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South African
BRICS Think Tank

South Africa's BRICS Engagement



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List of acronyms and abbreviations

AIIB	Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank
AU	African Union
ARC	African Regional Center
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal's initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BRI	China's Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
IBSA	India, Brazil and South African Dialogue Forum
IGD	Institute for Global Dialogue
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IORA	Indian Ocean Rime Association
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MPB	Medical and Dental Board
NBD	New Development Bank
NHI	National Health Insurance
NIHSS	National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences
ORF	Observer Research Foundation
RFC	Reserve Force Council
SABTT	South African BRICS Think Tank
SAFPI	South Africa Foreign Policy Initiative
SAMA	South African Medical Association
SAMDP	South African Medical and Dental Practitioner's Association
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMMEs	Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Ms. Mabera has a Masters degree in International Relations obtained in 2014, a BA Honours degree in International Relations obtained in 2011 and a BPolSci degree in International Studies obtained in 2010, all from the University of Pretoria. She is currently a Senior Researcher on African diplomacy/African foreign policy at the Institute for Global Dialogue. Her research interests include the Responsibility to Protect, African diplomacy, African foreign policy and human security.

Prof. Rasigan Maharajh

Professor Maharajh is Nodal Head of the Department of Science and Technology and National Research Foundation's Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy; the founding Chief Director of the Institute for Economic Research on Innovation (IERI) at Tshwane University of Technology; Professor Extraordinaire at the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology at Stellenbosch University; an Associate Research Fellow of the Tellus Institute in Boston; and the Chairperson of the Southern Africa Node of the Millennium Project. Professor Maharajh holds a PhD from the School of Economics and Management, Lund University, Sweden; is also an alumnus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and of Harvard Business School in the USA. Rasigan has twice served as Ministerial Representative to the Council of Rhodes University and is in his third elected-term as a Senator of Tshwane University of Technology. In the past decade, Rasigan has contributed to more than 65 publications, and has presented his work in at least 37 countries.

Dr. Thulisile Mphambukeli

Dr. Mphambukeli is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Free State (UFS). She obtained the degree of Bachelor of Community and Development Studies, the degree Master of Town and Regional Planning at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the degree of Bachelor in Theology at Faith Bible College, and a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning from UFS. She is a Fellow Third World Academy of Science UNESCO, Fellow Brown International Advance Institute, Brown University, USA; An Alumni Public Affairs Research Institute, a University of the Free State Rector's Prestige Scholar. She is a recipient of many grants and has published extensively in local and international journals.

Prof. Godwell Nhamo

Prof Nhamo is a Chief Researcher and Chair for the Exxaro Chair in Business and Climate Change at the University of South Africa (Unisa). He is an NRF C3 rated researcher in the fields of Green Economy, Climate Change Governance and Sustainable Development and has published widely in these areas. Prof Nhamo has over 20 years of work experience drawn from a mix of academic and consultancy spheres. Among his offerings are six books (5 edited) and over 60 journal articles and book chapters. Since 2013, Prof Nhamo has graduated nine (9) PhDs and is currently supervising 7 others. Professor Nhamo sits in a number of both international and national boards and technical panels addressing issues in his research space. He has hosted 10 postdoctoral fellows from across Africa. Professor Nhamo has received many awards that include: Unisa Chairperson of Council Award of Excellence in Overall Job Performance and Community Service, and Unisa Vice Chancellor Award of Research Excellence (both in 2016). He was also a 2015/16 finalist in the prestigious South Africa National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) Green Matter Category for outstanding contributions in biodiversity conservation, sustainability and green economy, a 2017 Semi-Finalist in the CEO Global Titans Awards and in 2017, recognised for the Rhodes University Distinguished Old Rhodian Award for having reached exceptional heights in his chosen career by maintaining excellence in the field and service to society.

Dr. Victor Ogbonnaya Okorie

Dr Okorie holds a joint PhD in development and anthropology, as well as a Master of Arts in cultural anthropology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. He also holds a Master of Philosophy in agricultural extension and rural sociology and a Bachelor of agriculture from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, where he is a Senior lecturer and teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses. He is a Fellow Third World Academy of Science, UNESCO; Fellow Brown International Advance Research Institute, Brown University USA; Fellow International Social Science Council, Paris France; Laureate

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Dr. Buntu Siwisa

Dr Siwisa is an independent research consultant on peace and security matters in Africa; member of the South African BRICS Academic Forum in the Peace and Security Cluster; associate of the BRICS Policy Centre. He obtained his D. Phil. from the University of Oxford, St. Peter's College (2006), and his M.A. (Economic History and Development Studies); B.A. (Hons) and undergraduate degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). As a research consultant and Senior Research Fellow affiliated to the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), he recently concluded work as a researcher, writer and rapporteur for the High-Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change. In the panel, chaired by former President Kgalema Motlanthe, appointed by the Speakers' Forum and reporting to parliament, he led on research and writing for the working group on Social Cohesion and Nation Building.

He has been a member of the Peace and Security cluster of the BRICS Academic Forum since 2013, representing South Africa in the fora of 2013 (eThekweni, South Africa); 2015 (Moscow, Russia); and 2016 (Goa, India). Previously, he has worked for government in international relations on Southern Africa and SADC, ACCORD as Senior Researcher and Manager of the Knowledge Production Department. He also was Leader of the Masters Programme in South African Political Economy and Senior Lecturer in Politics at the Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth.

Introduction

Dr. Philani Mthembu, Executive Director at the Institute for Global Dialogue, opened the event by contextualising the day's discussion and explained that the dialogue falls under South Africa's second track diplomacy, whereby academic institutions, think tanks and researchers interact. South Africa pushed to have this interaction institutionalised in 2013 through its first BRICS Presidency. He then outlined that this policy dialogue will expand a number of topics that have been discussed at numerous BRICS meetings throughout the year involving the South Africa BRICS Think Tank, other research or think tank organisations, universities, civil society organisations, and government departments, such as the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). Dr. Mthembu then assured those present that the dialogue would record the discussions, which will be shared with these organisations in order to continue developing the thinking around South Africa's membership in the BRICS partnership. He then urged think tanks to use the various platforms provided by BRICS to outline concrete ideas that could be adopted by the various nation states while also communicating the intricacies of BRICS to the broader society. This would be important if the BRICS partnership is to truly deepen beyond state to state relations and have buy in from the broader society. Think tanks are uniquely placed to interact with both state actors and civil society, which interact within the first and third tracks of diplomacy respectively.

Dr. Elias Phaahla, BRICS Programme Coordinator for the South African BRICS Think Tank, within the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS), expanded by noting that 2018 will be a momentous year for South Africa's hosting of the BRICS presidency. The South African BRICS Think Tank complements the discussions by hosting the BRICS academic forum and summit, as well as other events. At face value, the numerous events seems separate, however, all activities are drawn from the main theme of Inclusive Growth and a Socially Responsive Economy. This theme is central to the South African context and may contribute to a level of renewed consciousness among the BRICS partners and South Africans by including all stakeholders who benefit from the BRICS partnership.

Panel 1 – Economic prosperity & inclusive growth in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As a BRICS priority, economic prosperity cannot be achieved if it is not based on inclusive growth. It is vital for South Africa to continue challenging profound inequalities and thus strive to achieve a redistributive environment through development and cooperation programmes. However, South Africa's, and BRICS' prosperity cannot occur in a vacuum, and thus regional and continental foci too contribute to the economic prosperity and inclusive growth.

Professor Godwell Nhamo began his presentation by using the example of the United Nations climate change negotiations, COP, where he noted that successful change is actualised through the free will and goodwill of people and nations. Trends in political dynamics depict a world where powerful actors are moving slowly from multilateralism to unilateralism, and that those lacking in comparative power will demand multilateralism. He then contextualised his presentation by discussing South Africa's need for inclusive growth through actualising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). From this, it is vital to have knowledge of the SDGs, which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015. The presentation was outlined in three overarching categories; dealing with systematic and structural defects, understanding the SDGs framework, and moving towards implementation by addressing financial implications and creating large data sets needed to monitor and evaluate progress on the SDGs. Prof Nhamo explained that his focus on the SDGs links to a strong overlap of the South African development goals; both share the same life span (completion by 2030), and the New Development Plan mirrors the SDGs as they both may be employed to eliminate South Africa's triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Prof Nhamo explained that the systematic and structural defects that South Africa is experiencing could be approached as follows; appropriate planning based on a core vision, creating goals and objectives, long term planning to leave a legacy, and focusing on agriculture, entrepreneurship and good governance. At present there is a focus on mineral wealth; due to the need for further development of these industries, and most people continue to live in poverty but are surrounded by resources. Although the success of key industries is important to economies, agriculture may promote entrepreneurship and more widespread access to economies. Moreover, the guidance of good governance and sound leadership thus promotes individual and collective agency to co-create values and contribute to a larger value chain for industries.

Linking the discussion to BRICS, Prof. Nhamo asked how do you shape core values among the BRICS countries and can this contribute to a vision that is linked to the 2018 agenda? The context of a country's present realities cannot be divided from its history; South African history is forged on the atrocities of apartheid and colonial pasts, which cannot be forgotten and needs to act as a mirror that reflects these legacies. Similarly, South Africa should not forget its history when engaging in BRICS but continue to learn from the BRICS countries' respective mirrors. For example, China is particularly successful for their planning and execution. Yet, while it is important to learn particular lessons, it is more important for South Africa to also contribute to the operationalisation of BRICS agreements.

In the context of Africa, Prof. Nhamo discussed Agenda 2063 and remained optimistic in stating that it is possible to achieve these aims. South Africa can be instrumental in achieving these aims by channelling BRICS interests in Africa, and so it is important to use South Africa's BRICS presidency in 2018 to achieve this. Prof. Nhamo continued the discussion by exploring the potential contributions of the SDGs to South Africa achieving inclusive development. In order to meet these goals, more participation in reading policy and working towards the goals is needed. For example, Prof. Nhamo encouraged more to understand what BRICS is, which is not limited to government participation as civil society may participate in the BRICS partnership through the *BRICS from Below* movement.

The SDGs offer a synergised path to development as they impact one another and are interrelated. Although such plans may receive critiques that they are an instrument of the global North and thus cannot relate to developing world issues, Prof Nhamo reiterated their potential for building global prosperity that impacts South Africa and BRICS. In his discussion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) it is possible to see continuity with the objectives of the SDGs. There is a concern that the SDG's potential may be overshadowed by the complex targets that have been set. With the MDGs, 8 goals and 18 targets were set, however with the SDGs, 17 Goals and 169 targets have been set. Each country was required to set a base line according to 2014/2015 statistics; without this information, the SDGs cannot be managed and South Africa is lagging behind as it still needs to set its base lines. A possible solution to this challenge is to create a "Plan-Do-Check" model, hold a national SDG Indaba that informs decision and policy makers, and allocate particular agendas to provincial and local governments. Prof. Nhamo noted that having access to base line statistics contributes to the implementation of SDGs, moreover, this information needed to be gathered domestically thus reducing any dependence on external resources.

The discussion points raised after the presentation considered the following; firstly, although SDGs may holistically promote the socio-economic well-being of persons, it does not necessarily match the idea of economic prosperity through 'inclusive growth'. It is thus more important to interrogate how we understand the South African and global economies; where they are presently and where they are going, which requires deeper reflection. Secondly, representation does not reflect participation, and many areas of the population are not able to participate. This gap could allow effective testing of the South African representative democracy and to interrogate the extent to which persons are represented. Thirdly, BRICS exists within a complicated context, however this does not necessarily need to be simplified in order to be understood and it may be valuable to understand complexity and apply the tools to measure it. In addition, it was recommended that South Africa should take a stronger empirical approach to its BRICS leadership in 2018, by relying more closely on quantitative data and the questions that are determined from it.

Prof. Nhamo closed the session by reiterating a number of points; BRICS needs to be communicated widely, and to all, in order to make the desired impact. SDGs could have a unique way of addressing fundamental challenges and South Africa's BRICS aspirations. For example, South Africa's energy crisis cannot be addressed commercially because it is a social imperative, thus addressing energy as a social policy issue would promote social and economic development. South African leadership also needs to consider how to open up the economy so that it works to South Africa's advantage.

Key Points:

- The SDGs road map may be a viable direction for South African inclusive development.
- In order to influence this particular space, it is important to consider unique solutions that come from a South African context and so Prof. Nhamo suggested decolonisation of the mind and making use of language that influences the agenda.

- It is important to consider the overarching goal of reaching prosperity, which is linked to agricultural growth and creating more employment and growth in the industry in order to eradicate poverty.

Panel 2 – Prioritising the productive, creative, and scientific powers of BRICS countries

Higher learning institutions are strategically valuable to the BRICS partnership; it is vital to the BRICS partnership to harness productive, creative and scientific capabilities. This may be achieved through the BRICS university partnership and higher learning institutions, by focusing on inclusivity and the opportunities offered through our diversity.

Professor Rasigan Maharajh's presentation, titled "Prioritising the Productive, Creative, and Scientific Powers of BRICS countries", started the discussion by expressing the social responsibility of researchers to share the knowledge that is created. This is particularly pertinent to the changing global context, which occurs rapidly. It is increasingly difficult to explain the changing global context as it may not necessarily make sense, moreover it is very rare that researchers are presented with the whole knowledge available. It is also important to be aware of who drives narratives. For example, BRICS is often linked to the Goldman Sachs report that anticipated the BRICs economic rise; however, the success of BRICS cannot be attributed to the report. Therefore, it is important to be critical in looking at what BRICS is, who is defining BRICS and what personal and professional implications BRICS has for individuals. In the case of researchers, it may be considered a responsibility to participate in the world beyond isolated laboratories; for practitioners, it may be their responsibility to make use of research actively; next, knowledge producing hubs in the form of laboratories, universities, and private sector research and development need to be preserved. These points may contribute to the availability of the expertise needed to action global agreements.

In terms of the focus on Research and Development (R&D) spending and the capacity to innovate, BRICS countries are not leading, however they are in the process of increasing their capacity. For example, China has been able to improve its position in the global innovation scale because it has invested a percentage of its GDP to R&D. The focus on R&D spending also contributed to the rise of China. By comparison, South Africa's contributions to R&D need to be upscale at present, South Africa has a number of challenges in meeting and increasing a number of R&D targets. It is important to utilise the BRICS partnership and improve South African STI through this interaction, particularly to push for a progressive view for the world that we want. Science and Technology has immense importance because it underpins and contributes to other areas of focus. Dr. Maharajh suggested that South Africa's presidency is an opportunity to put forth a critical perspective on BRICS engagements.

The BRICS Action Plan for Innovation Cooperation promotes opportunities that create platforms in: technology cooperation, transfer and translation, science and technology parks, youth innovation and entrepreneurship, and creating strategic and long term university-industry partnerships; as well as to support proactive environments for those platforms. In 2016, the BRICS STI framework Programme Pilot Call received 320 proposals, from which 26 were accepted. These proposals touched on: prevention and monitoring of natural disasters, water resources and pollution treatment, geospatial technology and its applications, new and renewable energy, and energy efficiency, astronomy, biotechnology and biomedicine including human health and neuroscience, information technologies and high performance computing, ocean and polar science and technology, material science including nanotechnology, and photonics. These STI fields were selected as priority areas because of their potential to present practical solutions for economic growth, societal issues and securing a technological legacy. In 2017, the BRICS STI Call continued to support these identified research fields, provide opportunities for researchers and to build on the capacity of basic research.

In preparation for South Africa's 2018 presidency, South Africa can complement the upcoming annual Young Scientists forum, the Ministerial Meeting and the Senior Officials Meeting by contributing South African STI resources. In addition, all public universities, science councils and public institutions in science should have a BRICS project in 2018. However, this has been met with budgetary constraints. It is thus recommended that those present at BRICS events take this message back to their respective institutions.

To conclude, Prof. Maharajh emphasised that the current conjuncture is characterised by global contradictions, conflicts, and crises that have domestic and regional impacts. Moreover, sociological and historical relations are derived from the international political economy that is structured on the basis of a Core, Semi-periphery, and Periphery role of countries in the capitalist system. Therefore STI is likely to emerge from the societies that understand the system. Thus it is important to note

what kind of role (Colonial, Post-colonial, Neo-colonial or Anti-imperialist) BRICS may take on. Prof. Maharajh therefore suggested the following:

- Radically revise new perspectives, which are required to realise the “World that we Want” and reform and/or transform;
- Redress knowledge asymmetries, such as decolonising curricula, epistemologies, and axiology;
- Enhance linkages between research and STI; and
- Democratise science and technology through socially-engaged scholarship, accessible knowledge and technologies, and open innovation platforms

In the discussion, the audience considered three main subjects of debate; firstly, the role of BRICS as a reformist or transformist grouping in geopolitics. It is important to question this role critically, particularly because of its socially rooted importance. Next, another respondent brought up the issues associated with pragmatism, whereby BRICS governments may have these forward looking commitments yet they still continue to rely heavily on the extractives industries in other developing countries. The effect is often more severe on the individuals who are already experiencing inequality. Although the critique is vital it is important to bear in mind that BRICS offers an opportunity and it is important to incorporate these aspirations into the partnership. Lastly, the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) was included in the STI discussion, endogenous forms of learning and knowledge have a role in STI and it is important to move towards this type of inclusion.

Key Points:

- The development of STIs through R&D should be a greater priority. It is becoming more important to engage empirically and to contest what we know.
- It important to show more proactive STI activity in the BRICS partnership so that South Africa is not reactive in its choices and relationships, but has the opportunity to contribute and set the agenda.

Panel 3 – The role of BRICS in conflict resolution, peace and social justice

There is a regional and global concern about conflict resolution, peace and social justice; it is no longer an issue that concerns material or political gains, but rather reducing a moral deficit that suppresses the potential of our humanistic heritage.

Ms. Faith Mabera’s presentation focused on BRICS’ role in international peace and security and provided an overview of the key issues and a notion of how to navigate the paradigms of BRICS as an actor in peace and security. Ms. Mabera started by iterating the most recent BRICS engagement, the Xiamen Summit declaration, this Declaration noted more than 10 references to peace and security, the meeting of high level representatives on security issues, the possibility of a foreign ministers’ meeting, as well as a Brazilian proposal for a BRICS intelligence forum. Ms. Mabera explained that peace and security issues feature prominently in a forum that is strongly economically centred, which is an acknowledgement of the global peace and security nexus and the awareness that it is not possible to divorce economics from peace and security. Moreover, this displays significant movement towards a more strategic agenda within BRICS, and BRICS is moving towards taking on a role of shaping norms and not just taking on norms. For example the approaches to humanitarian intervention, UN led peacekeeping, and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) normative understandings.

In addition, Ms. Mabera expressed that there is a methodological challenge when discussing and studying BRICS within the context of peace and security due to motivations, logic, goals and interests, and the differences in BRICS members’ peace and security approaches and respective constitutions. Overall, the BRICS have a reformist behaviour towards global peace and security issues, to the extent that Western actors have labelled the BRICS as the so-called ‘sovereignty hoax’ or ‘free riders’. The narrative from the west is predominantly confrontational towards the BRICS, which also provides an interesting dynamic to understanding the BRICS agenda. It is possible to see a clearer direction of BRICS members’ understanding of peace and security after the 2011 Libyan intervention, which was dealt with by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Immediately after, the BRICS states blocked a European led resolution at the UNSC that aimed to put a halt to the Syrian Crisis. This action was the attempt of the BRICS to prevent a foreign regime change, particularly because the BRICS members

believed in a political solution to the crisis and chose not to overstep principles of sovereignty. The BRICS collective actions towards Syria were decisive in their means of cooperation. It was later seen at the Delhi summit in 2016, when the BRICS moved towards specialised meetings about joint actions in security areas such as piracy, cyber security and regional security.

The second approach to considering BRICS within the peace and security nexus, the R2P norm, is a soft norm and it is not being implemented frequently as yet. The surest case of its implementation was during the Libyan Crisis. All BRICS countries endorsed the R2P norm at the 2005 World Summit. According to Ms. Maberera, the approach to R2P may also be considered a norm subsidiarity approach, which keeps a check on actors from abusing this mechanism for intervention. To this degree the BRICS have emphasised its military action or intervention as the last resort, but also emphasised a robust criteria in the case of military intervention. For example, China has pushed for a concept of 'responsible protection', and Brazil has emphasised 'responsibility while protecting'. Therefore while the BRICS may not push to enforce R2P immediately, they are making valuable contributions to the evolution of the norm. For rising powers, or BRICS, there is an incentive to be cautious about peace and security because causing a disruption would be counter intuitive to the economic welfare of the grouping and of their own interests. The BRICS peace and security engagement is therefore driven by caution, the emphasis on local and regional ownership of solutions and contextual solutions to issues.

Ms. Maberera concluded by considering the next 10 years of BRICS:

- BRICS should not be expected to display a homogenous position towards issues;
- BRICS will not institutionalise a strict bureaucratic system, such as the European Union (EU);
- BRICS will continue to proceed with its discourse around sovereignty; and
- BRICS will continue to move towards a more organic understanding of global politics in the context of a post-western world.

Dr. Buntu Siwisa's presentation considered existing instability dynamics in mapping a South African-led action plan on peace, security and development. The aims of the presentation were to; 1) consider a map of peace and security and social justice, and 2) these considerations should feature in South Africa's presidency of BRICS. His discussion included; taking stock of BRICS and multi-polarity, BRICS' existing commitments to conflict resolution, peace and social justice, South Africa's foreign policy and the proposed areas of focus during the BRICS 2018 presidency, and the possible BRICS development agencies that may be involved.

Dr. Siwisa further explained that the ideas generated in various tracks of diplomacy are not up-scaled or imbibed by the other.

In taking stock of BRICS and multipolarity; BRICS is founded on multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations (UN). However, a number of challenges exist in the BRICS dynamics:

- Russia and China have significant regional power and are involved in complicated peace and security dynamics as well as have strategic interests around the world, this may have some effect as to how the remaining BRICS countries participate in their diplomatic mediations.
- Brazil is also experiencing a number domestic political difficulties from the post-Lula and Rousseff regimes, and under the Temer administration it is anticipated that the western focus may have an implication on BRICS coordination.
- The BRICS countries have varied emphases and approaches to peace building and conflict resolution, which makes it more difficult to streamline any particular approaches.

According to Dr. Siwisa, the BRICS have a commitment to conflict resolution and peace because it has implications in their development agendas. These commitments are reiterated in summit declarations and the recognition and support of interventions in African countries. In order to attain peace and security it is important to promote mutual trust, mutual benefits, equity and cooperation to address causes of conflict, and their political, economic and social dimensions. Furthermore, these elements may promote counter-terrorism operations, security in the use of ICT, energy security, and finding peaceful solutions to major international and regional hotspots.

Moving towards the 2018 summit, South Africa's foreign policy is informed by a number of key principles; an extension of its domestic policy to address the triple threat to development, political stability and development of SADC, the African Agenda, Pan-Africanism, South-South cooperation, and nuclear non-proliferation. Dr. Siwisa then explored the possible focus areas for South Africa's peace and security contributions during its BRICS presidency. Firstly, the focus should be premised on institution building to encourage reciprocity between the state and the people, as well as create practical links between agreements and implementation. Secondly, peace building should take stock of gaps within existing strategies, financing operations and capacity to undertake operations and place relevant interventions to ensure that these gaps are closed.

Dr. Siwisa concluded by putting forth the following recommendations:

- More exchanges of information should take place in the sphere of peace, security and development projects. South Africa should take the opportunity to lead in information exchanges in the pursuit of closing gaps and avoiding duplication.
- South Africa should lead BRICS in the pursuit of SDGs monitoring, evaluating and measuring.
- Peace building should be premised on institution building and have an Africa focus, from this, South Africa should involve BRICS members and also draw from particular expertise.
- Civil society organisations and development agencies should be utilised increasingly.

During the discussion, the audience asked a number of questions relating to the contributions to peace keeping in Africa. For example, the Chinese naval base in Djibouti, which allows China to be involved in counter piracy measures and to protect their economic interests. In addition, BRICS countries have often operated on their own in relation to peace building and peacekeeping. Another question made reference to the role of local institutions in the character of peace building. The panellists explained that there is a local role especially through the inclusion of civil societies and regional organisations. Local institutions bear the brunt of peace building, the challenge is that there is no sense of clear reflection of what they are doing because there is no central point of reference that tracks their efforts. Lastly, participants explained that BRICS has state-centric approaches to peacekeeping and conflict resolution, as well as pushing for civilian involvement and for political solutions.

Key Points:

The BRICS countries are prioritising peace building and peacekeeping because of the economic implications.

Panel 4 – Revisiting the commons: Strengthening responsible forms of development

This panel explored the commons, which highlights the importance of linking environmental needs as well as economic development; how to stimulate the growth of an inclusive economy through green economies, ecosystem networks and supporting biodiversity projects, while prioritising indigenous networks.

Dr. Thulisile Mphambukeli's presentation, titled "From policy to performance: The social justice approach to managing the commons in the waterscape", purported that moving from policy to performance begins with inclusive knowledge, and that inclusive knowledge production will inform inclusive policy that will lead to inclusive development. A social justice indicators approach offers one possible solution to attaining inclusiveness. Access to water is one of the most prominent challenges today, due to the continuous growth of consumption, low levels of water resource management, and external factors such as climate change; which lead to the permanent reduction of the levels of water available. Consequently, access to water has become politically and economically driven. In this presentation, social justice was defined as venues, processes and practices that empower parts of populations, which may have been oppressed. Social justice in town planning should be linked to accessing the commons, particularly in the practices of BRICS countries, in order to understand the complex interaction between the commons and the larger political economy. This may allow the BRICS countries to model their commons in a more suitable manner and more effectively organise resistance to the illegitimate process of encroachment. For example, in India, you find that the commons have been encroached upon through a process of accumulation through dispossession and bio-natural hazards that are the result of climate change, which is arguably a man-made phenomenon.

In 2016, a BRICS conference was held to discuss sustainable uses of water resources, in Moscow. Dr. Mphambukeli expressed that these discussions took place at government level, and thus severely lacked the input of civilians or civil society who are in the position to enhance the resolutions and outcomes of the meeting. In order to revisit the commons in BRICS, it requires an advanced understanding of the various complexities, particularly the political economy of water, as well as the inclusion of more non-state actors. Therefore, how can we employ the social justice indicators to manage the sustainability of water resources in BRICS? Platforms have been established in order to ensure a thorough and coordinated approach; however in order to move towards performance, BRICS countries need to be committed to fund the necessary research that incorporates the following four pillars of social justice: capacity building, representation, resource access and safety and security. BRICS should use social justice indicators in order to address issues related to water management and incorporate more perspectives on water management. For example, the political economy of the water-scape in BRICS countries may be approached from a social justice perspective because it incorporates a trans-disciplinary understanding of the field, the multiple stakeholders that are involved, and the potential for Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in water management to benefit the issues experienced by local communities.

This call for the incorporation of IKS could build new layers of relational models among the commons. Furthermore, this knowledge should be elevated to the state level so that the selected country can align their own solutions and management methods with their cultural norms and practices. BRICS should look at the participatory and representation levels so that the group is able to achieve the goals that it has set for itself but also for its embedding as a group that is seen as a vanguard for the wants and needs of local communities.

Dr. Mphambukeli concluded by explaining how it is possible to have proactive and inclusive research projects in the case of managing a water-scape in South Africa. It is possible to outline five phases, namely, preparation, analysis of stakeholder engagement, visioning and strategy, project formulation and evaluation and monitoring, which adhere to the four dimensions of social justice. This would allow research and projects to take an inclusive role in a community and adhere to ethical practice because of their accountability to all stakeholders.

Dr. Victor Okorie presented a paper titled "Revisiting and redeeming the commons: Whither BRICS' Political Economies?", which expressed that the BRICS countries had started the partnership with an awareness surrounding environmental concerns operating under the constraints of a modern world economy as well as the aspirations of the countries in question. Dr. Okorie structured his presentation in four parts; summarising the key debates surrounding ownership of the commons, discussing the situation in BRICS and the steps taken to redeem the commons in BRICS countries, as well as suggestions for redeeming the commons. The two key debates firstly highlighted the Enclosure Act, which allowed for the conversion of commonly owned properties into private owned properties and reduced the amount of common spaces, and secondly, the commons have become controlled by competing interests, an anthropocentrism versus eco-centrism, whereby the visible hands of the masses compete with the invisible hand of the market. The effect of these competing interests have had a negative effect on the world environment and so a number of platforms and plans have been launched to combat global warming and climate change. BRICS's plan for responsible governance is to consider the middle way between the competing interests of the anthropocentric and eco-centric, which may be a more responsible form of utilising the commons.

One way of measuring this responsibility towards the commons is to utilise the [Happy Planet Index](#) (HPI), which is focused on what sustainable wellbeing means for the environment and its inhabitants. This index considers the general satisfaction of individuals, their health and life expectancy and the level of inequality, in relation to their ecological footprint. Inequality of outcomes and the ecological footprint are and should be considered more important in measuring development because of the historical impact on developing countries. These indicators, inequality and ecological footprint, linked to the overall HPI, show where efforts need to be concentrated. For example, South Africa, India and Brazil have a higher degree of inequality than China and Russia, which may be linked to the political economies that were geared to be responsive towards inequality. Although particular economic systems may address inequality faster, they may not necessarily be responsible towards the environment. For example, both China and South Africa have very different economies and levels of inequality, but their ecological footprint is similar. Moreover, it is becoming important to consider the producer of pollution as well as the consumer of the products produced by the polluter.

The steps taken in BRICS countries to improve the situation in terms of the general satisfaction of humans in relation to the environment are as follows; Brazil is focused on bio-energy production and export, as well as social inclusion, Russia has an environmental framework developed in collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), India is

improving levels of social inclusion and promoting a symbiosis between their market system and environment, China has invested \$50 billion in renewable energy, and South Africa is investing heavily in green job creation. In comparison to the other BRICS countries, Dr. Okorie stated that South Africa has one of the best frameworks for a green economy, however it cannot implement it due to a number of constraints.

Dr. Okorie thus closed his presentation by offering three recommendations to redeem the commons:

- Stimulating inclusive growth through green growth. This may come in the form of: agriculture that produces more from less, and therefore Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) may increasingly become an option despite the reservations and protests against them; the social reproduction of green citizens, whereby the education system needs to be geared to producing environmentally considerate people; promoting a green economy movement; investing in green lifestyle research; and creating trade policies on green technology, by finding ways to mutually learn and provide tech;
- Leveraging on Indigenous knowledge and including climate smart knowledge from below; and
- Incorporating greater collaboration between private sector, non-state actors and the state.

The discussion points raised after the presentations focused on the steps that were being taken in South Africa to lead on the front of water conservation, and how it is possible to overcome the potential conflict of social hierarchy and environmental management. Dr. Mphambukeli expressed that BRICS resolutions have been silent about water issues especially the nexus between water and food. The challenge faced in South Africa is a disconnection between political communities and local communities sharing in the water commons. For example, with regards to responsible water use, South Africa has limited supplies of water and immense pressures of a growing population. Yet, there are very few advertisements that are displayed on television, and government needs to increase its public service communications or announcements. In addition, water use in South Africa for agricultural purposes may require looking at indigenous plants or GMO plants. Lastly, Dr. Mphambukeli explained that it could be possible to address the challenges of socio-political interests and the management of the environment through responsible research. Researchers must consider for who and why they are carrying out their research, especially when linked to issues of social justice it becomes clear that the researcher and the people may have a greater impact.

Key Points:

- Ethical guidelines for research is becoming increasingly important in order not to impede elements of social justice. It is important that BRICS has ethical guidelines for research that is funded; and if these guidelines are available, are researchers aware of these guidelines and the importance of the ethics concerned?
- The commons have a key part in the sustainability and development of societies. It is important to take decisive actions that redeem countries' usage of the environment.

Finding new development paradigms: The role of BRICS & the South African Presidency

All four sessions emphasised that BRICS is part of a larger discussion: previously, issues like security were not an active part of the BRICS agenda, but security has become increasingly prioritised; debates on geopolitics and global power structures, such as the dominance of the USA in world affairs should be critiqued in order to open our new understanding of emerging powers and changing global structures; moreover, it is important to keep revisiting the BRICS, critically, and exploring what the partnership endeavours to achieve and the possible negative and positive impacts these achievements have.

The aim of this discussion is to explore the possible recommendations that encourage but also critically assess South Africa's possible contribution to the BRICS Presidency in 2018. The second decade of BRICS will require a far stronger people to people dimension, therefore:

- We must interrogate what we say and what we think as Africans, whether it is organic or we are only repeating narratives;

- We need to be more critical of our political economy and how it feeds into the research that we produce and the solutions that we offer;
- If research is conducted, it is important to share it with the South African government, however decision makers need to be proactive about this information;
- Public goods and infrastructure are a necessity, especially in the South African context, it is important to be mindful of these fundamental needs and indigenous knowledge systems solutions going forward; and
- South Africa has the potential to take the engagement further by broader representation of societies, especially in relation to sustainable infrastructure. It is possible for South Africa to put forward a model of interaction with the multi stakeholders.

Close by Prof. Lesiba Teffo, (Director: School of Transdisciplinary Research Institutes (STRI), UNISA)

Prof. Teffo closed the event by reminding participants of the various components that were discussed; namely, South Africa's high level political involvement, the importance of knowledge and knowledge systems in South Africa and the global South, and what BRICS and South Africa's involvement means to Africa. Firstly, the discussion had emphasised the importance of sharing lessons on global governance, in addition to infrastructure development and investment among BRICS countries. South Africa's high level participation in this partnership is linked to its accountability to the South African audience, which is dependent on the good governance and calibre of the various levels of government and the separation of powers in South Africa. Secondly, the day's discussion had looked at the creation of knowledge, particularly IKS. Prof Teffo emphasised his passion for South Africa's IKS and the potential it has because it has been institutionalised; for example, in 2004, a national policy decision was taken to mainstream IKS. North West University has made a four-year first degree in IKS available as part of their IKS Centre, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal houses a Department of Science and Technology-National Research Foundation (DST-NRF) Centre in IKS. Lastly, Prof Teffo referred to South Africa's positioning in Africa and drew from historical narratives of liberation movements in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as a reminder to all South Africans to hold each other accountable and to remember the importance of celebrating success but renouncing and denouncing systems that are not vested in the interest of the people.

Prof Teffo concluded by reaffirming his impression that South Africa has the capacity to lead the BRICS discussions in 2018 and that this is now the time to ensure our good governance works in favour of this.



South African
BRICS Think Tank

IGD and SABTT Dialogue Series: South Africa's BRICS Engagement

Programme, 22 November 2017

Burgers Park Hotel, CNR Lilian Ngoyi and Minnaar Street, Pretoria

The South African BRICS Presidency 2018: Towards an Agenda for Inclusive Development?

9:00 - 9:30	Arrival and registration
9:30 – 9:45	Welcome and opening remarks by <i>Dr. Philani Mthembu (Executive Director, Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD)) and Representative from the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS)</i>
9:30 – 10:15	Panel 1 – Economic prosperity & inclusive growth in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Prof. Godwell Nhamo (Exxaro Chair, University of South Africa) <i>Q & A Session</i>
10:15 – 11:00	Panel 2 – Prioritising the productive, creative, and scientific powers of BRICS countries Prof. Rasigan Maharajh (Chief Director, Institute for Economic Research on Innovation (IERI), Tshwane University of Technology) <i>Q & A Session</i>
11:00 - 11:30	Tea break
11:30 – 12:15	Panel 3 – The role of BRICS in conflict resolution, peace and social justice Ms. Faith Mabera (Senior Researcher, IGD) Dr. Buntu Siwisa (Independent research consultant on peace and security matters in Africa; member of the South African BRICS Academic Forum in the Peace and Security Cluster; associate of the BRICS Policy Centre)

	<i>Q & A Session</i>
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:15	Panel 4 – Revisiting the commons: Strengthening responsible forms of development Dr. Thulisile Mphambukeli (Senior Lecturer, University of the Free State) Dr. Victor Okorie (Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of the Free State)
	<i>Q & A Session</i>
14:15 – 15:00	Break away session – Finding new development paradigms: The role of BRICS & the South African Presidency
15:00 – 15:30	Tea break
15:30 – 16:00	Rapporteur session and closing remarks
16:00	Vote of thanks and close by Prof. Lesiba Teffo (Director: School of Transdisciplinary Research Institutes (STRI), UNISA)

About the Institute for Global Dialogue, associated with UNISA



The IGD is an independent foreign policy and diplomacy think tank dedicated to the analysis of and dialogue on global dynamics that have a bearing on South Africa in Africa. It advances a balanced, relevant and policy-oriented analysis, debate and documentation of South Africa's role in international relations and diplomacy.

The IGD's research agenda has three broad programmatic focus areas: foreign policy analysis with special reference to the making and management of foreign policy and diplomatic tools like economic, developmental, and public diplomacy; African studies focusing on the role of regional and continental integration in African politics and development as well as the study of peace diplomacy; and international diplomacy, analysing dynamics in international diplomacy that have a bearing on African peace and prosperity.

In 2010, following a strategic review the institute entered into its strategic partnership with the University of South Africa, the biggest university in the southern hemisphere to pursue through research, publications and community engagement the shared vision of a prosperous and peaceful Africa in a progressive global order.

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