

Civil BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China and South Africa) Policy Recommendations

Submitted for consideration by the official BRICS Summit to be held in South Africa on 25-27 July 2018

Since 2014 South African civil society organisations (CSOs) have requested that their engagement with BRICS be formalised. This Track 3 approach is known as Civil BRICS and would complement formalized tracks such as Track 1 (Diplomacy, consisting of the official governmental engagement between the BRICS partners) and Track 2 (government-affiliated institutions such as the BRICS Think Tanks Council and the BRICS Business Council, both institutionalised in 2013).

This document puts forward policy recommendations raised by South African CSOs with regional and BRICS partners for consideration by the South African BRICS Sherpa office of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). They comprise the following thematic areas: Inclusive Economic Development (as an umbrella group for urbanisation, taxation and fiscal justice); Land, Mining, Agriculture and Climate Change; Gender and Inequality; Peace and Security; New Development Bank (NDB) and Youth.

The recommendations are a result of several consultations that took place at a provincial level in South Africa, namely in Gauteng (with participation from CSOs in Free State and Northern Cape), Kwa-Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape (with participation of CSOs from all regions of the province including the Western Cape) and Limpopo (with participation of CSOs from Mpumalanga). A pre-Civil BRICS meeting was held on 24-25 April 2018 with various national, regional and BRICS stakeholders, including civil society, social movements and academics. Following this meeting, additional consultations took place with BRICS CSOs. A Civil BRICS meeting will be held in Johannesburg on 25-26 June 2018 in Johannesburg.

This document also builds on the policy recommendations that were developed during the 2016 Civil BRICS in India as well as subsequent civil society meetings held with New Development Bank and African Regional Centre Staff over the past 2 years during the 2016 Civil BRICS. This includes the Second NDB Annual Meeting (April 2017), and CSO Meetings held with the NDB Board in Shanghai (November 2017) and with the NDB African Regional Center (ARC) in Johannesburg (March 2018).

Under the South African Presidency, we urge BRICS leaders to formalise the third track of diplomacy, Track III, which includes interaction with civil society organisations and people-to-people engagement, "Civil BRICS." We further urge the DIRCO to incorporate Civil BRICS views and policy recommendations in the 2018 BRICS proceedings and the 2018 BRICS Leaders Communiqué, whereby Civil BRICS is acknowledged as a formal mechanism.

ABOUT TRACK 3 “CIVIL BRICS”

The formalisation of a Track 3 mechanism seeks to strengthen the role of Civil Society (CS) in BRICS public policy making processes, focused on people-centred development. The platform aims to establish a formal dialogue between BRICS Civil Society and BRICS decision makers; to make a substantive contribution to BRICS policy formulation based on civil society recommendations on key policy issues, especially from a people’s perspective; and to contribute to the South-South Development cooperation and to strengthen people-to-people solidarity. The track 3 mechanism to date has not been uniform among BRICS member states, leading to differences in the effectiveness of engagements. As such, civil society across BRICS countries requests a standardisation of specific governance structures and operating principles. These recommendations are highlighted to BRICS leaders as follows:

Recommended Governance Structure and Principles

- Track 3, Civil BRICS should be held on a rotational based on the annual chairing of BRICS Presidency.
- Track 3, Civil BRICS should be an autonomous and self-determining platform for civil society (non-state actors) in organising its processes for engagement, including its agenda, thematic priorities and non-governmental organisation (NGO) participants from BRICS countries and regional partners.
- Space should be recognised and supported by BRICS governments to promote an enabling environment for civil society to engage meaningfully. Support might be also come with partial funding and/or in-kind support for the convening of Civil BRICS and related activities, and/or assistance with visas.
- The BRICS Summit Host government will work with an independent, self-determined Civil BRICS secretariat to determine the process of meaningful engagement and time frame by which civil society should share policy recommendations to be considered by BRICS governments for consideration in the BRICS Summit Declaration and Action Plan.
- The BRICS Sherpa (BRICS Presidency Office) will be expected to take part of the Civil BRICS forum to receive the Civil BRICS Communiqué and policy recommendations for consideration by other BRICS Leaders in the BRICS Summit Declaration and Action Plan.

INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BRICS leaders have emphasised practical economic cooperation as a cornerstone of cooperation, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship with increased participation of academia, businesses, civil society and other stakeholders in this process. BRICS also supports industrial cooperation including in the spheres of human resources, social security and employment. Moreover, BRICS leaders have acknowledged the importance of clean and renewable energy and committed to implement the Paris Agreement.

The theme of the 2018 summit is “BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution.” However, the world is still faced with extreme poverty and inequality. Abuse of state power and resources, corruption and narrow self-interest threatens economic growth. Illicit financial flows (IFFs) cost developing countries trillions of dollars that could be used to promote more inclusive economic growth, including public investments towards improving access to housing, transport, essential services, and ICT. In this regard there is a need for fiscal justice in relation to tax collection.

Moreover, the Fourth Industrial Revolution has the potential to create a “winner takes all” economy. To address this there is a need for a continued focus on human and social development to act as enablers of the revolution, including education and skills training to prepare communities to adapt to changing labour market conditions.

Additional considerations on human and social development include housing and basic services. In order to protect and acknowledge the existence of informal settlements, the principle of social production of habitat¹ should be taken into account. Social housing and public investment in housing and basic services like water and sanitation should be framed as public investments. To enable this, it is important that spatial planning and urban design considers planning for the growing informal spaces of production. It is imperative that we take into account processes of gentrification and deindustrialization. Informal sectors must be protected and there must be social security support. Safe, affordable and sustainable transport systems that are accessible by all and especially focusing on the low-income groups must be prioritized.

BRICS leaders must ensure that education is adapted to the changing environment. This includes a focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) that will result in innovative and home-grown solutions to address real needs on the continent. Aside from this, there is a need to strengthen technical and vocational training related to requirements in the job market. Investing in research and development will also create an environment for private enterprises to invest in. All marginalized sections of society must be protected. As unemployment and education is unlikely to be addressed in the short term, there should also be an emphasis on employing people that have not been able to achieve higher

¹ The term “social production” arises from social theory, but “social production of habitat” (SPH) has become commonly associated with a particular type of social movement experience, especially in Latin America. It refers to a range of initiatives by ordinary people and communities to improve their living conditions. This site emphasizes also the necessary human rights—especially housing and land rights—dimension of social production of habitat. See: <http://www.hic-mena.org/spage.php?id=o2g=#.WwU6kEiFPDc>

education degrees or technical qualifications, thus providing opportunities to those who have been formerly disadvantaged.

Policy recommendations

Fiscal Justice

- Focus on the principle of fiscal justice respecting tax collection under a progressive tax system perspective (who makes and owns more, pays more). Orient public spending to prioritise the poorest and activate the economy by generating employment and income. Establish a BRICS IFF policy that facilitates the establishment of multi-agency units within BRICS country governments to address IFF's.
- Promote good governance by effectively addressing corruption and abuse of power by top government officials within the BRICS countries and adopting regional/international statutes that prohibit trade mis-invoicing.
- Promote financial transparency by establishing a BRICS tax information sharing network that allows open exchange of tax information amongst BRICS countries
- BRICS countries, especially in the Africa region need to form and or strengthen transfer pricing units within tax authorities to enhance the technical expertise needed to tackle transfer pricing risks.
- BRICS countries should end offshore secrecy and tax havens and prevent illicit financial flows destined for their countries or jurisdictions from Africa.
- BRICS Countries should ensure an inclusive and conducive operating space for CSO's to lobby their governments and international community to take action on stopping IFF's.
- African countries need to establish common and acceptable standards for tax incentives guided by cost-benefit analyses.

Inclusive (human and social) Economic Development

- In order to ensure inclusive, pro-poor economic growth, BRICS governments must ensure social security in terms of employment opportunities, decent working conditions, safety, and security at work places.
- Develop capacity in the services sector to allow for greater employment of unskilled/less skilled workers.
- Protect Informal sectors through human-rights based policies.
- Develop programs to provide basic facilities such as food security, housing, education, health, drinking water, and sanitation facilities for all. These programs should be provided with adequate funds by respective governments to ensure coverage of all people.
- Prioritise and emphasis green energies for sustainable development.
- Allow cross-fertilisation of skills and education training to wide sectors of society across BRICS member states, with a particular focus on STEM.

- Invest in technical and vocational training related to requirements in the job market and invest in research and development exchanges across BRICS.

LAND, MINING, AGRICULTURE and CLIMATE CHANGE

BRICS Civil Society are concerned with negative developments on issues of environment, mining, land and inadequate management of agriculture in relation to climate change in all BRICS countries. Of all these issues, only agriculture and climate change are mentioned by BRICS leaders. On climate change leaders have affirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement and the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). On agriculture, leaders have noted the need to adapt agriculture to climate change, enhance agricultural technology cooperation and innovation, agricultural trade and investment, and ICT application in agriculture.

BRICS governments should prioritise food security. Specifically, the lack of access to food is a significant issue for the global community and particularly for developing nations as it adversely impacts their economic growth and resilience. The increased concentration of global policy-making in the hands of a few are shifting even as national-level policy decisions continue to be directed to varying extents by global and private actors such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and transnational or multinational corporations. Small-scale producers play a critical role both in the global food supply chain as well as in food security and economic independence of the world's poor. However, many of these small-scale producers are disadvantaged by policies that limit their decision-making power in markets and fail to protect their rights.

Africa is rich in minerals and should follow resource-based industrialisation strategies if it wants to build on its comparative advantage. However fair agricultural and trade policies are needed at the global level. Policies must also be done in a way to benefit local communities and small- scale farmers.

In addition, there is a need for effective responses and interventions in addressing issues on mining, land access, agriculture, environment and climate change that protect the poor and marginalised. Interventions and initiatives must enable and strengthen the ordinary people of BRICS countries. Laws and respect for human rights must be enforced in this regard.

Policy recommendations

- Promote inclusive and fair policies on land, mining and agriculture at a national, inter-regional and global level, while adopting a human rights perspective and adhering to country laws and policies in business transactions.
- Promote local and fair employment when conducting business in BRICS member countries so as to promote inclusive growth and make use of local resources in a just manner so as to enhance the economy.

- Ensure land access to all, with a particular focus on women, to address poverty alleviation by 2030.
- Ensure that trade and investment agreements in agriculture and food commodities provide the requisite policy space to Governments to protect and promote domestic food producers towards food sovereignty (and not be subjected to unwanted products/dumping practices).
- Promote small-scale production in international markets for enhanced food security and protect the rights of small-scale farmers. There should be a gender analysis at every step in the agriculture and food security value chain to ensure that there will be economic and social empowerment for women in agriculture.
- Poverty and food insecurity should be tackled through social safety (security) nets. Production-based food security should be preferred by adopting sustainable agricultural production. Adopt the 'Right to Food and GSF (Global Strategic Framework) for Food Security and Nutrition' and the UN Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA), Food and Agriculture Organisation, United Nations, 2012.
- Promote national development strategies that enhance protect land, natural resources and traditional production systems.
- Develop comprehensive initiatives to strengthen and enhance energy efficiency and ensure universal energy access. Scale up renewable energy electricity generation and phase out fossil fuels in the medium to long run. This includes public support for renewable energy, infrastructure and the upgrading of technology to ensure affordable, reliable and sustainable resource access for rural areas and small-scale farmers. Initiatives must promote employment and mitigate climate change.
- Comply with the Paris Agreement and ensure compliance of BRICS respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- Reduce sectoral emissions, especially with respect to the transportation sector.
- Explore potential and opportunities among BRICS industries in the energy efficiency sector (South Africa and India) and in mitigating agricultural emissions (Brazil, India, China).
- Link BRICS climate Goals with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and move towards sustainable lifestyles.

NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK (NDB)

BRICS civil society groups took note of BRICS leaders' commitment to promote sustainable infrastructure development through the NDB and its African Regional Centre.

BRICS civil society calls for the NDB to maintain its strategic focus on financing projects that promote inclusive, people centred and sustainable development and should consider a more reasonable balance of its support between large and medium, and small-scale infrastructure projects.

While civil society welcomes the NDB's commitment to environmental and social safeguards as expressed in its interim Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), several areas can be further strengthened such as establishing clearer sustainability criteria and due diligence requirements for project selection, supervision, and implementation.

Moreover, BRICS civil society encourages the Bank to enhance its transparency and accountability policies and practices through strengthening its processes for public consultation and engagement with civil society, including information disclosure especially at national and regional levels.

Policy Recommendations

- Demonstrate and disseminate information to the public on how inclusive growth is a core principle and guide for NDB sustainable infrastructure investments, with a strong emphasis on reducing poverty and inequality.
- Given that proposed projects currently focus on large-scale infrastructure, the Bank must ensure it achieves its mandate of reducing poverty, inequality and gender inequality by providing Special Funds for projects on women's economic empowerment, small scale agriculture, education, skills development, renewable energy, humanitarian response, disaster mitigation and healthcare, across BRICS countries, new members and other EMDCs.
- Set aside a minimum 3% allocation of total paid-in capital (US\$50 billion) – i.e. US\$1.5 billion – over a 5-year period as Special Funds for community-led small development projects ranging between US\$1-5 million in aforementioned sectors.
- Ensure private-public partnerships are guided by the UN standards on Business and Human Rights and develop accountability measures for the NDB/ARC.
- Promote transparency and accountability by providing access to information and proactive disclosure at all stages of the project cycle in accessible languages and formats for affected communities/CSOs.
- While aiming to use national systems as the best way to strengthen a country's own capacity, the Bank must effectively manage social and environmental impacts. Further, the NDB's country systems analysis must be made publicly available.
- Develop frameworks and action plans for civil society engagement and establish participatory and consultative processes with CSOs and local communities across the project cycle.
- Strengthen the Environmental and Social Framework by including clear sustainability criteria or operational indicators and due diligence for project selection, supervision, and implementation.
- Ensure NDB policies enhance implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda (Financing for Development), and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

- Ensure that the African Regional Center promotes inclusive African priorities linked to Agenda 2063.
- Address gender inequality and youth challenges (see specific recommendations under gender and youth sections).

GENDER AND INEQUALITY

Previous BRICS summits have recognised the importance of gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly in light of the 2030 Agenda. However more can be done to enhance accountability for the implementation of these commitments. Gender must be mainstreamed throughout the BRICS agenda and gender analyses are vital. There is a need to challenge and transform harmful social norms and respect the identities of all.

Policy recommendations

- Ensure that New Development Bank and African Regional Centre establishes a gender policy, gender advisory committee and regional gender desks in consultation with civil society.
- Develop gender sensitive fiscal policies of BRICS countries. These policies must include gender responsive budgeting and should include all sectors and areas of government intervention.
- Adopt and implement inclusive economic development policies in the workplace towards addressing the gender pay-gap in all countries by 2030. Women must be guaranteed labour rights and conditions of decent work in all sectors.
- Recognize all forms of work undertaken by women, including unpaid care work, and address this through legislation, policies, and services.
- Implement the recommendations of the UN High Level Report on Women’s Economic Empowerment that was endorsed in 2017
- Implement all of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), including expanding the definition of gender to include LGBTIQ+ people and see gender as diverse.
- Increase investment in comprehensive and inclusive gender equality education, training, and research to address all forms of gender stereotypes and discrimination and violence.
- Ensure equal access to quality education for all citizens regardless of identity and implement comprehensive and inclusive sexual education in education settings at all levels. Invest in STEM (Science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education, information communication technology for all women and girls.
- Acknowledge women’s rights to productive resources including natural resources such as land, water, forests; financial resources such as credit, sustainable livelihoods and social resources such as housing and social security.

- Ensure the BRICS gender and women's forum is accessible and includes representation of women from all sectors of society and engages adequately with civil society. Its mandate should extend beyond entrepreneurship and business.

YOUTH

The BRICS focus on youth and increased people-to-people exchanges are welcomed, as is the creation of a youth forum and action plan. However, civil society calls on BRICS leaders to examine the underlying conditions that prevent youth from accessing opportunities, and to ensure that opportunities are accessible to all. Most fundamental to strengthening youth potential is the need to promote inclusive education from an early age, and to ensure that opportunities continue to be strengthened across the education spectrum. Education goes beyond traditional notions, to also include vocational and technical training appropriate to the job market across BRICS member countries. Barriers to youth opportunities must be removed, such as visas and access to technologies that will allow for virtual exchanges.

Policy recommendations

- Develop and implement BRICS policies to promote free quality education and higher education
- Promote a standardised education system to match the quality and breadth of educational opportunities in BRICS member states.
- Promote life education and global citizenship education in BRICS countries
- Develop a one stop centre to promote information on education and other opportunities offered by BRICS, especially programmes promoting the mobility of students
- Develop a VISA free regime within the BRICS countries to promote student mobility, trade at all levels and inter-cultural exchange amongst young people
- Develop concrete steps to establish the BRICS Network University, including the development of an accessible and interactive virtual platform, and enhance linkages to other universities
- Develop BRICS policies that promote access to information
- Develop economic conditions and a conducive environment to allow the youth opportunities entering the job market
- Continue to enhance research and educational exchanges amongst youth
- Provide subsidised traineeships, internships and other opportunities among member countries for newly graduated youth, including through the NDB/ARC.
- Enhance flexibility for youth loans from credit providers in BRICS member countries
- Establish and implement a BRICS Youth Council to implement all BRICS Youth Summit recommendations and to sustain linkages with other BRICS institutions.

- Ensure that the NDB/ARC carry out projects with a specific youth focus, including funding entrepreneurial, agricultural and educational activities.

PEACE AND SECURITY

BRICS leaders have continued to emphasise a fair and equitable world order and, while emphasising the central role of the UN, have insisted on its reform. They have also committed to human rights and fundamental freedoms, with an emphasis on sovereignty and non-interference. BRICS recognises the comprehensive approach needed to address the root causes of violence and the links between peace and development and the importance of Agenda 2063. They have also stressed the importance of African regional and sub-regional organisations and committed to contribute peacekeeping troops.

However, BRICS leaders can do more to uphold human rights instruments and the responsibility to protect and to act preventatively. This includes addressing socio-economic imbalances, addressing a wide range of crime, promoting peaceful, just and inclusive institutions (SDG 16) and recognising the role of civil society in contributing towards peace and security. Partnerships (SDG 17) are also necessary. Freedom of speech, assembly and association is imperative. A gender perspective throughout all engagements is welcomed, as is the appreciation of African agendas and African solutions. The importance of BRICS contributions to peacekeeping is welcomed, but requires greater transparency, better protection of peacekeepers as well as standards for troop contributing countries. In addition, sustaining peace goes beyond peacekeeping and requires broader activities linked to addressing the root causes of violence.

Policy Recommendations

- Continue to call for a more equitable reform of the UNSC and other multilateral institutions.
- Develop a common understanding of what conflict prevention entails among member states. This would include understanding the right time to intervene (robust peacekeeping and the responsibility to protect) in relation to principles of non-interference and sovereignty.
- Uphold human rights principles and instruments.
- Better define policies for engagement which link peace and development initiatives, including linking BRICS policies to Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.
- Ensure greater transparency on peacekeeping operations in respective member states and frameworks for peacekeeping engagement internationally.
- Develop a position of regional solutions and the principles of subsidiarity.
- Promote sharing of peacekeeping experiences among BRICS member states to enhance performance and safety of peacekeepers, in alignment with UN serviceability standards, exploitation and abuse.
- Understand that sustaining peace requires a holistic approach that goes beyond peacekeeping and addresses the root causes of violence, therefore

supplementing peacekeeping activities and funds with sustaining peace activities and making sure peacekeepers are trained in human rights, rule of law etc.

- Protect the freedom of speech while establishing counter-terrorism policies and cybersecurity monitoring.
- BRICS States should implement UN mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for states to address domestic, sexual violence and gender-based violence and ensure women are included in sustaining peace activities.

ORGANISATION ENDORSEMENTS

The Civil BRICS policy document has been endorsed by the following organisations:

- Action Aid (South Africa)
- Africa Solidarity Network (Africa Region)
- African Forum and Network on Debt and Development – AFRODAD (Africa Region)
- African Monitor (South Africa/Africa Region)
- BRICS Feminist Watch (Brasil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)
- Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability – CBGA (India)
- Centre for Rural Studies and Development (India)
- Centre for Youth and Social Development (India)
- Diakonia Council of Churches (South Africa)
- Eastern and Southern Africa Farmer’s Forum – ESAFF (South Africa)
- Eastern Cape Environmental Network (South Africa)
- Economic Justice Network (South Africa/ Southern Africa Region)
- EKTA Resource Centre for Women (India)
- GRIP- Rape Intervention Programme (South Africa)
- Human Rights Institute Of South Africa (South Africa)
- Mining Affected Communities United in Action (South Africa)
- North East Network (India)
- Open Medical Club Charitable Foundation (Russia)
- Oxfam (Brasil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)
- Pathey Budget Centre (India)
- South Africa Climate Action Network
- South African Council of Churches (South Africa)
- South African Green Revolutionary Communities (South Africa)
- Uganda Debt Network (Uganda)
- Vasudha Foundation (India)

Note: The call for organisational endorsements is open until the time of Civil BRICS to be convened in Johannesburg from 25-26 June 2018.