



सत्यमेव जयते

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**BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting**

**Statement by**

**External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj**

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Your Excellency Mr. Aloysio Nunes Ferreira Filho  
Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov  
Excellency Mr. Wang Yi  
Excellency Ms. Lindiwe Sisulu

At the outset,

I thank Minister Aloysio Nunes Ferreira Filho for chairing this meeting. BRICS has been making progress over the years, and South Africa's Chairmanship this year has given it significant direction. I am sure that under Brazil's Chairmanship in 2019, BRICS cooperation will achieve even greater heights. Our Leaders have had a very successful BRICS Summit in Johannesburg. We thank South Africa for hosting it. The Leaders have given us strong mandates and we are fully committed to implement them. Our exchanges at Pretoria in June also contributed towards enriching intra-BRICS cooperation further.

Excellency,

There was a clear indication during the special retreat organized during the Summit that, while BRICS has taken several impressive strides in the last decade, we still need to consolidate BRICS amongst the five of us further and take it forward. We certainly have several unfinished agenda, like for example the establishment of the BRICS Credit Rating Agency.

However, at a broader level, we need to develop greater understanding and convergence on issues of mutual concern in the coming years, if BRICS has to emerge stronger. As Prime Minister Modi mentioned, BRICS started a decade ago to change the status quo in international organizations and correct distortions in multilateralism. Therefore, a decade later, our call for multilateralism cannot and should not be for reinforcing this status quo but rather to change it. That is why, he mentioned that "reformed multilateralism" is what we are looking for. One such reform which is the most significant unfinished agenda is the reform of the UN Security Council. The discussions on UNSC reform cannot be an exercise in perpetuity, while the legitimacy and credibility of the Security Council continues to get eroded. We, in BRICS should speak with a stronger voice rather than be divided amongst ourselves in this critical area of international governance.

We are meeting at a time when multilateralism, international trade, and rules based world order face strong head-winds. We must continue to work together to fight unilateralism. BRICS countries have been contributing positively to global stability and growth. With strong continuing growth and demand, most of future consumer-demands will emanate from the emerging economies.

Excellency,

BRICS Leaders have given us a robust mandate on counter terrorism at the successive BRICS

Summit, including at Johannesburg Summit. We have given a call for a BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy for joint-action with a focus on money laundering, terrorist-finance, cyberspace and de-radicalization as our priorities.

Dismantling terrorist organisations support infrastructure would be the first step. Terror groups such as Lashkar e-Taiba, ISIS, Al Qaeda, Jaish e-Muhammad, Taliban, and Haqqani Network are organized entities that thrive on State support.

We must also join hands to make United Nations' counter-terrorism mechanism efficient in listing terrorists and their outfits. Implementation of FATF standards, across all jurisdictions, will strengthen international efforts in addressing terrorism. Prime Minister Modi has been stressing on enhanced BRICS people-to-people exchanges. The sentiment was echoed during the Special Retreat. India will continue to work to strengthen this aspect, including in sports and fitness, and hope to hold the BRICS workshop on film technology and development. India is fully committed to UN Peacekeeping, as the largest troop contributing country in cumulative terms to UN Peacekeeping operations. BRICS and India could explore possibilities of a joint cooperation in peacekeeping training at our Centre for UN Peacekeeping in New Delhi.

In the ongoing Peacebuilding Architecture review discourse, India's efforts are geared towards ensuring that it is member-states driven. Peace building process, involving institutions and capacity building, should be nationally owned and rooted to ground realities while eliciting the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Through voluntary South-South Cooperation, we are reaching out to create a joint narrative of development with other developing countries. We need to work together to reflect our position in the international discourse, and make sure we do not get drawn into the North-South template and accounting.

Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication remain major challenges in today's world. The 2030 Agenda, with its overarching goal of poverty eradication and the seventeen SDGs, is a matter of commitment for us to our people. Our aim is to achieve our development priorities in a sustainable manner by harnessing renewable energy and efficient use of resources. The International Solar Alliance launched by India is an example of our efforts in this direction. We will soon hold the first General Assembly of ISA in India next week.

Excellencies,

The world today is characterised by chronic armed-conflicts in different parts of the world, especially in West Asia. These conflicts are of intra-state nature with the proliferation of non-state actors and terrorist-networks with global reach.

Conflicts in Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen pose security challenges for the region and for global peace. We are deeply concerned with continuing tensions on the border between Gaza Strip and Israel.

We have recently considerably increased our contribution to UNRWA to USD 5 million. India firmly believes that the dialogue and country-led processes are the only viable options to effectively address the issues in that region.

We have been consistently supportive of efforts to bring about peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. We believe that any solution to the issue of Korean Peninsula must address concerns about the proliferation linkages with India's neighbourhood.

I am confident that our deliberations today will further BRICS understanding and consensus on several issues.

Thank you.