

## BRICS LEADERS CONVENE FOR THE XV BRICS SUMMIT IN SOUTH AFRICA



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## PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA CALLS FOR INVESTMENT IN AFRICA

President Cyril Ramaphosa has called on the business community to invest in the continent and identify solutions to the rapid economic, technological and social changes underway.

Addressing the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, during the BRICS Business Forum Leaders' Dialogue, the President said these changes created new risks for employment, equality and poverty in many BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries.

"From a South African perspective, there is massive untapped potential for investment in our country and on the African continent. Africa is a continent of great opportunity in the industrialisation process in a variety of sectors.

"Africa is a continent rich in the critical minerals that will drive business success in the 21st century. The continent has resources of lithium, vanadium, cobalt, platinum, palladium, nickel, copper, rare earth minerals, rhodium and many others," the President said.

He emphasised that African countries made it clear that the investors of choice are those who will process the resources here, close to source.

"We are developing stronger regional value chains that will connect a number of African countries, providing investors with diversity, strength and resilience," President Ramaphosa said.

Taking place under the theme: BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism, the summit was attended by the leaders of Brazil, India, China, as well as South Africa, as the host.

The President said the success of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) would require a massive investment in infrastructure.

AfCFTA intends to create a single market for goods and services, facilitated by movement of persons to deepen the economic integration of the African continent.

"The African Continental Free Trade Area creates a single market that is expected to grow to 1.7 billion people and nearly US\$7 trillion in consumer and business spending by 2030. We need to mobilise the substantial financing needed to build the roads, ports, rail, energy and telecommunications networks that will enable industrialisation and trade.

"Growth in African economies will be driven in the main by small and medium enterprises. This requires focussed and effective support to these businesses. It is important that specific financing be directed to women-owned businesses so that they can harness the benefits of the continental free trade area," the President said.

He said the investment in skills development was growing as Africa has a young, digitally connected and urbanising population, which provides a stable workforce for companies in future.



"These factors all position Africa as the next frontier of productivity and growth. BRICS countries have an opportunity to contribute to and participate in Africa's growth story. This can be achieved through greater cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, new energy and the digital economy.

"South Africa has an important position in this growing African market, facilitated by the African Continental Free Trade Area and other free trade agreements. South Africa's industrial strength, our mineral endowments and our large market opportunities provide a compelling value-proposition for companies wanting to establish their businesses here," the President said.

President Ramaphosa said South Africa had significant industrial capacity, with Africa's most advanced industrial innovation and fabrication base.

"Firms that have invested here recognise that South Africa has deep local capital markets and strong financial systems. We have



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a diverse and sophisticated economy. South Africa possesses world-class infrastructure, skills, abundant natural resources, industrial clusters and a host of incentives to support investment.

“Many investment and partnership opportunities exist in renewable energy, infrastructure, aquaculture, information and communications technology, automotives, pharmaceuticals and advanced manufacturing, among others,” the President said.

He explained that the BRICS group of countries existed not only to strengthen government-to-government relations, but also to forge stronger ties between the peoples of the five nations.

“It is for this reason that several bodies have been established to enable cooperation across society. The BRICS Business Council is a vital and vibrant platform for strengthening economic ties between our respective countries and in forging common perspectives on inclusive economic growth and development.

“The changes that have taken place in BRICS economies over the past decade have done much to transform the shape of the global economy. Together, the BRICS countries make up a quarter of the global economy, they account for a fifth of global trade and are home to more than 40% of the world’s population,” the President said.

As BRICS countries celebrate its 15th anniversary, trade between BRICS countries totalled some US\$162 billion last year.

“Foreign investment has played an important role in the growth of BRICS economies. Total annual foreign direct investment into BRICS countries is four times greater than it was 20 years ago,” the President said.

With the establishment of the New Development Bank by BRICS countries in 2015, the President said its formation had demonstrated its ability to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development in emerging economies without conditionalities.

“BRICS economies have emerged as powerful engines of global growth. Yet, the rapid economic, technological and social changes underway create new risks for employment, equality and poverty in many BRICS countries. We therefore call on the business community to join hands with us to identify solutions to these and other challenges affecting our respective economies,” the President said. Source: – *SAnews.gov.za*

## MINISTER PATEL REFLECTS ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES AS HE WELCOMES BRICS DELEGATES

Trade, Industry and Competition Minister, Ebrahim Patel, has reflected on the issues facing global economies as he welcomed all delegates at the XV BRICS Summit, which officially kicked off in Johannesburg on Tuesday morning, 22 August 2023.

The Sandton Convention Centre has been a hive of activity as delegates from across the globe congregate to take part in the first in-person summit since the COVID-19 outbreak.

“A special welcome to all of you to the province of Gauteng, the economic powerhouse of the African continent, where 35% of South Africa’s wealth is generated. This small but very productive province accounts for 5% of Africa’s GDP [Gross Domestic Product],” said Minister Patel.

The BRICS grouping of major emerging economies – Brazil, India, China, South Africa and Russia – is holding their summit in Johannesburg from 22 to 24 August 2023 under the South Africa’s Chairship.

Minister Patel told the room full of delegates that the world looked different from five years ago when the country hosted the 10th BRICS Summit in 2018.

“Today, the world is more polarised, climate change is more pressing and the speed of technological innovation is rapidly increasing. These trends are in turn reshaping our economies and societies in more profound ways than more of us can project,” he said.



The Minister noted that change across the globe had created turmoil and tension.

“As the world changes, we have seen a rise of unilateralism and a pushback on the global rule-based system.”

Minister Patel, however, believes that it cannot be business as usual for the private sector, governments and other role players. He has called on leaders to adapt to the “new normal” and often volatile, uncertain and complex world.

“It’s in this context that the BRICS Business Council meets here today,” Minister Patel said.



### Towards a better future

Despite challenges, he said the council was optimistic about the future.

The Minister reflected on some of the institutions that were built by the bloc, such as the New Development Bank, which drives investment and infrastructure, and supports economies and societies.

Minister Patel said the power of science, technology and innovation must be harnessed to solve some of the world's problems, from developing lifesaving vaccines to green technologies that can decarbonise the energy mix.

Other developments such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which has the potential to bring together a market of 1.3 billion people and provide a much-needed boost to African industrialisation, must be actively pursued.

“We’re no longer just a raw material supplier. Africa is taking its place in the world as an innovator and industrialiser – the Africa of people, young people, rapidly urbanising, digitally connected and energetic. We’re pushing back against the toxic legacy of 55 states divided by borders from a continent of 1.3 billion people united in our resolve, connected in a unified manner.”

Meanwhile, Brazil’s Finance Minister, Fernando Haddad, said his country always strove to facilitate investment in the interest of his country. He described BRICS’ contribution as “enormous”.

“In Brazil, we believe in multilateralism and cultural and social diversity, and that we equitably distribute the opportunities.”

Minister Haddad said it was important for BRICS to be unified. India’s Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, commended businesses for organising centres for them to discuss the BRICS economies. He said India, which grew its GDP by 7.2% last year, was one of the world’s fastest-growing economies.

Minister Goyal said India was also transforming its infrastructure, and that it boasted more than 800 million Internet users and an increase in online services.

In addition, the country is also growing its renewable energy sources.

Goyal also reflected on the important partnership between the BRICS countries and the global South based on mutual respect.

– Source: *SAnews.gov.za*



Once completed, the free trade area, which is of substantial economic interest to South Africa and the African continent, will provide a market of over 1 billion people with a GDP of over US\$2.6 trillion.

## CALL TO ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION OF AfCFTA



### African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

Creating One African Market

BRICS Business Council Chairperson, Patrice Motsepe, has emphasised the importance of accelerating the implementation and advancement of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The AfCFTA intends to create a single market for goods and services, facilitated by movement of persons to deepen the economic integration of the African continent. The single market is expected to grow to 1.7 billion people and nearly US\$7 trillion in consumer and business spending by 2030.

Addressing the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, Motsepe called for a sense of urgency to make sure that trade barriers – both tariff and non-tariff – are significantly diminished and eliminated.

“South African companies are the largest trading partners on the African continent. They are world class with many of them being as good as the best in the world.

“The key issue is that the governments have to increase their partnerships with the private sector and these discussions between the private sector and governments must increase significantly.

“Part of these discussions is for the private sector to indicate to government what impediment and barriers are there to the free trade of goods and services on the Africa continent,” Motsepe said on Tuesday, 23 August 2023.

Taking place under the theme: *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism*, the summit is being attended by the leaders of Brazil, India, China, as well as South Africa, as the host.

Motsepe stressed that the future of African business depended on its capacity and ability to prove to the rest of the world that it could conduct partnerships, trade, investments as well as the ability to have business relationships that are mutually beneficial.

“The key issue for us is that we have to consistently produce results and indicate that the standards of living of our people are improving because at the heart of these trade ties is the poor, the unemployed and the marginalised,” he said.

Motsepe expressed confidence in the continent’s ability to grow its economies.

“We have a clear understanding of the challenges that confront us, but we are equally confident based on the facts that the time

for Africa has come. We will do well because seven of the fastest-growing economies in the world are on the African continent.

“The amount of intra-African trade is increasing significantly and the partnership with BRICS countries is very important and the relationships of doing business with the rest of the world is also important,” he said.

In an effort for BRICS countries to have greater access to markets, Motsepe called for the fast-tracking of priority visas for entrepreneurs who are looking for opportunities.

“We understand that there are legitimate concerns about making sure that governments maintain their sovereign control of who comes and who goes out. We agree with that and support it as well, but these are some of the low-hanging fruits [that can be addressed].

“We can immediately give preferential access to businesspeople from BRICS countries. Give them visas, allow them to come and look at opportunities in South Africa as well as on the continent. What we spoke about was reciprocity,” he said.

Motsepe said BRICS had enormous potential and intended to significantly increase trade, investment and partnership relationships between South Africa, Africa and the BRICS countries.

Last year, trade between BRICS countries totalled some US\$162 billion.

“The potential is enormous but again the sense of urgency is that we need to translate the good ideas that we have; these big plans into effective, legislative policy instruments that allow for effective free flow of goods and services. When we started, we wanted to increase the trade between the African continent and BRICS countries.

“The commitment and the will are there. A market is an opportunity until you invest and sometimes your investment takes five to seven years before you realise value. There is opportunities in terms of what we can do, the magnitude of how we can grow and the magnitude of how we can grow the trade investment and business ties between South Africa, Africa and BRICS countries,” Motsepe said.

With South Africa’s history with the BRICS countries, which emanates during the years of the country’s fight for democracy, Motsepe said South Africa was building on those partnerships and they were important.

“We are building on that historical support that they have given to initiatives and the struggle towards democracy. We are using the history that we have with them to build very strong, beneficial business, investment ties and economic growth.

“This BRICS partnership has to translate into assessable, quantifiable investment and trade ties and it is doing that. That partnership has resulted in benefits but in relation to where we should be, there is still a long way to go,” he said. – Source: [SAnews.gov.za](http://SAnews.gov.za)

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## BRICS BUSINESS FORUM LEADERS' DIALOGUE – SUMMARY OF ADDRESSES BY BRICS LEADERS



**Brazil:** President of Brazil, Lula da Silva acknowledges that BRICS has a unique chance of shaping the world's global development path. The BRICS countries together make up a third of the global economy. To further enhance BRICS initiatives, collaboration between the public and private sector is vital for harnessing this potential and achieving lasting results.

**Russia:** Russian President Vladimir Putin says his country is willing to cooperate in the development of the African continent. President Putin called on all the BRICS Summit partners to cooperate on equal terms and to also offer an update on his offer of free grain for African countries.

**India:** Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi believes that mutual cooperation and trust are the key pillars that will thrust the BRICS group of countries as well as the global south towards development and economic growth. The countries shared sentiments from the beginning of COVID-19, and also emphasised that the role of BRICS is even more vital during these times as tensions, disputes and economic challenges are prevalent.

**China:** Chinese President Xi Jinping acknowledged that a positive and stable force for good will continue to grow with BRICS partners. South Africa and China enjoy vibrant economic relations. BRICS will forge stronger strategic partnerships, actively advance membership expansion, deepen solidarity and solidify co-operation with other emerging markets and developing countries. Chinese President Xi pledged his support

to resolving South Africa's energy challenges. This included the donation of emergency power equipment worth R167 million and availing of a grant of approximately R500 million as development assistance. China is South Africa's largest trading partner and South Africa is China's biggest trading partner in Africa.

**South Africa:** President Cyril Ramaphosa has called on the business community to invest in the continent and identify solutions to the rapid economic, technological and social changes underway. From a South African perspective, there is massive untapped potential for investment in South Africa and on the African continent. Africa is a continent of great opportunity in the industrialisation process in a variety of sectors. Africa is a continent rich in the critical minerals and resources. The President said the success of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will require a massive investment in infrastructure.

Growth in African economies will be driven in the main by small and medium enterprises, to this end focus should be directed towards financing women-owned businesses.

This will ensure that they harness the benefits of the continental free trade area. President Ramaphosa requests that prioritisation is on the investment in skills development. Africa has a young, digitally connected and urbanising population, which will contribute immensely to the stable workforce for companies in future.

The BRICS Business Council is a vital and vibrant platform for strengthening economic ties between our respective countries and in forging common perspectives on inclusive economic growth and development.

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# XV BRICS SUMMIT 22 – 24 AUGUST 2023

*BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism*

Issue 2 – 23 August 2023 **NEWSLETTER**

## ISSUES ARISING FROM BUSINESS FORUM

BRICS Business Council Chairperson, Patrice Motsepe Addressed the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg. The key issues addressed during the forum include the sense of urgency to make sure that trade barriers, both tariff and non-tariff, are significantly diminished and eliminated.

South African companies are the largest trading partners on the African continent. The key issue is that the governments have to increase their partnerships with the private sector to capitalise in these trading initiatives. The AfCFTA intends to create a single market for goods and services, facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of the African continent. The private sector is requested to indicate to government what impediment and barriers are there to the free trade of goods and services on the Africa continent.

Another key issue is to ensure that Africa is consistently producing results that indicate that the standards of living of our people are improving as the heart of these trade ties are the poor, the unemployed and the marginalized. There are legitimate concerns about making sure that governments maintain their sovereign control of who comes and who goes out.

To address these issues, it is advised that immediate preferential access is given to business from BRICS countries that allow

them to explore opportunities in South Africa as well as on the continent.

The BRICS Business Forum also emphasized the need for the creation of a reward system, as the BRICS Business Council chairperson, Jai Shroff, said food security is a big issue, as climate change has a huge impact on farmers.

Trade, Industry and Competition Minister, Ebrahim Patel, has further reflected on the issues facing global economies. Currently, the world is now more polarised, climate change is more pressing and the speed of technological innovation is rapidly increasing. This results in a rise of unilateralism and a pushback on the global rule-based system.

It is imperative that the BRICS countries are adaptable to the volatile, uncertain and complex world. Many institutions are built by the bloc, such as the New Development Bank, which drives investment and infrastructure, and supports economies and societies. Mr Ebrahim Patel also indicated that the power of science, technology and innovation must be harnessed to solve some of the world's problems, from developing lifesaving vaccines to green technologies that can decarbonise the energy mix.

The main event poster features the BRICS Business Council logo and the South African flag. The central text reads "RISE TOGETHER" in large white letters, with the subtitle "FORGING COLLABORATIONS. TRANSFORMING NATIONS." below it. The dates "19-24 AUGUST 2023" are prominently displayed. At the bottom, there are two QR codes for downloading the app, with "DOWNLOAD OUR APP" written above them. Logos for "Google play" and "Download on the App Store" are also present.

This summary card features the BRICS logo and the event title "XV BRICS SUMMIT" with the subtitle "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism". The main text states: "South Africa benefits from being part of a collective voice striving to advance a world order based on mutual respect and the equal sovereignty of nations." The footer includes the hashtag "#BRICSZA | #BRICS".

This summary card features the BRICS logo and the event title "XV BRICS SUMMIT" with the subtitle "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism". The main text states: "BRICS cooperation has grown over the last fifteen years to include an annual programme of over 160 meetings across the three pillars of political and security, economic and financial, and people-to-people cooperation, contributing to the sustainable development agenda, the development of humanity, and more fair global governance." The footer includes the hashtag "#BRICSZA | #BRICS".

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## BRICS WELL POSITIONED TO CREATE EQUITABLE WORLD ORDER

President Cyril Ramaphosa has used the occasion of the XV BRICS Summit Open Plenary to reiterate the bloc's commitment to the principles of solidarity, sustainable development and an equitable world order.

Joined by his counterparts from the grouping's member countries – the President of Brazil Lula Da Silva; Russian President Vladimir Putin; Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the People's Republic of China President, Xi Jinping – President Ramaphosa said the BRICS partnership must be harnessed to drive inclusive global economic recovery.

The South African Statesman said it remains a matter of concern that global financial and payment systems are “increasingly being used as instruments of geopolitical contestation”.

“Global economic recovery relies on predictable global payment systems and the smooth operation of banking, supply chains, trade, tourism and financial flows.

“We will continue discussions on practical measures to facilitate trade and investment flows through the increased use of local currencies,” President Ramaphosa said on the second day of the summit.

President Ramaphosa also said the bloc was “deeply concerned about conflicts across the world that continue to cause great suffering and hardship.”

“As South Africa, our position remains that diplomacy, dialogue, negotiation and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter are necessary for the peaceful and just resolution of conflicts.

With the BRICS partnership straddling four continents and five countries that are home to almost three and a half billion people, President Ramaphosa said the bloc has, over the years, been a major driver of global growth, trade and investment.

It is for this reason, the President said, that the agenda of peace and stability ought to be supported; it is the precondition for a better and more equitable world.

“The world is changing. New economic, political, social and technological realities call for greater cooperation between nations.

“These realities call for a fundamental reform of the institutions of global governance so that they may be more representative and better able to respond to the challenges that confront humanity,” the President said.

This year's edition of the BRICS Summit is a significant one, not only because it is the first to be hosted in person since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent global restrictions, but because of the interest it has attracted from other countries, with over 20 countries having applied to join the bloc of developing nations.

President Ramaphosa said while BRICS is firmly committed

to advancing the interests of the Global South, BRICS stands ready to collaborate with all countries that aspire to create a more inclusive international order.

“BRICS stands for solidarity and for progress. It stands for inclusivity and a more just, equitable world order. It stands for sustainable development.

“We are an inclusive formation of developing and emerging economies that are working together to benefit from our rich histories, cultures and systems to advance common prosperity. We do so because we know that poverty, inequality and underdevelopment are the biggest challenges facing humankind.” Advancing the African agenda

The theme for this year's summit – ‘BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism’ – is testament to the group's realisation that Africa is pivotal to the world's sustained development, something that President Ramaphosa says is a strategic priority for South Africa during its chairship of BRICS. The President has welcomed the ongoing engagement of BRICS countries with Africa in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect.

The objectives of reciprocal trade and investment, he said, are some of the pillars in building an Africa that is able to compete on an equal footing in the global economy.

“The African Continental Free Trade Area, once fully operational, will unlock the benefits of the continental market and generate mutually beneficial opportunities for both African and BRICS countries,” President Ramaphosa said.

As the world grapples with climate change, the President said it has become crucial to ensure that the transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient future is just, fair and takes into account differing national circumstances.

In line with this objective, BRICS nations need to advance the interests of the Global South and call for industrialised countries to honour their commitments to support climate actions by developing economy countries.

President Ramaphosa expressed his full confidence that this 15th BRICS Summit will advance the cause of common prosperity and progress.

“We are confident that this XV BRICS Summit will enrich and inspire our work towards the achievement of a more humane global community,” he said.

The summit, which will wrap up on Thursday, has already seen the hosting of the BRICS Business Council and the signing of a joint memorandum of cooperation, which will see China helping South Africa to power critical institutions as the country continues to work on a plan to deal conclusively with load shedding. - SAnews.gov.za



## PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING FOR CHANGE



Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at the Inaugural Township Economy in BRICS Dialogue in Orlando West, Soweto

Yet again, all eyes are on South Africa as we host the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg. The BRICS Summit brings together leaders across sectors from the world's leading emerging economic markets to chart a path for the growth in influence and development of the multilateral forum.

The developmental agenda of BRICS must be guided by a clear plan to ensure that the strategic objectives of the BRICS forum align with the domestic imperatives of BRICS nations.

South Africa's Chairship as led by His Excellency, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa is chaired under the theme "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism."

In the pursuit to unleash the economic potential of Africa and the broader Global South, we must utilize the national planning machinery across nations to ensure that the strategic objectives of BRICS orient and amplify developmental targets as reflected in South Africa's National Development Plan Vision 2030 (NDP), United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

In the context of South Africa, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), together with the National Planning Commission (NPC) as led by the Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation, Ms. Maropene Ramokgopa must work closely with the various workstreams in BRICS to ensure that planning imperatives are catalytic and foster the BRICS vision. We must give practical meaning to: Planning for Development, Planning for Change.

A week before the commencement of the Summit, the Inaugural Township Economy in BRICS Dialogue was convened in Orlando West, Soweto. Soweto is located in Johannesburg and is the largest township in the Global South.

The engagement was supported by several partners including government departments namely the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and DPME, alongside the Chinese Embassy in South Africa and various business formations and entrepreneurs.

The engagement highlighted that although the challenges of townships may be unique across contexts, but the opportunities our township economies yield are similar across BRICS nations.

In the context of South Africa, the NDP clearly stipulates that Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) are expected to generate 90% of the eleven million jobs to be created.

Most SMMEs are located in townships and rural areas and have the potential to meet the NDP imperatives that indicate this sector to contribute 60%-80% to GDP growth and employ 90% of the country's workforce by 2030.

Therefore, as South Africa, we assert that our townships must also benefit from the opportunities of the BRICS association. The Township Economy cannot be confined to one individual nation. It is a collective endeavour that must be informed by a clear developmental plan.

There is a compelling case to make that the BRICS association should recognize and ensure the inclusion of Township Economies in the developmental agenda of BRICS across all member states through formal structures.

Our national planning machinery cannot be excluded from the rapid economic growth and development of BRICS nations alongside their collective influence to advance the national, regional and global imperatives.

It is through developmental planning that we can ensure our participation in BRICS is anchored on our strategic role in influencing international politics, promoting a shared ideology for inclusive and equitable growth, strengthening domestic politics, and increasing commercial opportunities.

Indeed, through a developmental plan, a better Africa will result in a better World.

The engagement highlighted that although the challenges of townships may be unique across contexts, but the opportunities our township economies yield are similar across BRICS nations.

## OPTIMISM REIGNS SUPREME AS THE GAUTENG GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY HOSTS THE AFRICA CAUCUS ON BRICS AND AFRICA



Ambassador Andre Nzapayeke Dean of African Ambassadors to South Africa and Former Prime Minister of Central Africa Republic



Gauteng MEC for Economic Development delivering the welcome address



Saki Zamxaka, Acting Group CEO of the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency

As the host of the BRICS Summit and the chair of the BRICS group, South Africa is advancing the interests of African States under the theme of ‘BRICS and Africa partnership for mutually accelerated growth, sustainable development and multilateralism’.

Through the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA), the Gauteng province, in collaboration with the BRICS Business Council, supported by the Organisation for Global Africa Cooperation, convened an Africa Caucus of business representatives and ambassadors.

The panel included Lerato Mataboge, Deputy Director General in the Department of Trade Industry and Competition (dtic); Yofi Grant, CEO of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre; Saki Zamxaka, Acting Group CEO of the Gauteng Growth & Development Agency and Athumani Mkyandika, Chief Investment Officer at the Tanzania Investment Centre.

One of the caucus’ objectives was to identify opportunities and challenges towards implementing the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement and the role of IPAs in facilitating BRICS investments.

In her welcome address, the MEC for the Gauteng Department of Economic Development, Ms Tasneem Motara, shared how the Growing Gauteng Together 2023 plan is an expression of the implementation of Agenda 2063 in an effort to build the Africa we want.

She outlined how the provincial plan has identified specific actions to expand intra-Africa commerce, which include expanding sub-national economic diplomacy and intensifying collaboration in various provinces and city regions on the continent; to formally showcase regional and continental partnerships and potential areas for collaboration based on Gauteng’s ten high-growth sectors and to promote continental investment in Gauteng-based businesses to help grow trade links.

Gauteng exports to Africa account for 31.1 % of all Gauteng exports, making Africa the 2nd largest destination for Gauteng exports after Asia. Since 2015, Gauteng has received R406.5 billion worth of goods from the continent and exported R1.19 trillion worth of goods to the continent.

It is important to note that the GGDA is a member of the African Business Council (AfBC), a private and public business facilitation entity of the African Union across the continent and that the creation of a regional market, through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), is a significant opportunity to help African countries diversify their exports, accelerate growth, and attract foreign direct investment from BRICS member states, thereby intensifying the global value-added economic participation of the continent.

GGDA Acting Group CEO Saki Zamxaka stressed that we should be asking which businesses have the potential to export and then actively support those businesses and that we can’t get away from developing our sectors and taking advantage of the opportunities it will create.

He did, however, warn that improvements in logistics are not just for us to move amongst ourselves but also for our competitors, meaning they can learn something at the port and get the product where it needs to be quicker and cheaper.

The overall sentiment was one of optimism, with Lerato Mataboge, DDG in the Department of Trade Industry and Competition, emphasising how we are going into the BRICS Summit with an African voice, that “Africa is the future and she is ready to take her place among the community of nations. We are here as Africans, and we’re going to pursue our integration very decisively.”

## STRATEGIC AGREEMENTS SIGNED AT BRICS WOMEN BUSINESS ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

Delegates attending the BRICS Women Business Alliance (WBA) Africa Trade Conference, have witnessed the signing of partnership agreements, which will pave the way towards building trade platforms with various countries.

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube led the Provincial Government's participation at the annual BRICS Women's Business Alliance Africa Trade Conference, currently underway at Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC) in Durban.

The conference, that took place from 20 - 21 August 2022, brought together over 500 women-led Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), from 18 countries, including Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, amongst others.

Dube-Ncube said the conference was a significant global milestone in the struggle for women empowerment, and it strategically takes place ahead of the Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) Summit to be attended by over 30 Heads of State and Government from across Africa from 22 - 24 August 2024.

She said they were inspired that the gathering would discuss among others, access to funding, trade, investment among BRICS nations and Africa, and facilitation of exports.

Dube-Ncube said the conference would also highlight crucial deliberations on establishing a Women Advancement Fund, aimed at providing women entrepreneurs with vital access to capital, nurturing the growth of women-led businesses, and propelling economic activity and job generation.

The Women Business Alliance will also expedite discussions on BRICS Tourism development, gendered healthcare policies, and collaborative efforts to boost economic prospects for women

"This platform will help propel women to competitively participate and fully exploit opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) a single market for goods and services.

"Similarly, the BRICS WBA Africa Trade Conference promises to be an unparalleled platform fostering collaboration among women-owned businesses and enterprises across BRICS and African nations," Dube-Ncube said.

The two-day indaba, which was unveiled in 2020, took place at the time which is characterised by a tectonic shift in the global world order, with the BRICS family of nations, which accounts for more than 23% of the global economic output, emerging as a strong counterbalance to the dominant global set up.

Welcoming hundreds of delegates on the first day of the conference on Sunday, Dube-Ncube said the problem statements for women globally may possess different nuances for different countries and world regions, but essentially they all boil to one – the total emancipation of women to enjoy equality with their male counterparts.

The summit was held under the theme: "The Role of Multi-lateral Trade and Investment in Economic Recalibration, Reconstruction and Recovery Plans".

"The Role of Multilateral Trade and Investment in economic re-calibration, reconstruction and recovery plans is premised on collaboration and inclusivity of women in the broader development of women," Dube-Ncube said. – *SAnews.gov.za*



## YOUNG PEOPLE CALL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF BRICS YOUTH COUNCIL

Making their voices heard at the XV BRICS Summit, young people across the member states have called for the establishment of a BRICS Youth Council.

Addressing the summit currently underway in Johannesburg on Wednesday, National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Chairperson Asanda Luwaca said the recent 9th BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India China, and South Africa) Youth Summit reached a consensus on the establishment of a Youth Council.

“This will allow us to ensure deeper and stronger collaborations among young people. We thus implore that this summit endorse our proposal for the establishment for the BRICS Youth Council in its final declaration in ensuring that new pathways for positive change and innovation can be realised.

“In doing so, it will further ensure that no young person among the BRICS member states gets left behind. Young people in their collective believe that youth are the present and the future. Our interaction as BRICS member states cannot and should not be limited to an annual summit,” Luwaca said.

Taking place under the theme: “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for mutually accelerated growth, sustainable development and inclusive multilateralism”, the summit is being attended by the leaders of Brazil, India, China, as well as South Africa, as the host.

Noting that young people make up the larger proportion of the population of each of the BRICS countries, Luwaca emphasised that the voices and views of the youth are critical as nations forge a post-pandemic society at the highest making forums.

“We believe that the BRICS countries in general and youth in particular should use their collective strengths to prioritise the development paradigm, using as a guiding principle for our work as we continue the intra BRICS cooperation across areas such as trade, education, skills development and training, economic participation and transformation, health and well-being and social cohesion.

“At our 9th Youth Summit, we presented the draft framework for the establishment of a BRICS Youth Council, which will become the coordination body for youth development between BRICS member countries and will join formations such as the BRICS Business Council, BRICS Women’s Alliance and the new Development Bank,” she said.

Last month, the NYDA hosted the 9th BRICS Youth Summit and the Meeting of Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs, under the theme: “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism”. The BRICS Youth Summit is a platform for dialogue for delegates from member states, striving for the promotion of peace, security, development in a multi-polar inter-dependent and increasingly complex, globalizing world.

The objectives of the summit are to bring together youth participants, affording them an opportunity to share ideas and work on a concrete Action Plan for co-operation in economic, humanitarian, mass media, and science sphere.

This year, South Africa as the head of BRICS directed the summit to focus on discussions that aim to encourage young leaders among BRICS nations to actively participate in addressing the most significant global challenges, economic, social issues, and contribute to the developmental agenda.

It further called for a focus on constructive engagements on issues relating to youth empowerment, the advancement of youth development and in creating a conducive environment where youth will devise a path to a brighter and better future.

The Youth Summit preceded the BRICS Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs meeting, which was attended by the Youth Ministers; Heads of Executive Authorities for Youth; Senior Government Officials; and youth.

The outcomes of the BRICS Youth Summit will be presented to the Ministers’ Meeting for decision-making and adoption of the presentations and resolutions made by delegates from the summit. – *SAnews.gov.za*

### MS ASANDA LUWACA, EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY’S SPEECH TO THE BRICS HEAD OF STATES SUMMIT 2023:

- Young people make up a large proportion of the populations of each of the respective BRICS countries, hence their voices and views are critical at the highest decision-making forums
- The ninth BRICS Youth Summit took place from 18th – 20th July, as we enter the SDG ‘Decade of Action’ (2021-30) - young people have urged for their inclusion at all discussion levels.
- BRICS countries believe that young people should use their collective strengths to prioritize the ‘development paradigm’.
- Young people in their collective believe that the youth is the present and future. Their interactions as BRICS members cannot and should not be limited to an annual summit.
- At the Youth Summit a draft framework for a BRICS Youth Council was presented, this will become the coordinating body for youth development between BRICS member countries.
- The draft framework will join formations such as the BRICS Business Council, BRICS Women’s Alliance and the new Development Bank and will be a historic achievement for young people of BRICS countries.
- The Youth Council has reached consensus. This will allow for a deeper and stronger collaboration amongst young people.
- The Youth Council requested that the BRICS Summit endorses their proposal for the establishment of a BRICS Youth Council in its final declaration.

### SINCE THE BEGINNING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CHAIRSHIP OF BRICS, THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES HAVE ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED

- At the Women Business Alliance (WBA) Africa Trade Conference, a partnership agreement was signed, which highlights crucial deliberations such as the Women Advancement Fund and BRICS tourism development.
- The XV BRICS Summit held bilateral engagements between the Minister of Electricity, the China State Grid Chairman and the National Electricity Engineering Company to advance Africa's energy security on our Just Transition energy developments.
- The New Development Bank (NDB) has successfully issued its debut ZAR bond in the South African bond market. These proceeds will be used to fund infrastructure and sustainable development projects in South Africa.
- BRICS ministers signed a Declaration on Agriculture, which outlines various areas of collaboration such as reducing the impact of climate change on agriculture and enhancing agricultural trade and investment.
- Through the Ministerial Meeting on Science and Innovation, Minister Blade Nzimande, has called on his partners from BRICS to develop science and innovation capacities across Africa to enhance public-private partnerships, put science, technology and innovation at the heart of South Africa's growth and development agenda.
- BRICS Urbanisation Forum ensures that the key issues of urbanisation are placed on the global BRICS agenda. The forum focussed on building productive and sustainable urban economies and exchanging best practices for fostering urbanisation in South Africa.
- The SA BRICS Business Council showcased South Africa's top tech youth talent. The event focussed on upskilling the youth through allowing for participation via various science and tech competitions.
- BRICS Ministers of Education have adopted a Ministerial Declaration, which makes firm commitments on the areas identified as education and training priorities for the BRICS member states.
- The BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group has played a pivotal role in promoting mutual concerns and fostering collaboration among its member nations. Key issues included battling cross-border corruption and enhancing anti-corruption education and training.
- BRICS has plans in place to extend an R18-billion loan to Transnet to upgrade its locomotives. The NDB aims to complete the transaction by the end of 2023 as part of its plans to further develop its US\$5.6-billion portfolio in South Africa.



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## DR TSHEPO MOTSEPE HOSTS BRICS FIRST LADIES

Dr Motsepe, the First Lady of the Republic of South Africa, hosted the spouses of the Heads of State invited to the XV BRICS Summit. The spousal programme, held at Summer Place in Hyde Park, Sandton, included a roundtable discussion on early childhood development. Dr Motsepe was also joined by Deputy President Paul Mashatile's spouse, Ms Hlumile Mjongile.



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# XV BRICS SUMMIT 22 – 24 AUGUST 2023

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