out or the thematic focus decided on. A proceeding of this nature must, of course, be useful for both academic audiences looking for a sense of the ideas communicated and discussed during the meeting, and a non-academic readership hoping for information that might be useful to think about for purposes of developing and refining policies. This book attempts to do this, mindful of the fact that a proceedings report must not then manufacture the consistency and complete synergy normally found in authored books.

With the book being structured as a proceedings record, it follows the themes or subjects discussed, helping a reader not familiar with the structure of the forum meetings to get a sense of it to the extent possible. It is also much easier to construct a proceedings record around themes, in order that both papers presented and interactive discussions feature cohesively. For instance, the thematic section of the book on the global economy shows that there was a wide-ranging and critical focus on global governance in general, as well as on international economic governance, trade and development. In regard to cooperation with Africa, the respective section details the various positions taken with regard to the very idea of Africa in the BRICS agenda, given the fact that individual BRICS countries have bilateral engagements with the continent, and how these coalesce around the idea of cohesion in BRICS engagement in order to avoid duplication and the burdening of Africa with desperate assistance and cooperation. The interface between political and economic considerations should also be of interest. The deliberations on education, research and skills development point to the implications of the geopolitics of global knowledge, which are marked by the ego-politics of concentration of control in a few countries of the global north, relegating others to consumers or mimicry. The ideas put forward

with regard to the urgency of education and research cooperation as well as the exchange of essential skills therefore seek to some extent to respond to this deep challenge of knowledge in an unchanged world order. The essence of any development trajectory is premised on peace and security and the forum recognised this, underlining the catalytic role to be played by BRICS in respect of both regional and international conflict by promoting, fostering and supporting sustainable and comprehensive solutions to the roots of conflict, violence and injustice in the international system.

We must state upfront that there were difficulties in receiving all the papers in time for the generation of this proceedings record, but this book is a decent record of the proceedings of the BRICS Think Tanks Workshop and the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum. The book of proceedings was compiled by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation with the record of proceedings by the Human Sciences Research Council, which is currently incubating the South African BRICS Think Tank. Full Circle and the publisher, the Africa Institute of South Africa, were also most helpful in the production of the book.



The Fifth BRICS Summit held in eThekweni, Durban, South Africa, from 25 – 27 March 2013



From left, President Xi of China, President Rousseff of Brazil, President Zuma of South Africa, President Putin of Russia and Prime Minister Singh of India enjoy a show during the Fifth BRICS Summit



Group photo at the BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum held on the margins of the Fifth BRICS Summit

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MINISTER MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE

MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATIONS, SOUTH AFRICA

Delivered at the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum on 10 March 2013

eThekweni, Durban, South Africa

Honourable Dr Nzimande

Minister of Higher Education and Training,

Honourable Ministers and members of the

BRICS Inter-Ministerial Committee,

Your Worship, Councillor James Nxumalo,

Mayor of the eThekweni Municipality and our

gracious host of the welcome dinner for the

BRICS Academic Forum,

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors from BRICS

countries,

Distinguished members of the official delegations from our BRICS partner

countries to the Academic Forum,

Distinguished members of the Advisory Committee,

Ladies and gentlemen



It is my distinct honour and privilege to deliver the keynote address at the welcome dinner for the BRICS Academic Forum. I wish to extend warm greetings and a hearty South African welcome on behalf of President Zuma, the Government and the people of South Africa.

It is indeed a momentous occasion for South Africa to host the Fifth BRICS Summit, the first time on African soil.

The BRICS Summit process has its origins in the extraordinary vision of our founding leaders, who constituted this grouping at a time of global uncertainty and transition during the global economic and financial crisis. The dire need for providing additional impetus to global governance reform debates was recognised. The growing interdependence between world nations required joint efforts to address common challenges.

Our leaders urged us to establish this Forum out of recognition of the importance of ideas in the realisation of the vision and objectives of BRICS. As academics, you will all be well aware of the important value of research, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, and capacity building in policy development. This Forum has a vital role to play in the generation of ideas

within the BRICS architecture. You are the brain trust that must enrich policy development within BRICS and in the BRICS countries, and generate scientific knowledge to improve our understanding of the world and our environment.

You are best positioned to make this valuable contribution when you are fully engaged. The Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire, emphasised the dialectic of scientific inquiry and practice in knowledge production in his most famous book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* when he wrote: “For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.”

However, knowledge can be used to engender the hegemony of certain ideas, in the process manufacturing consent and the legitimacy of particular interests in society. There are a set of ideas that we take for granted today and consider self-evident because they were packaged for us as ‘scientific’ and ‘objective’ when in fact they are views of a particular class or group of people. In this sense, knowledge production is not a neutral exercise. It is highly contested and not immune from the political economy of power relations in society and the world.

Accordingly, the North-South disparities in knowledge production and the content of today’s dominant ideas reflect the inequalities and power imbalance that characterise our global system. Therefore, if BRICS is to be a factor in the current global system, we must extend our engagement to the terrain of ideas.

As the intelligentsia, you have an opportunity to play your part in shaping the 21st century given your function in society of observing, analysing and influencing policy direction in the reconfiguration of the global landscape.

The world is currently experiencing a quiet and yet profound shift from the old locus of political, economic and social power to a multipolar system with BRICS countries as the catalysts and drivers. In essence, the BRICS concept and its associated forums represent a counter to hegemonic unilateral creation of knowledge into a more pluralistic co-determination of knowledge production and policy agenda setting that recognises multiple centres of human civilisation.

In this regard, you have an important role to play in demystifying unilateral hegemonic pretenses of the universality of the current dominant paradigm

into a positive force that recognises human diversity and the potential contribution that each knowledge base can make to human development. If this Forum is to be effective, it must contribute to emancipating plurality of discourse with the sole purpose of advancing humanity.

Indeed, the BRICS countries have produced many prominent scholars for centuries whose works continue to survive the passage of time and influence generation after generation. China's Confucius has had an influence on humanity for more than two thousand years. Amartya Sen is yet another example – he did not only win the prestigious Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1998 for his work in welfare economics, but he was also instrumental in the creation of the widely used United Nations Human Development Index. Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace* has been immortalised in many languages in movies, music and theatre, among others.

We have given to humanity Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, who continue to inspire millions all over the world.

Gautama Buddha, the father of Buddhism, is the son of India.

The intelligentsia was in the forefront of the struggle in our respective countries, challenging hegemonic ideas and generating alternative knowledge.

Therefore, when we challenge you to stand up against the apparatus of knowledge production whose ideas dominate the world in favour of one side, we are not asking you to do something that you have not done before or that you are not currently doing. We challenge you to marshal your forces through BRICS for effectiveness and higher impact.

The emergence of BRICS has not been well received by all of us. On the one hand, there are those who do not have a positive appreciation of BRICS because they believe that its continued existence will threaten the status quo and tamper with the current international balance of forces. On the other end, there are critics of BRICS who regard it as a body of so-called 'sub-imperialist' countries that are joining the club of traditional powers. These critics talk of what they call a 'new scramble' for Africa, comparing the growing interest on our continent by BRICS countries to the late 19th century when European colonial powers partitioned Africa among themselves.

What these two groups of critics have in common is their lack of appreciation of multipolarity for the geopolitical health of our international system. The first group views multipolarity in a negative sense, as a threat; while the

second group would much rather remain under the old system than see it being shaken up by emerging players from the South.

To see BRICS countries as 'sub-imperialist' is the result of a dogmatic application of classical notions of imperialism and the center-periphery model of American sociologist and world-systems analyst Immanuel Wallerstein, to a situation that is fundamentally different from what these theories were trying to explain. Our scholars have to be innovative and courageous enough to develop new tools of analysis and theoretical models when history challenges us to do so.

It is reminiscent of a warning author Franz Fanon made in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* that: "It so happens that the unpreparedness of the educated classes, the lack of practical links between them and the mass of the people, their laziness, and, let it be said, their cowardice at the decisive moment of the struggle will give rise to tragic mishaps". The tragic mishap in this case is that such intellectuals will be left behind and rendered irrelevant by history.

A poignant question being posed today is whether BRICS represents a real paradigm shift, or whether new role players are just assuming traditional balance-of-power positions. BRICS leaders have clearly signalled that they do not compete with any country or grouping and in fact wish to transform the former model of cooperation based on a zero-sum relationship in favour of more equitable and sustainable global partnerships. For this reason, the theme selected for the Summit was *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation*. This approach constitutes a plurilateral or, using the older idiom, a multipolar structure of international relations.

When South Africa planned the hosting of the Summit and held related meetings, we reflected on the existing synergies within the grouping and appreciated that the academic and business forums as well as our think tank network are critical components of our people-to-people interaction and that their salient relevance vis-à-vis the BRICS leadership needs to be emphasised.

It is therefore particularly significant that the Summit theme has been adopted as the theme for the Academic Forum this year.

The BRICS Academic Forum endeavours to complement and supplement the BRICS Leaders Summit and the official consultation process amongst

officials and ministries of the respective BRICS countries. This Forum seeks to collectively offer viable and timely advice and recommendations to government leaders of BRICS to support policy making, the adoption of best practices, the exploration of new frameworks, and assistance in the implementation of existing and new schemes and programmes. This Forum also serves as our 'alter ego' which will analyse our agendas and critique them, often in a robust manner.

What make BRICS timely and historic are a few factors which need to be emphasised.

Firstly, a common history brings the BRICS countries together. This history distinguishes the BRICS countries from the traditional powers. It is a history of struggle against colonialism and underdevelopment, in the spirit of Bandung, the first ever Asia-Africa conference, which helped guide a new philosophy of human rights for colonised nations in 1955. Circumstances of history have put these countries on the same side.

Secondly, the BRICS countries have common challenges as developing nations. In South Africa, we refer to the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment. We have set in motion processes to grow our economy and expand our infrastructure, among others. Other BRICS member states are dealing with similar challenges that differ in scale and degree.

Thirdly, we are driven by shared interests not only in the definition of our respective national interests as individual BRICS countries; we also share a common vision of the world of the future.

Fourthly, each of the BRICS countries works for a true partnership with Africa, and this resonates well with us because Africa is the centrepiece of our foreign policy. The theme chosen for this Summit is a testimony to the consensus that exists among the BRICS countries on the importance of forging a true and effective partnership with the African continent.

The Summit theme acknowledges the various engagement activities of BRICS countries vis-à-vis the African continent.

Viewing Africa as the new global growth centre, BRICS countries are emerging as the new largest investors and trade partners to the continent with strong exponential growth potential for the future.

The Summit theme emphasises the African Union's own prioritisation of infrastructure development and industrialisation and will also contribute to the sharing of related international and regional approaches and best practices between BRICS and Africa.

Finally, bilateral relations among BRICS countries are on the increase and improving across many sectors, most notably in political cooperation and the economy. We are frank and open to each other.

I have perused your programme, which is very impressive, and comprehensive enough to cover the core issues that are on the agenda of the BRICS leaders. I look forward to receiving your recommendations at the end of your deliberations. As with previous Academic Forums, the leaders will study your recommendations closely and use them to inform their decisions.

In respect of the themes posed for deliberation, I wish to make some preliminary reflections.

In the context of the global financial situation, BRICS economies have become the engines for sustainable global growth and during the financial crisis served as the anchor for low-income countries through their economic relationships with these countries. The overarching risk for all of us, however, remains that of sustainability. This takes several forms, the most important of which revolves around inclusiveness, dealing with inequality and creating jobs.

Indeed we meet at a time of global uncertainty, which requires that we consider issues of mutual interest and systemic importance in order to explore shared concerns and develop solutions. The prevailing global economic system is regulated by institutions which were conceived in circumstances when the global economy was characterised by very different challenges and opportunities. We also need to focus our 'lenses' from a more BRICS-specific perspective as opposed to adhering to traditional views.

As emerging economies become more integrated and interdependent, they increasingly shape the global economy and influence its dynamics. BRICS offers an historic opportunity to explore new models and approaches towards more equitable development and inclusive global growth by emphasising complementarities and building on our respective economic strengths.

The G20 has become an important player in the reform of the global economic architecture, including the Bretton Woods Institutions. In its work, the G20 should continue to prioritise development.

Furthermore, BRICS considers the United Nations (UN) to be the foremost multilateral forum entrusted with bringing about hope, peace, order and sustainable development to the world. The UN enjoys universal membership and is at the centre of global governance and multilateralism.

We express our strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the UN playing the leading role in dealing with global challenges and threats. In this regard, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council. These changes will make the UN more representative, effective, legitimate and efficient, so that it can successfully deal with global challenges.

In respect of education, research and skills development of building industrialising economies, a 2011 UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) study found that in recent decades university-industry partnerships have moved high onto the policy agenda and are fast becoming a new and expanded phenomenon. The university-industry partnership is conceptualised as a means to bridge the perceived gap between the science base and the productive sector, which would allow new knowledge to be rapidly transformed into innovation. As previously stated, the BRICS Business and Academic Fora are critical to harnessing our skills development in this regard, and linkages between these fora need to be strengthened through joint initiatives.

The nexus of university and industry holds potential for economic development, entrepreneurship and job creation. We need to take advantage of the opportunities presented to us as governments aim to strengthen international partnerships in the pursuit of new knowledge and innovation for technology transfer opportunities.

Regarding our core Summit theme and our cooperation on the African continent, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our continental organisation, the OAU (Organisation of African Unity), this year, it is poignant that this coincides with the first BRICS Summit on African soil.

President Zuma will be convening a BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum Retreat immediately following the Fifth BRICS Summit to enable BRICS and African leaders to exchange views guided by the theme *Unlocking Africa's Potential: BRICS and Africa Cooperation on Infrastructure*. The Retreat will

reflect primarily on infrastructure development, as well as integration and industrialisation which are aligned to Africa's own priorities, to the mutual benefit of the BRICS countries and the Continent.

The theme on peace and security requires special focus from our academics, taking into account the various debates in this regard. From our perspective, the peaceful resolution of any conflict situation is paramount and we emphasise the importance of preventive diplomacy and mediation.

The AU has made significant progress in conflict resolution and peace building on the Continent through its peace and security architecture since its formation more than a decade ago. In order to enhance its role, we encourage BRICS to support closer collaboration with the AU peace and security architecture. Of particular importance is continued focus of the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) on formal cooperation between the UNSC and the AU PSC, as reflected in UNSC Resolution 2033 (2012) unanimously adopted by the Security Council under the South African Presidency in 2012.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the OAU, we should also remember a stalwart of Pan-Africanism, Dr W.E.B. Du Bois, who died in 1963 in Ghana, just a few months after the formation of the OAU.

At the height of the First World War in 1915, Dr Du Bois wrote his famous article entitled *The African Roots of War*, where he described what was contributing to the development and accumulation of wealth by the North while the South was being underdeveloped. He asked: "Whence comes this new wealth [that the North is accumulating] and on what does its accumulation depend? It comes primarily from the darker nations of the world – Asia and Africa, South and Central America, the West Indies and the islands of the South Seas." We need this analysis to distinguish the emerging global players of the South, some of whom are in BRICS, from the traditional powers.

When Dr Du Bois visited China in 1959, he was so moved by the revolution there that when he addressed Peking University during his tour he proclaimed: "Africa, arise, face the rising sun! ... China is flesh of your flesh and blood of your blood."

Since then China has risen and Africa is rising.

I can anticipate the vibrant debates that will take place over the next few days and I wish you a successful engagement. I trust you will enjoy the warm hospitality that the city of eThekweni has to offer.

I thank you.

# ADDRESS BY MINISTER BLADE NZIMANDE

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING, SOUTH AFRICA

Delivered at the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum on 11 March 2013  
eThekweni, Durban, South Africa

Deputy Minister of Higher Education and  
Training, Mr Mduduzi Manana

Ambassador Sooklal from the Department of  
International Relations and  
Cooperation

Dr Olive Shisana, Chief Executive Officer of the  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

Heads of delegations from the BRICS countries

Mr Logan Naidoo, Deputy Speaker of the  
eThekweni Municipality

Vice Chancellors here with us

Ladies and Gentlemen, colleagues from the five BRICS nations



It gives me great pleasure to be able to meet with you, academics and researchers from leading developing economies. For those of you who have come from outside South Africa, I'd like to welcome you warmly and I trust that you are being made to feel welcome by your South African colleagues and by all the South Africans that you come into contact with.

Our countries, the BRICS, are about to hold a summit to discuss matters of mutual interest in a quest to find ways to improve the living standards of all our people, to educate them and to keep them healthy. The summit will also seek to develop ways for our countries to cooperate with one another so as to create a better, fairer, more peaceful world. The BRICS grouping is neither a hegemony nor a power bloc. It seeks, rather, to enhance cooperation among some of the leading developing nations in order to promote global stability, security and prosperity.

All our countries face the crucial challenge of overcoming poverty, unemployment and inequality in our societies. For this, it is important that we develop policies and strategies to achieve sustained and sustainable economic growth and development, as well as an equitable distribution of resources among our people. These goals are, of course, not unique to the BRICS countries and are shared by other developing nations. These nations will follow the summit's deliberations closely and will be keenly interested

in the decisions that we take, particularly decisions involving the establishment of new development institutions such as the proposed BRICS Bank and the approach we take to the reform of the institutions of global governance.

The last two decades have seen a fundamental redistribution of global economic power and, accompanying this, of actual political influence. However, the architecture of global governance still reflects the international balance of forces at the end of the Second World War. The UN and some of its institutions, for instance, are outmoded and do not reflect the shift in the balance of forces that has taken place over the past two decades. The question is how to change the institutions of global governance not only to better reflect the current international balance of forces, but also to ensure that the voices and interests of all the world's people – including those who are currently weak and relatively voiceless – are taken into account.

The theme for the fifth BRICS Summit is *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation*.

Africa is currently the poorest and least developed continent. But it is also a continent in the early stages of rebirth and growth. Of course, this growth is not guaranteed – what looks promising can also go wrong. It is certainly in our interests as South Africans to ensure that it does not. But it is also in the interests of the other BRICS nations and indeed of the developed world that Africa must realise its potential.

The integration of the African economies is at an early stage. Although communications infrastructure is improving, it still has a long way to go. It is not possible to travel between many neighbouring countries by train, and railway infrastructure is mainly geared for getting raw materials to the coast for export, and not for moving goods and people around within countries or within the continent. Roads, especially major arterial roads, are in need of serious upgrading. Despite a large expansion of air travel routes in Africa, it is still often easier to fly from one African country to another via Europe rather than directly. Industry, in general, is still weak – especially outside of the raw-material, extractive industries.

But despite these challenges, Africa's fortunes are changing for the better. Economic growth rates are increasing in many of our countries – new infrastructure is being built, communication systems and electronic connectivity are expanding, and the manufacturing industry, though still weak, is starting to expand. BRICS countries are partners in a number of development projects, particularly with regard to infrastructure development. There is

a direct interest in extending cooperation between all the BRICS countries and Africa to support the continent's development agenda, especially as it relates to infrastructure development and industrialisation.

A supportive international environment is important for Africa. It's not by accident that Africa's emergence from the morass of stagnation associated with the period of imposed structural adjustment programmes from the mid-70s to the mid-90s has coincided with the emergence of the large BRICS countries as economic giants. These countries have given African nations the ability to start to escape the clutches of neo-colonial dependence on foreign aid, and the policies and 'advice' of Western-controlled finance institutions. Trade and mutually beneficial foreign investment from countries without colonial mind-sets are starting to free Africans to shape their own national economies and polities.

South Africa's freedom, gained in 1994, has ended this country's isolation from the rest of Africa and has led to the strengthening of its ties with the rest of the continent. South African trade with, and investment in, the rest of Africa has expanded exponentially since the country gained its freedom. South Africa is the most developed country in Africa, but we are acutely aware that our future wellbeing is inextricably tied to that of our continent. Our own future is tied to the economic development of Africa as a whole, and to the establishment of stability and peace throughout the continent. We believe that the other BRICS countries can play an important role in achieving these goals and that they (and the rest of the world), in turn, will benefit from the process.

One of the most important elements of BRICS cooperation should be in the sphere of knowledge production and academic cooperation. To achieve our goals – both in Africa and the world – we need to constantly strengthen our scientific and technical knowledge in all spheres; to deepen our understanding of our societies and those of the rest of the world; and to refine and improve our development strategies. To these ends, we must strengthen the cooperation between ourselves, develop joint research projects and academic exchange projects, and deepen the dialogue between our academics. Particularly important, I think, is the need to cooperate in the area of expanding cooperation with regard to post-graduate studies.

All our countries have excellent universities and colleges as well as other institutions, that face many challenges to meet the expectations of our people. Academic cooperation can help us to strengthen all of these institutions, helping to expand the frontiers of human knowledge. Most of our

universities have traditionally had much stronger ties with Western academic institutions than with those in other developing countries. Of course, those ties with Western universities are beneficial and must continue, but it is anomalous that our ties with countries that face similar challenges of development are relatively weak. Economists and economic historians in South African universities, for example, tend to know more about the British or American paths and strategies of economic development than about those of contemporary developing countries in Asia or Latin America, whose challenges are more similar to our own. And I dare say that it is likely that similar knowledge gaps about Africa also exist in other developing countries, including the BRICS.

In South Africa we are about to establish a National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Its main purpose will be to strengthen the study of these disciplines in our country. But an important part of its mandate will be to build ties with scholars across the African continent and the global South. The Deputy Director of the interim structure that is establishing the institute, Dr Sarah Mosoetsa, is here at this Academic Forum, and I hope that many of our visitors will take this opportunity to establish contact with her. And, of course, please take the opportunity to strengthen your relations with our long-established Human Sciences Research Council, and with the natural and social scientists from many of our universities and research institutes. South African delegates should take full advantage of this opportunity to build contacts and partnerships.

To all the delegates, I extend my best wishes for a successful Academic Forum. I hope that it will make an important contribution to understanding the BRICS group of countries and the challenges they face in a globalising world. I look forward to seeing the report of your deliberations, especially as they relate to understanding the capacity for collaboration among the BRICS nations in high-level educational enterprises, including science, technology and post-graduate education. Partnerships in natural and human sciences, technology and post-graduate education should logically form the basis for further intra-BRICS development and integration. Your debates and conclusions should also contribute to the understanding of our political leadership as it deliberates at this summit and beyond.

I wish you all well for the remainder of this Forum.

I thank you.

## ADDRESS BY DR JEFFREY MABELEBELE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, HIGHER EDUCATION SOUTH AFRICA

Delivered at the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum on 11 March 2013

eThekweni, Durban, South Africa

Chairperson

Director-General of the DHET, Gwebs Qonde

Deputy Director-General of the DIRCO,

Ambassador Sooklal

Heads of Delegation from the five BRICS countries

Distinguished academics and researchers from the BRICS countries

Members of the diplomatic corps

Leadership of the Durban University of Technology (present here)

Distinguished guests and colleagues



I should start off by thanking the organisers for inviting me to this forum. I should also take this opportunity to congratulate the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the Durban University of Technology and Higher Education South Africa (HESA) for organising this academic forum.

As a 'non-BRICS' scholar myself, I will stray from the formalities of a keynote address, raise substantive issues and, where possible, pose provocative questions. The Fifth Academic Forum reaffirms the correctness of the truism that globally and politically, the influence of the BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – is rapidly increasing. Indeed, the BRICS economies have grown so dramatically in the past few years that they could overtake the combined size of the G7 nations (the Western-dominated group of economies) within the next decade or so. Two of the five BRICS members, China and Brazil, are now ranked among the world's five biggest economies, with China overtaking Japan recently to rank behind only the United States in size. These are exciting developments in the evolution of a new global political and economic order.

I am particularly delighted that the organisers have chosen the theme *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation*. This theme underscores the role of BRICS in the conceptualisation and implementation of a global development agenda for the developing world. The forum should interrogate better ways of advancing economic development in poor regions of the world, including Africa, and should respond practically to the following three interrelated challenges, among others:

1. How can the developing world, including Africa as a continent, be lifted out of the 'low' or 'middle-income syndrome', that is to say the rates of growth and development that do not allow the continent to move out of poverty and under-development? It should be noted that even though high growth rates continued over the past decade, driven largely by resources, we have seen signs of rising inflation and current account deficits in some parts of the African continent, including South Africa. What kinds of contribution can the Academic Forum make in relation to increasing rates of economic growth in Africa and ensuring that the benefits of such growth are shared equitably?
2. Although Africa is endowed with natural resources, its challenge is to move from a path built on consumption and commodity exports to a more sustainable developmental path based on industrialisation. Is there scope for BRICS, working closely with the African Union and other economic bodies on the continent, to conceptualise and implement an Africa-wide industrialisation strategy?
3. What are the key strategic considerations to be made before setting up the famous BRICS Development Bank? The need for the bank is fairly obvious if you look at the growing trade among the BRICS countries and the frustrations these countries have had with existing development financing institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Although it is understood that the bank can be a lender of choice to Africa, how can it be used to correct trade imbalances between BRICS and Africa, by getting BRICS to invest more in African industry, including infrastructure to ratchet up local production and exports? It is in the interest of this forum to suggest financing priorities of the proposed bank to the Heads of State Summit.

I hope these important matters will find some place on the agenda of this Academic Forum to be discussed, and that resolutions will be proposed for discussion by the Heads of State.

We appreciate that assembled in this room are leading academics and policy makers from all the BRICS member countries, primarily to debate the challenges and prospects of this geopolitical structure in the context of global and international governance imperatives. Over the next few days, this forum will create opportunities for academics and policy makers to debate critical and strategic issues relating to BRICS, and how best it can be (re)positioned to advance South-South cooperation and, broadly, a developmental and progressive global agenda.

There is no doubt that the theory and praxis of BRICS as an emerging geopolitical bloc for political and economic diplomacy has become more urgent than before, given the challenges that BRICS countries and the world as a whole face. The challenge of rapidly eradicating poverty and underdevelopment, and reducing inequality in the BRICS countries remains a key priority. The challenge of reforming the global system of governance, at both the political and economic levels, cannot be over-emphasised. The imperative to strengthen cooperation among the developing countries through a deliberate and conscious strategic framework remains relevant.

This Academic Forum should ask itself a question: What is so enticing about BRICS, and does its scholarship or even theorisation matter? Over 10 years ago, Jim O'Neill, Head of Economic Research at Goldman Sachs, coined the term BRIC. In 2003, Goldman Sachs made its first detailed projections of how the rise of BRIC countries might shape the world economy. It was anticipated at the time that BRIC economies would grow faster than, and outrun, the economies of the major developed countries. At the time, Goldman Sachs predicted:

“The relative importance of the BRICs as an engine of new demand growth and spending power may shift more dramatically and quickly than many expect. Higher growth in these economies could offset the impact of growing populations and slower growth in today's advanced economies.”

These countries were seen as engines of global growth, and predictions were that China would overtake the United States as the leading economy of the world in 2050.

However, after the formation of BRICS, some scholars were reticent to give BRICS a chance, because it was formed on the eve of the global financial crisis. Political scientists either dismissed BRICS as a 'mirage' or proposed alternative acronyms to designate what they considered to be more appropriate and coherent blocs. To these scholars, BRICS was simply a heterogeneous bloc with very little capacity and capability to achieve 'sufficient consensus' on a range of vexing geo-political and economic matters on the global agenda. It was a marriage of convenience based purely on an undefined agenda to counter the hegemony of the Western powers in the global system of governance. Attached to this scholarship was the notion that individual countries joined BRICS for their own selfish needs, which often run counter to the collective needs of the member countries.

On the other hand, some scholars have argued that although BRICS combines considerable assets and ambitions, it lacks the strategic posture and depth to challenge the US leadership or entrench a new world order. According to these scholars, if it wants to play a transformative role, BRICS would have to agree on a blueprint for change, which includes a realistic timetable for implementation – a commitment to controversial domestic reforms.

With scholarship and research now gravitating away from the predictions of Goldman Sachs, and with new developments shedding some light on the challenges and prospects of BRICS, this Academic Forum should further interrogate the relevance and appropriateness of the scholarship and attendant research on BRICS. In responding to the question: Does theorisation and scholarship on BRICS matter? one can be bold and say: "Yes." Without this Academic Forum discussing better ways of contributing to the research and scholarship on BRICS, on a global scale, the very strategic objectives of this important body could be undermined and jeopardised by scholarship and by research from other countries whose economic diplomacy and broader geopolitical interests are threatened by the emergence of this body.

I guess the question I am trying to ask is: How can this Academic Forum, building on the previous ones held, unearth opportunities for new and alternative scholarly narratives on BRICS to emerge, and how can it contribute to the strengthening of BRICS, in the context of the current global challenges and risk?

Proceeding from the premise that research output is a manifestation of the improvement of human capital in any economy (cf Inglezi-Lotz & Pouris 2013) it is vitally important for the BRICS countries to discuss progress made by member countries, separately and collectively, in relation to

research and development (R&D) performance. In their study entitled *Comparative Analysis of Scientific Output of BRIC Countries* (2011), based on 1980 to 2009 data downloaded from the Scopus database, there are interesting trends emerging with implications for the strengthening of the science systems in BRICS countries.

Projections from this study indicate that the publication productivity of the United States is saturating and that there could be a significant increase in the publication share of the BRICS region in the future.

If the present trend continues, then BRICS may surpass the US by the year 2013. China's contribution will be the highest, followed by India, Brazil and Russia. By 2020, BRIC countries may be the largest producer of publications, comprising nearly 37% of the world publication output. This may further increase to 45% in 2025, while the US may face stagnation during the period.

In order to consolidate these gains, this Academic Forum must reflect on strategies for strengthening the capacity of the BRICS countries to emerge as global leaders in research and development in future, including increasing spending on research in all BRICS countries as a percentage of GDP. The trends also suggest shifts in the production, flow and consumption of knowledge in the world. In order for these trends to take root, these researchers suggest that BRICS countries must continue to invest heavily in developing infrastructure for research and development in different fields of science and technology, as well as in frontier areas such as atomic energy, space sciences, electronics, telecommunications and biotechnology. The Academic Forum must offer suggestions on how best the research and innovation infrastructure could be built, and how the R&D performance of these countries could be improved in the medium to long term.

Let me conclude by positing some thoughts on some few matters that the Academic Forum may need to devote some attention to.

1. This Forum should review the resolutions it took at the previous Academic Fora, and assess general progress with regard to the implementation of the resolutions taken. In this way, this 2013 Academic Forum will be building on previous discussions on these important matters.
2. The Academic Forum should make practical suggestions on how the resources from the private sector could be mobilised for the advancement of the BRICS agenda, including the R&D performance of the BRICS member countries. The success of BRICS depends on the extent to which it harnesses resources in the hands of the private sector for maximum development impact. For example, if appropriately marshalled, the new multinationals coming into the BRICS economies have an important role to play in advancing the imperatives of BRICS.
3. The Academic Forum should spell out the exact role of the 'ideas institutions' in propelling forward a BRICS agenda. Such institutions include public universities, science councils, research institutes, and so on. Without the active participation of these institutions in the shaping of a BRICS agenda, this noble concept will face a determined intellectual combat strategy from the West to undermine its prospects. It is important that a strategy is developed to mobilise the participation of these institutions in BRICS initiatives in all member countries and that research funds be set aside for this purpose, beyond an annual Academic Forum. As Professor Stefani Colliniv, professor of English Literature and Intellectual History at the University of Cambridge, puts it, universities "provide a home for attempts to extend and deepen human understanding in ways which are, simultaneously, disciplined and illimitable".
4. The role of civil society organisations cannot be underestimated. In order for the BRICS agenda to enjoy popular legitimacy, mechanisms should be found to engage professional groups, trade unions, consumer organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and religious organisations on the broad strategic objectives of BRICS and for civil society organisations to enable them to find creative ways of making a contribution to the implementation of such an agenda. Some form

of social compacting between states and other sectors of society in each country should be explored.

5. The Academic Forum should debate the merits and demerits of possible strategic alliances between BRICS and the G20, the United Nations and other relevant bodies in the global governance system. For example, what is the possibility, and likely effectiveness, of BRICS becoming a 'caucus' within the G20 and the United Nations?
6. Are there better ways for South Africa, through its foreign policy imperatives and other means, to serve as a 'trusted' interlocutor between BRICS and other African nations? How entrenched are the fissures in the continent for this proposal to take root?
7. How best can the BRICS countries boost their investments in research and development, and share the requisite infrastructure for each other's mutual benefit?

The complexity of the issues that the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum has to grapple with underlines the fact that there are no easy solutions. The discussions to take place in the parallel sessions on such sub-themes as *BRICS and the Global Economy*; *Reform of the Institutions of Global Governance*; *Co-operation on Africa*; *Education*; *Research and Skills Development in Industrialising Economies*; and *Peace and Security* reflect in part the huge expectations of the populations of the developing world from this Academic Forum.

This forum can etch itself in the memory of these populations for time to come if it produces not only a set of practical recommendations in relation to the broad themes identified and the questions I have posed, but also mechanisms for implementing such recommendations. As Christian Brutsch and Mihaela Papa of the Centre for Rising Powers (University of Cambridge) aptly put it:

"BRICS can get their act together... and exploit the West's relative decline to drive a hard coalition bargain. Yet if they end up doing nothing, they – and perhaps the developing world at large – will soon lament the early demise of another promising attempt to globalise the international order."

This is a possibility all of us at this Academic Forum should aim to defeat.

On behalf of Higher Education South Africa (HESA), and in whose name I speak, I wish you a successful Academic Forum. As HESA, and the South African public university sector, we look forward to receiving your report.

Thank you.

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRICS THINK TANKS WORKSHOP

## OPENING ADDRESS

Ambassador Jerry Matjila, Director-General of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, South Africa, opened the meeting of the BRICS Think Tanks Workshop with some reflections on BRICS and the role of think tanks. BRICS is a young grouping which needs to be nurtured. The integration of BRICS is the key to a successful grouping. South Africa appreciates the role of think tanks in developing and supporting public policies in BRICS as well as to shape multilateral change. The challenge is how to harness common ideas and translate them into policies. The focus is how to shape BRICS in the next five to ten years. BRICS is about changing the old order of international relations and resetting power relations. Do we have the stamina to resist the onslaught of those who oppose BRICS? Our approach, therefore, needs to be multi-polar, considering, amongst others, the political dimension, global security (energy, resources, food, terrorism, crime, etc.), the economic dimension and the social-cultural dimension. The objective of the workshop is to achieve consensus on the Concept Note on a consortium of BRICS think tank.

## CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE THINK TANK

Prof. Eddie Webster (University of the Witwatersrand and HSRC Board Member) made a presentation on *What gap could a BRICS think tank fill in South Africa?*, in which he considered think tanks in terms of their origins, types, functions, operation, dangers, and place within global governance. Think tanks are characterised by their promotion of a 'big idea', which in South Africa could be used to consolidate a process of mutual South-South learning ('South-South' not in the literal sense, but in the emerging figurative sense), especially around the evolving global governance structures emerging in BRICS.

### *Discussion*

Brazil indicated that think tanks are a link between academics and government forums. The role of the think tank would be to form a hub for designing the scope of research for academic institutions. Deeper knowledge is

required about each BRICS country. IPEA offered to host a website containing databanks on various topics of interest to BRICS. The Brazilian Research Council adopted a LATTES platform: a database of academics' research interests, etc. IPEA would host a BRICS databank and website enabling access to micro-data (household surveys, etc.) and a databank of researchers working on BRICS (their names, institutional affiliations, research interests, and CVs). These databanks would facilitate bilateral comparisons.

India pointed out that the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) was the biggest independent think tank in India – an interface between hard research and policy formulation. ORF also has good relations with the Indian government. Prof. Webster's notion that knowledge should be co-constructed is very important. The Narega project in India is actually derived from the Brazilian concept. Therefore, Brazil's idea of a database and website is to be supported. India started one after the Beijing Forum, but this needs to be elevated to a higher level. There should also be a BRICS presence in the social media, e.g. a BRICS Facebook page.

Russia indicated that the ideas of different participants should be combined, but should not be squeezed into a South-South paradigm. Russia is an established centre of power. BRICS is an alliance of civilisations, not simply countries, and therefore differs from the Euro-Atlantic alliance. In Russia there is a well-established tradition of institutes. The Russian think tank is an umbrella organisation of scholars. BRICS research should not be monopolised by any one institution. The think tank is a mechanism to build national consensus on different points of view. A website is therefore to be supported. Russia is already publishing an electronic bulletin – a five-page digest on BRICS. It was suggested that an international digest be published and sent via email to all BRICS members, weekly or fortnightly, with a dozen publications. These digests should come from the national offices of BRICS.

China pointed out that there were think tanks devoted to the study of BRICS, but that there is no think tank devoted to BRICS as a grouping. Country think tanks should therefore do this. In 2011, the Ministry of Education began research on important regions and countries. For example, Shanghai now has a research centre on BRICS, as well as a foreign trade centre. China receives funding from partner foundations. It is very important to have joint access to research findings.

South Africa indicated that there were three areas to consider. First, there was bilateral networking in the human and social sciences, but not yet at BRICS level. A deepening of scientific networks needed to happen. Only six per cent to seven per cent of international cooperation is BRICS related. Second, an Erasmus-type project for Africa should be established to track the movement of postgraduate students and determine where it needs to intensify. And third, catalytic projects should be identified where priority research is happening and should assist in bringing researchers together.

India pointed out a challenge with regard to the IPEA proposal for a data-bank and website, in that BRICS countries have different ways of measuring household variables as well as different copyrights. ORF has data for several surveys that do not talk to one another. Access to the data, moreover, is not affordable for Indian researchers. Governments should perhaps fund this. Second, multilateralism should not preclude or subsume bilateralism. Bilateral relations between countries remain important. India has a series of bilateral contacts with Chinese and Russian institutions, which ORF manages.

Brazil pointed out that think tanks do research that is applicable to policy. But the degree of formalisation wanted is important. Access to the CVs of BRICS researchers should be encouraged with links to their research and that of others in BRICS.

Participant observer Prof. Semela (South Africa) made four suggestions arising out of the delegation discussion. First, there should be an audit of all existing entities engaged in BRICS work, to ensure there is no duplication. Second, the BRICS project should be a phased programme in which short-, medium-, and long-term research and policy objectives are set. Third, science, engineering and technology (SET) should be a key focus of the think tanks. And fourth, with regard to Prof. Webster's 'big idea', a knowledge hub of the BRICS network would support the evolution of the larger configuration of the global ideology.

## THE STRUCTURE OF BRICS COUNTRY THINK TANKS

Each of the five country delegations made a presentation on the structure and functioning of its think tank.

## 1. South Africa

In the South African presentation, Dr Olive Shisana (Human Sciences Research Council – HSRC) outlined the aims, sphere of operation, network architecture, benefits, proposed activities, and anticipated outputs of the South African think tank, which is housed within the HSRC. As the South African think tank, the HSRC aimed “to co-operate with various local experts and organisations in the field in order to strengthen and build the analytical and scholarly capacity in this important field ... [which is] crucial to create networks and also to stimulate fresh thinking in relation to BRICS and not simply to replicate what is already being done by others”.

### *Discussion*

India indicated that if a government wants to get maximum mileage from the organisations it funds, it must be able to take constructive criticism in order to change the country. In terms of a network of think tanks, no one think tank could have all the expertise. The expertise in one country could be shared with others, via the website and face-to-face interactions.

Brazil asked how the HSRC balanced regional and BRICS perspectives.

Russia asked how many staff would work for the BRICS South Africa think tank, and how many would be researchers.

China indicated that CASS was the counterpart of the HSRC in China. CASS had regional studies institutes on BRICS countries. What studies of different regions were conducted in the HSRC?

Dr Shisana’s response to India was that the balance of parliamentary and external funding was a healthy one in terms of preserving the HSRC’s independence. Her response to Brazil was that a separate project focused on BRICS would be set up in the HSRC which would pull in other research on BRICS, and that this would go way beyond one programme focused on BRICS. Her response to Russia was that there would be a small research group in the HSRC, about 15 persons, dedicated to BRICS. Her response to China was that the HSRC indeed had a strong relationship with CASS but that the HSRC worked not with CASS’s institutes but with the administration of CASS itself, which identifies researchers to work on particular problems. South Africa added that the Africa agenda was the number one priority for South Africa. The question should then be: How does South Africa’s membership of BRICS benefit Africa and South Africa? The Department of Higher Education and Training’s special projects have emphasized ‘Afropolitanism’.

## 2. Russian Federation

Russia provided a historical overview of the Russian Federation's research and policy context within which its think tank (the National Committee for BRICS Research) is located, emphasizing the founding role of the Federation in the establishment of BRICS and the staging of the first BRICS meeting by the Russkiy Foundation. The think tank plays a research coordination role rather than employing large numbers of researchers. A major challenge confronting the think tank lies in coordinating the efforts of the plethora of new research organisations in the Russian Federation working on BRICS.

### *Discussion*

In response to a question from Brazil, Russia indicated that 80 per cent of Russian Federation money circulates in Moscow, and that the focus was therefore on BRICS rather than the region. In response to a question from South Africa regarding the relationship between the BRICS Academic Forum and BRICS think tanks, Russia indicated that the National Committee for BRICS Research was formally registered on 29 December 2012. The Charter outlined what the Committee's work should be. This body represents Russia but not the countries of the former Soviet Union.

## 3. India

India provided a short history of its think tank (the Observer Research Foundation – ORF) and how it came to be identified in 2009 as the national coordinator of BRICS, outlined the main purpose of ORF (the provision of a platform for debate on a range of issues among persons with diametrically opposed views) and its activities, and drew attention to the aura surrounding BRICS, especially among the young, and to ORF's publication record (60 in 2012 alone). ORF acted as a platform to coordinate BRICS-related research and activity rather than employing a large number of researchers.

### *Discussion*

In response to the Indian presentation, Prof. Eddie Webster (Wits University, South Africa) challenged the audience to conceive of comparison as meaning similarity or difference. For example, only 40 per cent of the economically active population in South Africa are in the labour market. In India and Brazil the situation is very different.

## 4. China

China outlined the rise of think tanks in China following the introduction of the country's reform, dividing them into four types: official,

government-commissioned; research, affiliated to the Party and to the military; research, linked to universities; and research, initiated by civil society. Most think tanks were involved in research and policy consultation. The Chinese think tank, the China Centre for Contemporary World Studies (CCCWS), undertook government- and commercial enterprise-commissioned research, with a focus on the former.

#### *Discussion*

In response to a question from Brazil regarding the role of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs vis-à-vis BRICS, China indicated that the Finance Minister was responsible for the BRICS Development Bank, and that different ministries were involved in BRICS issues.

Further discussion revolved around the role and prominence of BRICS. It was generally agreed that BRICS needs to be expanded beyond the economy to embrace many other areas in the social and natural sciences. Countries besides BRICS countries, moreover, were paying great attention to BRICS – as evidenced recently by the European Union's reference to BRICS and by certain companies' adoption of 'BRICS' in their names.

### **5. Brazil**

Brazil stressed the independence of its think tank, the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), despite its links to the Presidency and to the government. IPEA is the hub of Brazilian think tanks, with access to a large body of researchers (450) and links to agencies of the United Nations (UN) family (IPEA was active in the establishment of the UN Poverty Centre in Brasilia). IPEA's work is focused on six areas: international relations and the macro-economy; social issues; regional issues; environmental issues; sectoral issues; and the state. With an open media strategy, the think tank has an intense relationship with the media. Like ORF, IPEA has a large body of publications.

#### *Discussion*

In response to a question about the role of civil society in Brazil, Brazil indicated that IPEA and Foreign Affairs had tried to engage civil society on BRICS as much as possible. An organisation like IPEA would not be sustainable if it did not do so. It had to be remembered that 40 million Brazilians were recipients of social grants.

Answering its own question about the balance of power between regional and BRICS concerns, Brazil indicated that it was a teenager on the international stage, but beginning to flex its muscles. This had created tensions on the continent. Brazil did not therefore present itself as a regional representative when it went to BRICS meetings.

## LONG-TERM VISION FOR BRICS: COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

### 1. India

India provided a brief outline of the document *A Long-Term Vision for BRICS*, indicating that it included the main pillars of BRICS and that each chapter ended with suggestions of a policy nature. The delegation agreed with many of the proposed changes in the South African position paper on the long-term vision document generated by ORF.

### 2. South Africa

Michael Cosser (HSRC) presented the South African position paper on the Indian document. Respect for different methodological approaches, the inclusivity of views and perspectives of BRICS countries, and the achievement of consensus around the elements of a long-term vision were key principles to be taken into account in the finalisation of the long-term vision document. From a conceptual perspective, the five delegations needed to address the issues of whether BRICS was an alliance ('a close association of nations formed to advance common interests or causes'), an agent of development, and an advocate of 'sustainable competitiveness,' and whether the BRICS countries should develop alternative benchmarks and indicators in the establishment of a different (non-western) paradigm of human development. Until such a paradigm was established, the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) might be used to demonstrate the competitive advantage of the five BRICS countries according to the 113 indicators that make up the 12 indicator pillars of the GCI, with the objective of country sharing of expertise in the areas of their relative strength.

### 3. Brazil, Russian Federation, and China

There were no formal inputs from the Brazilian, Russian, and Chinese delegations. The discussion around the document entitled *A Long-Term Vision for BRICS* and the South African position paper is captured below.

### *Discussion*

Brazil indicated that the title of the document *A Long-Term Vision for BRICS* raised issues for the Brazilian delegation. The official Brazilian position was that all five countries should collaborate on a long-term vision.

Russia indicated that the document should be less academic and should not propose options.

Prof. Eddie Webster (South Africa) drew attention to the indicators used in the South African position paper to compare the performance of the BRICS countries. Having introduced Amartya Sen, the author should have gone on to cite the Human Development Index indicators. The World Economic Forum indicators should therefore be replaced by the Human Development Index indicators, or indeed by a new set of indicators.

India indicated that the drafting of a long-term vision document for BRICS was an official task assigned by the BRICS Leaders.

China made two specific proposals. First, the think tanks should suggest themes and topics for investigation over the next five years. These should be in line with the Leaders' Summit. Additional themes could be chosen for the October / November meeting of the think tanks and those to be held over the next five years. This would provide a roadmap for business. And second, a research fund of BRICS countries should be established to help finance the publication of research findings. General academic surveys should be carried out, as decided in the Delhi Declaration, for which the governments of the five countries would provide seed funding. Other sources of funding could follow. The coordinator of the think tanks in any one year would help facilitate this process.

## COUNTRY PROPOSALS MADE AT THE WORKSHOP

### 1. BRICS databank and website

- 1.1 Brazil suggested the need for a BRICS website containing databanks on various topics of interest to BRICS. The website would host and enable access to microdata – household surveys and the like from all five countries – to enable bi- and multi-lateral comparisons. A separate databank would contain a list of all scholars in the five countries working on BRICS, including their profiles, research interests, CVs, and contact details. IPEA offered to host such a website

and databanks. India strongly supported this initiative, which would elevate ORF's own website launched in the wake of the Beijing forum to a higher level. China stressed the importance of joint access to research findings. South Africa strongly supported Brazil's proposal for a household survey that would generate indicators to compare performance of the BRICS countries in addressing the development needs of their populations. Overall, the countries supported this proposal of the data bank to be hosted by Brazil's IPEA.

## **2. BRICS international digest**

2.1 Russia proposed that an international digest be published and disseminated via email to all BRICS members. This would be a weekly or fortnightly publication containing a dozen or so articles generated by the national offices of BRICS countries. This was supported.

## **3. BRICS Facebook page**

3.1 India proposed the establishment of a BRICS Facebook page. There was no objection to this proposal.

## **4. Student exchange**

4.1 South Africa proposed the mounting of an Erasmus-type project that would facilitate and intensify student exchange, particularly on the African continent – a proposal that was supported.

## **5. Research**

5.1 South Africa proposed that the HSRC as the South African think tank identify catalytic projects where priority research was being conducted and facilitate collaboration amongst these researchers / research entities.

5.2 China suggested that the BRICS think tanks collectively study BRICS as a grouping.

5.3 China proposed that the think tanks collectively suggest themes and topics for investigation over the next five years. These themes should be in line with the Leaders' Summit. Additional themes for the November 2013 workshop and for the next five years could also, however, be suggested. This would provide a roadmap for taking BRICS forward.

5.4 China proposed the establishment of a BRICS research fund to assist think tanks in financing the publication of research findings.

Country governments should provide seed funding until such a fund was operational.

5.5 China suggested that, as per the Delhi Declaration, general academic surveys be conducted.

5.6 These ideas were generally supported.

## **6. Long-term vision for BRICS**

6.1 Russia suggested that the long-term vision document be less academic than at present, since it was aimed primarily at bureaucrats. This was noted and was to be taken into account in drafting the next version.

## **AGREEMENTS REACHED AT THE WORKSHOP**

### **1. Concept note**

The need to achieve consensus on the Concept Note discussed at the workshop was superseded by an agreement that a signed Declaration should announce the establishment of a Council representing the think tanks of the five countries.

### **2. Long-term vision document**

South Africa, as 2013 BRICS host country, will produce a second draft of the long-term vision document, incorporating the comments in the South African position paper presented at the workshop as well as Human Development Index indicators into the Indian document.



Group photo at the BRICS Think Tanks Workshop



Amb. H.H.S. Viswanathan, Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation of India, addresses the workshop.

Dr Olive Shisana, Chief Executive Officer of the Human Sciences Research Council, addresses the workshop.



Delegates from China (front) and South Africa (back) during the workshop

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM

COMPILED BY THE HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The inaugural session of the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum was opened on 11 March with a welcome address by Dr Diana Parker (Acting Deputy Director General of the Department of Higher Education and Training) and Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele (Chief Executive Officer, Higher Education South Africa). In his inaugural address, Dr Mabelebele first outlined challenges facing BRICS countries, commented on the theme of Africa, and emphasised the need to maintain a sharp focus on a developmental and progressive agenda. He urged the audience to further reflect on the role of the Academic Forum in terms of the development and suggested some questions the Academic Forum could discuss.

This Academic Forum was organised around five interrelated themes: BRICS and the global economy; reform of institutions of global governance; cooperation on Africa; education, research and skills development for building industrialising economies; and peace and security. The plenary session was organised with one presentation on each theme; parallel sessions followed afterwards with presentations by representatives from each of the other four member countries. The recommendations on all five themes are attached as an appendix to this report.

## BRICS AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

In the first plenary session, under the theme *BRICS and the Global Economy*, Professor Ragisan Maharajh from the Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa, gave a presentation structured around three themes: geo-political economic transition; evolutionary economics; and emerging alternatives. Prof. Maharajh illustrated the effect of structural change on the global economy, particularly in the last 30 years. He observed that this change was manifested primarily in the shrinking share of world GDP and PPP growth from the developed world and a concomitant dramatic increase from emerging and developing economies (especially China and India). He then drew attention to the space opened up by this shift, which was further aided by the global economic crisis and the related debates on economic theory and alternative perspectives to prevailing neo-liberal ideas.

He went on to describe a number of 'concurrent crises' now afflicting the world economy. These included climate, energy, environment, finance and food, and highlighted the challenges of accelerating growth, sustainable development, food security and energy security. He demonstrated the extent of technological change, environmental degradation and projected shifts in energy sources, and asked the question, 'what role could BRICS play as one of the four emergent alliances (the other three being the G20, IBSA and BASIC)? Would it be an economic trade bloc? Would it be a 'Progressive Global Alternative'? He proposed that the current focus should be on 'evolutionary economics', characterised by processes that transform the economy from within. These processes emerge from the activities of those who learn from their own experiences and those of others and who are capable of innovating, as well as from the diversity of individual capabilities and learning efforts. Innovative activities resulting in growth will be critical in shaping evolutionary economics. This economic alternative will be hinged upon notions of distributed economic knowledge that support the variety of coexisting technologies, institutions and commercial enterprises: variety which will drive competition and facilitate the discovery of better ways of doing things.

In the first parallel session, Dr Ivan Oliveira of the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil, set out to analyse the effects of the global financial and economic crisis on developing countries — particularly the BRICS countries — and the implications for BRICS cooperation on global economic governance. Dr Oliveira began by focusing on BRICS economic data (GDP growth; investment as a percentage of GDP; inflation; per capita income (PPP); exports as a percentage of GDP and imports as a percentage of GDP) over a 10-year (2001-2010) or a 15-year period (1995-2009 and 1996-2010). He then compared the trade figures among the BRICS countries (trade flows; participation of manufactured goods in total exports; high-technological-intensity goods participation in total exports; manufactured goods in total exports; simple average MFN Tariff and trade-weighted average MFN Tariff) over the 15-year periods 1995-2009 and 1996-2010. He highlighted the areas in which each BRICS countries had outperformed the others — for example China on GDP growth, investment, trade flows, exports, participation of manufactured goods in total exports and high-technological- intensity goods participation in total exports; India on inflation; Russia, jointly with Brazil, for manufactured goods in total imports and on *per capita* income; Brazil on simple average MFN Tariff and trade-weighted average MFN Tariff; South Africa on imports — before he went on to show BRICS' average growth in terms of exports of services: 17.5% over

the 10-year period 2001-2010, representing more than 10% of world exports of services.

He then outlined what he termed the 'New Dynamic Sectors' in which the BRICS countries could compete (for example construction; computing and information technology; royalties and licensing and personal, cultural and recreational services), and proposed further cultivation of intra-BRICS services growth in transport, travel, financial services, computing and information and other business services. Since the World Trade Organisation (WTO) remained the central locus of cooperation on trade, he proposed that BRICS countries should work within the WTO to forge a trade agenda favourable to BRICS. He proposed the same approach within the G20. While the figures Dr Oliveira presented were incontrovertible, one participant questioned the wisdom of trying to reform the WTO from within, emphasising the need to forge preferential trade agreements outside of the WTO.

In the second parallel session, Professor Leonid Grigoryev of the Russian Energy Agency presented on the topic of reformation of the global financial architecture. Prof. Grigoryev first outlined the differences among the BRICS countries: population size and concentration; proportion of the labour force with a tertiary qualification; household expenditure on food; GDP *per capita*; share of income by quintile; technology development through research and development (R&D) expenditure as a percentage of GDP; percentage of the population employed in R&D; high-tech exports as a percentage of manufactured exports; the number of patent applications and other burning issues that may define a new agenda confronting BRICS. These issues include industrial production; trade balance; the energy balance in Russia and South Africa; primary energy balance; the structure of consumption by fuel; passenger cars in use *per capita*; passenger cars in use; defence expenditure; foreign direct investment inflows and outflows; current account balance; capital flows in emerging market economies; share of world GDP and IMF quotas; foreign exchange reserves; development bank loans allocated by sector and the dynamic of BRICS currency rates in relation to the US Dollar.

He went on to sketch the similar concerns confronting the BRICS nations, including their place in the global economy, pathways to developed-country status and similar social inequalities (rich versus poor regions; big cities versus numerous villages; affluence versus substantial poverty). Professor Grigoryev concluded by identifying three actions the BRICS grouping could take to strengthen its position in the global economy: namely to apply pressure for further reforms of voting power distribution in the IMF; to

strengthen the role of BRICS countries' currencies as reserve assets; and to work on the establishment of formal arrangements on the structure and nature of the current global financial architecture. The reform of the global financial architecture should include the world currency system, he proposed, as well as reforming multilateral development institutions to give greater voice to developing countries, strengthening the regulation of financial markets to ensure stability of the world financial system, and building the BRICS Development Bank as a centre of knowledge production.

In the third parallel session, Mr Bandi Ram Prasad of the Financial Technologies Knowledge Management Company in India demonstrated the economic success of the BRICS bloc and the impact of the global economic downturn on its growth trajectory — that is, in terms of declining growth rates and currency volatility. The focus of his presentation was the manner in which BRICS countries could implement policies in the wake of the global economic downturn to return to, or maintain, their growth paths. While the BRICS countries are hardly homogenous (for example, Russia's economy is commodity-driven; China is a powerhouse of exports; India's is a domestic demand-driven economy; Brazil has a highly developed economic structure and South Africa represents the fast-growing African region), he argued that growth was 'the common glue' that gave the BRICS community its power and prominence in the global economy.

Mr Prasad proposed that the BRICS countries should forge stronger links with the Next Eleven<sup>1</sup> and the Frontier Markets<sup>2</sup> to reduce excessive BRICS dependence on developed markets for exports. A special task force should be created within the BRICS Secretariat to engage with these countries, he suggested. In addition, the agenda for BRICS development cooperation should include the design of safer and longer-term investments that are understandable to retail investors; the development of specialised capital markets to cater solely for the needs of small and medium enterprises; the extension of the process of listing index futures to include companies with global operations; the design of special financial instruments with sovereign guarantees to promote investment diversification; using technology to promote financial inclusion among BRICS countries; BRICS Development Bank's creation of institutional mechanisms to provide infrastructure financing for economic growth and promoting greater exchange

1 The Next Eleven are the next eleven emerging markets identified by Goldman Sachs: Bangladesh; Egypt; Indonesia; Iran; South Korea; Mexico; Nigeria; Pakistan; Philippines, Turkey and Vietnam.

2 MSCI Barra has 26 countries classified as Frontier Markets.

of information, knowledge skills and expertise in the areas of financial management, information technology, process management, financial education, and investor literacy in order to build the capacity needed for economic growth.

Arising from the discussion following Mr Prasad's presentation, the session proposed the establishment of a BRICS research and data centre geared towards an annual review of economies and their finances in order to effect greater cooperation amongst BRICS countries.

In the fourth parallel session, Mr Huang Wei of the Chinese Academy of Social Science argued that the best option for BRICS countries, in the face of the challenges confronting them, was to 'work together to achieve inclusive growth'. Mr Wei first outlined three features of the world economy in the wake of the global economic downturn: two-speed economic growth between the G7 and the BRICS; the coexistence of larger economies with low *per capita* incomes and the overlaps between evolving architectures of global economic governance. As examples, he referred to the United Nations and the global reach of summits of groupings such as the G20, G8 and BRICS; official platforms such as the G10, APEC and SCO; unofficial platforms such as the WEF and Boao Forum for Asia; regional integration organisations such as the EU, AU and ASEAN; sovereign states such as the USA and China; sub-regional organisations such as the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS); international institutions such as BIS, IMF, WB and WTO; multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as the Inter-American Development Bank, AfDB and ADB; and supra-national institutions such as the ECB. He depicted the top 50 world economies as a set of intersecting circles that incorporated the countries constituting the G8, BRICS, the G11 and Australia within the G20; four of the G7 countries within the European Union and the remaining countries in the top 50 outside of these intersecting spheres [of influence].

The effect of slowing economic growth, he argued, manifested in the emergence of exchange rate protection battles between developed countries, even as they continue to determine new trade rules, for example through the TPP and FTA. The high volatility of international capital flows was, he argued, due to the spill-over effect of those countries' easing of their monetary policies. Mr Wei then outlined three challenges facing BRICS in the short and medium term: the effect of the slowdown on economic growth; the high volatility of international capital flows and limited resources, including energy, mineral resources, agricultural products, high-quality labour and capital. The solutions, he proposed, could be threefold: to expand the global

production chain; to raise the input-output ratio; and to facilitate information transparency in resource markets and build an information-sharing centre. To be more specific, he proposed that these short- and medium-term issues could be addressed through the establishment of the BRICS Business Council, the new BRICS Bank and a resource- and information-sharing centre. For the longer term, Mr Wei proposed six fundamental factors for success: competition; property protection; modern technology; a consumer market; modern medicine and a strong work ethic — all of which had to be applied in the context of a stable and functional government. Strong, sustainable, balanced economic growth, he concluded, depended on improving the domestic economic environment, promoting and sharing science and technology, cooperation in the area of medicine and the establishment of an education exchange project.

The ensuing discussion highlighted the importance of BRICS lending support to other developing countries, particularly through supporting their agendas in global governance structures: for example in terms of intellectual property rights and exceptions to these rules. The audience proposed that BRICS countries also needed to invest in indigenous instruments to bring about innovation in the global economy; for example in traditional medicines. BRICS countries should include ‘observer’ states in future meetings of the alliance, and set up an education system to support other countries in building their capacities and catching up on different areas of capability. In this regard, the session proposed that an education system based on the Chinese work ethic be devised and implemented in order to build more productive capacity and effect a paradigm shift away from productive capacity constraints such as strikes, for example, which could tarnish a country’s reputation and have direct impacts on foreign direct investment and relationship-building.

## REFORM OF INSTITUTIONS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

The plenary session on reform of institutions of global governance was presented by Ms Adriana Abdenur of IPEA, Brazil. The main focus of the presentation was an analysis of the progress on representative and fair global governance, as well as a proposal for a two-pronged strategy as a way forward (working simultaneously inside and outside the existing system).

Ms Abdenur noted that the traditional approach of working within had ‘mixed’ effects on global institutions, citing the example of the dysfunctionality of the WTO. She outlined the twin crises of existing multilaterals, that

is to say, the crises of legitimacy (because of unsatisfactory performance in addressing chronic challenges and crises, insufficient representativity which in turn gave insufficient recognition to emerging powers) and paralysis (being unable to reform the multilaterals themselves). As the result of these crises, she argued, there had been a proliferation of plurilateral, minilateral and regional arrangements. These arrangements have been gaining strength, she said (with their timing coinciding with the crises), and have led not only to multi-polarity, but also to confusion and potential negative effects for emerging economies.

She discussed the advantages and disadvantages of such structures, and proposed that BRICS should work both within the system (pushing for change) and outside it (creating a parallel system). However, economic and security matters should be analysed together, she cautioned, as divorcing the two approaches could result in partial and therefore limited reform.

The questions raised from the floor included Russia's chairmanship of the G8 and F20; the priorities of the reform agenda (given that the basis of the current global governance model is open market access); the need for indicators or a framework that did not originate in the West (for example in the usage of the word itself and the perspective disclosed by usage of the term 'paralysis'); the contribution BRICS countries bring to the understanding of a third crisis (i.e. the ideological crisis resulting from general adoption of the neo-classical paradigm of economic growth); the ability of BRICS to speak with one voice; the role of continental organisation and the danger of compartmentalisation within the pluralising global architecture.

Mr Paulo Esteves of IPEA responded to these questions. He elaborated on the use of the term 'paralysis crisis', explaining that it referred chiefly to the North, but also the inability among BRICS countries to reach consensus on a reform agenda and so to sustain reform within multilaterals. In addition, he cautioned, asymmetries within BRICS could result in the paralysis of existing institutions. He agreed with the proposal of an additional crisis, and highlighted the risks for emerging countries if multilaterals were unable to reform: i.e. that emerging countries would not be able to depend upon the authority of existing multilaterals to protect themselves. The chairperson, Mr Nikonov (Russia), commented that BRICS countries share a desire for reform (rather than revolution), and that the BRICS countries are still underrepresented in international institutions.

The first parallel session saw a presentation from Mr V. Davydov, with a focus on his proposal suggesting BRICS being a new and meaningful player

in global governance. Mr Davydov first outlined a few factors that would determine BRICS' ability to engage with other global players, including a readiness to find a common denominator; an ability to engage with established multilateral institutions and a willingness to entrust mutual interests to the BRICS grouping. He then highlighted the need to attend to BRICS' institutional form and mechanisms, particularly a 'virtual secretariat' in the immediate term and a permanent secretariat for the future. He further proposed five priority areas that required attention: the need for more formal arrangements (instead of continuing to deal with matters in an ad-hoc manner); consolidating and speeding up the transformation of financial systems; the need to create an information pool; the need to accelerate establishment of the BRICS Development Bank as well as the need to provide an inspirational identity through BRICS' multi-civilisational character.

Some participants questioned BRICS' readiness for a permanent secretariat and the benefits of creating such a structure (particularly before more common projects and actions were identified and implemented); but generally agreed with the need to prioritise the establishment of the BRICS Bank as an alternative financial institution (but also as an experiment in institutionalising BRICS); BRICS' agenda on political reform (instead of merely economic governance reform); and the need for BRICS to engage with other emerging powers to increase its credibility and ability to push for reforms.

In order to boost collective negotiating power, Mr Davydov reiterated the need to focus on common ideas and goals and on what works (instead of what does not). Another participant asked about the factors that could speed up reform, and about BRICS' role as an evolutionary or a revolutionary organisation. 'Time will tell,' Mr Davydov commented. 'The speed of history is picking up pace. So I'm agitating for even more.'

The second parallel session was presented by Mr M.K. Venu of India. His focus was on how BRICS might take forward some important ideas outlined in the 2012 New Delhi Declaration on deeper financial and trade cooperation. More specifically, he asked how a BRICS bank could play a similar role to that played by the World Bank in post-WWII reconstruction. His main proposal was the establishment of a BRICS bank. He argued that a BRICS bank could enable BRICS countries to share technical expertise, offering significant advances by funding infrastructure differently from the World Bank, with fewer macroconditionalities and driving an agenda for a new development paradigm.

Secondly, a BRICS bank could serve as a reserve pooling system to stabilise financial markets (by holding each other's currencies, for example) and smooth over the volatility caused by international financial markets and disruption in capital flows (especially since the IMF's attention is currently preoccupied primarily with the Eurozone). He argued that this new initiative could enable these economies to understand each other's financial markets, and could also contribute to better integration and trade. Keeping a symbolic proportion of their Central Bank reserves in bonds issued by other BRICS nations could also signify a long-term commitment to developing intra-BRICS institutional arrangements, he suggested. He further proposed that, in the future, this system could be extended to trade in food items to fortify food security among BRICS member countries.

Participants asked about the distinguishing features of a BRICS bank when compared with other MDBs/IFIs: the essential characteristics of the new development agenda; the appropriate balance between government forces and market forces; whether the role of the BRICS bank should be an alternative to or complement the World Bank; and the proposed main focus of the BRICS bank.

Mr Venu reiterated the need to form a parallel institution to create bargaining power in order to push for reform, because the existing multilateral financial institutions do not operate satisfactorily. He suggested that infrastructure should remain the main focus of the BRICS bank, and that it must operate on rational market principles when funding projects, with better accommodation for the longer-term returns of social infrastructure-based investments. He further emphasised the need for a stable flow of investment to developing countries (a task which the existing institutions are unlikely to be able to fulfil, given the persistent economic and financial crisis), and the need to create alternative pricing structures which will, arguably, be more market-based and less dependent on speculation than is currently the case in Western markets.

The third parallel session was presented by Mr Zou Lixing from China, who focused on the impact of industrialisation on global governance. He used the examples of climate change, the green economy (GE) and renewable-energy (RE)-based economic development as examples to illustrate a call for new patterns of industrialisation and organisation, as well as new industrial and business models for innovative development.

One participant commented on the new global industrial revolution context to which Mr Zou alluded, and asked for his opinion as to whether this

would require reform of IFIs only, or of other global economic and political institutions also. Mr Zou responded that technological, social and governance changes are all linked. Although the industrial and technological revolution might take another 20-50 years, the present is a good time to think about any implications which might alter current governance mechanisms and institutions.

Another participant raised a concern over land acquisition by transnational corporations in Africa (hedge funds, for example, offer investment opportunities in African land) as a new issue for global governance which, according to the participant, could lead to mass migration. The participant asked whether BRICS' institutional arrangements would adequately prepare it to address this issue. Mr Zou agreed that there was a need to transform governance systems for the many challenges and opportunities faced by regional and global institutions.

Another participant raised a question about the sequence and primacy of the reform agenda: whether it should focus on the systems or the institutions of governance. In answering this question, Mr Zou used the metaphor of the Southern African highway as an illustration: the highway itself could help change the dynamics of interaction, just as high-tech infrastructure could alter the way one thinks about governance systems.

Mr Zou's proposal to use the new technological revolution to reform global governance was queried: did emerging economies have an advantage in terms of technology? In the case of RE, most development has originated in developed economies, so what role could emerging economies play in reform of the global political architecture, especially the UN and the UNSC? Mr Zou suggested that BRICS should use technology to 'sidestep' traditional institutions.

Another delegate noted that Europe is developing its competitive advantage in RE, and wondered how such a shift would impact on WTO rules and RE business in BRICS and the global South. Mr Zou responded that the UN was the platform to unite the South to face the new situation as it evolved.

The fourth parallel session was presented by Ms Michelle Pressend of South Africa, who used a few examples to illustrate the intractability of challenges in transforming global governance institutions. The first related to the regulation of multinational corporations (MNCs/TNCs); particularly to their role in the illicit financial flows which often surpass some countries' entire GDP. She mentioned the G20's and BRICS' 2011 Sanya Declaration's

acknowledgment of the problem and the UN's problematic response, in which work on it was moved from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to the UN Global Compact (UNGC). In her view this reflected a downgrading from a rule-making forum to a voluntary one, where, moreover, progress was lagging.

Her second example was the global response to climate change, which was chiefly based on voluntary commitments. She outlined the challenges faced by the Green Climate Fund, which is managed by the World Bank and has become merely a new non-tariff trade barrier. She challenged the value of its potential success without fundamental change away from a consumption-driven economy mainly founded on fossil fuels, monoculture and international trade, and questioned BRICS' ability to redirect the trend. A third example was the political reform of IFIs, which continue to operate within a neo-classical/neo-liberal paradigm. A challenge faced by South Africa, she argued, is the country's limited state-driven mechanisms for social and economic challenges, unlike other BRICS countries with strong state involvement in the economy. She asked whether BRICS could and should learn from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), where decisions unfold through implementation, as opposed to a legalist approach where regulation can delay solutions.

A participant queried the distinction between BRICS' role as change agent and as a transformation agency, suggesting that 'transition' rather than 'transformation' was a more correct way to describe BRICS' role so far. This participant also commented that 'even a weak multipolar world is better than a unipolar world, however.' Other participants also commented on the need for BRICS to understand its drive for change; enquired about the relationship between the first track and second track in the BRICS discussion and about the nature of the BRICS bank, such as the precise meaning of 'complementarity' to the World Bank, its funding structure and the kind of infrastructure it should fund; as well as the importance of people-to-people collaboration in addition to government-to-government collaboration.

## COOPERATION ON AFRICA

Dr Alexei Vasiliev, of the African Studies Institute of the Russian Academy of Social Sciences, led the discussion in the plenary session dealing with Cooperation on Africa. He began by commenting on the impact of globalisation, its promise of development and the dangers of its perpetuation of the West's domination in terms of its cultures, values, standards, norms,

development models and social structures — often at the expense of all others not of Western orientation.

He highlighted the significance of BRICS' alliance with previously maligned countries which are bound by a shared experience of historical marginalisation and Western cultural, political, social and economic domination. He then reiterated the main values espoused by BRICS: humility, cultural sensitivity, tolerance and equality, and how the alliance places great importance on the notion that 'respect enables understanding'. The main purpose of BRICS, he argued, should therefore be about giving recognition to BRICS members and other regions in the world, and providing a platform for them to showcase their own cultures, values and institutions. Mutual interests and mutual benefits should be the principles for engagement, and developing an alternative paradigm should be the objective of the BRICS, he asserted.

He identified Africa as a significant partner of BRICS, and underscored South Africa's strategic position as a gateway for BRICS countries to increase their involvement in the African continent. He shared his hope that, through its membership of BRICS, South Africa would also play a significant role in sharing both knowledge and expertise with fellow African states, particularly in areas of institutional and infrastructure development and the strengthening of capacity for the industrialisation process. Finally, Dr Vasiliev made a practical proposal concerning the timing of the Academic Forum: it should take place at least two months prior to the BRICS Leadership Summit in order for its resolutions to be meaningfully included in the Leadership Summit and therefore guarantee a more direct impact on the deliberations among the leaders.

One participant cautioned against an overly-critical stance towards the West and called for a hard look within. Dr. Vasiliev responded that searching for alternatives is always complicated, but mutual respect should be the starting point. Another participant asked whether South Africa is the best facilitator for BRICS' dialogue with Africa, or whether BRICS should cooperate with individual African countries or perhaps use the G8's approach of working through NEPAD when approaching Africa. Dr Vasiliev responded that South Africa should not see itself as the exclusive representative of the continent, and its optimal roles should be dependent on which problems need to be resolved. Individual African countries should be allowed to represent themselves and to introduce their own ideas.

The first parallel session was presented by Ms R Beri of India. Her presentation focused on India's approach to Africa, the main characteristics of the approach, and its challenges. She first recalled India's historical solidarity with Africa, for example during the struggle for liberation from colonialism, emphasising India's respect for Africa, with India regarding Africa as possessing all the prerequisites for an emerging global economic growth region. India's increased involvement in Africa, she claimed, has been through cooperation and consultative engagement rather than the imposition of ideology or policy.

Outlining areas of existing and potential cooperation, she emphasised that this cooperation offered mutual benefits for both parties. She gave examples of existing commitments between India and a number of African countries forged at the last Indo-Africa summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and suggested that Africa could learn from the Indian success story.

She then identified some challenges facing the engagement; most notably that India's foreign policy is not confined to Africa, and that India is also keen on strengthening its strategic relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Europe as well as with parts of Asia. Another challenge, she pointed out, was to coordinate diverse stakeholders in partnerships such as those with NGOs and the private sector. She reiterated the need to define the objectives of the existing relationship between India and Africa in order to ensure an equal, productive and mutually beneficial cooperation.

During discussions, Ms Beri sought to correct one participant's misconception that India's involvement in Africa was an 'all-of-a-sudden' development. She re-stated the historical connection. Another participant noted the heightened interest in Africa by BRICS countries, and suggested that this was an indication of the continent becoming the new frontier for economic growth. This, in turn, would require the continent to exhibit political leadership in order to strengthen internal capacity to positively utilise such benefits for its people. Ms Beri concurred and suggested that the task of African leadership itself, and the AU in particular, should be to ensure that economic integration within the continent as well as bilateral partnerships with individual BRICS member states was squarely based on mutual benefits. The participant enquired about India's position regarding South Africa's chairing of the AU vis-à-vis its membership of BRICS, and India's role in BRICS in the face of the expectation that South Africa should facilitate Africa becoming a more cohesive continent. Ms Beri responded that India was not suited to assume such a position on behalf of Africa, and that it would not attempt to impose ideology, shape and direction on the AU.

The second parallel session was presented by Dr Zhu Xiyan of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' (CASS) Institute of West Asian and Africa Studies (IWAAS). She stated that in her view economic and trade relations were the pillars of strength cementing the BRICS/Africa cooperation. Despite recent global financial turmoil, the African economy had generally been resilient, she asserted. This was an indication of African economic stability; a necessary foundation for Africa's economic takeoff. She attributed Africa's economic growth during the past decade to factors such as increased trade volume and increased foreign direct investment from BRICS member countries (most notably China and India), as well as internal factors such as growing investment in Africa's energy sector; a 'demographic dividend, urbanisation, construction and increasing domestic demand from the growing middle class.' She cited China and India, in particular, as the leading countries in terms of visibility in Africa, having entered into numerous bilateral agreements with various African countries. She then listed areas of learning where BRICS could share with Africa, including BRICS' experiences in social development, sustainable economic growth and regional economic integration. She concluded by calling for the creation of free-trade zones throughout Africa via SADC, COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) to strengthen cohesion in, for example, transport, infrastructure and investment support.

One participant cautioned that the BRICS-Africa partnership shouldn't follow the exploitative 'paternalistic donor-recipient' model. Instead, the relationship should be based on mutual benefits among equal stakeholders. The participant also alluded to increasing consumer spending across Africa, and asked what BRICS' role was in evolving 'new business models' geared toward leveraging increasing levels of consumption to aid economic growth. Alluding to each country's comparative advantage in different areas (for example infrastructure for China, the transport sector for Brazil and capacity-building for India), the participant further asked how BRICS countries could co-operate as a group. Responding to the question, Dr Zhu alluded to China's desire to assist Africa in various aspects of development and economic growth, and to the principle of Sino-African cooperation that prioritises mutual benefits and is aimed at contributing towards a deeper and clearer mutual understanding. Answering another participant's question on the number of Chinese currently in Africa, Dr Zhu gave an estimate of approximately 1 million, including workers and tourists.

The third parallel session was presented by Dr Siphamandla Zondi of South Africa's Institute for Global Dialogue. He re-emphasised development as

the focal point of cooperation and defined desired development as something with a people-centred approach which is aimed at lifting people out of poverty. Africa shared three main challenges with other Southern countries, he said: (1) the need to promote collective self-reliance, in order to realise mutual learning in addressing common challenges; (2) the need for endogenous development, with home-grown development approaches; and (3) the need to address the lack of regional integration with sufficient co-ordination. He cited examples such as The South Commission of the late 1980s, arguing that a South-South partnership had not succeeded in the past, mainly due to lack of South-wide institutional support.

He saluted BRICS' commitment to long-term partnership with Africa, as reflected in, for instance, repeated recommendations in previous BRICS summits of the need to deepen collaboration with African institutions such as NEPAD and the AU. These commitments had already borne fruits for the continent, he declared. He proposed that Africa should further diversify sources of aid and partnerships in order to safeguard against the risk of turbulent global financial markets. In response to a question about the most appropriate platform for BRICS to engage with Africa, Dr Zondi was forthright in recommending the AU. In his view, 'those who truly support Africa should be helping to strengthen the AU.' He identified the need for Africa to step up its ability to operate as a single unit, and highlighted supporting the AU as a strategic move for this purpose, whereas preoccupation with bilateral relations with individual African states could weaken it.

He noted that the new AU headquarters was built by China, but with few experts from BRICS. He challenged BRICS to clarify its views on African development, and called for more support for the AU in the form of seconding 10 or 20 officials from each country, for example. Dr Zondi identified several priorities for the African continent. These included integration: 'a form of solidarity that African states require to address the problem of balkanisation'; endogenous development; people-centred development and reliance. Africa, in his view, should take ownership of the self-reliance process, although the process could also certainly be accelerated by cooperation between African states and the BRICS countries.

On the question of South Africa's involvement in Africa's development, Dr Zondi noted that African states had agreed that NEPAD would remain the continent's co-coordinating programme for development initiatives, while South Africa's involvement in Africa had emphasised providing assistance to stabilise countries emerging from conflict (such as was the case in the

DRC, Burundi and Sudan) and strengthening regional institutions such as the SADC, around which the AU was able to organise itself.

Mr Andre de Mello de Souza of Brazil's Institute for Applied Economic Research led the discussion in the fourth parallel session. His presentation sought to map Brazil's increasing political and economic presence in Africa, particularly by examining the role of Brazil's development cooperation (BDC) in Africa. 'To what extent could BDC be seen as a new model for development and cooperation?', he asked. Answering his own question, he first sketched the history of BDC since the 1970s and noted the significant increase in the amount of resources made available (tripled) and the number of beneficiaries in Africa, particularly since 2003 under the Lula government.

He described Brazil's historical connection with Africa since the 17th-century slave trade, its strong diplomatic representation within Africa, increasing trade volumes and technical cooperation with Africa and the growing number of tri-lateral agreements with African countries before concluding that the BRICS initiative is one way of solidifying existing cooperation. Mr de Souza identified the distinguishing principles by which BDC selects its partners and beneficiaries, which differs from those of other typical OECD countries: horizontal cooperation; demand-driven solutions (instead of self-proposed ones); mutual benefit; non-conditionality in terms of cooperation and respect for human rights (consideration of social conditions is a prerequisite for cooperation). The areas of Brazilian-African cooperation focus mainly on agriculture, health and education, the transfer of knowledge and skills through investment in laboratories to an increasing extent, and replication of some of its 'best practice' social policies and models. He contrasted this with China's and India's primary focus on energy and infrastructure.

Mr de Souza concluded by identifying the challenges of these development partnerships, including institutional fragmentation and a lack of central planning and coordination in Brazil (which made it difficult to ensure adequate monitoring or appropriate cost-benefit analyses of the projects); Brazil's legislation, which hinders financing of initiatives or the hiring of personnel abroad; insufficient knowledge about Africa and the programme's insistence that Brazil also needs to benefit from the partnership.

On the question of the origin of Brazil's interest in Africa, Mr de Souza responded that it was part of the continuation of the foreign policy of the Lula government to develop trade and economic relationships with other

developing Southern countries, including those in Africa. In response to another question on private sector and civil society involvement in forging cooperation, Mr de Souza cited some examples of non-state companies which have become involved in this partnership initiative, and those which had sent representatives to Africa to search for projects on which to cooperate. Another participant asked about the similarities between the approaches used by India and Brazil. Mr de Souza responded that India was involved in the energy sector, education and social development issues, while Brazil also had an interest in bio-fuel and energy.

## EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The plenary session on education, research and skills development was presented by Dr Rakesh Basant of the Indian Institute of Management. He began his presentation by pointing out the changing need for skills in the contemporary world, ranging from basic to complex skills that include research and innovation capabilities, as a result of the changes of economies and labour markets. Changing skills needs mean, he asserted, that education now needed to focus more on satisfying strategic needs rather than merely immediate ones. The Global Competitiveness Index demonstrates individual BRICS countries' capabilities to meet strategic needs, and highlights a number of areas where mutual learning from better-performing countries in the bloc could take place, including literacy and health status, the amount and quality of engineering and manufacturing training, ways to gain practical experience, graduation of PhD candidates and the number of professors with PhDs.

He presented figures for R&D spending and outcomes, suggesting that innovation should include not only products and processes, but also training and technology preparedness — and that educational institutions had an important role to play in innovation. Lastly, he proposed some collaboration opportunities between BRICS countries. One participant cautioned about the potential methodological and conceptual inadequacy of the index used in the presentation and asked how certain terms (such as elite and non-elite institutions) were defined. Another participant asked for comments on how to balance immediate needs and strategic needs in curricula. Another wondered whether there existed indicators to assess 'perception and reality' aspects of skills. Dr. Basant explained the terms in question and agreed on the need to re-think the indicators, especially those coming from the developed countries. He reiterated the need to diversify skills, the need for broader indicators for innovation and the need to pay attention to market

mismatch. He explained that immediate needs were usually (albeit not always perfectly) satisfied by market demand, but that the market was not enough for strategic needs. This called for the state's intervention at both ends, he concluded.

The first parallel session heard a presentation by Mr Yiguo Liu, of China's Central Institute for Vocational and Technical Education, on the vocational and technical education system in China. He first outlined some challenges facing the system, namely, the divides between urban and rural, between coastal and inland, and the poor communication between these areas.

After providing background information on the Chinese system, he introduced the main focus of the presentation: to illustrate China's approach to improving education quality in the sector. Mr Liu elaborated on what China has attempted and the results, using the four key elements he identified as a guide: setting teaching standards among and across different specialisations and specialisation clusters; availability of teachers; better school-enterprise cooperation and the integration of the whole system, including attention to issues such as recruitment, graduate employment, college reform, improving transition from school to post-school system and the use of demonstration colleges. He concluded by suggesting that there was a need to strengthen cooperation and pay better attention to the economic factors involved.

Questions from the floor centred chiefly on the role of private enterprise in the sector; the approach used by China to motivate students to enter the system instead of remaining unemployed and the structure used for the transition from school to vocational college and university (articulation), as well as the factors used to choose a specialisation. Mr Liu responded that private enterprises in China are involved in the sector training body; students' enrolment in the sector is almost automatic if they fail to qualify for university, although there seems to be a general interest in learning practical and useful skills — a match to what the vocational system offers; that smoothing articulation is in progress; and that the decisions about specialisation are based mainly on market demand and are seldom decided by vocational analysis alone. Mr Liu encouraged the use of special economic zones in South Africa to encourage students to enter into the vocational system.

Further questions involved the difference between vocational school- and university-goers, the difference between vocational school- and secondary school-goers, and the state of vocational teacher training in China,

especially in terms of its linkage to work-based experience. Mr Liu replied that both the vocational and university systems were needed in China because they served different purposes; there was a changing yet still mandatory rule that in China one needs to receive vocational education if one cannot go to secondary school. In terms of the linkage to work-based experience, China differentiates between teachers who teach public courses and special skills courses, and requires those who teach special skills courses to have relevant work experience, although not all have it as yet. The audience further proposed a BRICS project on vocational and technical training, and recommended the establishment of a community of practice on vocational training led by China, with better attention paid to post-school transitions.

The second parallel session heard a presentation by Volker Wedekind from the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal, South Africa, focusing on an analysis of the South African skills landscape. He gave a brief history of education and training during apartheid as a separate system to the academic stream based on a system of technical colleges and apprenticeships; the difficulty of moving between systems and the design of the post-apartheid system, led by the National Qualifications Framework, which focused on integration and reorganisation of different sectors of general schooling, Further Education and Training (FET) colleges and universities. Because of the change in focus, however, the process led to gaps between the vision and reality, uneven development across different sectors, knock-on effects on other parts of the system and, thus, systemic inequality. These gaps have produced systemic tensions, he noted, compounding the global economic crisis, limited workplace opportunities, the changing nature of work and the lack of interest by youngsters in technical work.

He then illustrated the challenges on a per-sector basis. In terms of the TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) and FET sector, he noted ongoing reform (mainly sector-based, i.e. Sectoral Education and Training Authorities, or SETAs); challenges regarding the SETA levy; uneven skill shortage reporting and insufficient teachers with industry experience. However there were some encouraging factors, such as renewed interest in TVET. He reported on progress in the university system — increased enrolment, for instance — and challenges, including the greater R&D expenditure outside universities; the university system being locked in the Anglophone world view; the growing number of youngsters not in education, employment or training; low economic growth below levels at which one could create employment; growing unemployment and the continuing skills shortages, despite large sums of money available for training.

He offered explanations for some of the challenges: a lack of trust in the system; a neo-liberal narrative that assaulted public education and precipitated ongoing crises; poor infrastructure and a lack of service delivery and resourcing, which often resulted in an increase in the number of strikes. He suggested that future priorities should be better and more integrated labour market intelligence; building of new post-school system models emphasising vocational education; differentiated pathways and forming a better understanding of complex systems and nuanced interventions. He proposed that the BRICS grouping could provide venues for comparative studies in post-school education systems and methodological debates for socially-engaged research, calling for BRICS research funding to facilitate scholarship and bursary programmes and exchanges of research fellows. He also proposed that more attention be paid to issues of language, culture and education, promotion of open-access publications and linkages among academic associations.

A participant agreed with his suggestion about increased scholarly exchanges and proposed the concept of a BRICS University. Another participant commented on the jobless graduate and skills shortage phenomenon in South Africa, and asked how one could address one possible reason for this phenomenon, namely, that South African employers largely do not want to train unskilled labour. Another asked about the preparedness of South African students for an industrialising economy, and commented on ways to sustain traditional culture and the relevance of the changes in apprenticeships.

Mr Ivor Baatjes, of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, highlighted the large number of South Africans outside the formal economy who often feel dislocated. As a society, he suggested, we should understand that many of them are not idle; they are engaged in activities that are socially and even economically useful. Other BRICS collaboration possibilities were raised, addressing issues such as how to improve basic and vocational skills, how to improve quality and quantity in English skills in non-elite institutions, how to correct labour market distortions which could result in skills-gaps, and how to make universities the centrepiece of the national innovation system by experimenting with financial options for research and models of enterprise creation, etc.

Volker responded that training does happen in companies, but often without subsequent certification. Companies also tended not to report such training, as the skills levy can then be written off directly [i.e. by the SETAS, without first being paid out to the company]. Availability of apprenticeships

is restricted in South Africa, he observed, and opportunities are mostly limited to the field of engineering. He suggested that the definition of 'industrialisation' in South Africa should include agriculture and other elements of the 'developmental state'. Lastly, he agreed that culture is a rich resource, important for both indigenous knowledge systems and tourism.

The third parallel session, which dealt with trends in training and research, was presented by Paulo A. Meyer Nascimento from IPEA, Brazil. The first part of his presentation discussed BRICS' contribution to the global labour supply, measured through figures such as gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education; distribution of university degrees by disciplines; evolution of tertiary education indicators; the proportion of engineering graduates employed in engineering-related jobs and the number of engineering graduates. The second part of his presentation considered publication and scientific output, both in terms of quantity (share of journal articles in various disciplines) and quality (impact relative to subject area). He concluded by pointing out the disciplines in which each country had relative strengths. South Africa's were microbiology, clinical medicine and immunology; Brazil/India/China's are engineering, maths and physics, while Russia's are maths and physics.

The questions posed chiefly addressed the technicalities of his presentation; for instance his figures; whether the papers were sole-authored or joint papers; whether patents were considered when measuring output and impact; where the graduates were employed; the database(-s) used (non-English and non-Thompson scale), and so on. Nascimento urged that BRICS researchers should establish their own research space, which would enable them to publish in an environment where the assessment of their work was not so subject to the current Western norms of rating the impact of research.

The fourth parallel session was presented by Mr Alexander Lukin, Vice-Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation. He began by pointing out a contradiction he had noted between criticising the West and consistently applying Western methodology and frameworks. He questioned where exactly BRICS could position itself as an alternative. He started his argument by urging a new round of interrogation of the development goals. Unlike hundreds of years ago when the goal of development was more spiritual, he claimed, the contemporary role of governments had been mainly to satisfy material needs. Education has largely followed a similar path. He then noted the success of some BRICS countries that have strong non-materialistic cultures, and suggested that

a refocusing of the development role could be viewed as an alternative to Western values and methodologies.

He illustrated his thesis by reference to the Russian case, describing Russian education reform and outlining its challenges: that is to say, Russia should have removed Marxist ideology from the education system and not interfered with the structure; issues of the Bologna system and 'competencies'; reliance on the Internet; the fact that cultural notions such as independent student work are not adopted in Russia; issues concerning free education; imported exams from the United States and, finally, the rejection of Russia's proposal to BRICS regarding more cultural cooperation.

He proposed the following as the focus of further BRICS collaboration on education/culture/science:

- Establishing a consultative council of BRICS countries, comprised of prominent intellectuals from each one;
- Establishing an ethical code for BRICS, based on the joint civilisations of groups;
- Developing a formal basis (for example, a signed agreement) for cultural cooperation;
- Encouraging more exchange among scientists, researchers, professors and students;
- Establishing cooperation with civil society (between NGOs, think-tanks, CBOs and students);
- Establishing contact and dialogue between religions;
- Conducting studies of languages;
- Creating 'information space' as an alternative to orthodox spaces; and
- Increasing sporting exchanges.

On the question of the distinction between cultural, spiritual, educational, and material wellbeing, Lukin answered that there was no contradiction. He reiterated that materialism was a legitimate goal, but that it should not be the only goal. The future could be impoverished if materialism alone was pursued, he claimed. The second question also concerned instrumentalism in education: i.e. whether one should do away with it. Lukin responded that one should not fight it, but that it could not be the only goal. The rights of people who want to study as a goal, and not as a means, should also be protected.

## PEACE AND SECURITY

The plenary session on peace and security heard a presentation by Mr Ji Ping, of the Chinese Foundation for Peace and Development. He first located his argument and proposal amid challenges from two fronts: innate deficiencies caused by the rules of compromise and balance, and external constraints caused by divergent and natural tendencies to pursue national interests.

His primary thesis was a proposal to establish a new security model founded upon the principles of equality, mutual trust, cooperation, policy coordination and innovation. More specifically, he called for more focus on the potential role of international NGOs in peace and security matters within BRICS. NGOs, he argued, could utilise civilians' often more accepting attitude towards NGO intervention; bypass the volatility of the local political economy and enrich the inter-government structure of BRICS.

The discussion that followed focused largely on his international NGO proposal, highlighting BRICS' principle of respect for sovereignty; the potential internal conflicts between NGOs and the state; the different paradigms of security and the economy which render it more difficult to achieve win-win outcomes on security; the need to balance between working with regional groupings and working with BRICS as well as the history of lack of a coherent voice among BRICS members on security matters.

Mr Ji responded that his NGO proposal was a theoretical rather than a practical one. He gave examples of different peacekeeping NGOs, which already exist in BRICS countries, and their various collaborations. Concerns over cyber-security were raised by another participant. Mr Ji proposed this as an area of universal concern among BRICS, an issue tackled through this multilateral platform rather than through bilateral ones.

The first parallel session on Peace and Security received a presentation by Dr Buntu Siwisa, from the African centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in South Africa. He began his presentation with some retrospective questions about BRICS: what it is not, what it should be, and the challenges of consistency and continuity. He reiterated that the institutional challenges facing BRICS resulted from the principle of respect for sovereignty, different geo-strategic interests and a preference for conflict resolution, particularly in the case of South Africa and Africa, through traditional regional blocs.

He highlighted the interconnectedness of today's security threats and listed the BRICS peace challenges as recognised by BRICS National Security Advisors (namely, international terrorism; cyber-terrorism; piracy; and unstable regions such as Mali, Syria and Libya). He proposed that improved youth employment could thwart the recruitment drive of international terrorist organisations. He noted that traditional Western peace-building was moving toward the logic of military drive-down; that the UN framework alone was inadequate in dealing with organised crime and that there was a need for cross-sectoral engagement that better acknowledged the interconnectedness of conflict management. He highlighted the new trend in Peace and Security towards greater recognition of the role of the private sector (who often have access to powerful stakeholders), as well as civil society.

Chairperson, Mr Vladimir Orlov, proposed focusing on a shift from challenges to strengths, and from conflicts to conflict resolution through building elements of cooperation. He also proposed the establishment of an international advisory group to maintain an international security index. One participant agreed with the need to measure security internationally, but asked whether the timing was right. He further questioned the state-centric conception of security and proposed a broader conceptualisation of security that encompassed a wider range of human security issues such as water, food, the environment and health security.

Another participant questioned the correctness of emphasising the regional lens in examining peace and security issues, as this was not necessarily applicable to all BRICS countries (that BRICS may be seen as an alternative 'region' by some BRICS members). It was also proposed that democratic governance issues should be included as another dimension of security. Dr Siwisa agreed that both human and state conceptions of security needed to be taken into account.

The second parallel session hosted Mr Rodrigo de Moraes, of IPEA, Brazil. He examined military expenditure and military equipment procurement expenditure within BRICS in comparison to that in six NATO countries (US, France, UK, Germany, Japan, Italy), and noted the increased military expenditure among BRICS countries (a reversed trend in comparison to the NATO countries). He suggested that the economic crisis was one possible reason for the decline in NATO military expenditure, and pointed out the opportunities that the reversed trend offered: a reduced gap in military capacity; bigger military purchasing and bargaining power; more pressure for BRICS to expand its role in international peace issues (including sharing

information) and increased opportunities to cooperate with NATO (and its defence industries).

In the discussion, it was pointed out that NATO was a military alliance, while BRICS was not. Most of the discussion focused on the important yet inadequate examination of expenditure numbers without sufficient attention to the qualitative information often hidden behind them. One participant reminded the audience that US military expenditure included a high percentage spent on military R&D, which was not the case with other countries. This, according to this participant, might have a significant implication for the future of military capacity and the further widening of the generational gap between military capacities. He also highlighted the need to differentiate between domestic and international military procurement, as well as the different possible motives for increased expenditure, such as to maintain domestic military industries. Another participant questioned the appropriateness of combining BRICS countries' military expenditures, given their different natures and reasons for military expenditure. Another asked for comments on BRICS' approach to using 'hard' or 'soft' power capabilities. De Moraes agreed with the critiques and suggestions concerning further examination of the numbers. In terms of the difference between soft and hard power, he responded that the preference for hard or soft power was usually determined by individual countries. For example, Brazil traditionally relied more on soft power, while Russia had depended on hard power.

The third parallel session heard from Professor Vyacheslav Nikonov from Russia. He diverged from his submitted paper for the forum, and instead posed 15 questions for debate:

1. Does UN reform have a coherent meaning in various discussions? Do Russia and China support South Africa, India and Brazil? How does one deal with other opponents to their candidacy (i.e. France and Japan)?
2. Rule of international law: how should BRICS respond to any infractions of international law? Should BRICS condemn all violations? Is BRICS capable of it?
3. Arms race: is it a good thing for BRICS to engage in the arms race? Is there a prospect of coherent military planning?
4. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD): does BRICS want to keep the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)? Should India be brought in? Is India interested in joining?
5. US Global Missile Defence: How should BRICS react, given that these defences pose a potential threat to Russia and China? Is

BRICS prepared to object to the expansion of global and national missile defence?

6. Arms control: are India and China interested in arms control?
7. Militarisation of space: should BRICS be against it outright, or should it aim at maintaining the balance? If balance is the aim, however, one still has to keep it up — implying that Russia must follow the US into space. So the question ultimately becomes one of how one can stop the United States' motivation and initiative to expand.
8. International terrorism: it is getting worse in Eurasia? It could expand to BRICS countries. What is the strategy?
9. Shanghai Security Cooperation Organisation: Is it viable? Should India be included?
10. Cyber-security: should BRICS be satisfied with the status of the Internet as an 'American NGO', to the extent that no others have a say in it? Is it possible to reach agreement on cyber-security control? Is there a need for a cyber non-proliferation treaty?
11. Right to protect (R2P): Does BRICS support it? Is BRICS ready to protect minorities if there is conflict between them and the majority population in that country?
12. Syria: Does BRICS have a peace plan? Should peacekeeping missions in Syria operate under the supervision of the UN?
13. Iran/North Korea and nuclear proliferation: what is BRICS's position? What might be a viable joint strategy?
14. Afghanistan: what is the post-2014 strategy after the US leaves?
15. Will joint consultation on security by BRICS be possible?

One participant reminded the audience that BRICS is non-confrontational and that the questions posted above are largely confrontational, so he questioned whether this was the right platform for them. He then highlighted the militarisation of the African continent as another area of concern, and proposed post-conflict reconstruction and development as the two areas where BRICS could cooperate constructively. He further proposed clustering the abovementioned themes into groups, so that the appropriate institutions could be located to tackle them. This proposal was seconded and a further proposal was made to construct a list of all peace and security concerns, from which one then chooses the ones of mutual concern.

Another participant acknowledged BRICS' limitations and the constraints on cooperation in peace and security, but advocated looking for commonalities and areas where cooperation was possible. Her suggestion was seconded by many other participants. For example, one participant restated the

distinction between traditional and non-traditional security, and suggested using non-traditional security issues — the broadened [human] security concern — to unify BRICS' position on peace and security. Another participant agreed and further proposed domestic security (such as crime) as another potential area for intra-BRICS security cooperation. Giving an example of exploring training platforms in peace and security, through such activities as summer schools, one participant proposed interrogating different themes alongside one another for potential synergy. Another further reminded the audience that security must be framed within the aim of development.

The fourth parallel session was presented by Dr Varun Sahni of India. He began by examining the reasons why states group themselves together: to aggregate power; to solve problems and to build community. He argued that building a peace community is a long term goal, and cannot be achieved overnight. He then pointed to World War II as the last time when BRICS countries aggregated, in addition to two smaller groupings afterwards — Russia and China before they split, and Russia and India from 1971 to 1991. Therefore, he concluded, problem-solving remained the most realistic reason for the BRICS grouping. He further proposed 10 areas of potential shared interest, in addition to the four that were listed by the BRICS National Security Advisers (mentioned in Dr Buntu Siwisa's presentation).

1. R2P: Is there any new thinking on this concept? Brazil has come up with Responsibility While Protecting (RWP). But RWP is more concerned with the question of how war is conducted (*jus in bellum*, justice in war) rather than going to war or not (*jus ad bello*, justice at war). So, while important, it does not assist in taking forward the R2P question.
2. UN Security Council reform: The veto power for permanent seats has served to prevent systemic war. How does one mark the arrival of great powers now that the annihilative power of systemic war is gone/obviated by the operation of the veto power? Key institutions, including the UNSC, need to be reminded that keeping states with systemic impact (or potential impact) out of the institution may lead to the irrelevance of international organisations over time.
3. Disarmament diplomacy: The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has been dead for 17 years, deadlocked mainly for procedural (need for consensus) and substantive reasons. Could BRICS do something about this, such as pre-negotiations outside of CD?
4. Space: A code of conduct for space is necessary. All (bar Russia) are late entrants to space, so shared interest in this domain is a

possibility. Even Russia and the US might have a common interest in this. The EU code of conduct could be used as a reference. Issues that need to be included are: space debris; squatters' rights; satellite slot allocation and so on;

5. Nuclear terrorism and nuclear de-alerting: it is necessary to prioritise the UN as a provider of global public security in this regard. What is BRICS' position?
6. Drones (technology and warfare): does BRICS have a position on the replacement of humans with machines?
7. Military goods could be used for civilian purposes. For example, a Navy could be seen as provision of public goods (surveying and patrolling common sea) beyond their military defence purposes if different countries, for instance India and China, could reach agreement on joint missions to use them in patrolling international seaspace.
8. Peacekeeping: Is there a possibility of a BRICS standby force?
9. Afghanistan: three out of five BRICS countries have a vested interest in this region. Is there any thinking within BRICS around the post-2014 strategy?
10. Epidemics and Pandemics: AIDS, for example, should be seen as a security issue.

One participant pointed back to the African agenda. Each BRICS country has significant interests in Africa; Africa dominates the global/UN security agenda. The question was what BRICS was willing to pay for stability in Africa. Another participant applauded Dr Varun's list as doable, as all countries have interests in these issues. She also agreed with the importance of the space debris issue. Another also agreed about the importance of including the space debris (space code of conduct) and pandemics issues into the security discussion, but questioned whether much could be done about the Conference on Disarmament. One participant alluded to disaster preparedness as another matter that deserves attention, and to the need for a BRICS platform to tackle similar issues incapable of resolution by bilateral arrangements. Yet another pointed to the need to engage not only powerful players, but also those with the potential to become powerful. He highlighted South Africa's competitiveness in peace and security in conflict resolution. Dr Varun agreed with most of the comments. In response to the question about the African agenda, he emphasised that BRICS must support decisions taken by existing regional and continental bodies. He finished with an encouraging prediction that wars would become obsolete over time; a prediction supported by evidence from the history of humanity.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane delivers the keynote address at the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum



From left, the South African and Chinese delegations to the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum



From left, the Indian, Russian and Brazilian delegations to the Fifth BRICS Academic Forum



Amb. H.H.S. Viswanathan, Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation of India, hands over the publication of the outcome of the Fourth BRICS Academic Forum in the presence of Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and Dr Siphamandla Zondi, Head of the South African Delegation



## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM

The 5th BRICS Academic Forum, comprising experts and scholars from the research and academic institutions of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, met on 11 and 12 March 2013 in Durban. Given that the BRICS has covered significant ground since the inception of the partnership five years ago, the Forum believes that they must build upon the progress made in the first five-year cycle of BRICS by consolidating the agreements reached and the achievements registered and by making further concrete proposals for realising the unfolding objectives of the BRICS partnership.

The theme for this year's Forum, *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation*, represents the common aspirations of BRICS countries for cementing partnerships with one another and with emerging markets and developing countries, including the African continent, in order to strengthen progressive development trajectories, promote integration and expedite industrialisation in developing countries.

A shared desire for peace, security, development, cooperation, respect for International Law and sovereignty continues to serve as the fundamental principles for BRICS members in pursuit of a more equitable and fair world. These principles hold particularly in dealings with African countries, the sovereignty of many of which has not been respected in the past, especially by colonial powers.

The Forum believes that BRICS must continue to create synergies for enhancing economic growth through greater engagement with one another as well as with the rest of the world, particularly the African continent.

The BRICS Think Tanks Workshop of 8 and 9 March 2013 saw the establishment of the BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC), which provides the platform for the exchange of ideas among researchers, academia and think-tanks as well as for the convening of the BRICS Academic Forum. The BTTC agreed on a process for finalising the joint long-term vision document for BRICS on the basis of the Indian draft, with inputs from other BRICS countries, in pursuance of paragraph 17 of the Delhi Declaration.

The Forum discussed five themes, which generated the following recommendations:

### **1. BRICS and the Global Economy**

BRICS should facilitate greater cooperation in the area of trade, especially in goods and services, towards strengthening partnerships for development and industrialisation. They should engage in further discussions on the feasibility of implementing preferential trade agreements among themselves. In addition, BRICS should strengthen financial and development cooperation through the establishment of a BRICS Development Bank, and create mechanisms to deal with volatility in global currency markets.

### **2. Reform of Institutions of Global Governance**

Recognising the shared objective of progressive and democratic transformation of the institutions of global governance, BRICS should strive to enhance the voice and representation of emerging economies and developing countries in multilateral forums. BRICS should actively explore innovative and complementary partnerships for sustainable and equitable development. The delegations propose the creation of a BRICS parliamentary forum as a platform for intensifying political interaction.

BRICS should continue to collaborate to identify and utilise strategic opportunities to advance its objectives of reform of global multilateral institutions in order to make them more democratic, representative and accountable.

### **3. Cooperation on Africa**

BRICS should recognise the diversity of values and experiences represented in the separate and intersecting histories of their own and African countries in the pursuit of mutually beneficial social and economic development on the African continent. This should include the pursuit of deeper cooperation with the African Union, taking into account Africa's priorities, especially integration.

### **4. Education, Research and Skills Development for Building Industrialising Economies**

BRICS should intensify its support for collaboration amongst academics and scholars through a variety of institutions, networks and programmes that advance education, research and skills development. This includes valuing local languages and cultural practices and establishing the required support mechanisms to make this possible. BRICS should consider the establishment of an independent BRICS rating agency for educational institutions, as well as a BRICS university. The Forum proposes the establishment of a data bank with primary data on the five countries, as well as a digital platform with detailed information on researchers and institutions dealing

with BRICS issues. The delegations note Brazil's offer to host the digital platform and the data bank.

#### **5. Peace and Security**

BRICS should continue to promote the centrality of the United Nations (UN), based on the principles of equality, mutual trust and cooperation. It should be more active in the peaceful resolution of conflict, dealing with issues of international terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and drug- and human trafficking. Mutual security concerns, such as water, food, environment, health and disaster preparedness should continue to be a focus. BRICS should also promote the peaceful use of outer space. BRICS countries should utilise their relative strengths in post-conflict resolution and peacemaking, peace-building and peacekeeping under the auspices of the UN.

The Forum specially thanks the South African organisers for their excellent arrangements and generous hospitality.

# ANNEXURE – DECLARATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRICS THINK TANK COUNCIL

We, the BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC), wish to celebrate the bonds between BRICS countries by declaring our mutual intention to enhance cooperation in research, knowledge sharing, capacity building and policy advice;

*Recalling* the 2011 Sanya Action Plan, which called for the enhancement of existing cooperation programmes through the holding of BRICS Think Tank symposiums and the establishment of a council of research centres of all BRICS countries;

*Cognisant* of the 2012 Delhi Action Plan, which directed new areas for cooperation;

*Based on* the Memorandum of Understanding for Enhancing Cooperation that BRICS Academic Institutions signed in New Delhi on 6 March 2012, which aims to strengthen cooperation between the BRICS academic institutions;

*Emphasising* the need for further collaboration and cooperation among BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC) members and other institutions.

We hereby declare that:

1. The BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC) is established, comprising the following institutions:
  - Institute for Applied Economic Research (JPEA), Brazil
  - National Committee for BRICS Research (NRC/ BRICS), Russia
  - Observer Research Foundation (ORF), India
  - China Centre for Contemporary World Studies (CCCWS), China
  - Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa
2. This BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC) will form the platform for the exchange of ideas among researchers, academia and think tanks. The BRICS Think Tank Council (BTTC) will be responsible for convening the BRICS Academic Forum.

3. The policy recommendation and guidance provided by the council will be presented to the BRICS leaders for consideration.
4. The functions and modalities of cooperation will be further elaborated on at the mid-term meeting in October 2013.